Bailey, K. E.: **Poet and peasant: a literary cultural approach to the parables in Luke.** Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976.

It is far from easy to write a fresh and interesting book on the parables, but this has been achieved by Dr Bailey. The "poet" aspect of his thesis lies in the establishment of various kinds of literary structure in the NT, and he makes a good case for the use of extended chiastic forms and (more traditionally) extended poetic parallelism. The "peasant" aspect stems from the author's twenty years of experience in the Middle East, during which he explored the oriental village way of life and questioned numerous resource persons about cultural aspects of the parables. Bailey suggests that of three possible approaches to the parables, historical, existential and aesthetic, the combinations historical–existential (Linnemann) and existential–aesthetic (Via) have been explored by earlier writers; he proposes to bring together the historical and aesthetic approaches, *i.e.* "peasant" and "poet". Working on these lines, he examines four parables (Lk. 11:5–8; 15:4–10; 11–32; 16:1–8) and two poems (Lk. 11:9–13; 16:9–13) in the Gospel of Luke, and has important insights to offer in each case. Thus he argues that 11:5–8 is about the man in bed and his desire for "avoidance of shame" (*anaideia*) by granting his friend's request: the parable is not primarily about the need for importunity in prayer. He offers a novel interpretation of the unjust steward's conduct: Noting that his master had treated him generously by merely dismissing him and not sending him to jail, he magnanimously reduced the amounts of the master's debtors, trusting that the master would fall in with his action, lest he appear to be ungenerous. So the point of the parable is to trust in the mercy of God. The prodigal son's wish for his portion of the property was really a wish to see his father dead, which the father met with generosity. These and other points are carefully argued, though not all the author's suggestions are fully convincing. A good case is made for the substantial authenticity of these portions of the teaching of Jesus. The book has implications for the translation of Lk. 11:8, and also raises the question whether translators should aim to reproduce the poetic structure which may be present in the teaching of Jesus.

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Vetus Testamentum, vol. 27 (1977), pp. 170–177, contains an article by Dr J. de Waard, the former editor of *Technical Papers*, entitles "The Chiastic Structure of Amos V 1–17". The article is a valuable complement to the forthcoming *Translator's Handbook on Amos*, by Dr de Waard and Dr E. A. Nida.

A Translator's Handbook on Paul's Letter to the Philippians, by Dr I-Jin Loh and Dr E. A. Nida, is now available. Further details will be given in the next issue of *The Bible Translator*.