"peripheral" rural masses whose basic needs and aspirations are not seen by the present African power elite in the urban centres. Part I summarizes African "anthropocentrism" based on the person, not the individual; the impact of history and methodical problems of human sciences in, and applied to, Africa. Part II situates theology in this context, closely following the French Thomist M.D. Chenu. Part III defines the approach of a peripheral theology to Church and mission action in Africa. Nyimi strongly supports the liberation programme of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT) but translates it into a highly philosophical discourse more familiar to his Zairian masters (O. Bimwenyi-Kweshi, V.I. Mudimbe) than to their more practical and more critical Cameroonian counterparts (E. Mveng, F. Eboussi Boulaga, J.-M. Ela). His own more down-to-earth contribution to the "people's theology" is still to be waited for.

Ostpreußendamm 170E
D—12207 Berlin

HEINRICH BALZ


The second Gulf war in 1992 between the United States and its allies on one side and Iraq on the other, was a mediashow on an unprecedented scale. Both sides manipulated and censored information to an extent that left little freedom to the media in covering the events. One important instance in which the media could play an independent role was in providing the public with background information. Departing from the hypothesis that a tendency may be observed in the coverage of other cultures and religions by the media which confirms and reinforces simplification strategies and stereotypes that already exist in society, an interdisciplinary group of scholars from the university of Tübingen set up a project to analyse German media reports of background information to the Gulf crisis. Der Islam in den Medien is the account of their findings.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part consists of contributions with general information on issues such as Western images of the Orient, representations of non-Western religions, the history and use of the concept of 'fundamentalism', and an example of the so-called ethno psychoanalytic hermeneutic method in analysing television programmes. While the somewhat disparate contributions in the first part of the book

tend to contain rather abstract or disconnected theoretical statements from the discipline of mass communication, most contributions in the second part of the book deal with content analyses of particular media reports, most of which television broadcasts.

Since the analyses of concrete examples demonstrate convincingly the ways in which the media appeal to stereotypes of the ‘Other’ and deliberately construct images that confirm fears people may have concerning the ‘Unknown’, I found this second part of the book by far the most interesting. In one way or another, the majority of the papers in this part deal with the documentaries of the German/French journalist Peter Scholl-Latour that were broadcasted on German television during the Gulf crisis. Silvia Kuske, for example, analyses the features that make up Scholl-Latour’s image of the ‘Orient’. In this image the word Orient is interchangeable with the words Islam and Arabs. Other false generalisations suggested by Scholl-Latour concern the attribution of specific essential characteristics of ‘Orientals’ in the way he depicts them in his documentaries, such as a preference for mass performances, religious fanaticism, bearded men and veiled women. In his commentaries, Scholl-Latour frequently refers to biblical stories to explain or draw parallels with current events.

The idea of the ‘Islamic Threat’ thus created is a recurrent theme in the papers that focus on Scholl-Latour’s documentaries. Hubert Mohr for instance argues that the editing of shots and texts is used in a very suggestive way, as in the example of bloody shots of members of a Shia religious order performing a ritual of self-mutilation which accompany a text which is mainly concerned with the theme of Islamic fundamentalism. In another contribution, Claudia Ott analyses the way music is used to create different atmospheres. She describes how the opening shots in ‘Den Gottlosen die Hölle’ show a Lenin statue, followed by shots of a large crowd of praying Muslims. These shots are accompanied by sounds in which the second theme of ‘The Gnom’ from Mussorgsky is gradually drowned by the sounds of the Islamic call to prayer. She concludes that the shift in the Western image of the enemy from communism to Islam suggested by the opening shots are reconfirmed and made to appeal more strongly to (unconscious) attitudes and feelings by the accompanying music.

The theme of the communist threat being replaced by the Islamic threat occurs in several papers. It is systematically analysed in the paper by Jutta Bernard and others who demonstrate that most metaphors that were used to create an image of communism as the enemy during the cold war are exactly the same ones that are now employed in creating an image of