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REFLECTIONS ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

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Faith in the living God has been rejected time and again by the ignorant and the indifferent, as well as by many of the learned and the thoughtful. It has been especially challenged today. Such theologians as Bishop John A. T. Robinson of Woolwich, honestly seeking to be *Honest to God*, urge Christians to abandon most of the phrasing which historically has been used to convey Christian thought. Similarly, the late Bishop James A. Pike of California dismisses many traditional doctrines as old bottles which will inevitably burst and whose bursting should occasion no regrets.

In this kind of context many men, even ministers, feel uneasy when they think about the Trinity. The question before us is whether it is time to renounce a doctrine which, by affirming that there are three persons in God, seems to have produced confusion rather than clarification, or whether it was designed to embody values that are a vital and necessary part of the Christian faith.

From the days of Arius it has been a chosen scheme with his disciples to represent the doctrine of the Trinity as an artificial theological construct, and consequently unimportant. To a large number of Christians, however, it is a doctrine fundamental to Christianity since it deals with a correct knowledge of God. Related to the divine Being, his nature and mode of being, this knowledge affects every man's understanding of God as the object of his worship, whether he regards him as one in essence and one in person, or admits that in the unity of the Deity there are three equally divine persons. It cannot be an irrelevant subject. If the doctrine of the Trinity is true, then those who deny it do not worship

the God of the Scriptures. If it is false, the Trinitarians, by paying divine honor to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, are equally guilty of idolatry. The doctrine of the Trinity is not merely speculation, but lies at the root of every man's theology and affects his whole creed and practice.

The difficulty is evident enough. A doctrine that affirms that God is one, and yet that there are three persons in God, must often bewilder the mind in its attempt to find a relevant and intelligible framework in which that seeming contradiction can be expressed and at the same time meet the average person's religious needs. No wonder that the reference to the Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Spirit incomprehensible has encouraged sardonic remarks to the effect that the whole doctrine is incomprehensible. But let us try to forget the arbitrary speculations and abstruse formulas of the scholastics and church councils in an effort to understand from the Scriptures a doctrine beset with difficulties and obscurities. Here it is true, more than with any other topic in theology, that we see through a glass darkly.

The Doctrine of God

The God of the Hebrews. In the NT there are no such words as Trinity or trinitarian. There is much about God the Father, about Jesus who is called the Son, and about the Holy Spirit.

Behind the NT is the OT. The world did not have to wait till the Christian era to discover God. For the people of Israel, more than for any other nation of the earth, God was the conscious center of their lives. He is a God of action, never indifferent or passive. He participates in human episodes, and the events of history are no accidents. God's hand controls them. To him all living things owe their existence, even if no one could look upon his face and live. When he comes down to touch men's lives, he either comes through an angel whom he has sent, or he inspires the prophets by his Spirit. They had a living faith in a living God.

The fundamental article of this faith is that God is one. "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord" (Dt 6: 4), is the cry which for centuries has been proclaimed by the Jewish prophets. We find it quoted by Jesus in his summary of the Law (Mk 12: 29-30), and it is echoed in the words of Paul and other writers of the early Church. Born in the midst of Judaism, the Christian religion shows a close bond between its concept of God and the Jewish doctrine of God. Both religions agree that God is creator and judge, and ruler of the universe. Both agree that he is just and merciful. Both agree that he is one.

The God of the Christian Religion. But the sending of Jesus Christ into the world reacted upon the Christian doctrine of God. A belief in the divine mission of Jesus and the experiencing of the Holy Spirit culminated in a doctrine of one God in three persons, a doctrine understood as a more intimate knowledge of the divine Being. The statements about Father, Son, and Spirit found in the NT are of such a nature as to reveal the awareness of a trinitarian theology. It seems to the author that the initial and crucial issue in this matter was in fact the relationship of Father to Son. In other terms, if the Word had not been made flesh, there would have been no stumbling block for Jewish monotheism.

Let us remember that it was not with theory, but with experience that the Christian faith began; not with impersonal dogma, but with personal impact. That which made Christianity a vital entity and specifically identified Christian experience was the encounter with Jesus of Nazareth. In their attempt to define in words the nature and meaning of their encounter with the Galilean, the inspired writers of the NT point to him as the Son of "the living God" (see, for instance, Mt 16: 18).

Of him the divine attributes are predicated: eternity (Jn 1: 2; Rev 1: 8, 11, 17, 18), omnipresence (Mt 18: 20); immutability (Heb 13: 8; 1: 8, 10, 12); omnipotence (Jn 1: 3; Col 1: 17). Things that are in the OT said of Yahweh-God,

the highest of all appellations of the Deity, are in the NT said of Christ (Ps 68:18 and Eph 4:8-10; Ps 102:21, 24-27 and Heb 1:10-12; Is 8:13-14 and 1 Pe 2:7-8; Is 40:3 and Mt 3:3). "Crowned with glory and honor" because he was made "perfect through suffering," the Son is infinitely higher than the angels. He existed before all the worlds; he fully shared in the divine glory throughout eternity. But he authenticated his person ultimately and in the time dimension, by his humiliation as servant and Redeemer. He lived as a man among men.

The phrasing "Son of God," to be sure, was not new. It appears in the OT identifying those who bear it with human beings, angels, or Israel in general, as well as its Davidic king in particular (see Gn 6:1, 2; Job 1:6; Hos 11:1; Ps 2:7). In either case it stresses a moral rather than a biological relationship. It explains in a perfectly standard and accepted way the character of the being recognized as very much out of the ordinary. Christ's dignity, however, stands at an infinite distance above that of any created being whatsoever. It is evident that the name is indicative of the deity of Christ. In wondrous union with the Father, but a different personality from Him,¹ this Son of God, fully God and perfect man, claims and receives without protest, as his just and inalienable right, equal trust, adoration, love and service with him who says, "I am the Lord, that is my name; my glory I give to no other" (Is 42:8).

The Issue Raised by the Incarnation. This special personal relationship of Jesus to God so often stressed in the Synoptics and even more in Paul's epistles passes almost into complete identification in Christ's last discourse to the disciples as

¹ The personalities of the Father and the Son are distinct. They are not to be identified nor confounded, as is clearly indicated, for instance, at Christ's baptism and transfiguration, when the voice of the Father was heard, saying of Him, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mt 3:17; 17:5). Jesus adds, "I bear witness of me . . . , and the Father himself which hath sent me has borne witness of me" (Jn 5:36, 37, KJV).

recorded in the Fourth Gospel. "If you had known me, you should have known my Father also; henceforth you know him and have seen him." Philip's protest brings but a repetition, even an intensification: "Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" (Jn 14: 7-9).

It is evident that the sending of the Word into the world reacted upon the Christian doctrine of God. The incarnation raised the crucial issue of the relationship of Father to Son. God was regarded as one, but he was also believed to be the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. Statements of this nature, taken in conjunction with other statements in which the divinity of Christ is affirmed or implied, lead immediately to the trinitarian doctrine. These ideas made it possible for Christians to conceive of the Father-Son relationship within the Deity and to discover a plurality within the unity of God. They readily considered these conclusions since they regarded them as foreshadowed in the OT Scriptures (Mic 5: 1, 2 and Mt 2: 5, 6; Ps 45: 6, 7 and Heb 1: 8, 9). OT prophecy found itself fulfilled. Implicit in the OT, these ideas find themselves explicitly and formally stated in the New. Therefore, it is erroneous to say that the doctrine of the Trinity is post-biblical and answers a problem which did not occur to the writers of the NT.

The Biblical View of the Spirit

In the Old Testament. We still have to consider the biblical view of the Spirit. In the OT the Spirit (*rúah*) is primarily the power that comes from God upon man, enabling him to do extraordinary things. It is true that the Spirit of God appears first as God's creative power. When "the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep," then "the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters." So begins the book of Genesis (Gn 1: 2). But this creative Spirit, the divine *rúah*, is essentially the

power of "the living God," the energy that comes to a man to enlarge his power for the special task appointed him to do. This is clear, for example, in the case of Samson (Jugs 14: 6) or of Saul (1 Sa 10: 10). In Joel 2: 28 the outpouring of the Spirit produces prophecy. In Is 44: 3 ff., Eze 11: 19 and 36: 26, the result is religious regeneration. In Is 11: 2 it is the endowment of the Messiah. However, several chapters later, Isaiah implies that God himself is spirit, when he affirms: "The Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit" (Is 31: 3). Finally in Ps 51: 11 and Is 63: 10 the Spirit is called holy. That which was only intimated at first was set forth more clearly and more fully as time went on.

Jesus and the Holy Spirit. This "Spirit of the Lord" Jesus regarded as having assigned him, in fulfillment of another of Isaiah's promises, "to bring good tidings to the afflicted . . . to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor . . ." (Is 61: 1, 2). In selecting these lines to set forth his view of his own mission, Jesus tied together God's revelation in his Son, the Christ, and the OT doctrine of the divine Spirit. He unquestionably was bringing in new factors for a better understanding of the nature of the Spirit, factors which would eventually lead his disciples to the understanding of the personality of the Spirit.

There are in fact only eight passages in the Synoptic Gospels in which there is a reference by our Lord to the Holy Spirit.² But how significant are the implications!

² They are as follows: the teaching about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Mk 3: 28-30; Mt 12: 31, 32; Lk 12: 10); the promise of the guidance of the Spirit in the coming time of persecution (Mk 13: 11); the saying about casting out evil spirits by the Spirit of God (Mt 12: 28); the reference to the inspiration of Ps 110 (Mk 12: 36; Mt 22: 43); the giving of the Holy Spirit in answer to prayer (Lk 11: 13); the baptismal command (Mt 28: 19); the reference to Is 61: 1, 2, in Christ's sermon at Nazareth (Lk 4: 16 ff.) and our Lord's promise of the Pentecostal outpouring (Lk 24: 9).

Christ's most notable references to the Spirit are those we find in the Fourth Gospel. In the early chapters of this book the Spirit is scarcely more prominent than he is in the Synoptics. God himself is a spirit, and man must be "born of water and of the Spirit" if he is to enter the kingdom of God. When we come to the latter part of John's writing, we enter into a really intensive discussion of the nature and mission of the Spirit. This is the representation of the Spirit as taking Jesus' place in the life of the disciples and of the Church. The Paraclete, or Comforter, as the KJV translates it (RSV, "Counselor") is in fact a long step beyond the *rûah* of the OT. There, as noted before, we have something like an impersonal force, gradually revealed as a moral personality. In John's account of the conversation of the Last Supper we have from the very first a fully personal being, who is not only conceived as power, but also as life. No doubt this latter idea was foreshadowed in the OT since "fire" as well as "wind" were traditional symbols of the Spirit.

Jesus: The Holy Spirit is the Indwelling Lord. In fact, what this Comforter, Advocate, or Counselor does and will do is clearly set forth by Jesus throughout the discourse. He will "teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you" (Jn 14: 26). "He will convince the world of sin" (16: 8) and "guide" the disciples "into all the truth" (16: 13). "He will glorify me," says Jesus, and "he will declare to you the things that are to come" (16: 13, 14). The introduction of the Spirit as "another Paraclete" points to a parallel between the Son and the Holy Ghost (Jn 14: 6).

The suggestion is clearly one of identity in function as well as that of a fully personal being, whereas the character as well as the mission are summed up and specified in "you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you" (Jn 14: 17). The Holy Spirit is thus described as the Lord indwelling the mind and heart of each individual believer. The nature of the Spirit is here revealed to the Master's disciples.

The God in whom Jesus believed and whom he revealed was not in any essential quality different from the OT God, the God whom the Jews sought to serve. Jesus did not come to destroy the Law, nor the Prophets, but to fulfill them. And this is what he did. There was nothing about his concept of the Spirit of God which was alien to the theological thinking of pre-Christian Judaism. Even as the OT writings inspired the faith in one God and Father of all, so they also made available to Christianity the identifying of that God as an active God, active on the earth, and among men, in the presence of the Holy Spirit. These were to become constituent factors in the origins of the doctrine of the Trinity.

The Apostles and the Holy Spirit. As the Lord had promised, the post-resurrection presence of the Spirit was experienced in many remarkable ways by those whom Jesus had called. The NT states that the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost fulfilled OT prophecy (Acts 2 : 16 ff.). In the OT the expression *rûah qôdeš* occurs only three times and even then with "thine" or "his," whereas in the NT, Holy Spirit (*pneuma hagion*) occurs 88 times, sometimes with the definite article and sometimes without it. The common NT use of the phrase "the Spirit" reveals a new world, a new dispensation, and indicates the vital and familiar position which he played in the experience of the early Christians. The meaning of Christ's apparent equation of the Spirit with the Son was taking on a deeper significance for them.

An Independent Personality. The terms "Spirit of God" or "Holy Spirit," however, do not suggest a personality as much as does the term "Son of God." Moreover, the person of the Holy Spirit did not appear in a clearly discernible, personal form among men, as did the person of the Son of God. Thus, in the early Church, the personality of the Holy Spirit was often questioned and even denied in some instances, as by the Monarchians for example, who were followed by Socinians and other modern Unitarians.

A careful examination of the NT writings, however,

leaves us little doubt that their authors thought of the Spirit as a fully personal "he" and not "it." Such personal properties and actions are ascribed to the Spirit as have proved him an independent personality. He has intelligence (Jn 14: 26; 15: 26; Rom 8: 16), will (Acts 16: 7; 1 Cor 12: 11), and affections (Eph 4: 30). Furthermore he performs acts proper to personality. He is said to speak expressly (1 Ti 4: 1), to send (Acts 10: 20), to prevent (Acts 16: 7), to command (Acts 11: 12), to forbid (Acts 16: 6), to call ministers of the gospel (Acts 13: 2), to appoint them to their spheres of duty (Acts 20: 28), to make intercession (Rom 8: 26, 27), to be grieved and tempted (Eph 4: 30; Acts 5: 19), as well as to dwell in Christians as his temple (1 Cor 3: 16; 6: 19) and to comfort them (Jn 14: 16, 17). These qualities and actions are more commonly identified with human personality and cannot be attributed to some mere power or influence.³ And this person is God since lying unto the Spirit is lying unto God, as Peter declares to Ananias in Acts 5: 3, 4.⁴

What About the Spiritual Gifts? The impression which we receive from these statements is confirmed by what we find in Paul's writings regarding the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is true that when Paul speaks of the gifts of the Spirit and of the power of the Spirit, both may appear at first to be mechanistic and impersonal. It soon becomes clear, however, that for Paul the Spirit is truly the Paraclete who walks beside us and helps us to do works of love, joy, patience and the like (see, for instance, Gal 5: 22, 23; Rom 5: 4,

³ Similar language implying that the Spirit is personal is found in other parts of the NT. According to Peter, the Spirit testifies (1 Pe 1: 11). The author of the epistle to the Hebrews says that the Spirit speaks and bears witness in the writings of the OT (Heb 3: 7). Several times in the book of Revelation the Spirit is said to speak (Rev 2: 7, 11, 17, 29; 3: 6, 13, 22; etc.).

⁴ "The Spirit—who with unutterable groanings intercedes for the soul in inner conflict, and who through the constant motion of faith and love draws him into God's all-embracing eschatological act of salvation—is no one else than God himself," writes Regin Prenter, *Spiritus Creator*, trans. by John M. Jensen (Philadelphia, 1953), p. 180.

5; 8: 2, 11). The same Spirit, affirms the apostle, who personally moved with loving care at the beginning and who was effective in the resurrection of God's Son (Rom 1: 4; 8: 11) is now personally working with suffering sighs too deep for words (Rom 8: 19-23). Is this then an impersonal effluence? From a study of the Scriptures one sees that the Spirit neither dispenses impersonal gifts nor energizes his creation with impersonal power. He gives himself. Only a person can spend himself and yet remain inviolate and uncontrolled.

The Consistency of the Apostles. If these examples had been few in number, they could have been dismissed as metaphorical. However, since they come from different authors and are comparatively numerous, they cannot lightly be pushed aside. Even the fact that many passages—the majority of them—can be interpreted as suggesting that the Spirit is a dynamic force⁵ is not inconsistent with his personal existence. The dynamic descriptions of the Spirit do not actually imply that the Spirit is impersonal; they are consistent with the belief that the Spirit is personal. On the other hand the references which imply that the Spirit is a person are not in conflict with the others. The only view which can account for all the references and preserve a general consistency is the view that the Spirit is personal.

The fact is that the biblical authors were not conscious of any inconsistency when they described the Spirit in both personal and dynamic terms. In Acts 2: 4, for instance, the Spirit is described first dynamically: "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit," and then animistically or personally: they "began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." The first reference could be interpreted as personal or impersonal. The second can only be

⁵ "My Spirit," for instance, would be more appropriate to an impersonal essence than to a person. Other phrases like "fervent in spirit," "being born in the Holy Spirit," and the repeated Pauline phrase "in the Spirit" are claimed by some to support the view that the Spirit is a power rather than a person (see Acts 15: 29; 18: 25; Rom 9: 1; 12: 11; 14: 17; 15: 16; 1 Cor 6: 11; 12: 3, 9, 13; 14: 16).

personal. There is no good reason for detecting an inconsistency here. The Holy Spirit is a personal being, and, because he is divine, can abide in many different men at the same time. In Acts 11: 16 is a reference to baptism with the Holy Spirit which could be interpreted in a dynamic sense, considering the Spirit as a divine effluence. However, only a few verses previously, Peter had said, "and the Spirit bade me go with them," which indicates the personal nature of the Spirit. The inspired writer was able to include in the same passage descriptions of the Spirit in both animistic and dynamic senses because the dynamic references in which the Spirit is described as a power were consistent with the passages in which the Spirit was said to behave like a person.

The more the early Christians, under the guidance of the Spirit, meditated upon the matter and the more they experienced his activity in their own lives, the more they were conscious of his personal nature, as separate, of course, from the person of the Father and that of the Son.

The Trinity in the Scriptures

Clear Trinitarian Confessions. We have seen that in the mind of the apostles there is an intimate connection between the Spirit and the Lord and the Father. Do they, however, think of the Holy Spirit as divine, as a divine person distinct both from the Father and from the Son? This is conclusively answered in several passages in which Paul mentions all three persons together. In one of his very earliest writings, for instance, he affirms: "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Th 2: 13, 14). It is evident that God, Christ and the Spirit are in the forefront of Paul's mind.

1 Cor 12: 4-6 agrees with this: "Now there are varieties

of gifts, but the same Spirit, and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one." The triadic pattern of this section is unmistakable. A step further is taken in what may be considered as an attempt to bring together basic values of the Christian faith and life when Paul ends his second epistle to the Corinthians with these words: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Cor 13: 14). The verbal collocation of the three divine persons has culminated in a clear trinitarian confession.⁶ The Gospel of Matthew also ends with a very explicit juxtaposition of the three persons found in their now traditional order: "Go therefore," says the resurrected Christ, "and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28: 19). The fact that in these statements we have a trinitarian formula seems inescapable. It is erroneous therefore, as we mentioned earlier, to say that the doctrine of the Trinity is post-biblical and answers a problem which did not occur to the writers of the NT. They believed in one God, but one God in three persons.

*The Trinity of Experience and the
Trinity of Revelation*

The Trinity of Speculation. These trinitarian confessions worked their way into the heart of Christian thinking and theology. Such statements of experience made under the guidance of the Spirit long antedated the Trinity of speculative thought that characterized the succeeding centuries of ecclesiastical history. It was legitimate, however, indeed inevitable, to reflect upon the threefold distinctions within God himself in an effort to discover what must be true of him.

⁶ Many other texts of Paul reveal on closer examination the influence of a threefold pattern. See for instance Rom 15: 30; Gal 4: 6; 2 Cor 1: 21, 22; Eph 3: 14-16; Tit 3: 4-6.

The affirmation of a threefold distinction within the Deity and attempts to explain it are not wanting in number. From the Cappadocian Fathers—Basil, Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory Nazianzen—to the so-called Athanasian Creed or the more recent Hegelian and Barthian interpretations, not to mention Augustine, speculative Christian theologians, beginning with a humble confession of the incomprehensibility of the divine nature and the limitations of human speculation, cheerfully went on to interpret the relations of Father, Son and Holy Spirit within the Deity, each one in terms of then-accepted discrimination of substance. “Hypostasis,” “nature” and “person” were among the preferred terms.⁷

The method most frequently employed in these trinitarian speculations consisted in interpreting the divine nature by analogies drawn from human nature. One thing became more and more evident as the centuries passed by: the differentiation among the three persons of the Deity was no longer, as it was for Paul and the NT writers, a difference in the operation of the divine Being in God’s creation and upon the human life testified by revelation and experience. It was a description of distinctions within the Deity for which there is no definable basis within the revealed knowledge of God. One is not thought of any longer as Creator, another as Redeemer and the third as Sanctifier, but rather all three persons are seen as functioning in three divine activities. Despite their pious professions of ignorance, most theologians appear to believe that they achieved precise and indisputable knowledge of the inmost character of God. The Trinity of speculation had triumphed over the Trinity of revelation and experience.

The Trinity of Revelation. Some have argued more recently

⁷ On the tortuous course of trinitarian speculation through succeeding centuries, see Henry P. van Dusen, *Spirit, Son and Father* (New York, 1958), pp. 149-177. Note, also, the carefully documented Bampton lectures of H. A. W. Turner, *The Pattern of Christian Truth* (London, 1954).

that the NT doctrine of the Trinity is a declaration concerning the inmost being of God that took its rise from empirical data of a reception of divine manifestation. It is an effort, they say, to discover what must be true of the Ultimate Reality based on what our experience of that Reality tells us. The threefold experiential distinction, which may be indisputably real within our Christian experience—like creation, redemption and sanctification, for instance—would in fact have been projected into the divine Being. Christian faith, in fidelity to its knowledge of God in experience, would thus have declared a threefold Deity.

Such a conclusion, however, is unsound and it is important to clearly see why. It is true that the NT authors could not but write within the framework of their personal experiences. But recognition of the divine Trinity is not merely a description of human experience. It is not just an inspired report on the feelings and thoughts of the apostles. It is a declaration concerning God based on a revelation; not only on the self-disclosure of God, but also on a disclosure of the truth of God. Therefore, it is an objective reality and, in the strictest sense, an affirmation of theology. The recognition of the Holy Spirit as truly fully divine, parallel and equal to the Father is, first of all, the object of a revelation. This is how God wills to make himself known to man.

We can, therefore, rightly yearn to know as much regarding God as it is possible to know. It is legitimate to inquire what light God's revelation of himself casts on his inmost being.

Since this is God's revealed self-manifestation it must be possible to think of the divine Being as a society of divine persons. Shall we conclude, therefore, that it is analogous to a society of human persons, as has been vigorously advocated? Let us beware of the inadequacy of our earth-bound thoughts regarding the ineffable Deity. The divine Triad is met only in God's revelation. It is therefore impossible to speak about God's triune nature independently of the

Scripture. We must abide by the testimony of the OT and NT. This means more than all the psychological and physiological analogies. When we speak of divine "persons" we do so because the Scriptures enforce this conclusion upon us. We do so because this is how the biblical writers try to make us understand the relationship existing among Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Three Distinct Persons in the Unity of God. The word "person," at this point, requires more particular notice.

According to the ordinary rules of language-interpretation of the Scripture nothing is more certain than that there is but one God.⁸ This ought never to be forgotten. It is the very foundation of our doctrine of God. By the same use of language rules we also learn that there are three in whom we are to believe. The highest names and perfections are attributed to them throughout the Holy Writings. The Scriptures seem to indicate that these three are all persons, because they are described as doing that which only intelligent agents or persons can do. Is not this sufficient authority for applying the term "persons" to them? Finally, the same authoritative source tells us that they are distinct, not merely in relation to us, as Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, but in relation to each other as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is sufficient authority for calling them distinct persons, although the danger always exists that one may tend to tritheism.

When the Son and the Holy Spirit are conceived to be names, operations, attitudes or offices of the Deity then they are not conceived as persons. He who conceives that the Father is not the Son or Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is not the Son, conceives them to be three distinct persons. And he who conceives the unity of God and the Trinity of persons, conceives the persons distinct but united. In other words, though he may not be able to accurately express his conceptions,

⁸ See for instance Dt 4: 39; 2 Ki 19: 51; Ps 88: 10; Is 44: 6, 9; Mk 12: 29, 32.

he will nevertheless really conceive the three divine persons to be at the same time distinct and yet one.

The argument has only one fault. This fault is fundamental. It is true that with respect to men, who are the only intelligent beings besides God and the angels of whom we have any knowledge, this notion of perfect unity in plurality of persons does not correspond nor fit into the framework of our human existence—perhaps because man's nature was purposely meant to be different from the nature of God. In other words, it was the will of the Creator that man should be so. Therefore, even the best analogies fall short in their attempt to describe the divine Being. Any and all spiritualistic interpretations are simply imperfect and untrue. They weaken and diminish the divine majesty to which no earthly likeness can be compared. The word "person" itself is still a poor way of expressing the reality. Here more than anywhere else in theology are we reminded of the purely hypothetical character of our speculations. Therefore, we must confess that the Trinity is one indivisible God and that the distinctions of the persons do not destroy the divine unity. This unity of God is expressed by saying that he is one substance. Nevertheless, in the divine unity there are three co-eternal and co-equal persons, who, though distinct, are the One undivided and adorable God. This is the doctrine of Scripture.

Relationship Between Father, Son and Spirit

How then shall we conceive the relationship of God as Father, as Son and as Holy Spirit? It is a relation, not of separation but of interdependence. Strictly speaking, all three must be thought of together, not separately.

The Relationship Between the Son and the Father. "The light of the knowledge of the glory of God," indeed, is given "in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor 4:6). The Son is "the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation" (Col 1:15), but Paul's faith in Christ does not allow him to forget the eternal Lord of Israel. It is "God our Father, who

loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace" (2 Th 2: 16). "God is faithful," he assures the Christians of Corinth, "by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor 1: 9). "Blessed be the God," begins another letter to them, "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort" (2 Cor 1: 3).

Paul's epistles are categorical about the primacy of the Father. His famous section on the *kenosis*, the incarnation of Christ, concludes that both the self-humbling and exaltation of Jesus are directed to assure "the glory of God the Father" (Php 2: 5-11). Such statements, however, remain in full harmony with Paul's confession of faith that Christ is God. As we noted earlier, he hails him as Lord, acknowledges that he performs divine functions, and applies to him OT quotations which were used by the Jews only of Yahweh. At the same time he recognizes Christ's humanity and obedience to the Father. When the apostles discuss his relationship with the Father they speak as if he were in some sense less than the Father, even after his resurrection. In acknowledging the priority and primacy of the Father, however, they did not deny the Son's divinity. The NT writer who deals most freely with the problem of the interrelations between Father and Son is the writer of the fourth gospel, and he emphasizes that Jesus is God. There is nothing incidental in the references that Jesus is God in the Fourth Gospel, which deliberately begins with the statement that the Word is God and reaches its climax in ch. 20: 28 when Thomas calls Jesus "My Lord and my God." This whole gospel is intended to state not only that Jesus is God, but also how the only-begotten Son of God is also the only begotten God in close relation to the Father.

Is Christ Inferior to the Father? Does the confession of Christ's full and true Deity conflict with these passages of Scripture in which he is described as being inferior to and

sent by the Father? ⁹ Paul himself sometimes writes as if Christ had a subordinate position to the Father. Such statements as Php 2: 5-11 show that the apostle was aware—as much as John—of the problems involved in Christ's relationship to the Father, and was attempting a solution.

It was natural for Paul to describe the earthly Christ as subordinate, for he had "humbled himself." He who was equal with the Father voluntarily assumed the limitations of human nature at the incarnation. As a man he prayed and obeyed God. Paul, however, does not confine this voluntary subordinate status to the earthly Jesus but extends it to the risen Lord.¹⁰ This is forcibly expressed in 1 Cor 15: 24-28, when, at the end, the Lord Jesus will hand over his kingdom to the Father.

Such statements show how the apostles attempted to bring a solution to the problem we are examining. Their view, however, was not subordinationism, nor does it imply any inferiority of the Son compared with the Father. Christ, here, is set in the order of Deity. The willing subordination of the Son to the Father—and of the Spirit to the Father and to the Son¹¹—relates not to their essential life with the Trinity. Nor is it in any way inconsistent with true equality. It is a demonstration of the unity of purpose existing among the members of the Deity. Here the activities of one are seen to be but the carrying out of the united will. We may conclude with some that the Father has a metaphysical priority,¹² or with others that he has a primacy of order.¹³ One thing nevertheless remains certain: the NT writers have not worked

⁹ See, for instance, Christ's own statements in Jn 4: 34; 12: 49, 50; 14: 28.

¹⁰ Even Christ's resurrection, in some passages, is an act attributed to the Father, not to Christ, Rom 4: 24; 8: 11; Gal 1: 1; 1 Th 1: 10; etc.

¹¹ As some statements indicate that the Father sends the Son and works through him, so others stress the fact that the Father and the Son work through the Holy Spirit, Rom 5: 5; Gal 5: 22, 23; Tit 3: 5; Acts 5: 8, 9.

¹² Augustine, *De Trinitate*, xv, 47.

¹³ Calvin, *Institutes*, I, xiii, 18-26.

out the problem with subtle refinement, but they all agree that the Father has priority and that both Father and Son are God. And they consider such a statement consistent.

The Relationship Between the Spirit and Christ, and the Spirit and the Father. Regarding the relationship between the Spirit and Christ, and between the Spirit and the Father, it has been shown that the NT writers regarded the Spirit as a person. They do not call him God or ascribe to him divine functions with the same regularity with which they ascribe them to Christ. Nevertheless, the Spirit is both the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of Christ. Divine works are performed by him, and divine honor is paid to him. The possession of the Spirit is described as one of the main characteristics of the Christian life. There is no indication, however, that there was a problem of the Spirit for these inspired writers, or that they felt any difficulty about the relationship between the Spirit and Christ or between the Spirit and the Father. The Father, the Spirit and the Son are clearly shown as different from each other. The Fourth Gospel adds, for its part, that the Father sends the Son, and that the Son must go away that the Spirit may come. This is the NT answer to the problem of the relationship among the three persons of the Trinity.

The Spirit, then, is after Christ in the divine economy. The Spirit does not come into operation, as promised, until Christ is glorified, until he has completed his earthly ministry and has returned to the Father. This is because the work of the Spirit has to do with the work of the incarnate Christ. The relation of the Spirit to Christ is in terms of continuation, as the complement to the work of Christ, continuing the presence of Christ beyond the brief span of his historical appearance.¹⁴ This is why the Spirit is so often referred to as

¹⁴ On the relation between the Spirit and Christ, see George S. Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology* (London, 1965), pp. 11-29, 72-95; and Arthur W. Wainwright, *The Trinity in the New Testament* (London, 1962), pp. 199-223.

the Spirit of Christ as well as the Spirit of God the Father, without implying any notion of inferiority or essential subordination.

The Work of the Trinity is Outwardly Indivisible. All Three, in fact, are One in the same design. The work of the Spirit cannot be isolated from the work of the Father and the Son. The work of the Trinity is outwardly indivisible just as the Trinity is indivisible. The triune God has really only one work to accomplish, just as he himself is one true God. That is his eternally all-embracing, life-creating and life-saving work. In this one work all three persons are actively engaged, drawing us away from sin, the devil and destruction.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit are distinguished only by their mutual relations as revealing the Deity to us.¹⁵ God the Father stresses the infinity, eternity and power of the Deity, the primacy and finality of God. Jesus Christ affirms the character of the divine Nature. In him we discern the nature of the divine purpose and the manner of God's working for its realization. The Holy Spirit testifies of the intimacy of omnipotent Power, the never-failing availability of God, how close he is to each one of us at every moment. Each of them, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, enlarges our understanding of God as revealed in the Scriptures. This is why the Trinity is a relation, not a separation.

Conclusion

Let us try to sum up our results and draw a conclusion from them. Is the Father real? Is he personal? What shall we think of Christ? What of the Holy Spirit? How are they related to each other? Is there any essential "Threeness"? Are we clear as to whether we believe in three gods, or truly in one?

These questions are of no little importance. They deal with

¹⁵ An excellent discussion of the interpersonal relation existing among Father, Son and Holy Spirit is that of Leonard Hodgson, *The Doctrine of the Trinity* (London, 1955), pp. 89-96, 104, 105, 183.

a reality so profound, so immediate that it touches every human being, learned or unlearned, at the center of immediate concern. They are as relevant today as they were nineteen hundred years ago.

These issues did not first occur when later generations of theologians reflected upon the NT Scriptures, as some suppose. It is the writer's conviction that the problems implied in the Trinity were raised and answered in NT times, and by the NT writers. They arose because of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, God the Son, and the development of Christian experience and revelation under the guidance of the Spirit of God. This is how in the Scriptures a biblical doctrine of God began with an account of the names and titles of Father, Son and Spirit, their divine personalities and mutual interrelations. Such an account of the Three in One is difficult to summarize in a vigorous formula, and the absence of the word Trinity does not rob from it the status of doctrine.

The apostles knew their limitations. They did not make it their chief aim to unravel all the complexities of the almighty God. They could but dimly discern the divine Nature. But this did not deter them. Rejecting the terms of Greek mythology or metaphysics, they expressed their convictions in an unpretending trinitarian confession of faith, the doctrine of one God subsisting and acting in three persons.

There should, in fact, be no ending of inquiry or of efforts of interpretation in a desire to meet the needs of today's souls in a way that is relevant. Let us not forget, however, that the doctrine of the Trinity is an attempt to describe and to understand what ultimately we do not understand and cannot describe. Therefore, let us count our imaginations as the small dust of the balance and renounce these subtilities that go beyond everything to be found in the Scriptures, remembering that the experience of the Trinity, founded on the study of God's Word, is within our grasp. This is why, far from being a fossilized tradition, the doctrine of the

Trinity can be a living doctrine and a living experience. These are realities we cannot deny. They have practical bearing. This, therefore, is a precious doctrine, indispensable to the Christian understanding of God, Christ and salvation.

THE PROBLEM OF HISTORY IN OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY

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The OT has somewhat unexpectedly become a "new frontier" in contemporary theology. This is due in large measure to the "epoch-making" *Old Testament Theology*¹ of Gerhard von Rad, who is generally recognized as "the world's most important Old Testament Theologian."² The publication of this two-volume work has triggered a chain reaction of responses and challenges, both pro and con, from colleagues in his own as well as other fields of specialization. A group of young theologians³ trained under von Rad at Heidelberg University, whose spokesman is the systematic theologian Wolfhart Pannenberg,⁴ ventured to use von Rad's traditio-

¹ The German original is entitled, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, 2 Bände (München, 1957, 1960), hereafter cited as *TAT*, I and II. An English translation by D. M. G. Stalker appeared as *Old Testament Theology*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1962, 1965), hereafter cited as *OTT*, I and II. Three essays by von Rad which anticipated his *magnum opus* need to be pointed out: "Grundprobleme einer biblischen Theologie des Alten Testaments," *ThLZ*, LXVIII (1943), 225-243; "Kritische Vorarbeiten zu einer Theologie des Alten Testaments," *Theologie und Liturgie*, ed. by L. Hennig (München, 1952), pp. 11-34; and "Typologische Auslegung des Alten Testaments," *Evangelische Theologie*, XII (1952), 17-33, which is translated as "Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament," *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics*, ed. by Claus Westermann (Richmond, Va., 1963), pp. 17-39.

² Carl E. Braaten, *New Directions in Theology Today*, Vol. II: *History and Hermeneutics* (Philadelphia, 1967), p. 108.

³ The group known as the "Pannenberg circle" consists of Wolfhart Pannenberg, Rolf Rendtorff, Trutz Rendtorff, Klaus Koch, Ulrich Wilckens, Dietrich Rössler, and Martin Else. This group received its main stimulus on the one hand from von Rad and on the other from the Lutheran dogmaticians Peter Brunner and Edmund Schlink.

⁴ The recent publication in the series, "New Frontiers in Theology," edited by James M. Robinson and John B. Cobb, Jr., under the title, *Theology as History* (New York-London, 1967), brings the theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg into focus for the English-speaking world.

historical analyses for their own goals, which they describe with the catchword "revelation as history." This catchword serves also as the title of the programmatic collection of their essays.⁵ It remains an open question to determine how far these scholars turned against their master or drew from his thought certain latent tendencies. The principal point of connection of the Pannenberg circle with von Rad is the latter's significant observation "that in principle Israel's faith is grounded in a theology of history. It regards itself as based upon historical acts, and as shaped and re-shaped by factors in which it saw the hand of Jahweh at work."⁶ Von Rad is also of the conviction that faith in Christ needs principally the OT view of history in order "to be saved from falling into the traps of mythology and speculation"⁷ and he, therefore, demands a new understanding of history.⁸ In von Rad's view the OT writings are statements which instead of referring to timeless religious truths refer to the "word and deed of Jahweh in history."⁹ Yet these statements present neither pure revelation from above nor pure perception and presentation of historical facts from below, but are statements of a confessional character which are "drawn up by faith."¹⁰ In this sense the subject-matter of an OT theology, corresponding to the form and content of its writings, are the "testimonies"¹¹ of the OT, *i.e.*, the confessional statements of the "continuing divine activity in history"¹² which is "a presen-

⁵ Wolfhart Pannenberg, ed., *Offenbarung als Geschichte*, "Kerygma und Dogma," Beiheft I (Göttingen, 1961; 2d revised ed., 1963).

⁶ *TAT*, I, 112; *OTT*, I, 106, cited by Pannenberg, "Kerygma und Geschichte," *Studien zur Theologie der alttestamentlichen Überlieferungen: Festschrift für Gerhard von Rad*, ed. by Rolf Rendtorff und Klaus Koch (Neukirchen, 1961), p. 135.

⁷ *TAT*, II, 400; *OTT*, II, 386.

⁸ *TAT*, II, 401; *OTT*, II, 387: "There is even reason for hoping that the Old Testament itself will force theologians to reconsider the concept of history."

⁹ *TAT*, I, 120; *OTT*, I, 114.

¹⁰ *TAT*, I, 113; *OTT*, I, 107.

¹¹ *TAT*, I, 117; *OTT*, I, 111.

¹² *TAT*, I, 112; *OTT*, I, 106.

tation of God's history with Israel" ¹³ as the faith of Israel understood it. ¹⁴ Since von Rad is the catalyst of the recent debate on the problem of history in OT theology, this study will first investigate von Rad's own understanding of history as it receives expression in his two-volume *Old Testament Theology*. This will occupy the sections I through III below. We will then discuss the major critical reactions to von Rad's understanding of history. And finally our investigation will turn to some critical considerations and questions which are raised in regard to the present status of the problem of history in OT theology.

I. *The Center of Interpretation in von Rad's OT Theology*

The basic thesis of von Rad is the establishment of God's self-revelation in his acts in history: "History is the place in which God reveals the secret of his person." ¹⁵ With the thesis that history is the place of the revelation of God, von Rad has won a "heuristic measuring rod" ¹⁶ with which all statements, all witnesses of faith of the OT, are measured as to their theological relevancy and legitimacy. The reason for the formulation of such a canon of interpretation lies in von Rad's contention that the OT lacks a center (*Mitte*): "Thus, on the basis of the Old Testament itself, it is truly difficult

¹³ *TAT*, I, 7; *OTT*, I, v.

¹⁴ See here the penetrating essay by Christoph Barth, "Grundprobleme einer Theologie des Alten Testaments," *Evangelische Theologie*, XXIII (1963), 342-372.

¹⁵ I have supplied my own translation of this key sentence from *TAT*, II, 349: "Der Ort, an dem Gott sein Personengeheimnis offenbart, ist die Geschichte." In the translation of *OTT*, II, 338, part of its significance is lost: ". . . that it is in history that God reveals the secret of his person." Von Rad does not follow the usual distinction made in German between *Historie* and *Geschichte*. He employs the term *Geschichte* almost to the complete exclusion of *Historie*, which according to the index is used only once, *TAT*, II, 8.

¹⁶ This phrase stems from Martin Honecker, "Zum Verständnis der Geschichte in Gerhard von Rads Theologie des Alten Testaments," *Evangelische Theologie*, XXIII (1963), 145, to whom I am indebted in many places in this article.

to answer the question of the unity of that Testament, for it has no focal-point [*Mitte*] as is found in the New Testament."¹⁷ The view that the OT has in Yahweh its center or focal-point¹⁸ is rejected by von Rad.¹⁹

Von Rad is very emphatic to point out that the OT is not a book that gives an account of historical facts as they "really happened." He states: "The Old Testament is a history book [*Geschichtsbuch*]; it tells of God's history with Israel, with the nations, and with the world, from the creation of the world down to the last things, that is to say, down to the time when dominion over the world is given to the Son of Man (Dan. VII. 13f.)."²⁰ Already the earliest confessions (the Credo of Dt 26) were historically determined, *i. e.*, "they connect the name of this God with some statement about an action in history."²¹ Von Rad explains, "This history can be described as saving history [*Heilsgeschichte*] because, as it is presented, creation itself is understood as a saving act of God and because, according to what the prophets foretold, God's will to save is, in spite of many acts of judgment, to

¹⁷ *TAT*, II, 376; *OTT*, II, 362; *Theologie und Liturgie*, p. 30: "So müssen wir uns wohl noch bewusster und konsequenter dem uns im Grunde unheimlichen Phänomen der Mittellosigkeit des AT stellen. An die Stelle der Mitte tritt der Weg oder wie Jesaja es für das alttestamentliche Ganze gültig formuliert hat, das 'Werk' Jahwehs (Jes. 5, 15, 19; 10, 12; 22, 12)." *ThLZ*, LXXXVIII (1963), col. 405, n. 3a: "Was hat es überhaupt mit dieser fast unisono gestellten Frage nach der 'Einheit,' der 'Mitte' des AT auf sich? Ist das etwas so Selbstverständliches, dass ihr Aufweis sozusagen zur *conditio sine qua non* einer ordentlichen Theologie des AT gehört? Und auf welcher Ebene soll sich diese (von vorneherein als vorhanden akzeptierte) Einheit aufweisen lassen, auf dem Gebiet der geschichtlichen Erfahrungen Israels oder in seiner Gedankenwelt? Oder handelt es sich bei diesem Postulat weniger um ein Anliegen der historischen oder theologischen Erkenntnis als um ein spekulativ-philosophisches Prinzip, das als bewusste Prämisse wirksam wird?"

¹⁸ This is the point made against von Rad by H. Graf Reventlow, "Grundfragen einer alttestamentlichen Theologie im Lichte der neueren deutschen Forschung," *ThZ*, XVII (1961), 96.

¹⁹ Von Rad, *ThLZ*, LXXXVIII (1963), col. 406; cf. *OTT*, II, 415.

²⁰ *TAT*, II, 370; *OTT*, II, 415.

²¹ *TAT*, I, 127; *OTT*, I, 121.

achieve its goal.”²² As a result of this view the Psalms and Wisdom literature of the OT are accorded the position of “Israel’s answer”²³ to the early experiences of Israel with Yahweh. The OT prophets, on the other hand, are not reformers with a message of an entirely new kind. “Instead, they regarded themselves as the spokesmen of old and well-known sacral traditions which they reinterpreted for their own day and age.”²⁴ Thus it becomes apparent that von Rad employs his understanding of OT history as a hermeneutical schema for interpreting the OT. The type of history of which von Rad speaks finds its clearest formulation in the Deuteronomist, whose view of history is described in the following way: “The history of Israel is a course of events [*Zeitablauf*] which receives its own peculiar dramatic quality from the tension between constantly promulgated prophecies and their corresponding fulfilment.”²⁵ This explains why in von Rad’s OT theology cultic and wisdom elements recede,²⁶ for his view of history is neither interested in secular history nor in the history of faith and cult, but is concerned solely “with the problem of how the word of Jahweh functioned in history.”²⁷ Fundamentally expressed, this means that the “Deuteronomistic theology of history was the first which clearly formulated the phenomenon of saving history, that is, of a course of history which was shaped and led to a fulfilment by a word of judgment and salvation continually injected into it.”²⁸

The prophetic message is by von Rad likewise interpreted with the schema that is based on the Deuteronomistic theology of history.²⁹ Accordingly one of the greatest achieve-

²² *TAT*, II, 370, 371; *OTT*, II, 357, 358.

²³ *TAT*, I, 352 ff.; *OTT*, I, 355 ff.

²⁴ *TAT*, II, 185; *OTT*, II, 175.

²⁵ *TAT*, I, 338; *OTT*, I, 340.

²⁶ Honecker, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

²⁷ *TAT*, I, 341; *OTT*, I, 343.

²⁸ *TAT*, I, 342; *OTT*, I, 344.

²⁹ The problem of this one-sided interpretation of prophecy is appar-

ments of prophecy "was to recapture for faith the dimension in which Jahweh had revealed himself par excellence, that of history and politics."³⁰ The essential step of the prophets beyond the tradition of saving history handed down to them, which was oriented in the past, consists in their opening the future as the place of the action of God.³¹ This projection of God's acts to the future, which is felt to be an "eschatologizing of concepts of history,"³² takes up the old confessional traditions and places them with the help of "creative interpretation"³³ within the horizon of a new saving event. "Projecting the old traditions into the future was the only possible way open to the prophets of making material statements about a future which involved God."³⁴ The eschatological character of the prophetic message consists of a negation of the old historical bases of salvation, and in that it does not remain with past historical acts, it "suddenly shifted the basis of salvation to a future action of God."³⁵ The kerygma of the prophets thus takes place within tensions created by three factors: "the new eschatological word with which Jahweh addresses Israel, the old election tradition, and the personal situation, be it one which incurred penalty or one which needed comfort, of the people addressed by the prophet."³⁶

In short, von Rad gains his understanding of history from the Deuteronomistic theology of history according to which saving history is led to its goal, its fulfillment, by means of

ently known to von Rad, since he points to the question of how far the prophet was "a spiritual man who stood in direct religious relationship to God" and a proclaimer of "the universal moral order." "In all probability, the questions considered by earlier criticism will one day require to be taken up again, though under different theological presuppositions." *TAT*, II, 311; *OTT*, II, 298.

³⁰ *TAT*, II, 192; *OTT*, II, 182.

³¹ *TAT*, II, 129 ff.; *OTT*, II, 115 ff.

³² *TAT*, II, 125 ff.; *OTT*, II, 112 ff.

³³ *TAT*, II, 313; *OTT*, II, 300.

³⁴ *TAT*, II, 312; *OTT*, II, 299.

³⁵ *TAT*, II, 131; *OTT*, II, 118.

³⁶ *TAT*, II, 140; *OTT*, II, 130.

the word of Yahweh. This seems surprising if one considers that von Rad's research had its starting point in the Hexateuch from which it moved to the prophets as the closing interpreters of the transmitted events of salvation. The eschatologizing thought of prophecy is, however, interpreted by von Rad with the help of the Deuteronomistic theology of history and in this way is bound to the primitive *heilsgeschichtliche* confession. Thus von Rad introduces not only the historico-relational concept but also a certain historico-theological concept, that of the theology of history of the Deuteronomistic historian, as a determinative hermeneutical schema into OT theology whereby it is to be interpreted.

II. *The Relationship of the Two Versions of Israel's History*

We are now ready to turn to von Rad's understanding of history as it concerns and determines the problem of history and faith within the sphere of OT theology. It is the reconciliation of history and faith within the OT that constitutes the point of departure for the comprehensive systematic theology of history of Pannenberg and his circle. This is the foundation on which his program stands or falls. Von Rad poses the problem in its acutest form when he contrasts the two versions of Israel's history, namely that of "modern critical research and that which Israel's faith has built up."³⁷ In a dispute with the NT scholar Hans Conzelmann,³⁸ von Rad emphatically states that "there are no *bruta facta* at all [in the OT]; we have history only in the form of interpretation, only in reflection."³⁹ First, the picture which Israel herself has drawn up of her history must be understood for what it is. Her confes-

³⁷ *TAT*, II, 8. This important section is unfortunately not translated in *OTT*.

³⁸ See Hans Conzelmann, "Fragen an Gerhard von Rad," *Evangelische Theologie*, XXIV (1964), 113-125.

³⁹ Gerhard von Rad, "Antwort auf Conzelmanns Fragen," *Evangelische Theologie*, XXIV (1964), 393; *ThLZ*, LXXXVIII (1963), cols. 410, 411; *OTT*, II, 416.

sional descriptions of her own origins and experiences in history are "ever new attempts to make the divine acts of salvation relevant for every new age and day,"⁴⁰ and are presented by her as a *Heilsgeschichte*, that is, as a redemptive history of God's saving acts. The traditio-historical interpretation of the OT is the appropriate method with which a "biblical" theology has to present Israel's concept of her own history in its kerygmatic interpretation. Second, there is the version of Israel's history as reconstructed by modern historiographers employing the historico-critical method, that is, the method of historical science—without a God hypothesis. In this picture of Israel's history no premises of faith or revelation are taken into account. If therefore one should speak within an OT theology of "divine acts in history" one must understand these as "those which the faith of Israel regarded as such—that is, the call of the forefathers, the deliverance from Egypt, the bestowal of the land of Canaan, etc.—and not of the result of modern critical historical scholarship, to which Israel's faith was unrelated."⁴¹ The dichotomy of the version of the history of Israel's own confessions and that as reconstructed by the historico-critical method is felt by von Rad as a "difficult historical problem,"⁴² because OT theology has to begin with the confessional description of Israel's history and not with the reconstructed historico-critical version. And in that it takes the confessions as its starting-point, it has to deal with the "specific kerygmatic intention"⁴³ of these confessions, which do not report a rational and objective historical event, but reflect upon the past from the vantage point of faith. Therefore von Rad holds that the two versions of Israel's history may be different. He points out that "historical investigation searches for a critically assured minimum

⁴⁰ *TAT*, I, 8; *OTT*, I, vi.

⁴¹ *TAT*, I, 112, 113; *OTT*, I, 106; cf. *Theologie und Liturgie*, pp. 18 ff.; *ThLZ*, LXXXVIII (1963), cols. 409 ff.

⁴² *TAT*, I, 112; *OTT*, I, 106.

⁴³ *Loc. cit.*

—the kerygmatic picture tends toward a theological maximum.”⁴⁴ Since von Rad looks for the disparity between the kerygmatic or confessional and the historico-critical versions of Israel’s history in the concept of history itself and not in the methodological problem connected with the radical disjunction of kerygmatic and historical statements, he has himself opened the door to misunderstanding. Franz Hesse,⁴⁵ for instance, has understood von Rad to indicate that the historico-critical version of Israel’s history is theologically irrelevant.⁴⁶ Is he right in thinking so?

It has been argued, on the other hand, that von Rad’s separation of the two versions of Israel’s history is not sharp enough, because he asserts that only the “world made up of testimonies . . . is above all the subject of a theology of the Old Testament.”⁴⁷ In so contending he makes himself vulnerable to the fatal objection that he bases his OT theology upon events which never happened in the way in which the OT reports them to have happened. His answer to this objection denies that *Heilsgeschichte* is to be identified with history as reconstructed by modern historico-critical research.⁴⁸ However, the problem, according to Honecker, consists of von Rad’s attempt to save a “reality”⁴⁹ for the kerygmatic version of Israel’s history which is really not there. Von Rad in turn points out that “our final comment on it should not be that it is obviously an ‘unhistorical’ version, because what is in question here is a version fashioned throughout by faith.”⁵⁰

⁴⁴ *TAT*, I, 114; *OTT*, I, 108.

⁴⁵ F. Hesse, “Die Erforschung der Geschichte Israels als theologische Aufgabe,” *Kerygma und Dogma*, IV (1958), 1-19; also Hesse, “Kerygma oder geschichtliche Wirklichkeit?” *ZThK*, LVII (1960), 17-26.

⁴⁶ Honecker, *op. cit.*, pp. 150, 151.

⁴⁷ *TAT*, I, 117; *OTT*, I, 111.

⁴⁸ *TAT*, II, 9: “Die historische Methode eröffnet uns nur einen Aspekt in das vielschichtige Phänomen der Geschichte und zwar einen, der über das Verhältnis der Geschichte zu Gott schlechterdings nichts auszusagen vermag.”

⁴⁹ Honecker, *op. cit.*, 151.

⁵⁰ *TAT*, I, 300; *OTT*, I, 302.

The impression is given at this point by von Rad that faith can support or build up the historicity of a version of history which was seemingly destroyed by historical criticism. But such an answer is not quite satisfactory. Is it possible to cover at once the historical and theological interpretation of a text as von Rad makes us believe? ⁵¹ Is Hesse better off in identifying the historico-critical interpretation with the theological one? ⁵² Or should one not rather take an alternative, one which does give more justice to the OT record as it stands without making artificial distinctions upon presuppositions which are alien to the material itself? These questions will receive due attention later.

III. *The Relationship of Word and Event*

It is significant to observe that von Rad attributes priority to the event over the word: "From first to last Israel manifestedly takes as her starting-point the absolute priority in theology of event over 'logos.'" ⁵³ This does not mean that Yahweh's self-revelation does not take place in "word and deed," ⁵⁴ in "words and acts." ⁵⁵ It means that Israelite theological thinking clings to "historical events." ⁵⁶ The event has absolute theological priority ⁵⁷ over the word, ⁵⁸ that is, there is a "remarkable preponderance of the matter-of-fact

⁵¹ *TAT*, II, 12: "Die theologische Deutung der alttestamentlichen Texte setzt aber nicht erst da ein, wo der literarkritisch und historisch geschulte Exegete (so oder so!) seine Arbeit getan hat, so dass wir also zwei Arbeitsgänge hätten, einen historisch-kritischen und dann einen 'theologischen.' Die theologische Deutung, die in dem Text eine Aussage von Gott zu begreifen sucht, ist vom ersten Anfang des Verstehensprozesses wirksam."

⁵² Hesse, *Kerygma und Dogma*, IV (1958), 10; *ZThK*, LVII (1960), 26.

⁵³ *TAT*, I, 121; *OTT*, I, 116.

⁵⁴ *TAT*, I, 120; *OTT*, I, 114.

⁵⁵ *TAT*, II, 371; *OTT*, II, 358.

⁵⁶ *TAT*, I, 123; *OTT*, I, 117.

⁵⁷ This seems true in spite of the ambiguity which Honecker, *op. cit.*, 152, n. 25, feels is present at this point.

⁵⁸ *TAT*, I, 121; *OTT*, I, 116.

historical over the theological . . . of the witness of Israel.”⁵⁹ What does this really mean? Does it refer to an undeniable temporal priority of the historical event over its interpretation? Or does it indicate a material superiority of the *brutum factum* over the word? According to von Rad the “self-revelation of God”⁶⁰ takes place in historical events as well as in “revelation in word.”⁶¹ Revelation in historical event and revelation in word are for von Rad two like forms in which God makes known his nature and his will: “God revealed himself by means of his words, and God revealed himself by means of his acts.”⁶² Yet emphasis is placed upon the glorification of God, on his *doxa*, through his act, and such an “event could only be recognized as a ‘sign,’ and indeed as an actual miracle.”⁶³ Thus history does not become revelation only through its interpreting word, but it is revelation already by virtue of the inherent character of the event in its punctiliar temporality. There exists, however, a corresponding relationship between history and word: “History becomes word, and word becomes history.”⁶⁴ This seems to mean that word follows history interpreting it, and word precedes history announcing it. Due to von Rad’s hermeneutical schema, which is determined by the Deuteronomistic theology of history, he is confronted with the difficulty to conceive of word only as announcement and interpretation of history and to understand history only as event which legitimizes word. Because of the use of this restrictive methodology, it appears correct for him to say that “re-telling” is the most appropriate form of theological interpretation of the OT: “Thus, re-telling remains the most legitimate form of theological discourse on the Old Testament.”⁶⁵ The historical

⁵⁹ *TAT*, I, 130; *OTT*, I, 125.

⁶⁰ *TAT*, II, 371; *OTT*, II, 358.

⁶¹ *Loc. cit.*

⁶² *Loc. cit.*

⁶³ *Loc. cit.*

⁶⁴ *Loc. cit.*

⁶⁵ *TAT*, I, 126; *OTT*, I, 121.

element is "perceived,"⁶⁶ "interpreted,"⁶⁷ and "reflected"⁶⁸ by faith in order to arrive at an all-inclusive "combination"⁶⁹ and conception⁷⁰ of the facts. At a later time it was important to make the acts of salvation "relevant"⁷¹ or to "actualize"⁷² them—a task which was accomplished by Israel through "reinterpretation,"⁷³ "adaptation,"⁷⁴ and "co-ordination."⁷⁵

A constant reinterpretation of the same past event was made possible by the way of the OT thought about history, which in one form or another is "inherently open to a future."⁷⁶ Israel remembered various separate historical events which brought her to an epoch-making realization, namely, "that there was a long road, that is to say, a history which led up to her formation."⁷⁷ It was in this way that Israel had broken through to the "concept of a linear historical span [lineare Geschichtsstrecke]."⁷⁸ To express von Rad's view differently one can say that history is the succession of events in the schema of promise and fulfillment.⁷⁹ The bed-rock fact in Israel's way of looking at history "may be called salvatio-historical: that is to say, a way of looking at history which in a specific sense understands each period it surveys as a realm of tension between a promise revealed and its realisation, between a prophecy and its fulfilment."⁸⁰ Pannenberg and his group

⁶⁶ *TAT*, I, 114; *OTT*, I, 108.

⁶⁷ *TAT*, I, 115, 122; *OTT*, I, 109, 116.

⁶⁸ *TAT*, I, 142; *OTT*, I, 138.

⁶⁹ *TAT*, I, 122, 158; *OTT*, I, 116, 154.

⁷⁰ *TAT*, II, 120 ff.; *OTT*, II, 106 ff.

⁷¹ *TAT*, I, 8, 352; II, 6; *OTT*, I, vi; II, vi.

⁷² *TAT*, I, 123; II, 6, 178, 187; *OTT*, I, 119; II, 6, 414.

⁷³ *TAT*, II, 255, 333; *OTT*, II, 240, 322.

⁷⁴ *TAT*, II, 61, 338, 399; *OTT*, II, 48, 328, 385.

⁷⁵ *ThLZ*, LXXXVIII (1963), 409; *OTT*, II, 418.

⁷⁶ *TAT*, II, 374; *OTT*, II, 361; cf. *ThLZ*, LXXXVIII (1963), 415; *OTT*, II, 462.

⁷⁷ *TAT*, II, 119; *OTT*, II, 106.

⁷⁸ *Loc. cit.*

⁷⁹ *ThLZ*, LXXXVIII (1963), 406; *OTT*, II, 416.

⁸⁰ *ThLZ*, LXXXVIII (1963), 415; *OTT*, II, 426. Hans Heinrich Schmid has further grounded the linear concept of saving history as the key concept of the Deuteronomist's view of history in "Das Ver-

build upon this linear concept of history.⁸¹ The difference between the Pannenberg circle and von Rad at this juncture is that the latter attempts to unlock the succession of historical events by means of the traditio-historical interpretation while the former attempts to unfold it with the aid of a synthetic historical methodology.

A full discussion of von Rad's understanding of history should include a treatment of his exposition of saving history as it moves in the tension between promise and fulfillment to be finally fully consummated in the Christ event. This would carry us, however, beyond the immediate scope of this study. For our purpose it will suffice to point out that what is at work here is the interrelatedness of a twofold methodology: first, the "structural analogy," which consists of the "peculiar interconnexion of revelation by word and revelation by event";⁸² and, secondly, "typological thinking," which is not based "on myth and speculation, but on history and eschatology."⁸³ The many questions that are raised by such a twofold methodology cannot be treated at this point.⁸⁴ In short, we must say that von Rad arrives at the crowning consummation of saving history in the Christ event as a result of the combination of three conceptions: the concept of linear history; the predominance of event over word; and the interpretation of history from the movement of the tension between promise and fulfillment.

ständnis der Geschichte im Deuteronomium," *ZThK*, LXIV (1967), 1-15, concluding on p. 5: "Das Geschichtsbild [des Deuteronomiums] . . . ist als linear-heilsgeschichtlich zu kennzeichnen."

⁸¹ Pannenberg, *Offenbarung als Geschichte*, pp. 112 ff.

⁸² *TAT*, II, 376; *OTT*, II, 363.

⁸³ *TAT*, II, 378; *OTT*, II, 365.

⁸⁴ For these questions see Hans Walter Wolff, "Zur Hermeneutik des Alten Testaments," *Evangelische Theologie*, XVI (1956), 337-370; "The Hermeneutics of the Old Testament," *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics*, pp. 160-199; "Das Geschichtsverständnis der alttestamentlichen Prophetie," *Evangelische Theologie*, XX (1960), 218-235; "The Understanding of History in the O. T. Prophets," *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics*, pp. 336-355; Walther Eichrodt, "Ist die typologische Exegese sachgemässe Exegese?" *VT*, Supplement IV

IV. *The Debate on the Problem of History in Old Testament Theology*

The reactions to von Rad's understanding of OT history have been many and mostly negative. Walther Eichrodt, who himself produced two highly important volumes on OT theology, affirms with von Rad that "God's acts in history" are the subject-matter of the OT witness. At the same time he strongly denies that the scholarly concern of the OT theologian has to consist in a "re-telling" ⁸⁵ of the historical discourse of the OT. ⁸⁶ An emphasis on event or objective historical fact in the OT message can only be undertaken "at the expense of the testimony of faith to the divine revelation" ⁸⁷ and will lead "to an uncontrolled and arbitrary attestation of God in individual facts of history." ⁸⁸ Eichrodt fears that this involves isolating the activity of God in history "in such a way as to ignore the testimony of faith evoked in response to it from the OT community." ⁸⁹

It seems that Eichrodt's negative reaction is centered in his distinction of the "external facts" of saving history in the OT from the "decisive inward event," namely, "the interior mastering of the human spirit by God's personal invasion." ⁹⁰ Here, in the creation and development of God's people, in the realization of the covenant relationship, the "decisive" event takes place "without which all external facts must become myth." ⁹¹ Here, then, is the "point of origin for all

(1957), 161-180; "Is Typological Exegesis an Appropriate Method?" *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics*, pp. 224-245; Jürgen Moltmann, "Exegese und Eschatologie in der Geschichte," *Evangelische Theologie*, XXII (1962), 61, n. 75.

⁸⁵ *TAT*, I, 126; *OTT*, I, 121.

⁸⁶ Eichrodt, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, Teil I (6th ed.; Göttingen, 1959), pp. vi ff.; *Theology of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia, 1961), I, 13-16, 512-520; the latter is hereafter cited as *TOT*.

⁸⁷ *TOT*, I, 14.

⁸⁸ *Loc. cit.*

⁸⁹ *TOT*, I, 15.

⁹⁰ *Loc. cit.*

⁹¹ *TOT*, I, 15 f.; also Eichrodt, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, Teil

further relation of God in history, here is the possibility and norm for all statements about God's speech and deed." ⁹² With such an understanding of the matter it becomes clear that the "external facts" of history can have no more than a secondary meaning.

Eichrodt also objects vehemently to von Rad's dualistic versions of Israel's history. He feels that the rift between the two pictures of Israel's history "is wrenched apart with such violence . . . that it seems impossible hence-forth to restore an inner coherence between the aspects of Israel's history." ⁹³ Von Rad dissolved the "true history of Israel" into "religious poetry"; even worse, it is drawn up by "Israel in flat contradiction of the facts." ⁹⁴ In reality, however, the faith of Israel is "founded on facts of history" and only in this way can this faith have "any kind of binding authority." ⁹⁵ Thus it appears that a reconciliation of both versions of Israel's history is in Eichrodt's thinking not only possible, but in the interest of the trustworthiness of the biblical witness absolutely necessary. ⁹⁶

Franz Hesse ⁹⁷ has attacked von Rad's disjuncture of the two versions of Israel's history even more radically and he is

II/III (4th ed.; Göttingen, 1961), p. XII; *Theology of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia, 1967), p. 11. It is to be regretted that the important discussion contained in the introductory section of the German edition is omitted in English.

⁹² *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, Teil II/III, p. XII.

⁹³ *TOT*, I, 512; cf. *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, Teil II/III, p. VIII.

⁹⁴ *TOT*, I, 513; cf. *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, Teil II/III, p. IX.

⁹⁵ *TOT*, I, 517; cf. *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, Teil II/III, p. XI.

⁹⁶ *TOT*, I, 516: ". . . it is realized that in the OT we are dealing not with an anti-historical transformation of the course of history into fairy tale or poem, but with an interpretation of real events. . . . Such interpretation is able, by means of a one-sided rendering, or one exaggerated in a particular direction, to grasp and represent the true meaning of the event more correctly than could an unobjectionable chronicle of the actual course of history."

⁹⁷ Hesse, *Kerygma und Dogma*, IV (1958), 1-19, and *ZThK*, LVII (1960), 17-26. See von Rad's reaction to it in *TAT*, II, 8-11.

seconded by Johannes Hempel⁹⁸ and from a slightly different perspective also by Victor Maag.⁹⁹ Hesse turns against what he calls von Rad's "double tracking,"¹⁰⁰ namely, that the secular history is to deal with the history of Israel while the kerygmatic version as formed mostly by the post-exilic community is theologically meaningful.¹⁰¹ Hesse recognizes correctly that with von Rad "kerygma theology has broken with all might into the field of Old Testament studies."¹⁰²

Hesse marks out the difference between the two versions of Israel's history with designations such as "real" and "unreal" or "correct" and "incorrect." He maintains that the version of Israel's history as drawn up by historico-critical research is alone theologically relevant, because the picture which Israel herself has drawn up is not only open to error but in very fact contains too often error. An OT theology must consist of "more than pure description of Old Testament tradition. . . . Our faith lives from that which happened in Old Testament times, not from that which is confessed as having happened. . . . Kerygma is not constitutive for our faith, but historical reality is."¹⁰³ Thus Hesse attempts to overcome the dualism of the two versions of Israel's history by closely identifying¹⁰⁴ the historical picture of Israel's history with salvation history. He states: "In what the people of Israel in the centuries of its existence experienced, what it did and what it suffered, 'salvation history' is present. This [salvation history] does not run side by side with the history of Israel, it does not lie upon another 'higher' plane, but although it is not identical with the history of Israel it is

⁹⁸ J. Hempel, "Alttestamentliche Theologie in protestantischer Sicht heute," *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, XV (1958), 206 ff.

⁹⁹ V. Maag, "Historische und ausserhistorische Begründung alttestamentlicher Theologie," *Schweizer Theologische Umschau*, XXIX (1959), 6-18.

¹⁰⁰ *Kerygma und Dogma*, IV (1958), 5.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-8.

¹⁰² *ZThK*, LVII (1960), 21.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 24, 25.

¹⁰⁴ See also Honecker, *op. cit.*, pp. 158, 159.

nevertheless there; thus we can say that in, with, and beneath the history of Israel God leads his salvation history to the 'telos' Jesus Christ, that is to say, in, with, and beneath that which *happens*, which *actually* took place."¹⁰⁵ Hesse therefore contends that "a separation between the history of Israel and Old Testament salvation history is thus not possible . . .," for "salvation history is present in hidden form in, with, and beneath the history of Israel."¹⁰⁶ From this it follows that the totality of "the history of the people of Israel with all its features is the subject of theological research . . ."¹⁰⁷

Hesse grounds saving history solely in the historico-critical version of Israel's history, insisting upon the "facticity of that which is reported,"¹⁰⁸ so that "the witness of Israel about its own history is not to concern us in as far as it wants to be witness of history, because it stands and falls with the historicity of that which is witnessed."¹⁰⁹ This seems to indicate that the kerygma of the OT as well as the kerygmatic version of Israel's history is to be judged by the historicity of that which is witnessed by it.¹¹⁰ We must of necessity ask whether Hesse does not fall prey to historical positivism.¹¹¹ If the modern historico-critical method is employed as the sole means for establishing historical "facticity" for verifying the kerygma of the OT and its picture of history, will this not bring about a decisively shortened picture of saving history? It seems that Hesse overestimates the "facticity" produced by the

¹⁰⁵ *Kerygma und Dogma*, IV (1958), 10.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁰⁸ *ZThK*, LVII (1960), 25.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹¹⁰ *Kerygma und Dogma*, IV (1958), 17-19.

¹¹¹ Von Rad points out that the version of Israel's history given by modern historiography, which works with the historico-critical method, also is already interpreted history; *TAT*, II, 9: "Auch das Bild der modernen Historie ist gedeutete Geschichte und zwar von geschichtsphilosophischen Prämissen aus, die für das Handeln Gottes in der Geschichte keinerlei Wahrnehmungsmöglichkeiten ergeben, weil hier notorisch nur der Mensch als der Schöpfer seiner Geschichte verstanden wird."

application of the historico-critical method while greatly underestimating, if not completely denying, any "facticity" whatever to the version of Israel's history as drawn up by herself. Von Rad replies to Hesse by pointing out that it is not as easy to distill that which is historical and factual from that which is confessional and kerygmatic as Hesse seems to indicate.¹¹² Von Rad states: "Also the best supported event of 'real history' remains silent in relation to the divine guidance of history; its relevancy for faith can be in no way objectively verified. For this the 'Witness' is needed."¹¹³ Thus von Rad points to the inadequacy of the historico-critical method for saving history.

It seems that Friedrich Baumgärtel's¹¹⁴ criticism strikes von Rad at a more vulnerable point. He points out that in von Rad's OT theology the "struggle of Israel for constantly new interpretations and actualizations" is emphasized to such an extent that that which is actually relevant, that is, "the struggle of God with his people and his messengers" and "the self-actualization of God . . . through his tools"¹¹⁵ is not given its due. In other words, von Rad needs to be more "theocentric." This criticism appears to be justified. Furthermore, the weakness of von Rad's starting-point is, in Baumgärtel's view, not so much the discrepancy between the two versions of Israel's history¹¹⁶ as it is the question concerning the meaning of Israel's confession for Christian faith. This question cannot be answered by historical research but must be answered theologically.¹¹⁷ This criticism is directed against von Rad's attempt to solve the theological question concerning

¹¹² *TAT*, II, 8-9; cf. *TAT*, I, 473.

¹¹³ *TAT*, II, 9.

¹¹⁴ F. Baumgärtel, "Gerhard von Rads Theologie des Alten Testaments," *ThLZ*, LXXXVI (1961), 801-816, 895-908; also "Das alttestamentliche Geschehen als 'heilsgeschichtliches' Geschehen," *Geschichte und Altes Testament. Festschrift für Albrecht Alt* (Göttingen, 1953), pp. 11-28; cf. Braaten, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-112.

¹¹⁵ *ThLZ*, LXXXVI (1961), 812 ff.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 804-805.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 805.

the meaning of the OT for Christian faith phenomenologically with the aid of traditio-historical interpretation. For Baumgärtel neither of the two versions of Israel's history possesses theological relevancy for Christian faith. Why? Because the problem is that the whole "Old Testament is witness out of a non-Christian religion."¹¹⁸ "Viewed historically it has another place than the Christian religion."¹¹⁹ Thus according to Baumgärtel, von Rad's error lies in assuming that Israel's witness to God's actions in history can be taken at face value and as relevant for the Christian church. The apt reply of another OT theologian, Claus Westermann, is hardly an overstatement: "Ultimately he [Baumgärtel] admits, then, that the church could also live without the Old Testament."¹²⁰ The essential weakness of Baumgärtel's criticism of von Rad at this point lies in his ultimate denial of the relevancy of the OT for Christian faith.

A positive reconciliation of the two pictures of Israel's history has been attempted by Wolfhart Pannenberg¹²¹ with

¹¹⁸ Baumgärtel, "Das hermeneutische Problem des Alten Testaments *ThLZ*, LXXIX (1954), 200; "The Hermeneutical Problem of the Old Testament," in *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics*, ed. by C. Westermann (Richmond, Va., 1963), p. 135.

¹¹⁹ *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics*, p. 145.

¹²⁰ Claus Westermann, "Remarks on the Theses of Bultmann and Baumgärtel," *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics*, p. 133.

¹²¹ Significant for our discussion is Pannenberg, "Heilsgeschehen und Geschichte," *Kerygma und Dogma*, V (1959), 218-237, 259-288; "Redemptive Event and History," in *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics*, pp. 314-335; "Kerygma und Geschichte," *Studien zur Theologie der alttestamentlichen Überlieferungen*, ed. by Rolf Rendtorff und Klaus Koch (Neukirchen, 1961), pp. 129-140, hereafter cited as *Studien*; Pannenberg, ed.; *Offenbarung als Geschichte* (Göttingen, 1961; 2d revised ed., 1963), hereafter cited as *OaG*. Noteworthy critiques of Pannenberg and his group are by Hans-Georg Geyer, "Geschichte als theologisches Problem," *Evangelische Theologie*, XXII (1962), 92-104; Lothar Steiger, "Offenbarungsgeschichte und theologische Vernunft," *ZThK*, LIX (1962), 88-113; Günther Klein, "Offenbarung als Geschichte?" *Monatsschrift für Pastoraltheologie*, LI (1962), 65-88, to which Pannenberg replied in the "Postscript" of the second edition of *OaG*, pp. 132-148; Klein, *Theologie des Wortes Gottes und die Hypothese der Universalgeschichte. Zur Auseinandersetzung mit Wolf-*

the aid of members of his "working circle" such as Rolf Rendtorff,¹²² Ulrich Wilckens,¹²³ and Dietrich Rössler.¹²⁴ Their approach can be characterized by their key phrase, "revelation as history."¹²⁵ While von Rad attempts to keep open the tension between the two versions of Israel's history, that is, between the historical event and its kerygmatic interpretation, his students, Pannenberg and his group, venture to solve this problem methodologically. They go beyond their teacher,

hart Pannenberg, "Beiträge zur Evangelischen Theologie," XXXVII (München, 1964); Hesse, "Wolfhart Pannenberg und das Alte Testament," *Neue Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie und Religionswissenschaft*, VII (1965), 174-199; Gerhard Sauter, *Zukunft und Verheissung. Das Problem der Zukunft in der gegenwärtigen theologischen und philosophischen Diskussion* (Zürich/Stuttgart, 1965), pp. 239-251; Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope* (London, 1967), pp. 76-84, and the highly important volume dedicated to Pannenberg's theology as a whole by James M. Robinson and John B. Cobb, Jr. eds., *Theology as History*, "New Frontiers in Theology," Vol. III (New York, 1967). Pannenberg took issue with those who criticized his theology in his "Response to the Discussion" in *Theology as History*, pp. 221-276.

¹²² R. Rendtorff is the OT theologian of the group whose following writings are important for the issue at hand: "Hermeneutik des Alten Testaments als Frage nach der Geschichte," *ZThK*, LVII (1960), 27-40; "Die Offenbarungsvorstellungen im alten Israel," *OaG*, pp. 21-41. Both essays are criticized by W. Zimmerli, "Offenbarung im Alten Testament. Ein Gespräch mit Rolf Rendtorff," *Evangelische Theologie*, XXII (1962), 15-31, to which Rendtorff answered in "Geschichte und Wort im Alten Testament," *Evangelische Theologie*, XXII (1962), 621-649. The following two essays by Rendtorff pertain also to the question of history in the OT: "Die Entstehung der israelitischen Religion als religionsgeschichtliches und theologisches Problem," *ThLZ*, LXXXVIII (1963), cols. 735-746; "Alttestamentliche Theologie und israelitisch-jüdische Religionsgeschichte," *Zwischenstation. Festschrift für Karl Kupisch zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. by Helmut Gollwitzer and J. Hoppe (München, 1963), pp. 208-222. Noteworthy is also the critique of Rendtorff by Arnold Gamper, "Offenbarung in Geschichte," *ZThK*, LXXXVI (1964), 180-196.

¹²³ U. Wilckens, "Das Offenbarungsverständnis in der Geschichte des Urchristentums," *OaG*, pp. 42-90.

¹²⁴ D. Rössler, *Gesetz und Geschichte. Untersuchungen zur Theologie der jüdischen Apokalyptik und der pharisäischen Orthodoxie*, "WMANT," III (2d ed., Neukirchen, 1962).

¹²⁵ This is also the title of the programmatic collection of essays of Pannenberg and his group, *Offenbarung als Geschichte* (*supra*, n. 121).

feeling that his distinction is inadequate¹²⁶ and that one cannot be satisfied with the "alternative between the picture of history which is arrived at by historico-critical research and that which is painted in the Old Testament."¹²⁷ Rendtorff explains that "Israel's history takes place in the external events which are commonly the subject of historico-critical research of history *and* in the manifold and stratified inner events, which we have gathered under the term tradition."¹²⁸ Therefore the historico-critical method is to be transformed and extended so as to be able to verify at the same time God's revelation in history. Pannenberg speaks in a similar vein when he refers to "history" as "reality in its totality."¹²⁹ He traces the development of this concept of history as "reality in its totality" from ancient Israel to the present. Pannenberg argues against the common distinction between historical facts and their meaning, evaluation, and interpretation by man. He feels that this common procedure in modern historiography, which employs the historico-critical method, is a result of the influence of positivism and neo-Kantianism. Pannenberg proposes that against such an artificial distinction "we must reinstate today the original unity of facts and their meaning."¹³⁰ That is to say that "in principle, every event

¹²⁶ Rendtorff, *Studien*, p. 84.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

¹²⁸ *Loc. cit.* It is pointed out that the adjectives "external" and "inner" are used because of a lack of better terminology. Rendtorff is not alone in making this point in the Pannenberg circle. The chief spokesman, Pannenberg, *Kerygma und Dogma*, V (1959), 287, points to the same thought: "Eine derartige Theologie der Geschichte unterscheidet sich vom herkömmlichen heilsgeschichtlichen Denken dadurch, dass sie prinzipiell historisch verifizierbar sein will."

¹²⁹ Pannenberg, *Kerygma und Dogma*, V, 232; *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics*, p. 314.

¹³⁰ Pannenberg, "The Revelation of God in Jesus Christ," *Theology as History*, "New Frontiers in Theology," III (New York, 1967), 127.

Pannenberg states on p. 126: "Such a splitting up of historical consciousness into detection of facts and an evaluation of them (or into history as known and history as experienced) is intolerable to Christian faith, not only because the message of the resurrection of Jesus and of God's revelation in him necessarily becomes merely

has its original meaning within the context of occurrence and tradition in which it took place. . . ."¹³¹ Pannenberg's objective, in light of this analysis, is to create a situation in which faith can rest on historically proven fact in order to be saved from subjectivity, self-redemption, and self-deception.¹³² In this connection both Pannenberg¹³³ and Rendtorff¹³⁴ have much to say about the relation of word and event. Rendtorff is of the conviction that "word has an essential part in the event of revelation."¹³⁵ But this should not be understood to mean that word has priority over event. Quite on the contrary, the word does not need to be the mediator between the event and the one who experiences the event, because "the event itself can and should bring about a recognition of Yahweh in the one who sees it and understands it to be the act of Yahweh."¹³⁶ Pannenberg holds that "the knowledge of Yahweh's divinity is not due to the events which were announced by his word, since the latter can be conceived

subjective interpretation, but also because it is the reflection of an outmoded and questionable historical method. It is based on the futile aim of the positivistic historians to ascertain bare facts without meaning in history."

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

¹³² Pannenberg, "Response to the Discussion," *Theology as History*, p. 269: "The knowledge of history on which faith is grounded has to do with the truth and reliability of that on which faith depends; these are presupposed in the act of trusting, and thus logically precede the act of faith in respect to its perceived content. But that does not mean that the subjective accomplishment of such knowledge would be in any way a condition of fellowship with God. . . . Such knowledge is thus not a condition for participating in salvation, but rather it assures faith about its basis."

¹³³ *OaG*, pp. 112-114; most recently in *Theology as History*, pp. 121, 122, 260.

¹³⁴ *OaG*, pp. 40, 41.

¹³⁵ *OaG*, p. 40.

¹³⁶ *Loc. cit.*; Zimmerli countered Rendtorff in "'Offenbarung' im Alten Testament," *Evangelische Theologie*, XXII (1962), 15-31, to which Rendtorff replied with "Geschichte und Wort im Alten Testament," *Evangelische Theologie*, XXII (1962), 621-649. A summary of the debate is now given by Robinson, "Revelation as Word and as History," *Theology as History*, pp. 42-62.

as mere effects of the word.”¹³⁷ Instead, the event has priority, because “time and again the course of events surpassed the words, giving them new meaning and a new reference.”¹³⁸ Proclamation “as event itself is not revelation, but it is report about revealing history and explication of the language of facts implicit in this history.”¹³⁹ In this sense the “language of facts” contains revelation which the word of proclamation, then, reports. Thus the Pannenberg circle is in essential agreement with von Rad on the priority of event over word and represents an alternative to the “theology of the word.”¹⁴⁰ Von Rad would agree that the event itself is revelation and does not only become revelation through its interpreting word. While Pannenberg says that “word relates to revelation as prediction, as command and as report,”¹⁴¹ von Rad has seemingly the same in mind when he says that “history becomes word, and word becomes history,”¹⁴² that is, that word

¹³⁷ *Theology as History*, p. 120.

¹³⁸ *Loc. cit.*; *OaG*, p. 112: “History is never made up out of so-called *bruta facta*. As human history, its occurrence is always interwoven with understanding, in hope and memory, and the transformations (!) of understanding are themselves events of history. The two cannot be separated even in the initial occurrences of a history. Thus history is always also the history of the transmission of traditions, and even the natural events which affect the history of a people do not have their meaning outside of their positive or negative relationship to the traditions and expectations in which the men of that history live.” *Theology as History*, p. 260: “. . . every individual event has its meaning and thereby its essence (i.e., what it is) only in relation to the whole. But the whole of reality is not yet completed, by virtue of its historicity. Nevertheless words ascribe to events, things, and even persons whom we encounter their essence, their meaning. In consequence of the above, that implies an *anticipation* of the whole of reality.”

¹³⁹ *OaG*, p. 114.

¹⁴⁰ Pannenberg’s theology is not only intended as an alternative to the “theology of the word” of such representatives as Bultmann, Gogarten, Fuchs, and Ebeling, but also to the Barthian position. The Pannenberg circle is indeed the first theological school to emerge in Germany from a generation that was born well after World War I had passed and is not in one form or another a development of the dialectic theology of the twenties.

¹⁴¹ *OaG*, p. 112.

¹⁴² *TAT*, I, 121; *OTT*, I, 116.

follows history interpreting it, and word precedes history announcing it. To sum up, a decisive difference between the Pannenberg group and von Rad lies in methodology. Von Rad unlocks historical events with the aid of traditio-historical interpretation. The Pannenberg group works with a synthetic historical method which emphasizes the original unity of facts and their meaning—thereby freeing it from the limitations of outmoded positivism and neo-Kantianism.

V. *Some Critical Considerations*

Von Rad believes that the OT lacks a center (*Mitte*) from which it is to be interpreted, quite unlike the NT, whose center is Jesus Christ. Therefore von Rad believes to have found the center from which to unlock the OT in the Deuteronomistic theology of history. This, in fact, becomes his hermeneutical schema for the interpretation of the entire OT. He has, however, failed to justify the right to use such a concept as a hermeneutical key; that is, he has been satisfied with the phenomenological utilization of his method. Of necessity one must ask whether with the same right one could not use the Priestly schema for interpreting the OT or the apocalyptic universalism of history of the Pannenberg group?¹⁴³ On the other hand, cannot the theophanies and epiphanies of the OT be understood as an unerring sign that God is the center of every certainty and confession?

It must also be asked how far von Rad himself is responsible for the new turn in theological thinking represented by the Pannenberg circle. In other words, von Rad's basic thesis

¹⁴³ Pannenberg speaks of the concept of the apocalyptic universalism of history in terms of an "universalgeschichtliche Konzeption" and an "universalgeschichtliches Schema" in *Kerygma und Dogma*, V (1959), 237, and in his "Geschichtsverständnis der Apokalypsic," *OaG*, p. 107; cf. U. Wilckens, *OaG*, pp. 53, 54, and Rössler, *Gesetz und Geschichte*, pp. 111 ff. For a critique of Rössler, see Philipp Vielhauer, "Apocalypses and Related Studies: Introduction," *Edgar Hennecke, New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. by Wilhelm Schneemelcher, tr. by R. McL. Wilson (Philadelphia, 1965), pp. 581-607, esp. p. 593.

that "history is the place in which God reveals the secret of his person" ¹⁴⁴ is open to a variety of interpretations. Does it mean that history itself is the real and full medium of revelation, *i.e.*, that inherent in it is the essential quality of revelation? This is obviously the conviction of the representatives of "revelation as history." Opposed to this is a statement such as this, taken from Karl Barth, "Revelation is not a predicate of history, but history is a predicate of revelation. One can and must first of all say the noun revelation, in order to say afterwards, as an explanation, history." ¹⁴⁵ According to this view history as such can never reveal God. Or is it possible that von Rad is simply concerned to point out that God does not reveal himself "from above" in a transcendental or mystical way? If so, history would, then, only be the place, but not the origin and medium of revelation. Revelation would thus be dependent upon the "word" which is proclaimed in the "place" of history. ¹⁴⁶ This points out the validity and importance of the "theology of the word." Salvation comes to man in the word, Ro 10: 17: "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." This appears to support the emphasis which is recently placed upon the "word" by Gerhard Ebeling ¹⁴⁷ and Ernst Fuchs. ¹⁴⁸ Faith would thus not be established by the "language of facts" ¹⁴⁹ nor by the historical proof of the events, but by the fact of language, which brings the event with the word and thus becomes a "word

¹⁴⁴ *TAT*, II, 349: "Der Ort, an dem Gott sein Personengeheimnis offenbart, ist die Geschichte," the English translation of which is obscured, *OTT*, II, 338: ". . . that it is in history that God reveals the secret of his person."

¹⁴⁵ Karl Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatik* (1948 ed.), p. 64.

¹⁴⁶ See especially Honecker, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

¹⁴⁷ Mention should be made of the following works by G. Ebeling: *The Nature of Faith* (Philadelphia, 1961); *Word and Faith* (Philadelphia, 1963); *Theology and Proclamation: Dialogue with Bultmann* (Philadelphia, 1966); *God and Word* (Philadelphia, 1967); *The Problem of Historicity* (Philadelphia, 1967).

¹⁴⁸ E. Fuchs, *Hermeneutik* (Bad Cannstadt, 1954; 2d ed., 1958); *Studies of the Historical Jesus* (London, 1964).

¹⁴⁹ Thus Pannenberg, *OaG*, pp. 100, 112.

event”¹⁵⁰ or “language event.”¹⁵¹ In this theological system only the “word” as interpretation of event transmits salvation to faith.

Our next consideration concerns the problem of the radical disjunction between Israel’s witness to her own history and the historico-critical reconstruction of Israel’s history. The essential weakness of von Rad’s theology of the OT is that his theological exposition shows no organic connection¹⁵² with his historico-critical exposition.¹⁵³ Against von Rad we must question whether historical research can be limited to a certain method or philosophy of history as that of E. Troeltsch, who is cited by von Rad.¹⁵⁴ Troeltsch’s premises may indeed have been binding for historical criticism for a long time but they do not need to remain binding forever. Against Hesse, who seems to make the opposite mistake in grounding saving history solely upon the historico-critical method and its version of Israel’s history, it must be pointed out that the so-called “scientific” version is not as absolute as it claims to be. We should remind ourselves of the problems inherent in the historico-critical version: First, there are two versions of the pre-history, *viz.* the version of Alt and Noth¹⁵⁵ on the one hand and that of the Albright school on the other; second, there are still many unsolved problems in the later period according

¹⁵⁰ Ebeling’s terminology; see *Word and Faith*, pp. 305-332.

¹⁵¹ Fuchs’s terminology; see *Studies of the Historical Jesus*, pp. 213-251.

¹⁵² Von Rad’s almost 800-page exposition of OT theology is prefixed by a treatment of Israel’s history as modern historiography covering 102 pages.

¹⁵³ See especially M. Sekine, “Vom Verstehen der Heilsgeschichte: das Grundproblem der alttestamentlichen Theologie,” *ZAW*, LXXXV (1963), 145-154.

¹⁵⁴ *TAT*, I, 114; *OTT*, I, 107.

¹⁵⁵ See especially H. Weidmann, *Die Patriarchen und ihre Religion*, “Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments” (abbr. FRLANT), XCIV (Göttingen, 1968), 126-167; M. Weippert, *Die Landnahme der israelitischen Stämme in der neueren wissenschaftlichen Diskussion*, “FRLANT,” XCII (Göttingen, 1967), 14-140.

to these historico-critical versions, so that a closed picture of the history of Israel is not available.¹⁵⁶ Many of the arguments against the OT version of Israel's history are not so secured by historical proof that they can be thought of as binding forever. Thus it would be utterly fallacious to think that an approximation of the two versions is not within the possible. John Bright¹⁵⁷ has demonstrated this by his reconstruction of the early history of Israel, and of a number of details in her later history, against the presentation of Martin Noth.¹⁵⁸ On the whole, however, it seems inadequate to distill "saving history" from the witness of the OT by means of the tradition-historical method to the exclusion of historico-critical research as is the case with von Rad. In the present writer's opinion it is equally inadequate to ground "saving history" solely on the historico-critical method as is the case with Hesse. Why? Because, as Rendtorff points out, both history and tradition are so intertwined together that they cannot be separated.¹⁵⁹ Research has shown that these methods, employed either alone or combined, will not bring about the effect of a "total picture"¹⁶⁰ of Israel's history. Therefore, no matter how we evaluate the way in which Pannenberg and his group worked out their theologies, Pannenberg's proposal—that "we must reinstate today the original unity of facts and their meaning,"¹⁶¹—calls for serious consideration

¹⁵⁶ J. A. Soggin, "Alttestamentliche Glaubenszeugnisse und geschichtliche Wirklichkeit," *ThZ*, XVII (1961), 385-398, has put his finger on this spot.

¹⁵⁷ John Bright, *A History of Israel* (Philadelphia, 1959); cf. Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (London, 1961); Helmer Ringgren, *Israelite Religion* (Philadelphia, 1966).

¹⁵⁸ Martin Noth, *The History of Israel* (rev. ed.; New York, 1960).

¹⁵⁹ Rendtorff, *Studien*, pp. 84-94; von Rad in criticizing Hesse makes the same point and thus entangles himself in contradictions with his own exposition of saving history which is, of course, based upon the tradition-historical analysis, *TAT*, II, 8-9. The Pannenberg circle, on the other hand, seeks to avoid such contradictions and pursues its own way.

¹⁶⁰ Rendtorff, *Studien*, p. 93.

¹⁶¹ Pannenberg, *Theology as History*, p. 127.

as a new starting-point for overcoming the artificial dichotomy by which modern historiography has wrenched apart the history of Israel under such outmoded and questionable influences as positivism and neo-Kantianism.¹⁶² Thus when we speak of God's acts in Israel's history, there is no reason to confine this activity to a few bare events, *bruta facta*, that the schema of historical criticism can verify by cross-checking with other historical evidences. Nor is it adequate and appropriate to employ the hermeneutical schema of von Rad, because with neither schema has scholarship been able to reach a fully acceptable understanding of historical reality fitting to the modern time due to serious methodological, historical, and theological limitations, restrictions, and inadequacies. God's acts are with the totality of Israel's career in history, including the highly complex and diverse ways in which she developed and transmitted her credal formulations. Thus we must work with a method that takes account of the totality of that history under the recognition of the original unity of facts and their meaning.

Postscript

This paper was already in the hands of the printer when G. Fohrer's article, "Der Mittelpunkt einer Theologie des Alten Testaments," *ThZ*, XXIV (1968), 161-172, appeared. His discussion relates to the problem of the "center" of the OT and it is his thesis that the "Mittelpunkt" (center) of an OT theology is not God, but rather the "*Herrschaft Gottes und Gemeinschaft zwischen Gott und Mensch*" (p. 163; cf. p. 171). Space does not permit to deal at this point with his thesis, which is of course open to question, for it places chief emphasis on God's reign and the divine-human relationship as *the* key to unlock the problem of OT theology.

¹⁶² The OT theologian Christoph Barth argues in "Grundprobleme einer Theologie des Alten Testaments," *Evangelische Theologie*, XXIII (1963), 368, against a critical methodology which declares every "supra-human and supranatural causality" unhistorical, as well as against a "rational-objective method" which believes itself able to distinguish without great difficulty between "real" and "interpreted" history.

DISSENT AND REFORM IN RUSSIAN
ORTHODOX CHURCH HISTORY FROM THE
11th THROUGH THE 16th CENTURIES

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Although the Russian Orthodox Church (and the Christian East in general) experienced no reform movements comparable to the Reformation of the 16th century of western Europe, the Russian Church had, almost from its inception, dissenters and reformers. Perhaps its reformers were not of the magnitude of Luther, Calvin, or Knox; but they nevertheless played a role in the religious developments of their times. Usually categorized by the names *eretiki* ("heretics"), *raskolniki* ("schismatics"), and *sektanti* ("sectarians"), they faced persecution from authorities in the established Church.

In the present survey it will be our purpose to capture a glimpse (mainly from Russian chronicle records) of the highlights of the history of the *eretiki* from the 11th through the 16th centuries. It should be pointed out that records regarding the *eretiki* are relatively scant, inasmuch as extant documents pertaining to the history of the Russian Church tend to treat only the glory of the Church and the privileges of its hierarchy. Indeed, it would seem that records reflecting the history of dissent and reform have often been suppressed. In an attempt to erase the memories of persecutions, the Church of the late 19th century categorically denied that inquisitorial methods were used by the Orthodox Church as had been the case in the Catholic West. But E. F. Grekulov has pointed out in his article "Inquisition in the Eastern Church" that inquisitorial methods were the right arm of the Church in the East, just as in the West, and that the Church can never successfully erase the events of persecution which

are so deeply impressed in the lives of the people of Russia.¹

We may begin our survey with the year 1004, when an abbot named Andrian was imprisoned for refusal to conform to the laws and practices of the Orthodox Church. The record of this event in an ancient chronicle from an Old-Slavonic monastery in Southern Russia is possibly the earliest extant account of treatment of a religious nonconformist in Russian church history. The Russian chronicles briefly state:

In this year [1004] the metropolitan bishop Leont committed abbot Andrian, the eunuch, to prison because he refused to conform to the laws of the Church, against the advice of the bishops, presbyters, and abbots, until he should reform and come to a knowledge of the truth, though so many people regarded him as a pious and virtuous man.²

This brief passage does not indicate the nature of Andrian's disobedience. The fact that he is specifically designated as "the eunuch" is of interest. Was he perhaps some sort of religious enthusiast? Also of interest are the reference to his condemnation by all three leading branches of the clergy and the mention of the esteem in which he was held by "so many people." What eventually happened to Andrian we do not know, for this brief mention is the only information we have concerning him in the chronicle.

After the case of Andrian, Russian chronicles are silent regarding any similar case for more than a century. Then in 1123 there is record of another reformer in southern Russia whom the Synod of Kiev branded as an "evil heretic."

¹ E. F. Grekulov, *The Inquisition of the Orthodox Church in Russia* (Е. Ф. Грекулов, *Православная инквизиция в России* [Pravoslavnaia inkvizitsiia v Rossii]) (Moscow, 1964), p. 3.

² *A Complete Collection of Russian Chronicles* (Полное собрание русских летописей [Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei]), IV (Moscow, 1962), 69. The word "eunuch" may indicate that as early as the 10th century, this kind of asceticism was practiced among some ultra-conservative groups of the Orthodox Church. Andrian was not committed to prison because he was a eunuch.

This man, named Dmitriĭ, was committed to the dungeon, but further information regarding him is lacking. Three decades later, in 1153, the same Synod passed sentence against another "evil heretic," Martin by name. Martin's offence is noted in the chronicles more specifically than is the case with regard to the earlier "heretics":

This man is teaching against the orthodox laws of the Church, attracting to himself multitudes of unlearned people, whom he causes to neglect, and even to oppose, the mother church.³

Martin was condemned by the Synod to be burned. He was thus the first heretic-martyr committed to the flames.

Not until the beginning of the 14th century do we find any serious movement toward reformation within the Russian Orthodox Church. At this time there were hundreds, and probably thousands in the city of Novgorod, who openly expressed their dissatisfaction with the Church because of her complete domination of every phase of their life. There are clear evidences in history that the dissatisfied group was large enough and sufficiently well organized for self-protection in case of an eventual persecution. They were called *eretiki*, "the heretics." Joseph, the bishop of Volano, with the intention of discouraging the trend towards heresy, writes in his book entitled *Education*:

An evil man named Karp, and by profession a heretic, lives here in our city of Novgorod. He brought a dangerous heresy into the lives of many orthodox believers, who, because of their weakness and ignorance, accept it, thinking that by doing this they do the right thing. But the day is at hand for them (the *eretiki*); for our Archbishop Dionisii, coming back from Constantinople, brought a letter from the ecumenical Patriarch Anthony, addressed to the elders of the city and instructing them to burn the *eretiki* so as to destroy heresy forever.⁴

As we see from the above quotation, the persecution of the

³ Grekulov, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

⁴ N. A. Kazakova and A. S. Lure, *Heretical Movements in Russia* (Н. А. Казакова и А. С. Луре, Антифеодальные еретические движения на Руси [Antifeodal'nye ereticheskie dvizheniia na Rusi]) (Moscow, 1955), p. 35.

eretiki was planned. But it did not occur, because the archbishop of Novgorod died suddenly and a new archbishop was to be chosen. In this city it was traditional for a new head of the Church to be chosen by the people, and they were very proud of this prerogative. Actually, the nomination was made by the nobility, though the whole populace had a part in the final vote. Inasmuch as the *eretiki* at this time were not yet officially condemned, and none of them was as yet excommunicated from the Church, they took the opportunity to suggest a change in the election procedures; they encouraged their friends, the common people, to place their nomination against that offered by the nobility. The people accepted this proposition and nominated a man of exceptional ability and character, Vasilii Kalika, who was elected by a great majority to the office of archbishop in 1330.

This new archbishop was not a friend of the *eretiki*, but he knew well that he owed his office to them. On the other hand, the *eretiki* themselves used caution and restraint, for they knew that no one could do greater service for them than a friendly orthodox archbishop. Vasilii, in turn, canceled any plans he may have had for persecuting them. As long as he was in office (1330-1352), they were safe. A Russian historian has commented thus:

Vasilii was one of the most interesting persons ever to occupy the chair of the archbishop of Novgorod. He was so wise and so progressive in comparison with his predecessors and successors that he will forever stand in history as a truly great man.⁵

Thanks to Archbishop Vasilii, the situation in the city of Novgorod became a situation of religious tolerance for more than twenty years. His personal interest in the progress of his townsmen, his decisive rejection of any measure against the *eretiki*, and his wise efforts to satisfy the nobility, created an extraordinary atmosphere for the activity and progress of the reformers. During Vasilii's term of office,

⁵ *Ibid.*

only one incident was recorded wherein this religious toleration could at all be considered as violated. One of the followers of the new faith did "something"⁶ to offend the abbot of St. Nikola's monastery, who in turn called a meeting of the common people to discuss the problem. The fact that nothing is said of the decision in the meeting suggests that there were so many followers of the new faith that the abbot, after discussing the problem with them "all day and all night," could not impose any punishment upon the accused.⁷

On the death of Archbishop Vasilii in 1352, the situation in Novgorod changed. The new Archbishop Stefan, who was chosen again with the help of the common people and the dissenters, lacked Vasilii's wisdom and character. Soon after his election he became hostile to the dissenters. However, external problems prevented the Church from launching at this time a campaign of extermination against the heretics, and for another twenty years the latter enjoyed relative peace and progress.

Finally the respite was broken when the *eretiki* themselves, probably reacting against some repressions imposed upon them by the Church, began an active campaign against the clergy and stopped attending church services. Their meeting-places were in the fields, in the parks, in the streets, and in ordinary houses. With a few exceptions, their leaders came from the lower priestly circles and from among the educated laity. Some of these leaders were excellent orators, others were well versed in the Bible, and still others were poets and musicians. They created a new literature and virtually a new culture in the city during a period of some 70 years of peace and progress (1300-1370).

Unfortunately the literature, poetry, and art have not survived to our day; but Bishop Stefan, a literary opponent of the reformers, reveals some interesting things about them.

⁶ The chronicle does not indicate what the offender did, but it may be deduced that he attacked the abbot in person.

⁷ Kazakova and Lure, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

Said Stefan, advising Orthodox Christians to stay away from the *eretiki*, "Christ teaches us, instead of praying in the streets and the fields, to pray in secret places, and instead of boasting with the words of knowledge, to run away from the wisdom of men." ⁸ This declaration against the *eretiki* shows clearly that their preaching and praying appealed to a great many in the city. The direct interpretation of the Bible was a mighty rod in their hand. Stefan tried further to show that the Church has the gift of eternal life and that every one leaving the Church and following the new faith will experience eternal torment: "Therefore it is dangerous for a Christian to listen to the preaching of the *eretiki*, for he may be caught like a bird in the devil's hands, and thus be given to eternal torment." ⁹

Neither Stefan's rhetoric nor the threat of excommunication from the Church could stop the progress of those who considered the Bible as their sword against the enemy. In the year 1375, the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the nobility decided not only to stop the progress of the reformation, but to annihilate the movement completely. That year, persecution started suddenly and with great force. "Then," says the chronicle, "they killed the heretics; deacon Mikita, deacon Karp, and another man were pushed off the bridge." ¹⁰ Only these three men are mentioned in the chronicle as being drowned in the river Volhov, but a picture on the page facing the literary record shows five men in the water and two others being pushed from the bridge. It is probable that the persecution was of a more general character than just affecting a few leaders of the movement, for the Church was engaged with the *eretiki* for the next 100 years. In 1425, fifty years after the first wave of severe persecution and the above-mentioned execution of the Novgorod *eretiki*, there is evidence that the dissenters were still active. In that

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *A Complete Collection of Russian Chronicles*, IV, 72.

year the Metropolitan Archbishop Fotii, of Moscow, wrote a letter to the Novgorod authorities to thank them for taking firm measures against the *eretiki*. He also advised them to use any means in crushing the stubbornness of the false prophets.¹¹

After the execution of the leaders and persecution of their followers, the reformers still managed to gain new members. This naturally forced the hierarchy to look for new means of repression. Bishop Stefan recommended a new measure, banishment from the city: "Anyone criticizing the priesthood as the *eretiki* do should be banished from the city, for it is written 'Take the evil one from among you; a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.'"¹² It may be that this advice of Bishop Stefan was accepted, for some of the dissenters were banished from the city. In any case, the application of capital punishment, excommunication, banishment, and other brutalities appears to have almost destroyed the great reformation movement in Novgorod, for the historical sources of the second half of the 15th century are silent about it.

However, Novgorod was not the only place where heretical activity was known to Russian church history. As the persecutions continued in that city, many of the persecuted fled to other cities, including Moscow. Bishop Joseph, in his *Story of Heresy*, mentions the two "arch-heretics" Aleksei and Denis, who according to his account, "with many people whom they first made Jewish, fled from Novgorod."¹³ He then proceeds to tell how these two heretics found a shelter in a monastery near Moscow. The abbot of the monastery there, Zosima, being very sympathetic with the refugees, provided a place for some of them in his monastery quarters, while others settled in the city of Moscow itself.

¹¹ Grekulov, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

¹² Kazakova and Lure, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 147; *A Complete Collection of Russian Chronicles*, XI (Moscow, 1956), 58.

At this time Czar Ivan III sent Feodor Kuricin, one of his diplomats, on a special mission to Hungary and Moldavia. Kuricin's successful peace mission in Hungary led him to proceed to Moldavia (modern Rumania) for a similar political purpose. Meanwhile Poland started a war against Russia, and Kuricin and his men were unable to pass through Poland to get back to their home country. Kuricin then decided to go through Turkish Crimea, hoping to get home that way. When he arrived in Crimea, he was put in prison until instructions came from Istanbul to release him. Whether Kuricin came in touch with some European reformers while in Hungary or Moldavia, is unknown; but we know that immediately after his arrival in Moscow he identified himself with the reformation movement and soon became its leader.

Czar Ivan III was an ambitious ruler. His growing power had but one serious rival, the Church. He knew well that one of the two must yield to the other, and he determined to be the victor. The heresy movement—a chief internal problem of the Church—was therefore virtually welcomed by the Czar. His friend Kuricin, now the leader of the movement, introduced Alekseï, a refugee from Novgorod, to the Czar; and Alekseï took the opportunity to say a good word about Abbot Zosima in connection with the latter's generosity toward the refugees from Novgorod. As a result of this interview, Zosima became the Metropolitan Archbishop of Moscow, the head of the whole Russian Orthodox Church.

When Zosima occupied the chair as the primate of the Church, he immediately discouraged the persecution of the *eretiki* everywhere. Knowing that now both the Czar and the Metropolitan were friendly toward them, the *eretiki* launched a proselytizing activity as never before, preaching to everyone who would listen, their exposition of the Bible. Many joined the circle of these enthusiastic preachers of the Gospel. The chronicle supplies the names of many rich and well-educated people who did so. Just as in Novgorod, the leadership in Moscow was mostly of the lower priestly order while

some of the outstanding preachers and teachers were laymen. The chronicle mentions one "Ivasko Chernoi, who writes the books,"¹⁴ and Zubov, a rich businessman who had great influence among the business people.

Feodor Kuricin, Ivasko Chernoi, Zubov, and Protopresbyter Aleksei were not the only ones of the Moscow aristocracy to join the *eretiki*. Beside other names found in the chronicle, there is also a record which indicates that the Czar's daughter-in-law, Elena of Moldavia, was an active member of the *eretiki* circle. This is known from a letter written by Czar Ivan to the archbishop of Novgorod, who had pleaded with the Czar to take some measures against the movement. It is possible that there was a connection between the movement in Moscow and the reformation activity in Moldavia, for, as we have already mentioned, Kuricin had visited that kingdom just before becoming a reformer himself. Could it be, in fact, that Kuricin obtained his leaning toward reformation in Moldavia, the home of princess Elena?¹⁵

Now then, what was Metropolitan Zosima's role in the movement of the *eretiki*? As far as actual help or word of encouragement is concerned, there is no proof of Zosima's involvement on the side of the *eretiki*. But there is considerable material in the chronicles and in Zosima's personal letters to show that he at that time was not opposed to the teachings of the heretics, if not in complete sympathy with them. We have already mentioned that while he was still abbot of a monastery, he opened its doors and gates to the persecuted refugees from Novgorod. But this is not an evidence that he

¹⁴ This Moscow heretic was commissioned by the Czar to translate the Greek chronicles into Russian. He speaks of 24 men who were helping him in this project. The names he supplied seem to be identical with the names we meet in the pages of the history of the *eretiki*. This may have been the committee that provided the leadership for the movement.

¹⁵ The chronicle said "daughter-in-law" and "Elena," which would indicate that the crown-prince's wife Helen of Moldavia was a heretic. But the circumstances and chronology tend to single out Elena, the daughter of Ivan III.

was an *eretik* himself. As a person of a compassionate heart he may have been moved to extend his Christian love toward the lost brethren. On the other hand, an episcopal record pictures him as "Zosima, the wolf, the serpent, who denies the life after death, and who pays no respect to the holy images."¹⁶ The same author writes further with great personal disturbance about the mass movement of the heresy, saying:

All ask about faith, but they do not go to the prophets and apostles for information; they go to the *eretiki*, the enemies of Christ, the ones who are excommunicated from the Church by the acts of the Holy Synod. They go to the sons of the priests and to their sons-in-law. With them they are friends, eating and drinking, and learning of Judaism from the servant of the devil, the Metropolitan, where they stay day and night.¹⁷

The question of Zosima's heresy is one of the problems of history. Many investigations have been made by scholars to find out whether he was truly involved, and if so to what extent. Most of the material found against him is written by men who had no respect for historical accuracy, but had a purpose of slandering the Metropolitan. The loudest criticism came from the Church hierarchy in the places where the *eretiki* were successful in their propaganda, like Novgorod and Moscow. Gennadiï, the Archbishop of Novgorod, grew impatient with Zosima, because the former was not able to get official permission from the Metropolitan to persecute the *eretiki*. Therefore he made many slanderous accusations against Zosima. There were also others who, either because of their fanatical feelings against the *eretiki* or because of personal reasons, made such obvious and intentional slanders that they cannot be considered historically valid.

One thing is certain, namely, that Gennadiï was inclined to follow the measures of inquisition against the dissenters. He wrote to Zosima in 1490, "See, the French are able to hold their faith with a firm hand. An ambassador of the

¹⁶ Kazakova and Lure, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

king of Spain told me how they cleaned up the country from all heretics, and I sent you word about that.”¹⁸ When the Metropolitan ignored his request, Gennadii wrote a letter to the Czar, asking for permission to persecute with a firm hand. In his letter he assured the Czar that he would be competent in applying the measures of inquisition against the *eretiki* because he had received the fullest information of “how to do it” from some of his Spanish inquisitionist friends, especially from Torquemada, who in 15 years of faithful service to God had sent thousands from this world to either hell or heaven by burning and by using other methods of extermination.

Ivan III at this time did not appreciate Gennadii's proposition, and he replied that as a servant of Jesus Christ he should abstain from blood. Ivan advised him to find other methods which might discourage the *eretiki* in their fervent zeal for the new faith, without involving bloodshed. Ivan's reason for so advising was not his compassionate heart, but his ambition for absolute power, which at this time was in the hands of the Church. He could see his way clear only with the help of as many people as possible; so he counted the movement of the *eretiki* as one of the tools in his hands to achieve his purpose of transferring the desired power from the Church to the crown.

Receiving the answer from the Czar, Gennadii decided, nevertheless, to proceed as far as he could in persecuting the new faith, hoping to make an end of it in his territory. On the advice of his friends, who had experience in how to persecute, he called a synod to secure an official condemnation of the dissention. Having done this, he brought all the *eretiki* of the city and surrounding towns into the city of Novgorod and ordered that they take their clothes off and put on some old rags that were prepared for them. Then they were ordered to mount horses with their faces backward

¹⁸ *Grekulov, op. cit.*, p. 13.

and to hold signs over their heads with the words, "This is the army of Satan." In such condition they were taken around the city, after which the orthodox people took the *eretiki* outside the city in a field and there beat them as much as they could. At the end of the day's procedure they burned a few leaders to death, put others in prison, and banished the rest from the city.

Zosima, the Metropolitan of Moscow, as we have already mentioned, was a man of different disposition. He was a man of peace and humane tendencies. There is no evidence in the writings of his opponents that they had a notion of any heresy on his part during the first two years of his administration. But when the Church Synod of Moscow, in 1490, put some of the *eretiki* on trial for penetrating into the royal family with their new faith, Zosima pleaded with the bishops not to demand capital punishment. When the Synod refused to follow his advice, he dismissed the session and set the accused free. This seems to be the starting point of misunderstanding and hatred between the bishops and the Metropolitan. The situation of enmity against Zosima continued, and in 1494 he decided to abdicate as Metropolitan of Moscow and primate of the whole Russian Church. He retired to the monastery of St. Trinity. A picture in a chronicle depicts him as leaving his palace voluntarily to take up a peaceful life in a monastery.¹⁹

In 1503, nine years after Zosima's resignation, the Synod of Moscow convened again in order to find a solution regarding the *eretiki*. The Synod passed sentence against the leaders of the movement by sending Ivan Volk, Mikhail Konoplev, and Ivan Maksimov to be burned in Moscow. At the same time Nekras Rukavov was condemned to be burned in Novgorod. Some of the Moscow reformers were drowned, others killed by various means, and a great many were sentenced to be "put to dungeons to stay there as long as they live." Whether

¹⁹ Kazakova and Lure, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

this sentence of life imprisonment was actually carried out we do not know.²⁰

During the persecution of 1503 Gennadii, the archbishop of Novgorod, showed himself so inhumane that the Czar, who was opposed to the persecution, pressured Gennadii severely enough that Gennadii resigned from office in the following year. He tried to stay in Novgorod as long as he could, but the Czar ordered his banishment to a monastery where he did not desire to go. There are two chronicle pictures relating to Gennadii's banishment: one depicts his unwillingness to leave his palace while the Czar's soldiers push him out of the city gate, and the other shows his unhappy death in the monastery.²¹

Once the persecution had started in this inquisitorial fashion and received an official approval of the Church, it could not be stopped easily. Many *eretiki* were apprehended here and there and put to death by the local bishops, priests, and abbots. A few years later, anyone saying anything against the priesthood or the church was regarded as an *eretik*. A social worker named Maksim Grek was condemned as an *eretik* by the monks of a monastery. They put him into a dungeon where they kept him for six years under the most inhumane conditions. Finally he was brought to the Synod of Moscow to receive his sentence of death for "blasphemy against God and the holy Mother of God, and also for criticizing the holy Church and her holy laws." They put him in a very narrow and deep hole and left him there to die. Maksim's friends were also apprehended. One, Mikhail, was burned in the city of Kolomna, and another, Silvan, was choked by smoke in a monastery.²²

In 1551, at the centennial meeting of the Church Synod in Moscow, the bishops pleaded with the Czar for his help

²⁰ Grekulov, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

²¹ *A complete Collection of Russian Chronicles*, XII (Moscow, 1962), 28.

²² Grekulov, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

against the *eretiki*. The Czar answered their petition by a commitment against all forms of dissent. Because of this declaration, Abbot Artemiĭ wrote to the Czar asking him to reconsider his commitment on the ground that it was abused day by day by the priests and monks. This angered the priesthood. Had it not been for the Czar's intervention, the priests would have beheaded Artemiĭ, but they only sent him back to his monastery, together with a command to a newly appointed abbot "to keep him inside with a great care, in the cell of silence."²³

The Synod of 1554 sentenced "the godless heretic and apostate from the Orthodox Church," Matvei Baskin, who taught that the institution of slavery is against the basic principles of Christianity, and that the Church has no right to exploit the poor people. Because Christ said that only God is the Father, and all men are brothers, therefore, Baskin declared, a priest is not a father. He refused to venerate the images and rejected some other dogmas of the Church. Baskin was subjected to questioning and was declared an *eretik*. He was locked into a wooden cottage and burned together with it. As many of his disciples as the priests and monks could find were subjected to hard labor in different monasteries.²⁴

The bloody terror of the Church against the *eretiki* became common practice. Every day of the year someone somewhere in Russia was persecuted and terrorized by the Church or by civil authorities. And yet the Orthodox Church of Russia never admitted that it persecuted anyone.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

THE BRETHERN OF THE COMMON LIFE:
A REVIEW ARTICLE OF R. R. POST'S
THE MODERN DEVOTION

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The "Devotio Moderna," entitled *The Modern Devotion* in a recent book by R. R. Post (but perhaps more accurately to be translated as "The New Devotion"¹), was a spiritual movement which originated in the Netherlands toward the end of the 14th century. This movement, of which Gerard Groot (1340-84) is considered to have been the founder, consisted primarily of three related groups: the Brethren of the Common Life, the Sisters of the Common Life, and the Augustinian Canons Regular of the Congregation of Windesheim. Whereas Brethren Houses and Sister Houses were organized in somewhat semi-monastic fashion, the monasteries and convents of the Congregation of Windesheim were full-fledged monastic establishments. From its main early centers in or near Deventer and Zwolle in the Netherlands, the Devotio Moderna branched out to other places in the Low Countries and also into Germany. Although the movement had no foundations in France, it did make an impact on monastic reform there.²

The Brethren of the Common Life established schools in connection with certain of their houses. Also, members at times served as teachers in nearby city schools or church schools. In addition, the Brethren commonly maintained

¹ Etienne Gilson, *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1938 and later printings), refers to the "*Moderna devotio*, that is, the modern, or new devotion" on p. 89 and speaks of the movement several times as the "*New Devotion*" on pp. 92 and 94.

² See, e.g., Albert Hyma, *Renaissance to Reformation* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1951 and 1955), pp. 337-374.

dormitories or other housing for youth. In their care for youth, spiritual exercises were an important part of the daily program. The copying of books (particularly religious books) was also a significant activity of these youth.

Because of the ideals of the *Devotio Moderna*, it is frequently claimed that the movement opened the door for humanism and even paved the way for the Protestant Reformation. Among the various scholars who have taken note of the *Devotio Moderna*, Albert Hyma is undoubtedly the most prominent to do so in America. He produced a comprehensive study of the movement in a book entitled *The Christian Renaissance*, published in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1924. This book has been republished in an enlarged second edition in 1965 in Hamden, Connecticut. Hyma has also dealt with the movement in his *The Brethren of the Common Life* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1950), and he has given due note to it in other of his works such as *Renaissance to Reformation* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1951 and 1955) and *The Youth of Erasmus* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1931; New York, 1968). Some of Hyma's doctoral students, such as William M. Landeen and William Spoelhof, have done comprehensive studies on certain aspects of the movement as well.

In Europe, the late R. R. Post has been recognized as an outstanding authority on the *Devotio Moderna*. His various Dutch publications are well known to the specialists. In 1968, however, he published what is undoubtedly his most comprehensive survey of the *Devotio*. This book is in English and, as we have mentioned, carries the title *The Modern Devotion*. It was published as Volume III in the Brill series "Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought," edited by Heiko A. Oberman. This work of some 700 pages is of sufficient importance to deserve more than a brief review; hence the present review article. However, this article will have to be limited to three items: (1) a few general observations; (2) a consideration of the educational work of the

Brethren of the Common Life, and (3) some remarks about the *Imitation of Christ*.

I

Post in his *The Modern Devotion* divides the history of the Devotio Moderna into three periods—from its origin to about 1420, from about 1420 to about 1480 or 1485, and from about 1485 to the extinction of the movement toward the end of the 16th century. The Brethren, the Sisters, and the Windesheimers are each dealt with as a group during these three periods. Such a division would be useful if for no other purpose than to place the profuse material within manageable segments. However, the chronological arrangement has further significance in that the history of the Brotherhood falls easily into these periods. For instance, it is during the last period that the Brethren became truly active in the field of education.

Post's presentation of the historical source materials reveals his thorough mastery of these sources. Indeed, his competence in this regard represents by far the best part of this book. On the other hand, this publication has a polemical setting which tends to mar Post's evaluation of various data. He attacks the views of Paul Mestwerdt, G. Bonet-Maury, A. Hyma, Lewis W. Spitz, William Spoelhof, and others. These scholars, he feels, evaluate too highly the influence and contributions of the Brotherhood of the Common Life.

Post calls for more careful definition of what the Devotio Moderna was. He also indicates the need for a more critical evaluation of the sources dealing with this movement. There has been, as he points out, a certain looseness in treating the Devotio. Just who, for example, belonged to this movement, and of what did the movement consist? Throughout his book Post questions whether various individuals whom other scholars refer to as representative of the Devotio really should be considered a part of this movement. Does, for example, the mere fact that certain persons had spent

time in the dormitories or schools of the Brotherhood without joining the movement make them valid representatives of the *Devotio Moderna*? Post raises important questions here.

However, there is another side to the story too. Even though there may be need for more careful definition of the Brethren of the Common Life and of the *Devotio Moderna* in general, there is also necessity to avoid a wooden approach to the subject. After all, when we speak of the *Devotio Moderna* and its influence, are we necessarily to limit our discussion to individuals who formally became members of the movement? Or were not the ideals of the movement spread by individuals who had long and lasting contact with the *Devotio*, whether or not they became members of one of its three constituent groups? For example, did not friends and students of the Brotherhood of the Common Life, even though not necessarily formally joining this Brotherhood, proclaim its views and exemplify its piety? In dealing with the spread of ideas and ideals, as is involved in a study of the *Devotio Moderna*, one must consider the *indirect* as well as the direct lines of influence. Therefore although there is much to say in favor of Post's appeal for clear definition, there is also a good deal to say against his rather rigid method of applying it. Obviously, much of Post's dispute with various other scholars revolves around this very question of definition. Some of these other scholars may at times have failed to define clearly. But on the other hand, they may nevertheless have pictured the true dimensions of the *Devotio Moderna* more accurately than Post has done.

Another impression a reader gets from Post's new publication is that the author at times simply fights "straw men." Has he evaluated properly the discussions and viewpoints of the scholars he criticizes? To take but one example: On pages 15-17 Post refers to the first edition of Hyma's *Christian Renaissance* (it is unfortunate that he was evidently unaware of the second edition of 1965). After summarizing

Hyma's view in a fairly, but not totally, accurate way, Post goes on to draw the following conclusion:

This remarkable and interesting opinion imparts to the *Devotio Moderna* a world-historical significance. It gave rise to the Christian Humanism north of the Alps, improved education and caused the counter-Reformation (p. 16).

Such a statement reveals an obvious misunderstanding of Hyma, who is further misrepresented by Post's later remark: "Hyma also assumes that no piety or even inward meditation existed outside the circles of the *Devotio*" (p. 17).

A summary of the latter kind is most astounding! Hyma surely takes no such position, and I know of no other serious and competent scholar in the field who does so. But still, Post's attack on such supposed views furnishes a background for this particular publication. That this should be the case is indeed sad.

In spite of such shortcomings, however, any interested student of the *Devotio Moderna* may well take to heart Post's appeal for clearer definitions, careful evaluation of the sources, and accuracy in treating details. Moreover, this comprehensive study will undoubtedly become a classic in its field. It cannot be ignored by any serious student of the *Devotio Moderna*.

II

Post may be classified among those scholars who have done considerable service by revealing the fact that the Brethren of the Common Life had schools in connection with some of their foundations. Nevertheless, the treatment he gives to these schools in his *The Modern Devotion* is, on the whole, quite negative. First of all, the Brotherhood did not take a real interest in education until around 1480. Only two schools (and one of them a doubtful situation), he says, were founded by the Brotherhood before this time. Moreover, few among the Brothers (if any at all) were teachers until about this same time.

The situation, according to Post, was this: The Brethren of the Common Life were anti-intellectual. They at first devoted their time so exclusively to spiritual activities and to copying books that they did not engage in educational pursuits and teaching. In fact, since they did not normally earn Master's degrees they were unqualified for teaching posts. However, around 1480 things changed. Humanism was coming on the scene by that time and was making an impact on education. To some degree the Brethren felt the influence of this movement and participated in it. However, a major factor in developing their interest in teaching and operating schools was the arrival of printing. This made the copying of books by hand unprofitable, and the Brethren of the Common Life had to look for some other source of income. An illustration of the type of statement Post makes occurs in his presentation regarding the Brethren's school in Emmerich: "Here and there . . . around 1480, the Brothers underwent a change of ideas. Driven by economic necessity, they looked about them for new sources of income" (p. 419). This "economic necessity" sent them into the field of teaching!

Even so, however, their entry into the educational field was not significant, according to Post. He indicates that in many places where the Brethren had houses and built dormitories they neither taught in nearby schools nor operated schools of their own, and that in various places in the Netherlands and Germany where they did have schools, these schools were quite mediocre. In a few places such as Liège, however, the Brethren did operate schools of some importance. The Liège school, which opened around 1500, was by 1515 the one main school in that city and was supported by the city itself (p. 558). John Sturm, who attended this school from 1521 to 1524, used it as a pattern for his later educational reforms in Strassburg.

But in spite of Post's admission as to the importance of this school in Liège, and even though he quotes from a source

of the time calling this "the principal school of Liège," he adds the following statement in a more negative vein (p. 567):

Such was the success of the Brothers in the field of teaching. Their own boys in the *domus pauperum* also profited by the school, and their house was moved closer to the school in 1544. However, despite their successes, the Brotherhouse lost ground and the role of the Brothers was soon played out. They belonged to a different period. Teaching was incapable of imparting a different spirit unless the conditions of life were completely transformed. The Brothers' aspirations to simplicity, even simplicity carried to excess, rendered them unsuited to the teaching profession.

Two other foundations of the Brethren to whose educational activity Post gives more than usual attention are those of Utrecht (pp. 568-576) and Brussels (pp. 613-618). In both of these places the Brethren achieved contemporary control over at least a large segment of the educational program. But according to Post's findings the Brethren intended in these places merely to control the schools (at least for part of the time), rather than to teach in them. In Brussels, for example, where in 1491 they were given total direction of the "big school" for a period of nine years, they appointed two teachers. But these teachers, according to Post, probably were not Brothers of the Common Life for various reasons, including the fact that they are not designated as Brothers and the fact that they are called *magister*, whereas "up till now we have no example at all of any Brother studying at the university and gaining his master's degree" (see pp. 613-615).

One further foundation of the Brethren which deserves mention is the one at Magdeburg, especially because of Luther's contact with the Magdeburg Brethren (treated by Post on pp. 628-630).³ In this city Luther went to school during the year 1497-98. In fact, he specifically mentions in a later letter (of 1522) to Claus Storm that he (Luther) and Hans Reinecke went to school "to the Nullbrothers" (the

³ I have dealt with this in somewhat further detail in *Essays on Luther* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1969), pp. 107-111.

Brothers of the Common Life) in Magdeburg. It is difficult to understand this language as meaning anything other than that Luther had the Brethren of the Common Life as schoolteachers in that city. Some scholars, following Otto Scheel, have felt that Luther attended classes in the Cathedral School, where Brethren of the Common Life were supposedly teachers. Other scholars, following E. Barnikol, believe that the Brethren operated their own school in Magdeburg. William M. Landeen has presented an excellent study on the subject, and has pointed out that Luther remembered the Brethren as dominating the school he attended.⁴ Both Landeen and Scheel have indicated that Luther probably did not stay in a dormitory of the Brethren in Magdeburg but rather in a private home. If such were the case—and it seems very likely so—, any argument that the Brethren did not teach in Magdeburg and that Luther's contact with them was simply in a dormitory becomes suspect. Interestingly enough, this is precisely Post's conclusion.

Post's argument is as follows: Since the Magdeburg house of the Brethren was a new foundation from Hildesheim and "still entirely in the hands of the *fraters* from Hildesheim," the city of Magdeburg would not have tolerated a school of theirs running in competition to the city school (p. 629). Also, "it is difficult to imagine that the *fraters* from Hildesheim were competent to teach successfully." Thus the "only remaining solution is that the young Martin boarded with the Brothers and went to school elsewhere" (p. 630)! It must be stated that this "only remaining solution" appears to be based more on Post's preconceived ideas than on a careful evaluation of the data. Post's conclusion obviously makes nonsense out of Luther's remark that he went to school in Magdeburg "to the Nullbrothers," as well as of other

⁴ See Landeen, "The *Devotio Moderna* in Germany," Part III, in *Research Studies of the State College of Washington*, XXI (1953), 302-309.

evidence pertaining to the question. We may just add that it is unfortunate that Post seemed unaware of the extensive study on the educational work of the Brethren of the Common Life produced by Julia S. Henkel in 1962 and even of Landeen's work which appeared in print as early as 1953.⁵

Post seems to have become overly impressed with the idea that the Brethren of the Common Life were anti-intellectual and therefore not psychologically suited to be teachers. Actually, as we have noted, a major factor for their entering the field at all, according to him, was the economic necessity of finding other labor once their work of book copying became unprofitable. Indeed, in some of the literature emanating from the *Devotio Moderna*, including Thomas à Kempis' *Imitation of Christ*, there are statements indicating an emphasis on the spiritual, and a corresponding depreciation of purely intellectual pursuits.⁶ This does not, however, mean that all the Brethren were anti-intellectual. Furthermore, Post's thesis leaves some rather important questions unexplained:

(1) If the Brethren were so uninterested in, and even hostile to, educational activities prior to 1480, why the sudden change thereafter? Were these Brethren so changeable and opportunistic that economic considerations brought about a complete reversal of their type of activity? Or would it not be much more logical to assume that education was right in line with the work that they had already been doing as book copyists and disseminators of literature?

⁵ J. Henkel, *An Historical Study of the Educational Contributions of the Brethren of the Common Life* (Ph. D. Dissertation; University of Pittsburgh, 1962); and Landeen, *op. cit.* Mrs. Henkel has also provided an excellent chapter entitled "School Organizational Patterns of the Brethren of the Common Life," in Kenneth A. Strand, ed., *The Dawn of Modern Civilization: Studies in Renaissance, Reformation and Other Topics Presented to Honor Albert Hyma* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1962 and 1964), pp. 323-338, and reprinted in Strand, ed., *Essays on the Northern Renaissance* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1968), pp. 35-50.

⁶ An edition of the *Imitation* less anti-intellectual will be referred to shortly.

(2) If the Brethren of the Common Life were so out of harmony with the educational ideals of humanism, why did they even accept humanists into their fellowship? Is it not easier to suppose that the work the Brethren had already been doing tied in so beautifully with some of the ideals and aims of humanism (particularly, Northern Humanism) that the two went hand in hand?

(3) The homeland of the *Devotio Moderna*—the towns of Deventer and Zwolle in the Netherlands—seems to have been considered by Post as a rather backward area. Certainly, these towns were not at the center of humanistic influence. But when we analyze the incunabula produced in them we find a situation which Post could well have taken into account: a remarkable interest in classical literature. During the 15th century, presses in these two cities printed some 600 to 700 editions (an astounding publication record!), well over 100 of which were classical works. By way of contrast, the output of incunabula in England was only one-fifth of that for the Low Countries and but two-thirds of that for the city of Deventer alone. England's output of incunabula classics was only about one-third of that of Deventer. Furthermore, Deventer and Zwolle produced more classics during the 15th century than did France and French-speaking Switzerland together. There is reason to believe that influence of the Brethren was involved in the publication interests of Deventer and Zwolle.⁷ Certainly Post could have taken these publication interests into account.

⁷ I have dealt with this in *Dawn of Modern Civilization*, pp. 344, 345 (reprinted in *Essays on the Northern Renaissance*, pp. 54, 55). See also Ludwig Schulze, "Brüder des gemeinsamen Lebens," in *Realenc. für Prot. Theol. und Kirche*, 3rd ed., III (1897), 481, regarding the Brethren's support of the printer Paffraet. And for detailed statistics regarding the publications in Deventer and Zwolle, see Albert Hyma, "Erasmus and the Reformation in Germany," *Medievalia et Humanistica*, VIII (1954), 100, as well as the various catalogs I mention in n. 17 on pp. 352, 353 of *Dawn* (p. 62 of *Essays on the Northern Renaissance*).

III

One of the most important productions of the Devotio Moderna is the *Imitation of Christ*. This work deserves mention here because of its great impact on later generations. It has appeared in thousands of editions in many languages and is today still a best seller. In his *The Modern Devotion* Post reviews some of the more recent treatments of the *Imitation of Christ* and its authorship (pp. 521-536). He dismisses Jacobus van Ginneken's thesis that Gerard Groote was the author. He mentions Albert Hyma's suggestion that Gerard Zerbolt, a later contemporary of Groote and one of the pioneers of the Brotherhood at Deventer, was the author, but finally resolves his treatment of the authorship to the question of whether Gerson of the University of Paris or Thomas à Kempis wrote the *Imitation*. As for himself, he accepts the Kempist position. This is, of course, the standard position as regards the *traditional* version of the *Imitation of Christ*.

Unfortunately, Post's discussion of the *Imitation of Christ* and its authorship does not do full justice to the work itself. Post has failed to recognize the material now available to indicate that there was a forerunner to the Kempist version. Professor Hyma has discussed this matter in detail in his book *The Brethren of the Common Life*, mentioned by Post in another context but not adequately utilized at this point. Unfortunately, Post also seems to have been unaware of Hyma's English translation of the text of Book I of the *Imitation* as found in the Eutin manuscript.⁸

An important point to note here is the vast difference of emphasis of the Eutin and traditional texts. Many examples of variance between the texts have been called to attention by Hyma, and a comparison of both the chapter titles and the text itself makes clear that the Eutin version is much less ascetic, monastic, and anti-intellectual in its outlook

⁸ Hyma, *The Imitation of Christ* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1950).

than is the traditional Kempist version. Further evidence has been forthcoming to support the thesis of an earlier form of the *Imitation of Christ* than that of Thomas à Kempis—evidence of which Post again seems to have been unaware.⁹

The question of the original version of the *Imitation*, as I have implied earlier, is not unrelated to that of Post's view of the Brethren's attitude toward education. If the emphasis of the Kempist version is considered normative for the Brethren, then one might suspect that school-teaching would be alien to them. But recognition of the earlier version (or versions), plus other writings and activities of pioneer members of the Brotherhood, would lead one to believe that the Brethren were not so anti-intellectual and unsuited to be teachers as Post would have us believe.

IV

In conclusion, it may be said that Post's *The Modern Devotion* is excellent for presentation of a vast store of information on the Brethren of the Common Life, and it is well documented. The unfortunate aspects of the book include its polemical setting, its inadequate treatment of the educational contributions of the Brethren of the Common Life, and its failure to make any significant contribution regarding the *Imitation of Christ*. Nevertheless, as indicated earlier, this book is undoubtedly destined to become a standard work in its field. It cannot be ignored by anyone wishing to do scholarly work in that field.

⁹ Hyma and Richard L. DeMolen will be publishing an excellent study of this evidence, and they will include a new English translation of the *Imitation*.

BOOK REVIEWS

Atkinson, James, *The Great Light: Luther and the Reformation*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1968. 287 pp. \$ 5.00.

This book is Volume IV in "The Advance of Christianity through the Centuries" series edited by F. F. Bruce. The title may give the impression that the book deals almost exclusively with Luther. Rather, it treats the Protestant Reformation quite broadly. Nevertheless, there is a particular emphasis on Luther which possibly justifies the title. The book is divided into four parts, Part I entitled "Luther and the German Reformation" covering nearly half of the main text (pp. 11-125). The other parts of the volume are as follows: "Zwingli and the Swiss Reformation" (pp. 129-155), "Calvin and the Establishment of Protestantism" (pp. 159-190), and "The Reformation in Britain" (pp. 193-261).

Luther probably deserves the emphasis he receives, inasmuch as he may be considered the great pioneer in the Protestant Reformation. Main attention is given to his thought and to a summary of some of his writings. On the other hand, biographical material is often quite sketchy. While many valuable insights are provided regarding Luther's thought and theological development, the exceptionally negative approach to the church of Luther's time must be questioned. Was there no background within Roman Catholicism itself toward reformation prior to Luther's arrival on the scene? What is to be said regarding the activities of humanists, mystics, the *Devotio Moderna*, the Conciliar Movement, and like groups?

Though the brevity of the treatment of Zwingli can be understood, the fact that more space is not devoted to Calvin is rather puzzling. That a considerable portion of the book is devoted to the British Reformation is natural inasmuch as this publication is part of a series originating in Great Britain and would therefore tend to emphasize developments there. One cannot but wonder, however, at a chapter title such as this (Chapter 14): "Scotland: Saviour of the Reformation." Does not such a title (and indeed the intent of the chapter itself) perhaps overplay the role of Scotland in the British Reformation?

A notable lack in this book is a discussion of those groups that are often called the "Sects." The present reviewer feels that the Anabaptists and even the various Puritan groups in England have hardly been given adequate treatment.

In closing, it must be said that although *Luther and the Reformation* shows somewhat of an imbalance in the treatment of its coverage, the insights which it furnishes in various areas are well worth the

attention of any reader. The style is lucid and the book makes enjoyable reading for the layman as well as the scholar.

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KENNETH A. STRAND

Betz, Otto, *What Do We Know About Jesus?* Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1968. 126 pp. \$ 1.65.

This book was originally published in German in 1965 when Betz was at Chicago Theological Seminary. He has recently returned to teach at Tübingen. Betz has contributed much in Qumran studies and his major contribution in this book is based on the background provided by the Qumran texts to the understanding of Jesus' messianic claim.

Books about Jesus are written today more or less from two points of view: from the basic acceptance of Bultmann's skepticism concerning what can be known about Jesus (including the new questers), and from a generally optimistic viewpoint which, while quite remote in spirit and method from the old liberalism, finds much more historical material in the Gospels than do Bultmann and his followers. The latter generally base their conclusions on Jewish backgrounds such as rabbinic sources and the Qumran scrolls. Betz falls in this latter camp.

In fact, in his opening chapter Betz takes to task Bultmann and even the new questers (rightly I believe) for neglecting the study of archaeological data including the Dead Sea Scrolls for the understanding of Jesus, and also for their preoccupation with form criticism. On the latter point, Betz attacks the criterion of dissimilarity as being too rigidly applied, since he finds it quite natural that similarity of ideas should be shared both by the church and Jesus and by the Jews and Jesus. And yet this criterion is useful to demonstrate the absolute authenticity of Jesus' teachings, *e.g.*, he finds that because the concept "of the rule of God" is rare in the OT and apocalyptic writings, totally absent in the Qumran Scrolls, and seldom used by Paul and the rabbis, "for these reasons alone there can be no doubt that the concept is an intrinsic part of Jesus' message" (p. 34).

Betz deals with "the bedrock of fact" in the activity of Jesus. He finds as primary background for the understanding of Jesus John the Baptist and the Qumran sect with their common eschatological expectation. The authentic activity of Jesus is set off against this common eschatological hope. The criterion of dissimilarity is invoked throughout. The miracles of Jesus are authentic and "can be deduced even from the Jewish polemic which called him a sorcerer" (p. 58). The criterion of similarity also seems to be invoked, though not explicitly. However, it is surprising that so little is written to establish the authenticity of the miracles of Jesus when Betz's objective is to do just this thing.

Against Bultmann who sees the miracles of Jesus along Hellenistic

lines, Betz would explain them out of the OT. Jesus is seen as the new Moses or David. Thus the stilling of the storm and the drowning of the herd of swine is analogous to the dividing of the Red Sea and the drowning of the Egyptians. The same OT events are the background for the walking on the water and the sinking of Peter. The feeding of the multitude finds its counterpart in the feeding of Israel with manna. These are signs, not of physical deliverance, but of spiritual deliverance. They mark the end of the devil's rule.

Betz is not satisfied with merely showing the general historical reliability of the facts of Jesus' life; he attacks the very citadel of historical criticism, *i.e.*, the denial of messianic consciousness in Jesus. To the question, why was Jesus crucified? Betz answers, because he claimed to be the Messiah. All other reasons are inadequate to account for his death by crucifixion at the hands of the Romans. He rejects the explanation that the church historicized its confession which only developed after the resurrection. Betz's attempt to show the existence of Jesus' messianic consciousness is the most original part of his work and also the most controversial. He leads up to his explanation by referring to Schweitzer's questions concerning the progression of events at the night trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin: "How did the High Priest know that Jesus claimed to be the Messiah? Why was the attempt first made to bring up a saying about the temple which could be interpreted as blasphemy in order to condemn him on this ground?" To these questions Betz adds, "Why was Jesus' messianic claim accounted blasphemous?" (p. 88)

The answers to all these questions Betz finds through the study of a fragmentary Qumran text in which the prophecy of Nathan (2 Sam 7) is applied to the Messiah. The saying about the temple was first used against him because 2 Sam 7 is used messianically in the Qumran fragment, and since in Nathan's prophecy the Son of David is to build a temple, such a claim would be equivalent to claiming Messiahship. Therefore, the high priest's query was a logical deduction out of the previous charge. If he would build a temple, he must claim to be the Son of the Blessed, and as such involves God's honor. But "a powerless person who maintains that he is the Messiah blasphemes Almighty God, and in the eyes of the Jews blasphemy is the worst of all crimes" (p. 89). Jesus answers the question affirmatively and thus blasphemes according to the high priest, but points toward his future sitting on the right hand of God. Thus all the questions raised above are answered and the logical progression of events becomes clear. For Betz the passage in Mk 14: 53-62, with the help of the Qumran fragment, is thus sufficient to show that Jesus knew himself to be the Messiah (p. 92).

Nathan's prophecy also serves to explain how readily the disciples could understand him as the Messiah at his resurrection. The resurrection merges into two conceptions, the restoration to life and the exaltation to his enthronement. Like David, Jesus was anointed sometime before he was enthroned. Thus, Easter has a continuity with the

earthly life of Jesus. His exaltation is the expected result of his anointing.

There are several questions raised by Betz's discussion. He seems at times to grasp at straws. His explanation that the drowning of the swine is analogous to the drowning of the Egyptians seems far-fetched. His legitimate desire to find Jesus' miracles reflecting those of Moses has gone too far. Peter's sinking as reflecting that of Nahson, the son of Aminadab, seems equally far-fetched. To conclude that Paul understood the Son of man in Daniel 7 as the community on the basis of I Cor 6: 2 is to take too many things for granted.

Betz interprets the temple which Jesus builds as the eschatological community. He bases it mainly on Mk 14: 58 (given wrongly as 14: 53 on p. 91), which is slim evidence for this interpretation, since it is not an interpretation of Jesus or the community, but a charge made by his enemies and it itself does not say (even if we accept it as an authentic statement of Jesus) what is the thing that is made without hands. The interpretation in John 2: 21 referring to his body seems more appropriate in all the passages where reference is made to the statement. It is, therefore, tenuous at best to connect it with Mt 16: 18.

And finally, to come to Betz's major point, to use the Qumran fragment on 2 Sam 7 as the explanation for Mk 14: 53-62 is to read into the passage, and especially into the high priest's procedures and questions, an eschatological understanding of 2 Sam 7 which the disciples themselves did not yet have and which would have been difficult for the high priest to have. It is questionable whether Betz's solution, via the Qumran fragment, can be accepted without further substantiation.

Betz's method is to find the key to the explanation of Jesus' acts in the OT with the help of the Qumran material, which gives us an indication of how messianic movements understood and interpreted the OT. Betz rejects the Hellenistic "divine man" as a model for the miracle-working Jesus. He also rejects Hellenistic derivation and origin for Christological titles such as Saviour and Lord. Perhaps Betz is basically correct, but one wonders if the Gospels do not reflect what does in fact happen in real life when cultures meet and mix and the meanings of words and ideas blend and become fused. Thus while Bultmann may have overestimated Hellenistic influence, Betz may very well have underestimated it. Nevertheless, his thesis that more consideration needs to be given to the milieu of Jesus, especially the Qumran Scrolls, is basically sound, and by this means he has not only given us new insights, but has helped us to see the plausibility of accepting more historical matter in the life of Jesus than the method of the Bultmannians allows.

Borsch, Frederick Houk, *The Son of Man in Myth and History*. "The New Testament Library." Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967. 431 pp. \$ 8.50.

The derivation of the expression "Son of Man" in the Gospels has intrigued and plagued scholars through the years. To the question of derivation is related the question of the authenticity of the Son of Man sayings in the mouth of Jesus. These two problems have been attacked anew, the latter by Tödt and the former by Borsch, Assistant Professor of NT Literature and Languages at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary.

What Borsch has accomplished had to be done sooner or later. OT scholars had explored the influence of Near Eastern kingship ideology on the OT, especially the Psalms, and had found many references which they thought could be explained only by this influence. In the royal rites the king battles against the forces of darkness and evil. He at first suffers defeat but cries for help and is saved. He then overcomes the powers of evil, is adopted as a divine son and is enthroned. Borsch identifies the king of this myth in a sweeping manner with the First Man, the Messiah, the Suffering Servant, the Heavenly Man, and the Son of Man, and utilizes this general mythical-ritual background as the derivation for the expression "Son of Man" in the Gospels.

Therefore, while others find the derivation of the expression in Ezekiel, Daniel, or Enoch, Borsch finds it in a wider background of ideas current and alive in Jesus' day, and he insists that these three books themselves are dependent on this background.

In the face of major catastrophes such as the fall of the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Babylonian captivity of Judah, the periodic renewal obtained through the annual ritual could no longer make sense. These catastrophes led to the idea of a renewal at the end of time or the "eschatologizing of the myth." The circle was stretched out into a line. With this linear perspective, the royal First Man became more important.

The actual background of the Son of Man in the Gospels is not normative Judaism, since there was no suffering messianic figure in its theology. Instead Borsch finds his evidence for this idea in a "number of Jewish-oriented sects which practiced forms of baptism as an ordination/coronation rite and which were likely open to at least a measure of *foreign* (or simply indigenous but non-Jewish) influences" (p. 218). His explanation for the disuse of the expression is interesting if not entirely convincing. The baptizing sectarian movement existed on the northern and eastern fringes of Palestine while the Church was centered in Jerusalem, and the NT is a record of the western thought of Christianity. Since the movement was not in the mainstream of the Church as it developed, its influence was curtailed in the later NT period. Later on he adds as a further explanation, that the myth had become reality, and therefore had no meaning in itself

apart from the reality. More meaningful expressions were substituted. Paul is an example of one who has refashioned the Son of Man idea into that of the Second Adam.

With this as the background for the Son of Man sayings, Borsch sees Jesus consciously fulfilling the role of the mythical Son of Man. Inspired by the myth, he became "involved in demythologization"; that is, by the actions of his own life, he sought to "seek to penetrate to the reality which the myth had always been striving to enshrine" (p. 404). But why is this myth, prevalent in Near Eastern societies, so important, almost prophetic and archetypal? Borsch considers the myth as something God-inspired, not simply accidental but providential, revealing the true aspirations and hopes of the human race.

Borsch's biggest problem is to make the Son of Man myth so dominating in the thinking of Jesus when the evidence seems so scant. Where other scholars have to go to an isolated expression in Daniel, or passages of questionable authenticity in Enoch, or a somewhat general address in Ezekiel, Borsch finds this myth so general that it forms the background for all these books and for the sayings of Jesus. Throughout Borsch argues carefully and adroitly for his thesis, but one cannot help noticing the following expressions at the crucial moments of his arguments: "We shall not claim that we can fully bridge this gap in time [4th cent. B.C.-1st cent. A.D.] (though it ought to be remembered that lacunae in our knowledge are not necessarily equivalent with gaps in this historical knowledge)" (pp. 134, 135). Speaking of the Son of Man setting in the time of Jesus, he says, "Obviously, too, it is hardly likely that this should be a well-known and well documented context" (p. 176), and again, "Yet it is to be admitted that this question cannot be answered to our complete satisfaction" (p. 177). Speaking of the Fourth Evangelist, he writes "Perhaps he knew of a tradition which spoke of the food given by the Son of Man and conducive to new life or of the offering of the flesh and blood (life or self) of the Son of Man which he then interpreted in the light of the contemporary practice" (p. 299). Regarding the bringing in of the story of David in Mk 2: 27, he says, "It is possible to guess that there may once have been a profound relationship in the context of the Man speculations" (p. 323). "Doubtless some will find this kind of an approach to an answer to be unsatisfactory, and we ourselves admit to having been tempted to opt for a theory which would be more definitive" (p. 360).

Considering the evidence that Borsch had to work with, he has made a remarkable case for his point of view. Perhaps the necessary documents will be discovered (see p. 400) which will sustain his position, but this is highly unlikely. Until such a time, his thesis must be considered as an interesting possibility.

Bright, John, *The Authority of the Old Testament*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1967. 272 pp. \$ 5.50.

The James A. Gray Lectures are held annually at the Divinity School of Duke University for the benefit of the Methodist pastors of North Carolina. It was the privilege of this reviewer to listen to the author when he delivered the substance of the present book in 1959. My recollection is that Bright impressed me with his integrity in defending the possibility of objective exegesis and the binding nature of biblical authority in the midst of an intellectual community which, even though geographically well within the Bible Belt, is not conservative in outlook. Bright built his case with what, at the time, seemed enough reasonableness to demand attention.

Reading *The Authority of the Old Testament* eight years later, this reviewer must confess disappointment with the almost naive superficiality of the first part of the book. Yet it says some things that probably needed to be said at the level in which they are stated. A word is necessary against Christian preaching that uses the OT in much the same way it uses anthologies of illustrations. Chapter 1 is designed to establish the nature of the problem, which is finally defined as consisting of establishing in what sense the OT is "authoritative for the Christian in matters of faith and practice" (p. 57). But Bright felt obliged to discuss the general question of religious authority and the more specific question of biblical authority before asking the question in terms of the OT. Thus, denying that the final authority over the Christian is a *book*, Bright makes clear that "the God of the Bible is the Christian's supreme authority in all senses of the word" (p. 31). Yet Bright wishes to insist that the book is "the final authority to be appealed to in all matters of belief and practice" (p. 23). This is the "historic Protestant tradition," and to step outside it is "dangerous in the extreme" (p. 38).

When it comes to the very significant role of the Church in the production and the canonization of the NT, Bright reacts to the Catholic recognition and use of this fact and thus overlooks much current scholarship, almost making the reader think that the author of the NT was the inspired apostle Paul. To say that "the New Testament was not produced by the Church corporately and anonymously" (p. 37) only serves to raise in the reader the question whether this is also true of the OT, and brings to mind some of the positive contributions of form-criticism. In order to maintain that "in establishing the canon the church did not create a new authority, but rather acknowledged and ratified an existing one" (p. 38), one needs better support than that provided by F. V. Filson's *Which Books Belong in the Bible?*

Bright's foes are Marcionism, subjectivism, and moralizing. How to escape from the first is relatively clear, but one wonders whether, if the OT is to be used in the Christian pulpit, the possibility of avoiding the other two is real, especially if the use which the NT

writers made of the OT is to be taken seriously. Underlying Bright's plea for objectivity is a static view of authority. In his defense of the authoritative nature of those OT passages which cannot be used for moralizing, the argument seems to be: They are authoritative because they are there. And when Bright emphasizes that it is the theology which informs these passages that is authoritative, and then honestly asks whether this theology is not given better expression in the NT, he finds himself in a difficult position out of which he is able to maneuver only by the process of eschatologizing, a process which is both subjective and moralizing.

All in all, Bright has provided a good primer for pastors wishing to use the OT in preaching, but he has not significantly advanced us toward a solution to the problem of the authority of the OT.

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Bube, Richard H., ed., *The Encounter Between Christianity and Science*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1968. 318 pp. \$ 5.95.

This volume consists of a series of essays on the topic indicated by its title. It appears to be a book by Christians of evangelical stance. The editor, who is Professor of Materials Science and Electrical Engineering at Stanford University, is responsible for the first four chapters, which are introductory: "The Nature of Science," "The Nature of Christianity," "Natural Revelation," and "Biblical Revelation." He also is author of a later chapter dealing with "Physical Science." Other contributors are as follows: "Astronomy" by Owen Gingerich, "Geology" by F. Donald Eckelmann, "Biological Science" by Walter R. Hearn, "Psychology" by Stanley E. Lindquist, and "Social Science" by David O. Moberg. The various writers are specialists in the respective fields with which they deal. The treatment in each instance is necessarily brief, as imposed by the nature of the book itself: (1) coverage of some six different "sciences" (broadly defined) precludes much attention to any one area, and (2) the treatment given to each area is related to matters of concern to conservative or evangelical Christians. But in spite of such limitations, a good deal of ground in each field has nevertheless been covered and much useful information has been provided.

The Foreword to this book was prepared by A. van der Ziel, Professor of Electrical Engineering at the University of Minnesota. He states that the book "is an attempt by several scientists . . . to relate their scientific work to their Christian faith," and that the authors "show that their science and their faith do not battle against each other, but that they mutually enrich and complement each other. The harmony thus achieved is not attained by rejecting major parts of

the Christian doctrine or the scientific endeavor, but by accepting the basic tenets of Christianity and by keeping an open attitude to *all* aspects of science" (p. 5). Van der Ziel further suggests that this book "should be read by those who fear and distrust modern science as an obstacle to Christian faith; they may then learn that their fear and distrust are unfounded. It should be read equally by those who have abandoned vital aspects of Christianity because of their views in science; they may then see that they were too hasty in their actions" (*loc. cit.*).

The purpose in writing this book is worthy. Moreover, the information it presents is good for all Christians to know—and especially for those who are prone either to spurn science or to quote outdated scientific data. This book does not furnish an abundance of scientific information (it could not possibly do so within its scope), but it does at least make the reader aware of the need to keep up to date. New things are continuously happening in the scientific world. One may ponder, for example, a statement from the editor's field (written as long ago as a decade, for that matter!), which refers to "heavy holes" and "negative mass" (p. 193).

But whether this book will really help to remove fear and distrust of Christians who look upon modern science as "an obstacle to Christian faith" is doubtful. In fact, many conservative Christians will undoubtedly feel that some of these authors have "sold out" to the theory of organic evolution. On the other hand, one can also wonder how effective this presentation will be in reaching "those who have abandoned vital aspects of Christianity because of their views in science."

There are, in the opinion of this reviewer, several deficiencies in this book which should be called to attention: (1) This work, though entitled "The Encounter Between Christianity and Science," includes not so much as one chapter by a professional theologian! The fact that the authors do indeed show a fairly good acquaintance with Christian theology hardly compensates for this deficiency. (2) Each author deals with a specific scientific field, but there is no serious attempt at overall correlation or synthesis. There is, of course, a common goal which is manifest throughout, but in reading this book one gets the feeling that he is dealing with an encounter between Christianity and "Sciences" rather than with an encounter between Christianity and "Science." To present a synthesis of this sort when treating fields that themselves often stay quite apart is not an easy task. Nevertheless, for a work of this kind should it not at least have been attempted? (3) Although the authors place a welcome emphasis on theologically changing attitudes which differentiate between Biblical truth and mere human interpretation of the Bible, they seem largely to ignore similar development (or the need for such development) in the sciences. It seems curious to the present reviewer, for example, that the chapter on "Psychology" rather than one on "Biology" or other pure sciences should be the one *in a book of this sort* to emphasize the tentativeness of scientific knowledge (p. 238).

One wonders at times if some of these authors are so close to their fields that they fail clearly to distinguish between what is sure and what is tentative there. Or perhaps what appears to be a somewhat one-sided emphasis stems from an apologetic concern to give a certain class of conservative Christians a better appreciation of the value of scientific inquiry and to extirpate from those Christians' minds the belief that their own theological views are necessarily identical with Biblical truth.

In closing, we wish to state that this book is in many ways a very good book. It deserves to be read, and to be read seriously. Certain emphases which recur throughout the book are valuable correctives. Three come immediately to mind: (1) Scientific evidence should be given serious consideration by Christians, not simply explained away because of preconceived theological assumptions. (2) It should be recognized that religious doctrines (even those of long standing) are not necessarily equivalent to Biblical truth. (3) Hermeneutically, it is improper to utilize Bible texts to answer questions which are irrelevant to the content and context of those texts and to the topic and purpose of the Bible writer who wrote them.

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KENNETH A. STRAND

Conzelmann, Hans, *Grundriss der Theologie des Neuen Testaments*. "Einführung in die evangelische Theologie," Band 2. München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1967. 407 pp. DM 28.00.

This "Outline of the Theology of the New Testament" is the first Protestant NT theology to appear in Germany since the publication of Bultmann's theology about two decades ago. Conzelmann himself is a scholar of the Bultmann school and belongs to the circle of scholars who since 1954 have become known as the post-Bultmannians. Therefore it would seem almost natural to observe in what ways Conzelmann's NT theology differs from that of his mentor. This work was written "as a textbook [Lehrbuch] for students" (p. 14) designed to introduce the reader into the present state of the discipline of NT theology. The author makes no attempt to be exhaustive in the citation of past and current literature on the various subjects and problems. Yet the short bibliographies of important studies at the beginning of each new section are extremely helpful in that they introduce the reader to what has been done most recently in those areas. One finds works published as recently as 1967.

Conzelmann's understanding of NT theology becomes apparent in the method and structure of his undertaking just as clearly as Bultmann's view can be read from the structure of his book. The author does not open in the fashion of Bultmann with a section on presuppositions. Instead he presents the material with which NT theology works, namely the kerygma of the earliest church and

the Hellenistic church. This means that Conzelmann rejects the attempts which open with a reconstruction of the teachings of Jesus. He believes that he must start with the kerygma itself where the motifs of NT theology are first available. Thus the "new quester" Conzelmann does not criticize Bultmann for relegating the message of the historical Jesus to the mere "presuppositions" of NT theology, but eliminates it altogether as a basis for NT theology. He believes that he must exclude the question of the historical Jesus on grounds of methodology. Although he affirms that the work of Jesus of Nazareth is the *Bedingung* (presupposition) of church, faith and theology, the basic problem of NT theology for Conzelmann is the question, "Why did faith after the appearances of the Risen One hold on to the identity of the Exalted one with Jesus of Nazareth?" (p. 16). Thus the problem of NT theology is not the question of how the Proclaimer became the Proclaimed. In view of the fact that Conzelmann places a different emphasis on the basic question of NT theology, we must ask the fundamental question whether or not the kerygma of the church is in essential continuity with the life and message of Jesus of Nazareth. Merely to affirm this continuity as Conzelmann does is not enough; it needs explication. In order to demonstrate that the kerygma interpreted Jesus adequately and correctly, within a theology of the NT we must explicate what is inherent in the person, proclamation, and deeds of Jesus of Nazareth, so that faith in Christ is actually grounded in Jesus himself. In other words, this reviewer argues that it is a methodological necessity that first the question of "how" (*wie*) must be answered within the framework of a NT theology before the question of "why" (*warum*) can be given consideration.

Main Part I treats "The Kerygma of the Earliest Church and the Hellenistic Church" (pp. 43-112). As this title indicates, Conzelmann does not distinguish clearly, as Bultmann does, between the kerygma of the earliest church and that of the Hellenistic church. He believes thereby "to overcome the alternative whether the unity or diversity within the New Testament is to be stressed" (p. 25). This procedure would then give room to the "historical manifoldness" and at the same time the "unity" would appear in the theology's relation to its subject matter, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ witnessed to in the kerygma. This part is interesting insofar as Conzelmann appears to be less sure than Bultmann in the reconstruction of the kerygma of the earliest church and the Hellenistic church, for both are now treated together. This seems to be a reflection of more recent research which indicates that things were more fluid and less distinct than Bultmann had supposed.

The second main part, entitled "The Synoptic Kerygma" (pp. 113-172), is an addition to the outlines of Bultmann's theology, which is on the whole reflected in Conzelmann's work. According to Bultmann's concept of a NT theology one can not yet speak of theology in the Synoptics. Conzelmann goes beyond Bultmann here. While the latter was still dominated by the original perspective of form-criticism,

which sought to search primarily for single units of tradition, the former, under the influence of redaction-criticism, points out that the kerygma is not only interpreted by means of terminological conceptions as in Paul and John, but also through the historical narratives of the Synoptics. Thus Conzelmann proceeds to present the Synoptic kerygma as it is available as a result of the history of the transmission of tradition (*Traditionsgeschichte*), and then asks for the authentic kernel of each tradition. After having outlined the common basic conception of God in the Synoptics, he treats the thematic topics of eschatology, ethics, and Christology. "Jesus does not expressly teach, who he is. . . . After his death this indirect Christology becomes transformed into the direct one of the faith of the church" (p. 146). On this last point the new quester Conzelmann does not go beyond Bultmann in maintaining that the implicit Christology of the teaching of Jesus has become explicit in the kerygma of the post-Easter church.

The third main part is devoted to the "Theology of Paul" (pp. 173-314). In order to avoid the misunderstanding to which Bultmann's existential interpretation of Paul's theology under the categories of "man prior to the revelation of faith" and "man under faith" may lead, namely anthropology, Conzelmann attempts to develop the theology of Paul more along the line of historical developments "as interpretation of the original *texts* of faith, *i.e.*, the oldest formulations of the credo" (p. 13). At this point we recognize again how much Conzelmann endeavors to work out his Pauline theology as well as the entire NT theology in terms of the present-day understanding of the history of the transmission of tradition. Over against Bultmann's "chemically purified distillate" (p. 180), which short-changes the sacraments, the conception of parousia and the end of the world, the theme of the OT, Israel and salvation history, and predestination, Conzelmann takes as his starting point for Pauline theology the imparting of the gift of righteousness from God. "This imparting cannot be experienced, but can only be heard and believed. Theology is the understanding of this process" (p. 185).

Main Part IV is called "The Development after Paul" (pp. 315-348). This section, in distinction from Bultmann who placed it after the section on Johannine Theology, comes immediately after the theology of Paul. Conzelmann attempts to avoid the value judgment of Bultmann's procedure which suggests that the high level of Pauline and Johannine theology was not maintained by later developments. He feels that this value judgment is reflected in today's uncritical use of "nascent catholicism" (*Frühkatholizismus*). He rejects the notion of "nascent catholicism" whenever there is still a *Traditionsgedanke* at work, thus refusing to follow the lead of Käsemann, Marxsen and others. His key to the theology of the period after Paul is "the self-consciousness of the third generation" (p. 319). This is not a key to "development," for "there is no logical consistency of casual legality" to be traced. Yet continuity is maintained in that the historical

movement of the church is determined by the authoritative teachings which are handed on. Therefore, "all theological themes of this period can be reduced to the following common denominator: A new stage of *reflexion* is reached" (p. 320, italics his). This stage of "reflexion" must, of course, again be understood in terms of the history of the transmission of tradition, which is determinative for Conzelmann.

The last main part is devoted to "John" (pp. 349-390). After the historical position of the Johannine writings is discussed, Johannine Christology is treated, which in turn is followed by a section on the "world and man." This sequence indicates that here Conzelmann is less dependent on Bultmann. Though the latter speaks unhesitatingly of "Gnostic dualism," Conzelmann warns that "in spite of antithetical terminology one can only speak with caution of Johannine dualism" (p. 385). There is no cosmological or anthropological dualism; at most one can speak of a "dualism of decision" within the framework of the possibility of existence. The author closes his presentation of Johannine theology with a section on eschatology. He does grant some aspects of future eschatology in John. "The element of futurity is not excluded, but actualized. John does not need any apocalyptic sentences in order to present pure futurity. . . . Naturally John knows the expectation of the parousia (as also the resurrection and judgment). He does not exclude it, but integrates it into his understanding of present salvation" (p. 388). In the last analysis, however, this means nothing else than that in John the future aspect of eschatology has meaning only in terms of present eschatology. "What has the believer to expect from the future? Nothing, aside from what he already possesses" (p. 390).

Within the space available in a review we have mentioned only a few of the many interesting points which Conzelmann treats in his work. In our restricted comparison with Bultmann's work we have been able to stress only the more significant points of disagreement. On the whole, however, it turns out that this post-Bultmannian theology of the NT is indeed very Bultmannian. Thus, in spite of changes and alterations, this work still follows the tradition of Bultmann and does not represent a radical break. Although many readers of this NT theology will be disappointed at the numerous negative conclusions which the author reaches on many points where contemporary NT and Biblical scholarship have opened up new directions, this volume is nevertheless stimulating and is thus highly recommended for everyone who wishes an up-to-date introduction to the state of affairs in NT theology as understood by post-Bultmannian liberal German scholarship.

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GERHARD F. HASEL

Craddock, Fred B., *The Pre-Existence of Christ in the New Testament*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968. 192 pp. \$ 4.50.

Christology is a live topic among NT scholars. What Fred Craddock has done is to treat with greater fulness one aspect of this larger topic. After setting down his methodology and aims, the professor of NT and preaching at the Graduate Seminary of Phillips University treats first the NT background materials dealing with pre-existence, secondly (the major portion of the book) the NT references to pre-existence, and thirdly the meaning of the NT affirmation of pre-existence for men of the 20th century.

Having pointed out the weaknesses of the treatments of Oscar Cullmann and W. D. Davies as due to the method of "definition by source," he proposes to employ the method which he calls "definition by function; that is, what each writer in each situation is intending to say by using the category of pre-existence." What Craddock opposes is the method which permits the source of the idea to dictate its meaning wherever the idea may be used. He maintains that the writer's intention must be seriously considered, since that intention can modify the meaning found in the source. Each writer has a definite intention and this is the controlling element in the definition of the meaning of pre-existence. This means that the pre-existence of the Torah to which the Messiah is compared must not pre-determine the meaning of pre-existence for the Messiah, but the writer's intention in the use of the category of pre-existence must be investigated before any judgments can be made.

From the study of NT background materials such as the Logos doctrine of Philo, the Sophia of the wisdom literature, the Son of Man of Enoch, the Torah of the Rabbis, the Logos of the Stoics, and the myths of the Gnostics, Craddock concludes with the interesting observation that the category of pre-existence is modified, or does not appear at all, if men feel at home in their present existence. Pre-existence is emphasized, on the other hand, if men feel alienated in the world. The alienated feel that salvation can come only from outside the boundaries of present existence. His second significant conclusion is that the "specific definition of pre-existence is determined in each case by the particular location of man's problem" (p. 79). If man's problem is with the created world, he defines pre-existence as precreation; if it is in regard to the problems of history, its inequities and injustices, he defines pre-existence as prehistorical or nonhistorical; if the problem is the body, pre-existence is defined as pre-embodiment. The third conclusion he draws is that pre-existence when it moves beyond the realm of an idea or principle requires the language of mythology to convey it. He seems to mean by this that beings which are not observable in human experience must be described.

The author seeks to apply these three conclusions to the affirmations of pre-existence in the NT. Paul speaks of the pre-existence of Christ in relation to creation, incarnation, and history; the Fourth Gospel, in

relation to creation in both temporal and spatial sense. Christ was before creation and came from outside the world. The Epistle to the Hebrews treats of pre-existence as the larger context for understanding the theological significance of the life and death of Jesus, and in the Apocalypse pre-existence is the context for the understanding of the suffering and death of Christians.

The conclusions which Craddock derives from his investigation of the category of pre-existence in the writings mentioned above may be a bit too facile. The process by which the idea of pre-existence comes to light seems more complicated than he makes it out to be. He takes no account of the evolutionary development of ideas or the influence of foreign ideas. Alienation in the world does not always lead to the development of the idea of pre-existence (the history of the Jews shows this). Pre-existence in mythological form developed only in the immediate pre-Christian period, even though the mood of despair and alienation was present at various times both before and afterward. The determining element here does not seem to be the presence or absence of the feeling of alienation, but dominant theological ideas. The Jewish concept of monotheism allows only for an eternal being and totally excludes a pre-existent being. Pre-existence there can only mean pre-conceived or predestined.

When Craddock speaks of the Stoic system as one of continuity and harmony, while at the same time describing it as a religion for the oppressed and arising at a time of flux and uncertainty, he fails to see that pre-existence is only one alternative to the problem of discontinuity in the world; the other is to create a system that would remove the discontinuity, as Stoicism did. In other words, it is not that discontinuity inevitably leads to the idea of pre-existence, but that it leads men to cope with it either through the idea of pre-existence or by some other means that will bring security to the individual, *e.g.*, the Stoic system.

In his discussion of 1 Cor 8: 6 Craddock says too much when he says that it "is the summary of [Paul's] entire answer" to the spiritual gnostics of Corinth. The significance of this text is overplayed because of its affirmation of pre-existence. When Craddock says that the Stoic formula ("from . . . , through . . . , unto . . .") on which 1 Cor 8: 6 is based presupposes the cyclical view of reality and then assumes that Paul accepts this view, he thereby falls into the same error for which he criticizes Davies and Cullmann. It is not difficult to assume that Paul could have taken over the Stoic formula without accepting the cyclical view.

To say regarding the book of Hebrews that "the Platonic categories of pre-existence, the real world of the idea or form and its material, earthly shadow or reflection, are obvious throughout the argument" (p. 131) is to fail to take account of the eschatological motif of the Epistle. Much here can be explained purely from Hebrew eschatological ideas, such as type and fulfilment. One cannot deny that Platonic influence is present, but the dominant motif is Hebraic. The contrast

is not so much the distinction between the material and the real, but that between the typical and the reality which takes place historically at the coming of Jesus.

It seems to the reviewer that the cautions the author belabors on pp. 102, 103 and 109 are not necessary in a work of this nature.

In his excellent final chapter the author discusses some attempts to translate the pre-existence category into modern terms but rejects these as de-historicization or de-transcendentalism. Nevertheless, he feels that "the term 'pre-existence' is not sacrosanct and essential to the gospel." He looks wistfully, though I think vainly, for new terms which will capture the meaning of pre-existence for modern man.

He does not take into account the fact that the functional use of the category of pre-existence with its various emphases in the NT is completely explicable without any real adaptation of its meaning. However, he seeks to alter its functional use in quite a different way than that found in the NT. How this would be is not clearly given, though some suggestions are presented. The question here is whether these alternatives are really alternatives or an entirely different category. It seems highly unlikely that the term is translatable to any other category.

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SAKAE KUBO

Cullmann, Oscar, *Vatican Council II, The New Direction; Essays Selected and Arranged by James D. Hester. "Religious Perspectives,"* Volume XIX. New York: Harper & Row, 1968. 116 pp. \$ 6.00.

Few NT scholars are as widely respected in Protestant and Roman Catholic circles as Professor Cullmann. Few, either, have accomplished what he has by entering into the ecumenical dialogue with a desire to develop a theological position that is relevant to life. This latest volume is a collection of previously unpublished articles on Vatican II, more evidence of his serious concern for Protestant and Roman Catholic relations. Besides the editor, Faith E. Burgess, Carl Schneider and Robert Holland have acted as translators from the French and German originals.

Some of these essays are quite specific, dealing for instance with questions addressed to the author concerning the Council texts on Revelation and the Virgin Mary. Others, such as "The Role of the Observers at the Vatican Council" and "Have Expectations been Fulfilled?" are Cullmann's reflections on side lights of the Council and his plea for a proper understanding of ecumenism.

As might be anticipated from a collection of Cullmann's writings, one of the most provocative chapters deals with salvation history and its ecumenical implications. Originally presented before an audience of bishops and cardinals during the third session of Vatican II,

this essay outlines Cullmann's theological approach to ecumenism. If properly understood, he argues, salvation history provides one of the basic theological foundations upon which the ecumenical dialogue can take place. If the common ground of God's saving acts in history is used, ecumenical dialogue has a better chance of being fruitful. This time of the Church, the time of the Spirit, which separates Christ's resurrection from his return is, Cullmann believes, the time of the ecumenical dialogue. The common desire manifested by the World Council of Churches and Vatican Council II for renewal and for drawing closer together with mutual respect for each other's diversity is to Cullmann a sign that salvation history is advancing toward its consummation, that God is at work.

Chapter 6, "The Reform of Vatican Council II in the Light of the History of the Catholic Church" (pp. 64-101) is by far Cullmann's most challenging and developed statement on Vatican II. Written some time after the close of the council, it appeared in the January, 1967, issue of *ThLZ*. Here the author develops more fully many of the insights presented in the shorter chapters of the book.

The central thesis of this chapter is that there truly has been a reform of the Roman Catholic Church at Vatican II. Although it is still too early to draw a final historical assessment of the assembly, this Lutheran theologian sees in the final draft of several conciliar texts, and above all in many interventions of the Council fathers, a new appreciation for the Bible that cannot any longer be confused with a mere desire for modernization of external forms. Here, thinks Cullmann, is where an unbiased evaluation of Vatican II is indispensable. He reminds the pessimist, who feels that nothing of any significance has been achieved, and the optimist, who sees more accomplishment than the facts justify, that reforms at Vatican II were possible only within the limitations imposed by Rome's dogmatic decisions and therefore within the limits of a Roman Catholic framework. This renewal, Cullmann thinks, has been achieved by juxtaposing a kind of antithesis alongside the unaltered text of the old dogma, thus leaving room for different and equally correct interpretations. Both judgments—"nothing changed," and "everything changed"—are false. Although the author warns us against facile evaluations implying that a rapprochement is just around the corner, he feels entitled "to conclude with certainty" that the entire Roman Catholic Church and its teaching is undergoing a process of reform with unpredictable consequences.

This form of optimism about the future is precisely what Karl Barth in his recent evaluation of Vatican II, *Ad Limina Apostolorum* (Richmond, Va., 1968), feels compelled to reject, although he thinks that the Roman Catholic effort calls for calm and brotherly love.

This reviewer would have liked to find some introduction to the most important resolutions of the Council, as well as an attempted analysis from so well qualified a critic of the changed situation since Vatican II, as one can find, for instance, in *After the Council* (Philadelphia, 1968),

by Edmund Schlink, another Lutheran theologian. One also wonders why the editor introduced a short chapter of less than four pages by L. Kaufmann, "Ecumenical Encounter at the Edge of the Council." It adds very little to the meaning of the volume. Thanks to cross references to other articles in this compilation of essays as well as to other books by Cullmann, the reader has a better opportunity to understand the author's thinking. The minor typographical errors (as on pp. 23, 44, 50, 108) do not detract from the interest of the volume. Its particular value lies in its genuine contribution to the contemporary Roman Catholic-Protestant dialogue.

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RAOUL DEDEREN

Hatt, Harold E., *Encountering Truth, A New Understanding of How Revelation Yields Doctrine*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966. 208 pp. \$ 4.50.

Until a few decades ago men of varying theological perspectives were agreed that revelation was essentially the transmission of knowledge or the affirmation of truths. Everybody from scholastics to deists, from pietists to rationalists, operated within this so-called "information barrier." Drawing upon the I-Thou encounter as a central category in its comprehension of the Christian faith, encounter theology has introduced a new chapter in the history of the interpretation of revelation. It seeks to elaborate the understanding of revelation as lying beyond the "information barrier." Revelation is now understood to be the personal self-disclosure of God to man, not the impartation of truths about God. Doctrines are described as the result of later rational reflection upon the self-manifestation of God and as distorting the encounter with God, since they belong to the sphere of I-It rather than I-Thou.

Hatt's thesis is that neither encounter theology nor propositional theology provides a clear and satisfactory concept of the relation between doctrine and revelation. Underlining the strengths and weaknesses in both, the author—a professor of theology and philosophy at the Graduate Seminary, Phillips University—seeks an interpretation that preserves the positive values that each has to offer.

Therefore he first investigates encounter theology as represented by Martin Buber and Emil Brunner, and the concept of revelation that emerges from it. His next step is to evaluate conceptual theology as presented by two American fundamentalists, J. Gresham Machen and B. B. Warfield, and one European orthodox theologian, Abraham Kuyper. Their view is rejected as inadequate because Hatt considers its concept of infallibility untenable. He concludes that a more adequate understanding of revelation is achieved by an emendation of encounter theology to include I-It elements in the divine-human encounter.

In other words, encounter theology does not go far enough in its understanding of the role of propositional elements in revelation, and propositional theology goes too far. It would seem, therefore, that what is needed is an explanation which includes propositional elements within encounter, without going to the extreme of affirming that propositions are revealed.

This explains why, over against such theologians as Paul van Buren and Schubert Ogden, for instance, who contend that theological use of analogical language is meaningless and that all talk about God is really talk about man, Hatt remains convinced that the concept of encounter between human beings points, in some sense, toward divine-human encounter. Encounter, he argues, is not simply a process of relating to another person, but of relating and interpreting the relation. Like encounter with man, encounter with God incorporates I-It elements within a basic I-Thou relation.

In this reviewer's opinion, however, no serious attempt has been made to develop Machen's, Warfield's and Kuyper's views in depth, nor to take serious account of their numerous interpreters or of more recent conservative theological literature. One finds only casual references to Merrill C. Tenney, G. C. Berkouwer, James I. Packer, Gordon H. Clark, Carl F. H. Henry and Paul Jewett. It is surprising that no mention is made of Bernard Ramm's major work, *Special Revelation and the Word of God*. No answer, in fact, has been offered to Ramm's thesis that the knowledge of God is not only a making known but also a saying. Moreover, the contributions of Machen, Warfield, and Kuyper seem not to have been fully apprehended by Hatt. This reviewer has never considered their views, as the author does, as predominantly abstract, nor does he think they insist, in the way Hatt contends, that Christian knowledge must be necessarily in a certain doctrinal form for faith to happen. For them the concept of faith as intellectual assent leaves room for trust in a person. There is no incompatibility here between a vital Christian experience and a strong emphasis on revealed doctrines.

Hatt's conclusion is that an existential, personal type of knowledge is present in an encounter with God. Although not infallibly communicated by divine fiat, but received through human interpretation of divine confrontation, this knowledge is later elaborated into doctrine. This is Hatt's way of saying that "knowledge about" is essentially a part of "knowledge of" God. If his conclusions prove less conclusive to others than they are to him, his book at least deserves fair consideration as a serious, conscientious piece of work, evincing both industry and originality.

Hyma, Albert, *The Youth of Erasmus*. Second edition, enlarged; New York: Russell & Russell, 1968. xxiii + 402 pp. \$ 16.00.

This new edition of *The Youth of Erasmus* is most welcome. The first edition was published by the University of Michigan Press in 1931 and has been out of print for years.

A book as standard in its field as this one is, hardly needs review, except to call attention to the new materials in the present edition. An Appendix C provides some notes and corrections to the text of Erasmus' *Book Against the Barbarians* as it appeared in the 1931 edition and is now photographically reproduced. Appendices D, E, and F furnish reprints of several important articles by Hyma: "Erasmus in Brabant," "Erasmus and the Oxford Reformers, 1493-1503," and "Erasmus and the Sacrament of Matrimony." The value of having these hard-to-find articles in this convenient form is obvious.

Hyma's "Introduction to the Second Edition" (pp. v-xvi) presents some interesting new material on "Erasmus and the Dialogue 'Julius Excluded.'" It is generally held that Erasmus was the author of this Dialogue. Hyma reviews and supports a number of Carl Stange's arguments for the contrary opinion that Erasmus was not author of the "Julius Excluded." These arguments are quite convincing. Hyma's own suggestion as to the identity of the real author is that it was Faustus Andrelini, a man with pro-French and anti-Papal biases characteristic of the Dialogue, and one who was also in a position to utilize the information and misinformation therein in precisely the way it is done. Hyma's points seem to be well taken.

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TRANSLITERATION OF HEBREW

CONSONANTS

כ = k	ד = d	י = y	ס = s	ך = r
ב = b	ה = h	כּ = k	שׁ = c	שׂ = s
בּ = b	ו = w	כֿ = k	שׂ = p	שׁ = s
ג = g	ז = z	ל = l	ט = t	ת = t
גּ = g	ח = h	מ = m	צ = s	
דּ = d	ט = t	נ = n	ק = q	

MASORETIC VOWEL POINTINGS

- = a	וּ, וֹ (vocal shewa) = e	ֿ = o
ֿ = ā	וֹ, וֹ = e	וֹ = o
ֿ = a	ֿ = i	וֹ = o
ֿ = e	ֿ = i	וֹ = u
ֿ = ē	ֿ = o	וֹ = ū

ABBREVIATIONS OF BOOKS AND PERIODICALS

<p><i>AAS</i> Annales archéol. de Syrie <i>AASOR</i> Annual, Amer. Sch. of Or. Res. <i>ADAJ</i> Annual, Dep. of Ant. of Jordan <i>AER</i> American Ecclesiastical Review <i>Afo</i> Archiv für Orientforschung <i>AfP</i> Archiv für Papyrusforschung <i>AJA</i> Amer. Journal of Archaeology <i>AJSL</i> Amer. Journ. of Sem. Lang. and Literature <i>ALBO</i> Analecta Lovan. Bibl. et Orient. <i>ANET</i> Ancient Near Eastern Texts, J. B. Pritchard, ed., 2d ed., 1955 <i>ANF</i> The Ante-Nicene Fathers <i>AO</i> Acta Orientalia <i>ARG</i> Archiv für Reformationsgesch. <i>ARW</i> Archiv für Religionswissenschaft <i>ASAE</i> Annales, Serv. des Ant. de l'Ég. <i>ASB</i> Acta Sanctorum (ed. Bolland) <i>AThR</i> Anglican Theological Review <i>AUSS</i> Andrews Univ. Sem. Studies <i>BA</i> Biblical Archaeologist <i>BASOR</i> Bulletin, Amer. Sch. of Or. Res. <i>Bib</i> Biblica <i>BIES</i> Bulletin, Israel Expl. Soc. <i>BIFAO</i> Bulletin, Inst. Franç. d'Arch. Or. <i>BiOr</i> Bibliotheca Orientalis</p>	<p><i>BJPES</i> Bulletin, Jewish Pal. Expl. Soc. <i>BJRL</i> Bulletin, John Rylands Library <i>BMB</i> Bulletin du Musée de Beyrouth <i>BQR</i> Baptist Quarterly Review <i>BR</i> Biblical Research (Chicago) <i>BRG</i> Biblioth. Rerum Germanicarum <i>BS</i> Bibliotheca Sacra <i>BSHPF</i> Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français <i>BT</i> Bible Translator <i>BZ</i> Biblische Zeitschrift <i>CBQ</i> Catholic Biblical Quarterly <i>CC</i> Christian Century <i>CdE</i> Chronique d'Égypte <i>CH</i> Church History <i>CIL</i> Corpus Inscript. Latinarum <i>CIS</i> Corpus Inscript. Semiticarum <i>CJTh</i> Canadian Journal of Theology <i>CSEL</i> Corpus Script. Eccl. Lat. <i>CT</i> Christianity Today <i>ER</i> Ecumenical Review <i>ETHL</i> Ephemer. Theol. Lovanienses <i>ET</i> Expository Times <i>HJ</i> Hibbert Journal <i>HThR</i> Harvard Theological Review <i>HUCA</i> Hebrew Union College Annual</p>
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<i>IEJ</i>	Israel Exploration Journal	<i>RB</i>	Revue Biblique
<i>IG</i>	Inscriptiones Graecae	<i>RE</i>	Review and Expositor
<i>Int</i>	Interpretation	<i>RdE</i>	Revue d'Égyptologie
<i>JACH</i>	Jahrb. für Ant. und Christentum	<i>RHE</i>	Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique
<i>JAOS</i>	Journ. of the Amer. Or. Soc.	<i>RHPR</i>	Revue d'Hist. et de Philos. Rel.
<i>JBL</i>	Journal of Biblical Literature	<i>RHR</i>	Revue de l'Histoire des Religions
<i>JBR</i>	Journal of Bible and Religion	<i>RL</i>	Religion in Life
<i>JCS</i>	Journal of Cuneiform Studies	<i>RLA</i>	Reallexikon der Assyriologie
<i>JEA</i>	Journal of Egyptian Arch.	<i>RQ</i>	Revue de Qumrân
<i>JJS</i>	Journal of Jewish Studies	<i>RSR</i>	Revue des Sciences Religieuses
<i>JNES</i>	Journal of Near Eastern Studies	<i>RSV</i>	Revised Standard Version
<i>JQR</i>	Jewish Quarterly Review	<i>SJT^h</i>	Scottish Journal of Theology
<i>JR</i>	Journal of Religion	<i>ST^h</i>	Studia Theologica
<i>JSS</i>	Journal of Semitic Studies	<i>ThEH</i>	Theologische Existenz heute
<i>JThS</i>	Journal of Theol. Studies	<i>ThQ</i>	Theologische Quartalschrift
<i>KJV</i>	King James Version	<i>ThT</i>	Theology Today
<i>LQ</i>	Lutheran Quarterly	<i>ThLZ</i>	Theologische Literaturzeitung
<i>MGH</i>	Monumenta Germaniae Historica	<i>ThR</i>	Theologische Rundschau
<i>MPG</i>	Migne, Patrologia Graeca	<i>Trad</i>	Traditio
<i>MPL</i>	Migne, Patrologia Latina	<i>ThS</i>	Theological Studies
<i>MQR</i>	Mennonite Quarterly Review	<i>ThZ</i>	Theologische Zeitschrift
<i>NKZ</i>	Neue kirchliche Zeitschrift	<i>VC</i>	Verbum Caro
<i>NPNF</i>	Nicene and Post-Nic. Fathers	<i>VD</i>	Verbum Domini
<i>NRT^h</i>	Nouvelle Revue Théologique	<i>VCh</i>	Vigiliae Christianae
<i>NT</i>	Novum Testamentum	<i>VT</i>	Vetus Testamentum
<i>NTA</i>	New Testament Abstracts	<i>WThJ</i>	Westminster Theol. Journal
<i>NTS</i>	New Testament Studies	<i>WZKM</i>	Wiener Zeitschr. f. d. Kunde d. Morgenlandes
<i>Num</i>	Numen	<i>ZA</i>	Zeitschrift für Assyriologie
<i>OCh</i>	Oriens Christianus	<i>ZAS</i>	Zeitsch. für ägyptische Sprache
<i>OLZ</i>	Orientalistische Literaturzeitung	<i>ZAW</i>	Zeitsch. für die allttes. Wiss.
<i>Or</i>	Orientalia	<i>ZDMG</i>	Zeitsch. der Deutsch. Morgenl. Gesellschaft
<i>OTS</i>	Oudtestamentische Studien	<i>ZDPV</i>	Zeitsch. des Deutsch. Pal. Ver.
<i>PEQ</i>	Palestine Exploration Quarterly	<i>ZKG</i>	Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte
<i>PJB</i>	Palästina-Jahrbuch	<i>ZHT^h</i>	Zeitsch. für hist. Theologie
<i>PRE</i>	Realencyklopädie für protes- tantische Theologie und Kirche	<i>ZKTh</i>	Zeitsch. für kath. Theologie
<i>QDAP</i>	Quarterly, Dep. of Ant. in Pal.	<i>ZNW</i>	Zeitsch. für die neutest. Wiss.
<i>RA</i>	Revue d'Assyr. et d'Arch. Or.	<i>ZDTh</i>	Zeitschrift für syst. Theologie
<i>RAC</i>	Rivista di Archaeologia Cristiana	<i>ZThK</i>	Zeitsch. für Theol. und Kirche