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C.H. Dodd and E.C. Hoskyns <i>J.S. King</i>	1
Paradox and Christology <i>J. Astley</i>	9
Baptism into One Body <i>Nicholas Paxton</i>	14
The Place of Reason in Christian Theology: towards a Theological Aesthetic <i>Martin Roberts</i>	18
Discussion: Regarding the Apocalypse <i>Ulrich Simon</i>	21
BOOK REVIEWS	23
FACULTY NEWS Insert	

KING'S THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

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C. H. DODD AND E. C. HOSKYNYS

J. S. KING

Eighteen eighty-four saw the birth of these two significant New Testament scholars: C. H. Dodd was born on 7 April; E. C. Hoskynys on 9 August. Hoskynys died tragically on 28 June, 1937; C. H. Dodd in the fullness of a long life on 22 September, 1973. Both have to this day devoted disciples and the world of New Testament scholarship stands in their debt, yet the work of both is increasingly questioned. The purpose of this paper is to make a biographical and theological comparison and to examine in some detail their treatment of the problem of history and its meaning in the Fourth Gospel.

Ancestry and Formative Years

Dodd was born in Wrexham, the son of a local headmaster who was a leading figure in the Independent Church in the town. Nonconformity was flourishing and the town was divided between those who spoke Welsh and those who spoke English; between those who went to Chapel and those who went to the Parish Church. Dodd owed much to his nurture in Pen-y-bryn chapel. It is possible to trace the Dodds back to the 17th century; Professor A. H. Dodd, C. H. Dodd's younger brother, has done this. Dodd's father, Charles, was born in 1855 and F. W. Dillistone paints a moving picture of his self-education which still stands a monument to determination and the opportunity open to those with ability and great diligence. Sufficient here to say that at the age of 12 he was accepted as a pupil teacher at Brookside School, beginning an association that lasted for 50 years and ended with his becoming headmaster. He showed both ability and determination, progressing by way of becoming a Queen's Scholar, which entitled him to two years' full time training in a Normal College, where his work was marked by such distinction that he was offered another scholarship but was prevented by poverty from further full time education, although his self-education continued so that it became something of a legend in the Dodd household. Dodd's grandfather, Edward, grew up on the family farm but enjoyed neither educational nor commercial success. This was partly due to ill health; he in fact for part of his life worked as a labourer on the family farm, earning the going-rate of six shillings per week.

Dodd's mother, Sarah, née Parsonage, was born in 1854; she lost both parents when very young and was brought up by her stepmother. She, too, was able, winning a Queen's Scholarship and gaining entrance to Stockwell College, ultimately becoming headmistress of the infant school in Penygelly. Upon her marriage to Charles Dodd in 1882, she gave up teaching, gave birth to four sons and was a considerable domestic and educational influence. Very little is known of the ancestry of the Parsonage family.

This is a remarkably different background to E. C. Hoskynys, who was a clerical baronet. The Hoskynses may be traced to Herefordshire, to a family of Welsh ancestry. If we trace this line back to the 17th century, we find John Hoskynys, Member of Parliament for the City of Hereford, who was imprisoned in the Tower in 1614. The baronetcy was purchased from Charles II, by Benedict in 1676. In his Biographical Introduction to E. C. Hoskynys and Noel

Davey, *Crucifixion-Resurrection*, SPCK, 1981, G. Wakefield concurs with the judgement that John Hoskynys was "was very much a Church of England man". Hoskynys's father, Edwyn, succeeded to the baronetcy on the death of Leigh; it was something of an indirect succession for he was the fourth son of the Reverend Canon Sir John Leigh Hoskynys. More significantly he was Bishop of Southwell; he was in the tradition of the so-called new episcopate which owed much to the Oxford Movement and "socialist" convictions. Thus, on his father's side, Hoskynys's ancestry was thoroughly English, upper middle class and Anglican but nonetheless leavened with a heritage from the Welsh Marches and a committed social tractarian Christianity.

On his mother's side his ancestry can be traced back to the 16th century for Edwyn Hoskynys married Mary Constance Maude Benson. The family originated in Cumberland, travelling by way of commercial activity in Liverpool to London, where Mary's father became bankrupt. Nonetheless her private income survived this debacle, while her brother became a most successful financier. Strangely the Bensons were socialists, owing much to the teachings of William Morris. Apparently Mary was something of an educationalist, though of the "new school" and, alas, the general verdict is that she hampered rather than promoted the educational development of her children.

Education

The difference in background was reflected in the educational path that each trod. After education at home, Hoskynys went by way of his preparatory school, Rottingdean, to Haileybury in 1897. He was not considered a great scholar yet naturally enough followed his father to Jesus College Cambridge, of which Dodd was later to be a Fellow, and achieved a second in history. He was incidentally a good oarsman whereas Dodd coxing the University College boat was in collision with the Wadham boat, which included in its crew Hewlett Johnson, later to be the so-called "Red Dean" of Canterbury. Dodd's career on the river was effectively ended.

Dodd went by way of Brookside School, where he was in the Infant Department until the age of seven and in the Boys' School until he was 12, to Grove Park Secondary School. He won a scholarship to this school, formerly a private school but later becoming a grammar school; his father would not allow him to take this up lest it be thought undue privilege had been accorded a headmaster's son. How the two families regarded privilege differently! Dodd won an Open Scholarship in Classics at University College, Oxford, where he won a First both in Classical Moderations and Greats. In 1907 he was elected to a Senior Demyship at Magdalen College. Interestingly it was only in 1871 that Oxford opened its doors to Nonconformists and there was still something of a move to prevent their reading Theology and in fact Dodd could not have pursued a higher degree in Theology at Oxford. Although too much must not be made of this, Hoskynys seems to have opposed a move to open the University Sermon at Cambridge to Nonconformists. There was desire to invite Dr. Anderson Scott from Westminster College; Hoskynys suggested two Anglicans and threw the meeting into some turmoil by suggesting the Abbot of Downside.

There was no doubting the possibility of an academic

career of distinction for Dodd; with Hoskyns it was otherwise and his election to a Fellowship at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge in 1916 is one of those instances of the strange workings of Providence or inspired choice for a second class historian was preferred to better equipped theologians. Hoskyns had no degree in Theology.

Towards the fullness of powers; the influence of Germany

In 1907 Dodd went to Berlin to pursue his research; Hoskyns was in Berlin at the same time. We may make a comparison between their attitudes to three scholars; Harnack, Schweitzer and Barth. Harnack made a significant positive impression on Dodd. Harnack was something of a liberal and quickly a reaction set in against his teaching but in certain respects Dodd epitomised one of Harnack's convictions that Christianity was "the revelation of God's relation to mankind in terms of a particular career which men could apprehend as part of their own historical inheritance and to which they could respond in a way which made sense within their contemporary world"². Dodd shared Harnack's view of the nature and importance of history. However, Dodd, the classicist, could never follow Harnack in his conviction that the original genius of Christianity had been infected by Greek metaphysical thought; for Dodd, as we shall see later, Greek thought was necessary for the fullest expression of the Gospel. It is easy now after two world wars and countless smaller ones to deride Harnack's liberal belief in the ideas of the divine fatherhood, the universal human brotherhood and the duty of man to his neighbour. Dodd continued to operate with a natural theology in which these ideas were congenial; Hoskyns apparently came to reject any natural theology but it is important to note that Dodd's understanding of natural theology did not deny the necessity for revelation, rather it made it if anything more important. Hoskyns, although he came to reject Harnack's position, was initially impressed by him.

For many in this period the influence of Schweitzer was dominant; it was the effective riposte to liberalism in that it made central the eschatological dimension with which liberalism was always unhappy and reduced to the status of an interim ethic the ethics that made such a natural appeal to the liberals. Hoskyns was impressed by this insistence on eschatology: "The one fundamental problem is what should we still possess if the whole of our world were destroyed tomorrow, and we stood naked before God. The eschatological belief crudely and ruthlessly sweeps away all our little moral busyness, strips us naked of worldly possessions and worldly entanglements, and asks what survives the catastrophe"³. Not only did Dodd propose an alternative solution to the eschatological problem but ethics were a central and relevant concern to the end of his life. Quite simply he could not accept the notion of the interim ethic. Moreover, Schweitzer's Jesus was a strange bewildering figure, barely accessible to us and certainly not congenial to our time. Dodd was certainly prepared to invite the interpreter of the New Testament to enter the strange first century world but he would return to our world to give an authentic and relevant account of Jesus and the Gospel⁴. J. O. Cobham is right to stress the importance of the debt that Hoskyns owed to Schweitzer, while Dillstone is guilty of some exaggeration when he cites with approval the verdict that Dodd "fought against Schweitzer throughout his life"⁵.

Dodd coined a beautiful phrase; "we took our Karl Barth in water"⁶. This did not indicate that Dodd was unaware of the work of Barth nor indeed of his influence but, rather, "in Great Britain the pendulum does not swing with such violence as in Germany"⁷. It is difficult to assess Barth's influence on Dodd; there is evidence that he lectured at Oxford on the theological revolution caused by Barth's teaching and maybe in his coming to stress the primacy of the interpretation of the New Testament rather than following up his earlier interests in psychology and religious experience we can see the seminal influence of Barth. There is more universal agreement that Hoskyns was influenced by Barth, not least because of the publication of his translation of Barth's famous commentary on Romans in 1933. There the agreement among scholars ends. Hoskyns agreed with Barth that "religion is not a thing to be desired and extolled; rather it is a misfortune which takes fatal hold upon some men and by them is passed on to others"⁸. While there is evidence that Hoskyns did not fully accept the Barthian rejection of natural theology, he tended towards that position and was concerned to stress the otherness of God: "The Church exists in the world only to bear witness to God, to His sovereign, regal power and holiness, to His miraculous power and glory . . . It is not what we think about God that matters but what he thinks about us; it is not what we think about Christ and the Church and the scriptures which is of any great value, but how we are judged by the word of God and his Son, Jesus Christ"⁹. There is, on the other hand, no evidence that he welcomed the appearance of Barth's *Church Dogmatics* nor that he was influenced by them. A. M. Ramsey is therefore right to counsel caution before we describe Hoskyns as a Barthian; he is equally right to suggest that Hoskyns's own style, often obscure, oracular and sententious, owes much to Barth as too his insistence on the cruciality of the Cross¹⁰.

Ordination

Hoskyns, by way of Wells Theological College, served his Title at St. Ignatius Sunderland; in this mining parish he ministered from 1908 until 1912, having rejected the offer of a curacy at the much more fashionable St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol. In 1912 he moved to become Warden of Stephenson Hall, Sheffield and in 1915 became chaplain of the Manchester Regiment, serving with distinction and valour. Dodd trained for the Ministry at Mansfield College, Oxford, accepting a Call from Brook Street Congregational Church, Warwick; he was ordained in April 1912, serving there until 1915 when he received an invitation to return to Mansfield.

Military service made a significant impact on Hoskyns; not perhaps as flamboyant an impact as it had on Studdert-Kennedy but what he proclaimed in memorable form in *The Unutterable Beauty* Hoskyns declared in a sermon; "the commemoration of Armistice Day requires a gospel to make sense of it"¹¹. Dodd was a pacifist in an age when it was exceedingly difficult to be one. I do not think that we can draw any conclusions from Dodd's theological development from his pacifism but in terms of our comparison of these two scholars and their background some important issues emerge. At the outbreak of the First World War there were no Free Church Chaplains in the armed forces; additionally there was a considerable pacifist tradition within these churches, though Norman Gooddall has been right to remind us that before conscription there were many members of these churches serving in Kitchener's armies.

Dodd became active in the National Council against Conscription, later addressed the Congregational Union Autumn Assembly of 1929 on "The Teaching of Jesus on Christianity and War" and later still in 1938 contributed to *The bases of Christian Pacifism*. He saw the difficulties with crystal clarity, being aware both of the demands that a state might rightly make upon its members in times of national crisis and of the pacifist demands of the teaching of Jesus. Dillistone recalls D. Daube's description of his dilemma: "A pacifist with a bad conscience"¹². One final point may be made here: there was no doubt that Dodd was acutely aware of the tyranny of Nazi Germany (and later of Stalinist Russia) whereas Wakefield asserts that Hoskyns's attitude to the rise of Nazi Germany was ambivalent: "at first at any rate Hoskyns was inclined to give Hitler the benefit of the doubt"¹³. It is necessary to remind ourselves that Hoskyns was not out of step with many in this country at that time. By the time that G. Kittel came to Cambridge, as a result of Hoskyns's pressure, to lecture in 1937 Hoskyns was dead and was not there to see this significant scholar wearing his Nazi membership badge.

Spirituality

Another and more interesting comparison may be drawn in terms of their spirituality. Hoskyns was a liberal catholic, convinced of the central importance of the Eucharist, the necessity of the Church and the significance of tradition. That is precisely what one would expect of a liberal catholic but he was also self-consciously an Anglican and that opened to him the rich vistas of the Protestant tradition. Not only his encounter with Barth's commentary on Romans but also his professional work on the Scriptures confirmed his opinion of the importance of the Bible. This was not so typically Anglican in this period. Wakefield has seen the significance of this well; "In the end Hoskyns's theology was completely Catholic and completely Protestant too. Properly understood, the two words are almost synonymous"¹⁴.

Dodd, with his roots deep in the tradition of the chapels in Wales, was, of course, convinced of the central importance of the Bible. We may, however, see a similar movement in spirituality. It is not very well known that Dodd valued the Eucharist much more highly than many in his tradition; in a letter written just before his engagement to Phyllis Terry, an Anglican, he wrote, "she has found her way through to a religious position in which we find common ground and can help one another; and in the Sacrament we both find our strength"¹⁵. Personal and theological interests neatly coincided. The importance that Dodd placed on the Sacrament may be well illustrated in his words: "the historical and mystical elements of our religion are perfectly fused in the Sacrament"¹⁶, and, "The Eucharist, rather than the episcopate, is the true *sacramentum unitatis*"¹⁷. For Dodd the Eucharist did full justice both to Realised Eschatology and the distinctive and definitive nature of Christianity as an historical religion: "in its central sacrament the Church places itself ever anew within the eschatological crisis in which it had its origin. Here Christ is set before us incarnate, crucified and risen, and we partake of the benefits of his finished work, as contemporaries with it. We are neither merely recalling a story of the past, nor merely expressing and nourishing a hope for the future, but experiencing in one significant rite the reality of the coming of Christ, which is both His coming in humiliation and His coming in glory . . . This contemporaneity must not be confused with

the timeless 'now' of the mystics. For that which the Church experiences is not just an eternal reality symbolically set forth under the forms of space, time and matter. It is a slice of the actual history of the world . . . It happened and we are there"¹⁸. Here we see not only the importance of the Eucharist, not simply the stress on Realised Eschatology and history, but also the importance of the Church.

It would be idle to pretend that there are no differences in the spirituality of Dodd and Hoskyns but we see here a coming together of the traditional insights of Catholicism and Protestantism in both of these scholars.

Johannine Scholars

Hoskyns's Johannine studies were obviously incomplete; that his work was published owed much to that most gifted of all "midwives", F. N. Davey, who at times felt the task to be burdensome. Hoskyns did not work on this commentary after 1936. Dodd's Johannine studies were also incomplete. G. B. Caird asserts that Dodd intended to write a commentary to complete his trilogy on the Fourth Gospel¹⁹. I have been assured by C. F. D. Moule, Dodd's literary executor, that no evidence actually exists to suggest that Dodd had begun work on this commentary. In the event much of Dodd's efforts were devoted to the New English Bible. Nonetheless Dodd's work required a commentary for its completion, for many of the issues raised in his two great works, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* and *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, required the exacting demands of a commentary and it would have been interesting to see if Dodd could have related those studies to the "new" insights of Johannine scholarship in the 1970s.

For our comparison to be justified, it must be demonstrated that Dodd's essential position was known before Hoskyns's death and also that in terms of the problem of history in the Fourth Gospel Dodd was working in conscious dialogue with Hoskyns. Dillistone has argued that Dodd sought to repair two deficiencies in Hoskyns's work: *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* was to do justice to the wide hellenistic background that Hoskyns ignored while *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* was to grapple with the problem of historicity in the Fourth Gospel²⁰. This is too simple; Dodd does not grapple with the problem of historicity in *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*: what was demonstrated so massively in this book was already there in embryo long ago. As early as 1921 Dodd was prepared to consider the possibility of a genuine historical tradition behind the Fourth Gospel²¹; by 1926 he was arguing for his classical position that "the writer (the evangelist) was probably himself not of the first Christian generation, but in the communal life of the Church at Ephesus, to which he belonged, he stood in the centre of a living tradition going back to very early days, and very likely preserving much authentic reminiscence of the first witnesses of Christ"²². The same point was made in his review of Bernard's commentary²³.

Similarly Dodd's position on the background of the Fourth Gospel was well known before Hoskyns's death. It was put forward in his review of Bernard's commentary where he averred that "the most serious limitation of the commentary, however, is its almost total neglect of the Hellenistic background . . . It is not enough to dismiss contemptuously the suggestion that the Evangelist drew upon such material as a source"²⁴. This was to do less than

justice to Bernard's considerable expertise in this field. Hoskyns applauded Bernard; in his review, "the reader of the commentary is never overwhelmed by undisciplined catenas of irrelevant parallels from the sphere of comparative religion. The references are primarily Biblical references with which are combined references to the Apostolic Fathers and Irenaeus"²⁵.

There is a tension in Dodd's position whereas there is no tension in Hoskyns's, for his commentary continues along the lines set out by Bernard. Dodd argued that the Fourth Gospel was a remarkable example of the interpenetration of Greek and Semitic thought yet, in the period which was climaxed by the publication of *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, he argued for the necessity of Greek thought for the fullest expression of the Gospel; he wrote of a "powerful new experience which demands the resources of both Greek and Jewish thought to express it"²⁶. Thus, while in his Inaugural Lecture at Cambridge, 2 June 1936, he could criticise those who collected parallels from Hellenistic sources and then concluded that Christianity was "one more amalgam of half-digested ideas drawn from Hellenistic sources, with a larger contribution from popular Judaism than is usual in such an amalgam"²⁷, Dodd made an identical criticism of Hoskyns's commentary as he had made of Bernard's²⁸.

In his Inaugural Lecture, Dodd suggested the necessity for the centripetal approach to the interpretation of the New Testament; this was carefully distinguished from the centrifugal approach that stressed the diversity of the New Testament and the special problems associated with each part. Dodd's aim was to "bring these ideas (those discovered by the centrifugal approach), now better understood in their individual character, into the unity of the life that had originally informed them"²⁹. Dodd suggested that this approach be applied to the new Testament as a whole. As Dodd himself recognised, Hoskyns's commentary was a brilliant example of this approach, demonstrating an interpretation from within the Biblical and Christian tradition³⁰. Ironically while Dodd applauded Hoskyns for this, he criticised him for ignoring the wider Hellenistic background. Put another way, the centripetal approach for Dodd had to embrace also Greek philosophy and the higher religions of paganism, to use his description. Hoskyns has been more consistent than Dodd at this point.

I suggest, then, that our comparison is a valid one. Upon his demobilisation, Hoskyns became College Lecturer in Divinity at Corpus Christi College; upon his election to the Norris-Hulse Chair of Divinity, Dodd became a Fellow of Jesus College. Although by this time, 1936, Hoskyns was "declining", the positions of both scholars had been worked out in some detail. Hoskyns in *The Riddle of the New Testament* and in the work for his commentary; Dodd notably in *The Authority of the Bible*, amplified admittedly in *History and the Gospel*, 1938, *The Apostolic Preaching and its Development* and two lectures, "The Background of the Fourth Gospel" and "The Present Task in New Testament Studies". Moreover, both reviewed Bernard's commentary; in each review we can see distinctive features which were to emerge in later work.

Christianity as an Historical Religion

For both Hoskyns and Dodd Christianity is an historical religion; we shall illustrate their positions briefly, outline some differences and conclude by examining their discus-

sions of the problems as illustrated in their studies of the Fourth Gospel.

It is generally held that the main thesis of *The Riddle of the New Testament* is that the Jesus of history and the Christ of the Church's faith cannot be ultimately separated. This was set forth classically at the beginning of Hoskyns's essay, "The Christ of Synoptic Gospels", in *Essays Catholic and Critical*: "for the Catholic Christian 'Quid vobis videtur de ecclesia, What think ye of the Church?' is not merely as pertinent a question as 'Quid vobis videtur de Christo, What think ye of the Christ?': it is but the same question differently formulated"³¹. *The Riddle of the New Testament* begins with part of the Nicene Creed in Latin; that part that stresses the historical nature of the Incarnation. Hoskyns observed; "When the Catholic Christian kneels at the words *incarnatus est* . . . he marks with proper solemnity his recognition that the Christian religion has its origin neither in general religious experience, nor in some peculiar esoteric mysticism, nor in a dogma. He declares his faith to rest upon a particular event in history . . . In consequence, the Christian religion is not merely open to historical investigation, but demands it, and its piety depends upon it. Inadequate or false reconstruction of the history of Jesus cuts at the heart of Christianity. The critical and historical study of the New Testament is therefore the prime activity of the church"³². Two initial points may be made; first, in asserting the necessity of the historical Jesus, Hoskyns was departing from one of his mentors, W. Spens, for whom the historical Jesus was not necessary in that Christianity could still have been true even if Jesus had not lived and, secondly, Hoskyns took every opportunity to show how Jesus was a stranger to our time.

We may set against this second point a claim made very near the end of *The Riddle of the New Testament*: "on the basis of a purely critical examination of the New Testament documents he (the historian) can reconstruct a clear historical figure, which is an intelligible figure; and he can, as result of this reconstruction, show that the emergence of the primitive church is also intelligible"³³. Yet the conclusion of the book stresses the "unresolved tension between confidence and helplessness"³⁴. Confidence because of the success of the historical method and helplessness because the "solution of the historical problem does nothing either to compel faith or to encourage unbelief"³⁵. We shall return to this situation later when we compare Hoskyns with Dodd but we may see the classical stance of Hoskyns developing in his review of Bernard's commentary. Bernard drew a distinction between the "evangelist" and the "witness" upon whom he depended. Hoskyns probed this distinction in a way that Bernard could not have expected; he maintained that this distinction is fundamental to the commentary so that "the Gospel is history and interpretation, not history interpreted, but history *and* (italicised) interpretation . . . The weakness of the commentary is that it introduces into a Gospel which is all of one piece a distinction which destroys the unity of both the whole and of each section"³⁶. This issued in the claim that the interpretation is all important and controls the history; this is the point seen clearly by Wakefield some 50 years later that in Hoskyns's understanding "theology controls the history"³⁷. This may well be Hoskyns's position and he was never averse to reminding his readers that a whole generation of scholars had become so obsessed with the problem of historicity that they failed to grapple with the

problem of history and its meaning³⁸, but he was quite simply wrong in his assessment of Bernard, fastening onto a distinction that is not central to the commentary and in so doing misrepresenting Bernard who argued that the evangelist is “not only a historian but an interpreter of history”³⁹.

Dodd welcomed this distinction because it amounted to Bernard’s abandonment of strict Apostolic authorship; he criticised Bernard for not going far enough arguing that it was virtually illusory for John, Son of Zebedee, is so responsible for the narrative and substance of the discourse that “the strict historicity of the record is hardly affected by the intervention of the evangelist”⁴⁰. Whereas Dodd’s “classical” stance is to emphasise the historical value of the Johannine tradition, the younger Dodd placed very much less value on it.

It is easy to demonstrate that for Dodd Christianity is an historical religion; it is indeed the definitive characteristic of Christianity, as may be seen in part four of *The Authority of the Bible* being entitled “The Authority of History”. Reminiscent of Hoskyns, Dodd argued that Christianity cannot consider the historical order irrelevant “while it uses as the symbol of its faith a creed which cites events ‘under Pontius Pilate’, and includes among the objects of belief an historical society, the Catholic Church”⁴¹. We have already seen how Dodd’s understanding of the Eucharist coincided with his understanding of Christianity as an historical religion. This is such a “commonplace” in Dodd’s thought that we need only elaborate on the dangers of neglecting the historical: “If we lose hold upon the historical actuality, the Gospels are betrayed into the hands of the Gnostics and we stand upon the verge of a new Docetism. Moreover, the denial of the importance of historical facts would carry with it a denial of what is the essence of the Gospel, namely, that the historical order – that order within which we must live and work – has received a specific character from the entrance into it of the Eternal Word of God”⁴².

The Problem of History in the Fourth Gospel

Again it is natural to continue our comparison of these two scholars for, as we have seen, both considered Christianity an historical religion and Dodd, while criticising Hoskyns for not taking the problem of historicity seriously enough, continued “in saying this, however, I do not wish to depart from Hoskyns’s solution of the theological-historical problem”⁴³. One contention of this comparison is that the differences are as fundamental as the similarities. We have already seen that Dodd is more likely to be concerned with the problems of historicity and Hoskyns with the problem of history. One besetting problem is that Hoskyns’s work here is more fragmentary than usual in that Davey wrote “The Fourth Gospel and the problem of the meaning of history” in the commentary although he hoped that it reflected Hoskyns’s position. Moreover, he also wrote “The Problem of History” in *Crucifixion-Resurrection*. Nonetheless, Hoskyns’s essential position seems clear.

Hoskyns maintained that the Evangelist intended to confront his readers with the problem of history. This was also the intention of the commentary: “it must endeavour to hear and set forth the Meaning which the author of the Gospel has himself heard and seen in the concrete, historical life and death of Jesus of Nazareth, in His separate actions

and His audible words”⁴⁴. It will not do this either by the “disentangling of history and interpretation”⁴⁵ or “by regarding this Meaning as an idea of the author or as something which itself belongs to the mere hearing or sight of an eyewitness, regarded as historian”⁴⁶. This is Hoskyns’s famous “triple barricade”. This position comes towards the end of the long introduction to the commentary, encapsulating the position set out in the very first paragraph where, however, Hoskyns argued “he (the author of the Fourth Gospel) insists with the whole power of his conviction that what he records is *what actually and really occurred*”⁴⁷. Admittedly he continues that this is where we are confronted by the eternal Word of God, with what is beyond history but “this Problem of all problems is presented to us . . . by confronting us with the precise and bodily history of Jesus from whose ‘belly’ flowed rivers of living water, who came not by water only, but by water and blood, by whose blood men are saved and whose flesh they must eat”⁴⁸. There is here an insistence on the genuine historicity of the events described in the Fourth Gospel yet there is a tension in Hoskyns’s position, for formally he agrees that the history of Jesus is where God is made known to men and yet on other occasions he does not seem at all concerned with the historical character of that revelation.

Like Dodd, Hoskyns attempted to do justice to the unique character of the Incarnation. To use Dodd’s words, “thus the historical situation in which Christ lived and died is also the moment at which what is beyond history takes command of history and gives to it an ultimate or ‘eschatological’ character”⁴⁹. This position seems to demand that as clear an attempt as possible be made to discover what were the actual events of the life of Jesus and as full an account as possible of the teaching of Jesus be set forth. To be true to the Johannine theological presentation one must work within the “dialectic” of “The Word was made flesh” and “The flesh profiteth nothing”.

At the conclusion of the long section on “The historical tension of the Fourth Gospel”, Hoskyns proposed his solution. He argued that “the visible, historical Jesus is the place in history where it is demanded that men should believe, and where they can so easily disbelieve, but where, if they disbelieve, the concrete history is found to be altogether meaningless, and where, if they believe, the fragmentary story of His life is woven into one whole, manifesting the glory of God and the glory of men who have been made by Him”⁵⁰. This is profound writing offering a right solution but he went on to argue that the Evangelist intended no escape from history and demanded that men “must be brought into full relationship with His stark historicity”⁵¹, although such a relationship would be profitless unless “the Spirit be veritably encountered there”⁵².

Yet what does Hoskyns mean by this entering into a full relationship with His stark historicity? Not a great deal, presumably, unless the reader is going to dismantle one of the triple barricades, that set against the separation of history and interpretation. If pressed at this point, Hoskyns’s solution leaves some questions unanswered not least because he asks “how can non-historical truth be set forth save in non-historical terms?”⁵³. He also argued that if we demand that an evangelist only narrate observable history, we are “demanding of him that he should not be an evangelist”⁵⁴. It appears that Hoskyns in his sheer exhilaration at being free from the problem of historicity never realised fully that the

question of historicity is an important part of the investigation of the Gospels.

Hoskyns apparently did not want to say that the Evangelist invented stories to be treated as allegories⁵⁵, yet this possibility must be seriously considered for Dodd probed Hoskyns's contention that non-historical truth can only be set forth in non-historical terms. For Dodd this amounted to Hoskyns's insistence "that an occurrence must often be related in a form which is factually untrue, in order that its inherent meaning may be brought out"⁵⁶.

This problem naturally climaxes in the Raising of Lazarus. Davey noted that anyone who lectures on the Fourth Gospel is asked "Did Lazarus rise from the dead? . . . It is, moreover, essentially a right question, not merely because so much seems to stand or fall with the answer to it, but because the conscious purpose of the fourth Evangelist seems to be to force his readers back upon the history – the flesh – of Jesus, in which according to his account the raising of Lazarus played so vital a part"⁵⁷. Hoskyns's treatment is not totally satisfactory; he argued that neither this miracle nor that in chapter nine "are introduced as proofs of doctrine or as symbolical illustrations of Christian mysticism; they constitute the revelation of the power of Jesus, and the truth is *manifested in historical action*"⁵⁸. Yet of chapter nine Hoskyns also wrote about a "complete fusion into one narrative of the experience of conversion to Christianity, of controversy with the Jews which was caused by the success of the Christian mission, and of the traditional accounts of healing of blind men by Jesus"⁵⁹. In this "complete fusion" the question of historicity is relegated to a comparatively unimportant place.

It comes, then, as no surprise that the raising of Lazarus is handled in a similar way. Hoskyns placed it in a profound theological context but the actual result of this is to leave the question of historicity unanswered and virtually unraised. There may indeed be no answer but at least the question ought to be raised in a commentary, particularly when the author writes "in spite of the author's emphasis on historicity, the narrative of the raising of Lazarus presents the historian with a very delicate problem"⁶⁰. Hoskyns contents himself with wondering about a possible connection with the Lucan parable of Dives and Lazarus and ultimately concluded "the form of the record of the raising of Lazarus suggests the freedom that results from the mighty act of God by which the Christians have passed from death to life"⁶¹. Despite his knowledge that the Evangelist stresses the historical nature of the event, Hoskyns did not grapple with the question of historicity at the very point where it presses most strongly upon the reader of the Fourth Gospel.

Davey's treatment is open to similar criticisms; the discussion ends just where one is expecting an answer to what he had described as a "right question". He moved onto a discussion of the relationship of chronological history to the meaning of history. This is to avoid ultimately the problem of what is chronological history. This problem must be faced; indeed the commentary demands that it must be faced for, as Davey recognised, the Evangelist's "Gospel is consciously created by his recognition of the supreme importance of the history of Jesus, *which not only mediates all that is to be known of God*, but also, in so doing, confronts man with the last things of God *now* (italicised), in the history through which man is passing, and so relates the whole world in which he stands to God"⁶².

Dodd's Position

Dodd was much more concerned with the problems of historicity than Hoskyns; "when, therefore, we have acknowledged that the Fourth Gospel is concerned with the non-historical that makes sense of history, I do not see how we can be prevented from raising the question (answering it is another matter), What value is to be assigned to the records of the facts of which sense is to be made?"⁶³. Dodd correctly asserted that "the problem of 'historicity' has a place of its own within the larger 'problem of history' (to use Hoskyns's expression)"⁶⁴. Dodd saw clearly that Hoskyns's position depended ultimately upon the unique character of the Incarnation and the confrontation of the world by God in Christ. For this to be a meaningful position there has to be a quest for the historical Jesus, some disentangling of the "triple barricade" as well as the recognition that the Jesus of history cannot be entirely separated from the Christ of the Church's faith.

Despite his long career Dodd did not in fact ever really grapple with the essential problem; it needs to be remembered that in *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, he contented himself with answering one question: "can we in any measure recover and describe a strain of tradition lying behind the Fourth Gospel, distinctive of it, and independent of other strains known to us?"⁶⁵. In so doing he was, as we have already suggested, continuing the work suggested very early in his career. He did not in *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* "take responsibility for our judgements of historical probability, a responsibility which no serious historian can avoid, with all its risks of 'subjectivity'"⁶⁶.

While there is no gainsaying the impression that Dodd did rate the historical value of the Johannine tradition highly, in no major work did he accomplish the serious historian's task. There is nothing in *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* that takes us beyond the equation "ancient" equals "historically reliable". He had not demonstrated the historical reliability of this ancient, independent Johannine strain of the tradition. More seriously, as J. A. T. Robinson has amply demonstrated, Dodd has an unsatisfactory and contradictory picture of the tradition and the Evangelist's relationship to it. Dodd's position demanded that he attempt the serious historical task; without it his Johannine studies are less complete than they might have been⁶⁷.

Some have seen this weighing of the tradition, as distinct from "recovering" it, in *The Founder of Christianity*. This is not so; of all Dodd's books this seems to be the one in which there is an unsatisfactory blend of the "academic" and the "popular". It is not too harsh to describe his use of the Gospels there as "pre-critical". The book seems to have been spared criticism because it has been received as "the last will and testament" of a great scholar. Not only is it not the serious historical task that was necessary, but for our present purpose it gives rise to concern about Dodd's consistency. The "classical" Dodd stressed the factual nature of the Johannine tradition (and indeed of the tradition generally) but here there is strange withdrawal from that position; "this use of symbolism is fundamentally poetical. It is not a flight into fantasy. It means that facts are being viewed in depth, not superficially. This must be taken into account when we consider the stories of the miracles. In the Fourth Gospel these are treated as 'signs', that is symbols. Not that John thought they did not happen but

their happening to him was of less value than their meaning . . . If anyone chooses to read the miracle stories of the Gospels as pictorial symbols of the power of spiritual renewal which the first Christians found in their encounter with Jesus, *without* (my italics) raising the question whether it all happened just like that, he is not far from the intention of John at least, and possibly the others"⁶⁸. Not only does this recall Dodd's early impatience with Bernard who, Dodd suggested, was too concerned with the factual nature of the miracles in the Fourth Gospel⁶⁹, but it is identical with part of Hoskyns's position.

Conclusions

Although Dodd was generally more consistent in his handling of the question, problems still remain partly because Dodd's own reconstruction is unsatisfactory, partly because of the inconsistency to which we have drawn attention but mainly because, whereas much current Johannine scholarship is rightly concerned with the quest for the historical Johannine community, Dodd ignored this, except for a few comments. Problems remain for Hoskyns because he has not satisfactorily related the meaning of history to chronological history and indeed on occasions avoided historical problems by recourse to the meaning of history.

The way in which each scholar approached the problem of history was determined by another factor. As in his doctrine of creation in which the natural and the supernatural were distinct yet related, so in Dodd's understanding of history the historical and the suprahistorical were related yet distinct. Hoskyns rejected natural theology, possibly under the influence of Barth. C. K. Barrett argues that it was the great achievement of Hoskyns and Davey to stress that the Fourth Gospel is a *theological* work. This means that Hoskyns could write of "the non-historical that makes sense of history"⁷¹. Hoskyns expressed the theological consequences of this eloquently: "the Fourth Gospel describes an ultimate tension . . . the tension between God and men. It vibrates and is set in motion at the point where trembling and arrogant human life is met by the Life that is eternal; at the point where men are confronted by Jesus, son of man and son of God"⁷².

Dodd did not work with this tension; more than a difference of terminology is implied by his preference for "suprahistorical" rather than "non-historical". The supra-historical is related to the historical so that there can be none of the tension that Hoskyns described.

For both the historical is a medium for God's self-revelation; for Dodd it was *the* medium. While we have argued that neither scholar has proposed a totally satisfying solution, each has raised fundamental questions that are as alive today as ever. It is appropriate to end with some of Hoskyns's words; to thank God for their work and to believe that both are "in the resting places which Jesus has prepared in His Father's house" where "this strictly theological tension can be resolved only in the resurrection"⁷³.

1. E. C. Hoskyns and Noel Davey, *Crucifixion-Resurrection*, SPCK, 1981, p. 29.
2. F. W. Dillistone, C. H. Dodd: *Interpreter of the New Testament*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1977, p. 56.
3. E. C. Hoskyns, *Cambridge Sermons*, SPCK, 1938, p. 37.
4. Paraphrasing Dodd's famous picture of the ideal interpreter of the New Testament from *The Present Task in New Testament Studies*, CUP, 1936.
5. cf. J. O. Cobham "Hoskyns the Sunderland Curate", *CQR*, 1957, 290-93, and Dillistone op.cit. p. 57.
6. Dodd, "Thirty Years of New Testament Studies", *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, 1950, 5-12; this quotation p. 6.
7. *ibid.*
8. K. Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans* (translated by Hoskyns) OUP, 1933, p. 258.
9. Hoskyns, *Cambridge Sermons*, p. 218f.
10. cf. A. M. Ramsey *From Gore to Temple*, Longmans, 1960, particularly pp. 131-40.
11. Hoskyns, *Cambridge Sermons*, p. 167.
12. Dillistone, op.cit., p. 156.
13. Hoskyns and Davey, *Crucifixion-Resurrection*, p. 64.
14. *ibid.*, p. 67.
15. Dillistone, op.cit., p. 94.
16. Dodd "The Eucharist in Relation to the Fellowship of the Church", *Theology* 1931, 333-36; this quotation p. 336; it was a feature of his writings.
17. *ibid.* p. 336.
18. Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, Nisbet, 1938, pp. 162ff. Italics in the original.
19. G. B. Caird, "Charles Harold Dodd", *The Proceedings of the British Academy*, 1974, pp. 3-16; this quotation p. 11.
20. Dillistone, op.cit., p. 165.
21. cf. Dodd, "The Close of the Galilean Ministry", *Expositor*, 1921, 273-91.
22. Dodd, *The Gospel in the New Testament*, National Sunday School Union, 1926, p. 100.
23. cf. Dodd, Review of J. H. Bernard, *Gospel according to St. John*, *Congregational Quarterly*, 1929, 369-71.
24. *ibid.* p. 371.
25. Hoskyns, Review of Bernard, *Theology* 1930, 165-71; this quotation p. 167.
26. Dodd, "Hellenism and Christianity" in *Independence, Convergence and Borrowing in Institutions, Thought and Art*, CUP, 1937, p. 126, my italics. The extended title says it all!
27. Dodd, *The Present Task in New Testament Studies*, p. 14.
28. cf. Dodd, Review of Hoskyns and Davey, *The Fourth Gospel*, *Theology*, 1940, pp. 305-10.
29. Dodd, *The Present Task in New Testament Studies*, p. 35.
30. Dodd, Review of Hoskyns, p. 306.
31. Hoskyns, "The Christ of the Synoptic Gospels" in *Essays Catholic and Critical*, SPCK, 1926; this quotation p. 153.
32. Hoskyns and Davey, *The Riddle of the New Testament*, Faber and Faber, 1931; all citations from the 1958 edition; this quotation p. 9f.
33. *ibid.* p. 177.
34. *ibid.*, p. 179.
35. *ibid.*
36. Hoskyns, Review of Bernard, p. 169f.
37. Hoskyns and Davey, *Crucifixion-Resurrection* p. 70.
38. cf. Hoskyns and Davey, *The Fourth Gospel*, Faber and Faber, 1947, pp. 58 and 112.
39. J. H. Bernard *The Gospel according to St. John*, T. and T. Clark, 1928, p. xc.
40. Dodd, Review of Bernard, p. 370.
41. Dodd, *The Authority of the Bible*, Nisbet, 1928, revised edition 1938 from which citations are taken; this quotation p. ix.
41. Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, p. 37.
43. Dodd, Review of Hoskyns, p. 308.
44. Hoskyns and Davey, *The Fourth Gospel*, p. 132.
45. *ibid.*
46. *ibid.*
47. *ibid.* p. 17, my italics.
48. *ibid.* p. 18.
49. Dodd, Review of Hoskyns, p. 308.
50. Hoskyns and Davey, *The Fourth Gospel*, p. 85.

51. *ibid.*
 52. *ibid.*
 53. *ibid.*, p. 84.
 54. *ibid.*
 55. cf. *ibid.*, p. 117.
 56. Dodd, Review of Hoskyns, p. 309.
 57. Hoskyns and Davey, *The Fourth Gospel*, p. 109.
 58. *ibid.* p. 112, my italics.
 59. *ibid.* p. 362; interestingly this is close to the Dodd's understanding in *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 357.
 60. *ibid.*, p. 395.
 61. *ibid.*
 62. *ibid.*, p. 126.
 63. Dodd, Review of Hoskyns, p. 309.
 64. *ibid.*, p. 310.
 65. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, CUP, 1963, p. 8.
 66. *ibid.*
 67. cf. J. A. T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, SCM, 1976, pp. 263-68.
 68. Dodd *The Founder of Christianity*, Collins, 1971; quotation from the Fontana edition, pp. 31f.
 69. cf. Dodd, Review of Bernard, p. 371.
 70. C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, SPCK, 1978, p. 97.
 71. Hoskyns and Davey, *The Fourth Gospel*, p. 129.
 72. *ibid.*, p. 61.
 73. *ibid.*, p. 130, where I have changed the order of the sentence.

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PARADOX AND CHRISTOLOGY

J. ASTLEY

It is inevitable that the category of 'paradox', understood as 'apparent contradiction', should be applied to the doctrine of the person of Christ.¹ And it is understandable that theologians should from time to time invoke the wave-particle duality of the physicist's understanding of light and the electron in order to defend the use of paradoxical language in Christian theology. In this paper I shall attempt to indicate some of the limitations of such an appeal.

I

One of the most interesting studies of the relevance of the wave-particle paradox in theology is to be found in W. H. Austin's *Waves, Particles, and Paradoxes*.² Austin surveys the evidence for both the particulate and the wave character of light and electrons, and discusses Neils Bohr's complementarist interpretation of the dualities of quantum theory. He concludes by proposing 'a definition of complementarity'

according to which it is a relation between two *models* used in an inquiry of some kind, e.g. an attempt at interpretation of a range of phenomena. Two models will be said to be complementary if both are used in the inquiry but the need to use both imposes restrictions on the freedom and precision with which each can be used. For example, if we are to use both wave and particle models for the electron without falling into outright contradiction, we must use wave packets as approximations to particles, and therefore . . . cannot handle the particle model in all the accustomed ways. We cannot, in particular, expect to attribute exact position or exact momentum to the particle, and the more nearly exact we make one the less exact the other can be³ (p. 30).

Austin notes that many physicists reject Bohr's 'Copenhagen Interpretation' of the quantum theory, arguing for various reasons that a complementarist interpretation is unnecessary – for the paradoxes of physics are resolvable (pp. 31–36). Nevertheless he believes that complementarist interpretations of paradox might be useful in theology. This is particularly the case where alternative ways of treating theological paradoxes can be shown to be inadequate.

These 'standard alternative approaches to the interpretation of theological paradoxes' (p. 80) are worth considering further. They may be classified as follows:

(1) The '*paradox-minimizing approach*'. This 'dissolution' of paradox attempts to remove the appearance of contradiction. Austin distinguishes two techniques:

(a) 'One way is to replace the paradox . . . with a set of statements of equivalent meaning in which no paradox occurs' (p. 81) e.g. by discerning a key term that is being used in different senses; (b) the other way is by 'exhibiting formal-logical representations of the paradoxical statements as theorems within consistent formal systems' (*ibid.*), a technique that Austin describes as a 'promising tool' (p. 41).

(2) Two other approaches, however, treat *paradox as permanent and necessary* in theology, but are incompatible with a complementarist interpretation of paradox:

(a) the 'poetic interpretation':

Here the paradoxes of religious discourse (many, if

not all of them) are taken to be like the paradoxes of poetry in that they convey insights through the clash of images, insights which could not be communicated in any other way . . . On this interpretation, poets and religious writers . . . use words and images in ways and for purposes radically unlike those of everyday discourse and scientific enquiry. The poetic interpretation is thus incompatible with a complementarist interpretation of religious paradoxes (p. 81).

A variant of this is the suggestion that 'theology consists of a poetic core, surrounded by a body of prose commentary' (p. 82).

(b) the '*sui generis interpretation*' argues that all theological paradoxes reflect the master paradox of the religious ultimate claiming both that some predicates can be applied to the religious ultimate and that no predicates are applicable to it (p. 45; Austin calls this the 'affirmation-negation paradox').

In his treatment of the Christological paradox, Austin argues that 'none of the standard "alternative approaches" seem very successful':

It is too specifically devoted to saying something unique about Christ to be a simple instantiation of the paradox of the religious ultimate. It does not seem to be a poetic paradox, though poetic use is sometimes made of it, for it originates in efforts to define what man ought to say of Christ, rather than in efforts to evoke insight through the interplay of clashing images. It has resisted dissolution, and indeed the Chalcedonian definition effectively blocks all the more obvious distinctions that might be invoked for this purpose (p. 85).

Austin attempts a complementarist interpretation of Christology. He notes first of all that it is inappropriate to treat *God* and *man* as the complementary models, for 'this seems to suggest that "Christ" is a being who is neither God nor man . . . And this runs counter to the insistence that he is *truly* God and *truly* man' (p. 86). Further, the doctrine of the person of Christ is often said to improve our conceptions of God and man and this 'suggests that they are not being used as models in the inquiry in the same sense that waves and particles are used as models in physical inquiry. For in the latter the conceptions of waves and particles employed do not change . . . (p. 89). Instead Austin suggests that the dominant Christological models⁴ of 'Logos' and 'Messiah' might be treated complementarily, with the Chalcedonian definition laying down ground rules for the use of each model, 'so that it would not be developed in such a way as to preclude use of the other' (*ibid.*). In an interesting analysis Austin argues further that,

We cannot . . . see Chalcedon as the direct confrontation of a strand of thought dominated by the Logos model and another strand dominated by the Messiah model. If there were such strands, they had been interwoven – in more than one way – well before Chalcedon, and the confrontation there was between different ways of interweaving the strands (p. 92).

II

It is interesting to compare Austin's analysis with that of Ian Ramsey. Ramsey distinguishes between 'avoidable' and 'unavoidable' paradoxes. Avoidable paradox 'spotlights some confusion or other' ('Paradox in Religion',⁵ p. 196) that can be cleared up either by retracing our argument to expose unilluminating category mistakes ('retrospectively

negative paradoxes') or by overcoming the paradox in a more comprehensive hypothesis ('subsequently significant paradoxes'). Interestingly enough, it is to this latter category that Ramsey assigns both the wave-particle paradox and the Christological paradox.⁶ Unlike Austin, then, Ramsey believes that the complementarist paradoxes are avoidable and resolvable.⁷

Ramsey claims, however, that there are unavoidable religious paradoxes – e.g. 'God is impassible yet loving . . . both transcendent and immanent' – that are permanent and irreducible. They arise in our attempts 'to describe what is both "seen and unseen" in language primarily suited to observables' (*ibid.*, p. 203). Yet Ramsey regards such paradoxes as 'logically explorable', for 'their structure can be investigated and explored' (p. 218). According to Ramsey, three techniques are useful here:

(1) Illumination may come from analysing the logic of 'I' which, like 'God', 'gives rise to unavoidable paradox in virtue of having to be associated with verifiable descriptions, yet distinguished from any or all of them' (p. 215⁸). This is similar to Austin's 'sui generis interpretation'.

(2) Another technique rests on the evocative function of religious discourse. Paradoxes are similar to the rest of religious language in that they are mainly rendered intelligible by the unveiling of the religious disclosures (revelations made known in moments of discernment or intuition) that lie behind them:

Any unavoidable religious paradox will be defensible only in so far as it can be so structured as to be evocative of a disclosure situation comprising 'what is seen and more' (p. 216⁹).

In fact it would appear that technique (1) is to be justified in terms of (2), for I and God are only known in disclosure situations. Thus Ramsey's claim here is that paradox may be justified and explored by tracking it back to the original disclosure from which it arises. Here, as elsewhere, Ramsey concentrates on the evocative function of religious language at the expense of its representative, analogical use. He believes that religious paradox only arises when people mistakenly interpret the different models in multi-model theological discourse as 'picturing models' which all serve as literal descriptions of the same entity:¹⁰

Question: How can God be both a 'Father' and a 'Rock'? Clearly he cannot if both words are applied literally to God. Ramsey's answer to the question (*Answer 1*) is that God is both 'Father' and 'Rock' in the sense that the disclosure of God may be evoked by father-language and by rock-language. Such a theological paradox dissolves, Ramsey claims, when both kinds of language are 'harmonised by being tracked back to the same kind of situation' ('Paradox in Religion', 208), when we read theology 'backwards, back into the disclosure of God'.¹¹ The paradox of God's omnipotence and our free-will is similarly resolved in so far as we come to know the omnipotent God in a disclosure (reached by the qualification of 'powerful' by 'all') which is at the same time a self-disclosure in which we realise our freedom.¹² Similarly, God can be both 'loving' and 'impassible' for "'God is impassible" . . . is to be understood by its ability to evoke in terms of "passibility" stories . . . the characteristic theological situation' and 'God is loving' (or rather, 'God is infinitely loving') has a similar evocative function. Thus 'Each assertion evokes the suitably odd situation' and 'each claims an odd positioning for the word "God"'.¹³

But Answer 1, of course, is only half the story. We must also offer *Answer 2*: that both 'Father' and 'Rock' may be used to represent God if they are used analogically, and if the analogical development of each model is such that it becomes compatible with the analogy derived from the other. Thus God is 'father-like' in the sense that he loves, cares and provides; he is also 'rock-like' in the sense that he is dependable, permanent and a source of 'shade' and 'rest'. God is not in every respect like a human father or a rock. This answer is entirely in line with Ramsey's own view of the representative function of models; he neglects to provide it himself only because he has become bemused by the evocative function of religious models.¹⁴

(3) Ramsey also invokes the formal function¹⁵ of religious language in the exploration of religious paradoxes. For religious language often provides rules for consistent talking about God, rather than representative ('descriptive') talk concerning him. Ramsey analyses many religious doctrines as providing formal language rules (e.g. the doctrine of *communicatio idiomatum* in Christology,¹⁶ and the concept of *perichoresis* in the doctrine of the Trinity¹⁷), and views the Creeds as essentially 'rules to guide all subsequent discourse'.¹⁸ Thus the Christological paradox may be resolved by being treated in the formal mode:

while words about 'human nature' and 'God' are logically diverse, yet they have to be mixed to talk about Jesus Christ

('Paradox in Religion', p. 200).

Although this example lies in the category of avoidable paradox, Ramsey also adopts the formal mode analysis in his discussion of many of God's attributes (which give rise to unavoidable paradoxes).¹⁹

Just as the evocative analysis of religious language requires supplementing by a consideration of its representative function, so also does this formal analysis. For even rules need some justification, unless they are adopted entirely arbitrarily. And surely the ultimate justification of doctrinal rules is that they guide us in the production of a consistent systematic theology which *does in fact* adequately represent the nature and activity of God. Ramsey presumably would accept this point; but it can be taken further. For Ramsey does not provide us with any convincing examples of 'rules' which cannot be treated – if properly understood as qualified, analogical language – as 'representations' in some sense or another. Thus, for example, we have a rule instructing us to unite the 'logical strands' of Father-, Son-, and Spirit-language when constructing our doctrine of God. But the justification for this rule is that a Trinitarian doctrine of God more adequately represents his nature than any other account which might be proposed. And as the 'rule' comes to us couched in the material mode as a set of statements about God, rather than in imperative or formal-mode language, to treat it as a 'rule' is to move the doctrine of the Trinity one place further back. It is to convert it from a doctrine about God into a set of rules for constructing the doctrine of God. But our doctrine of God must itself be assessed in the material mode in terms of its adequacy as a representation of God. So this manoeuvre gains nothing in the long run, except in so far as it reminds us once again of the figurative nature of much religious language.

* * * * *

I have argued, then, that Ramsey's techniques for exploring paradox need to be supplemented by a consideration of the representative function of the models employed in the paradox, and thus by an interpretation of paradox in terms of analogical predication.²⁰ And if we attempt – as I believe theologians must – to specify such religious analogies and provide a more determinate 'partial interpretation' of them,²¹ then we are well on the way to resolving many of the paradoxes of religion,²² however 'irreducible' they may seem at first sight.

III

We are now in a position to make a number of points relevant to the issue of paradox in theology.

(1) Ramsey, unlike Austin, regards the wave-particle and Christological paradoxes as avoidable: such complementary paradoxes can be largely resolved. Ian Barbour holds a similar view with regard to the wave-particle duality, and it is one which theologians ought to take note of:

Complementarity provides *no justification for an uncritical acceptance of dichotomies*. It cannot be used to avoid dealing with inconsistencies or to veto the search for unity. The 'paradoxical' element in the wave-particle duality should not be over-emphasized. We do not say that an electron is both a wave and a particle, but that it exhibits wave-like and particle-like behaviour; moreover we do have a unified mathematical formalism which provides at least probabilistic predictions. And . . . we cannot rule out in advance the search for new unifying models (such as David Bohm's postulation of sub-atomic causal mechanisms), even though previous attempts have not yielded any new theories in better agreement with the data than quantum theory. Coherence remains an important ideal and criterion in all reflective enquiry.²³

(2) Even if the Christological paradox is regarded as 'unavoidable' and 'irreducible', it might still be treated – again using Ramsey's terminology – as 'explorable'. I have argued that Ramsey's analysis and justification of unavoidable paradox solely in terms of the evocative and formal functions of religious language is inadequate. We need to refer to its representative function as well. In *Waves, Particles, and Paradoxes*, Austin suggests a formal approach to the Christological paradox (p. 89). Bohr's own neo-Kantian epistemology expresses a scepticism²⁴ with regard to the possibility of our knowing the world in itself that tends to move in the same direction. Richard Swinburne writes:

According to the Copenhagen Interpretation Quantum Theory is just a predicting device, and does not tell us about what the world is like. It cannot do so – because if it did it would have to say either (a) light is sometimes particles and sometimes a wave or (b) light is always particles and always a wave. But neither (a) nor (b) will do. (b) is self-contradictory – light either is or is not a material object. Yet it will not do to say (a), that the beam of light forced to show interference phenomena was a wave, and that forced to show the photoelectric effect was really a stream of particles. For all our evidence is that any one beam can be made to show either effect.²⁵

Yet the majority of physicists – and many philosophers of science – still accept a realist, albeit a critical realist, epistemological position in opposition to such 'instrumentalism'.²⁶ They would agree with Barbour:

The complementarity of models, under these conditions, underscores *the inadequacy of literalism*. The use of one model limits the use of the other; they are not simply 'alternative models' having different domains or functions. They are symbolic representations of aspects of reality which cannot be consistently visualized in terms of analogies with everyday experience; they are only very indirectly related to observable phenomena. On the other hand, complementarity does not require us to treat models merely as useful fictions, or to accept a positivist interpretation. Complementarity when understood in this way is not inconsistent with critical realism.²⁷

In both science and theology such a 'critical realism' is needed, for both scientific and theological models are analogical representations, rather than literal descriptions, of Reality.²⁸ Thus Swinburne comments;

The alternative to the Copenhagen Interpretation is to say that light is both 'particles' and 'wave', only in extended senses of the terms which do not exclude each other. Light is a stream of 'particles', in a sense of 'particle' in which grains of sand and everything else which we would call 'particles' are particles, but in a sense in which some things which we would not call 'particles' are particles. Light is a 'wave', in the sense in which a water wave and everything else which we would call 'waves' are such, but in a sense in which some things which we would not call 'waves' are waves . . . With the new analogical senses of 'wave' and 'particle' is it coherent to suppose that light is both a stream of 'particles' and a 'wave'? I know of no straightforward proof that it is or that it is not. But there is clearly indirect evidence that there exist such objects and so that it is coherent to suppose that there are.²⁹

(3) This brings me to a further point. Ronald Hepburn makes an important point about the use of paradoxical language in theology:

Sceptics have wanted to say that the contradictions in accounts of God entail that there can *be* no God, just as the contradiction in a 'round square' entails that nothing can *be* a round square. But no one has suggested that because we were forced to use two irreconcilable explanatory models for light – that therefore there could be no such thing as *light!* But why should no one suggest this? Because 'light' is ostensibly definable; because, that is to say, you can switch on a lamp in a dark room, and say '*That's light!*'. You can draw someone's attention to an actual instance of what the word 'light' is used for. Paradox appears only when we attempt to gather up all we know about light, all the different, experimentally discovered features of its behaviour into one explanatory picture, and we find that two pictures, not one, emerge – a particle-picture and a wave-picture. But where a term receives an ostensive definition, our perplexity at its nature can never rise to such a pitch that we are forced to say, 'It is impossible that this should exist', no matter how unaccountable its behaviour.³⁰

As is well known, Hepburn is critical of the sort of ostensive definition of God appealed to by encounter theologians. We do not necessarily need to go along with him in this criticism, but we should note that it is not *God*

who is being pointed to as the referent of the Christological paradox.³¹ But who is being pointed to? Is it the *historical Jesus* whom we must understand by means of divine and human models (or Logos and Messiah models)? Or is it the *risen Christ* of (some Christians') religious experience? Many theologians would plump for the former, but we do seem to need to distinguish between Jesus-of-history-Christologies and Christ-of-faith-Christologies and make some attempt to relate them. The ostensive definition that allows us to use both divine and human language of Christ is certainly more problematic in the case of Christ-of-faith-Christologies. However, is not it in both cases the applicability of the models/language in the first place that should be questioned? There is surely a profound disanalogy between the wave-particle and the Christological examples. For Jesus does not seem to show any 'divine-behaviour' that is incompatible with his 'human-behaviour' (in the way that light shows 'wave-behaviour' that does seem to be incompatible with its 'particle-behaviour'). There does not seem to be anything paradoxical in a fully human, non-divine, being speaking and acting as Jesus did.³² The soteriological dimension of the work of Christ can be explained by means of an exemplarist revelational analysis that is fully compatible with the view of Jesus as a man who was used by God as the medium of his revelation, and the mediator of his love to men. Such an analysis requires us to predicate no divine rôle of, or element in, Jesus that is incompatible with his humanity. In short, Christology need not be paradoxical.

(4) We should recall Austin's rejection of the use of 'God' and 'man' as models in his study of the Christological paradox. Now although 'Jesus is both God and man' is certainly paradoxical,³³ 'Jesus is both Logos and Messiah' is much less so – for it offers us much more scope for arguing about the meaning of the terms used. And some New Testament scholars would argue that the status of the 'Logos-model' in New Testament theology is such that it can be applied to the human Jesus without paradox.³⁴ The doctrinal formulation 'Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate'³⁵ seems to express this Logos/Messiah 'complementarity' and is at the very least less paradoxical³⁶ than the bald assertion that 'Jesus is God'. For, *prima facie*, 'the Word of God incarnate' does seem to qualify the term God in two ways. Those ways need to be spelled out, and they may be spelled out so as to make the statement non-paradoxical. Of course the Chalcedonian phrase 'truly God and truly man' still glosses the assertion, but that phrase itself demands interpretation – which could diminish its paradoxical nature.³⁷

(5) My final point, however, is that what Austin calls the 'poetic interpretation' seems to me to be the most fruitful way of analysing religious paradox. Austin argues that 'the claim that all cognitively significant religious discourse is poetic in character is, on the face of it, highly implausible' (*Waves, Particles, and Paradoxes*, p. 82). This is true. The Athanasian creed, for example, is not a poem. But that does not prevent us from arguing that the real home of the paradoxes of the faith is religion proper, rather than theology. Theology is the second-order interpretative analysis that should be striving to go beyond, to articulate and expound, the first-order language of religious hymns, prayers, confessions and exhortations. And it is this religious language that is often poetic, metaphorical, mythological and paradoxical. The 'incarnation', then, should not be treated as a doctrine showing the paradox of complementarity. Rather it should be regarded as a mythological, paradoxical story. It is a story of considerable religious

worth as a first-order expression of the value to be placed on the person of Jesus³⁸, and perhaps as having in addition the 'engineering function'³⁹ of evoking an experience of the presence and activity of God 'in' and 'through' Jesus. But 'the doctrine(s) of the incarnation' is (are) the attempt(s) of the theologians to explain and understand such a story; to go beyond the paradox and provide a coherent, consistent and plausible analysis of the 'presence' of God 'in' Christ. Religion would do well to keep its Christological paradox⁴⁰ – and maintain its sharpness well honed. Provided, that is, that the religious paradox 'works'. But paradoxes do not 'work' in the very different language game of *theology*. What is needed in theology is some explanation, understanding and transcending of paradox by means of models and analogies, so as to articulate as clearly as possible the truth about him who is the truth.

1. Cf., e.g., B. Hebblethwaite in M. Goulder (ed.), *Incarnation and Myth*, SCM (1979), p. 61, and C. F. D. Moule, 'The Manhood of Jesus in the New Testament', in S. W. Sykes & J. P. Clayton (eds.), *Christ, Faith and History*, CUP (1972).
2. *Rice University Studies*, 53, 2 (Spring, 1967).
3. i.e. the Heisenberg uncertainty principle.
4. Cf. I. T. Ramsey, *Models and Mystery*, OUP (1964), p. 14. For Ramsey's account of 'dominant models' cf. 'Talking about God . . .', in F. W. Dillstone (ed.), *Myth and Symbol*, SPCK (1966), p. 90; *Christian Discourse*, OUP (1965), pp. 20, 58; 'Theological Literacy', *Chicago Theological Seminary Register* LIII, 5 (1963), p. 28.
5. *The Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supp. Vol. XXXIII (1959).
6. *ibid.*, pp. 199ff; cf. J. H. Gill, *Ian Ramsey*, Allen & Unwin (1976), p. 99. Pace M. Goulder, 'Paradox and Mystification', in *Incarnation and Myth*, p. 59 n. 3 – although Ramsey's qualification in 'Paradox in Religion' p. 201 should be noted.
7. 'What theologians have to do . . . is something like what Bohm has done . . . in the wave-particle case by giving a harmonious mathematical treatment to what seems to be two disparate approaches . . . a task which at least in principle is only like discovering (say) that discourse both about straight lines and ellipses can be harmonised within discourse about a cone' (I. T. Ramsey, *Mind*, LXXII, 286, 1963, p. 298). David Bohm is a physicist who adopts a non-complementarist treatment of the wave-particle paradox (cf. Austin, *op.cit.*, pp. 32f.).
8. Cf. *Religious Language*, SCM (1957), pp. 88f; 'The Paradox of Omnipotence', *Mind*, LXV, 258 (1956), p. 265.
9. Cf. *Freedom and Immortality*, SCM (1960), p. 53.
10. Cf. 'The Paradox of Omnipotence', *passim*.
11. 'Hell' p. 221, in G. N. A. Vesey (ed.), *Talk of God*, Macmillan (1969). The evocative function of religious language is analysed most fully in *Religious Language*.
12. *Freedom and Immortality*, pp. 59f.
13. *Religious Language*, p. 89; cf. 'Paradox in Religion', pp. 207ff.
14. Cf. W. H. Austin, 'Models, Mystery and Paradox in Ian Ramsey', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, VII, 1 (1968), p. 43. For Ramsey's account of the representative function of religious models see 'Letter to the Editor', *Theology*, LXXIV, 609 (1971), p. 126. According to Ramsey, qualified-models are 'appropriate currency' for our articulations about what is disclosed in a religious disclosure (cf. *Religious Language*, p. 92), they serve as theological 'approximations' in our attempts to represent God in human language (cf. *Christian Discourse*, pp. 70f; *Models for Divine Activity*, SCM [1973], p. 23).
15. Sentences about words are said to be in the 'formal mode', while sentences about entities and events are in the 'material mode'.
16. Cf. 'Logical Empiricism and Patristics', *Studia Patristica*, 5, 111 (1962), p. 545.
17. Cf. *Models for Divine Activity*, p. 46.
18. *On being Sure in Religion*, Athlone (1963), p. 87; cf. *ibid.*, pp. 52ff.
19. Cf. e.g., 'A Personal God', p. 70, in F. G. Healey (ed.), *Prospect for Theology*, Nisbet (1966).
20. Cf. *Religious Language*, p. 185; V. Mehta, *The New Theologian*, Weidenfeld & Nicholson (1966), p. 100.
21. E. R. MacCormac, 'Scientific and Religious Metaphors', *Religious Studies*, 11, 4 (1975), p. 405; cf. P. C. Hayner, 'Analogical Predication', *The Journal of Philosophy*, LV, 20 (1958), p. 861.
22. Cf. W. H. Austin, *Waves, Particles and Paradoxes*, pp. 47f.
23. I. G. Barbour, *Myths, Models and Paradigms*, SCM (1974), p. 77; cf. *ibid.* p. 91.

24. Cf. I. G. Barbour, *Issues in Science and Religion*, SCM (1966), pp. 293f.
25. *The Coherence of Theism*, OUP (1977), pp. 66f. Agnosticism about the ontological status of scientific theoretical entities can lead to a non-realist position that can either take the form – as here – of ‘instrumentalism’ (which regards scientific theories not as statements about theoretical entities but as instruments – e.g. rules of inference – for predicting observable phenomena) or be expressed in the related, but more explicitly positivist, account of ‘descriptivism’ or ‘reductionism’ (in which the sentences of a scientific theory are treated as statements referring to observable rather than unobservable entities). Cf. A. M. Quinton, *The Nature of Things*, RKP (1973) pp. 288f.; E. Nagel, *The Structure of Science*, RKP (1961), pp. 118ff.; I. G. Barbour, *Issues in Science and Religion*, ch. 6 and p. 303.
26. Cf. the discussions in Nagel pp. 137ff., 145f.; Barbour, *Issues . . .*, p. 166; R. Harré, *The Philosophies of Science*, OUP (1972), ch. 3; G. Maxwell, ‘The Ontological Status of Theoretical Entities’, in H. Feigl and G. Maxwell (eds.), *Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Sciences*, Vol. III, Univ. Minnesota Press (1962); K. R. Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations*, RKP (1972), pp. 111ff.; M. Hesse, *Science and the Human Imagination*, SCM (1954), pp. 150f. Cf. also a later book by W. H. Austin; *The Relevance of Natural Science to Theology*, Macmillan (1976), ch. 2.
27. *Myths, Models and Paradigms*, p. 78; cf. *Issues in Science and Religion* p. 161.
28. Cf. I. G. Barbour, *Myths, Models and Paradigms*, pp. 48, 50, 69 and *Issues . . .*, pp. 172, 216ff.; F. Ferré, ‘Mapping the Logic of Models in Science and Theology’, in D. M. High (ed.), *New Essays in Religious Language*, OUP (1969), pp. 74ff. and ‘Metaphors, Models and Religion’, *Soundings*, LJ (1968), p. 344. I would argue that such a critical realism is espoused by Ian Ramsey also, although his treatment of language as formal mode discourse often obscures this. Cf. *Models and Mystery*, OUP (1964), pp. 20f; ‘Models and Mystery’ *Theoria to Theory*, I, 3 (1967), p. 268 etc.
29. *op.cit.* pp.67f. Cf. Barbour, *Issues . . .*, pp. 293f.
30. *Christianity and Paradox*, Watts (1958), p. 18; cf. *ibid.* p. 186.
31. Hepburn’s discussion of the indirect ostensive definition of God through our pointing to Jesus (as God incarnate) is not really relevant to our discussion: *op.cit.*, ch. 5.
32. Cf. D. Cupitt, *The Debate about Christ*, SCM (1979), ch. 6.
33. If not a straight contradiction: cf. J. H. Hick, *God and the Universe of Faiths*, Macmillan (1973), pp. 170f.; *The Myth of God Incarnate*, SCM (1977), p. 178; ‘Letter to the Editor: Incarnation’, *Theology*, LXXX, 675 (1977), p.204.
34. This is how I would interpret C. H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, CUP (1953), pp. 280ff. Cf. also G. B. Caird, ‘The Development of the Doctrine of Christ in the New Testament’, in N. Pittenger (ed.), *Christ for Us Today*, SCM (1968), pp. 76ff. The application of ‘Son of God’ language to the human Jesus seems even less paradoxical – cf. W. G. Kümmel, *Theology of the New Testament*, SCM (1974), p. 111; O. Cullmann, *Christology of the New Testament*, SCM (1963), p. 293.
35. Cf. N. Lash in *Incarnation and Myth*, p. 41.
36. It is patently not a self-contradiction.
37. Cf. J. H. Hick, *God and the Universe of Faiths*, Ch. 11. The problem is whether Hick’s ‘love of God incarnate’ Christology adequately expresses the *totus deus* confession – cf. *op.cit.* p. 159. Cf. also D. Cupitt in *Incarnation and Myth*, pp. 47ff.
38. Cf. J. H. Hick, *The Myth of God Incarnate*, ch. 12; *Incarnation and Myth*, pp. 47ff.
39. Cf. N. Smart, ‘Paradox in Religion’, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary Vol. XXXIII (1959), p. 224.
40. On the value of paradox see J. Wisdom, *Paradox and Discovery*, Blackwell (1965), ch. XI.

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BAPTISM INTO ONE BODY

NICHOLAS PAXTON

When the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission produced its Final Report in September 1981 after nearly 12 years of work, one noteworthy feature was the marked scarcity of references to baptism, together with the absence of a statement on it. Though ARCIC decided to concentrate on the subjects of the Eucharist, Ministry and Ordination, and Authority in the Church on the grounds that these were more controversial topics than baptism for Anglicans and Roman Catholics, that is not to say that the ecumenical movement as a whole has reached full agreement on the meaning and theology of baptism. However, ARCIC has provided a valuable guideline for future ecumenical discussion on baptism by noting that "sharing in the same Holy Spirit, whereby we become members of the same body of Christ and adopted children of the same Father, we are also bound to one another in a completely new relationship. *Koinonia* with one another is entailed by our *koinonia* with God in Christ. This is the mystery of the Church". In the light of ARCIC's comment on the one hand and of the unity covenant's failure on the other, this article will treat of baptism under five main headings: firstly, the way in which baptism has been seen and discussed in the ecumenical movement over the past 30 years; secondly, our baptismal incorporation into Christ; thirdly, baptism as our entrance into the People of God; fourthly, the relationship between baptism, faith and justification; and lastly the connection between our baptism and the Church's work. By this approach we shall be able to clarify the way in which baptism brings all Christians into a unity in Christ, brought about in faith and expressed in the service of the world.

Baptism and the Ecumenical Movement

In the Windsor Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine, ARCIC writes that "by his word God calls us into a new relationship with himself as our Father and with one another as his children – a relationship inaugurated by baptism into Christ through the Holy Spirit"². This insight into baptism as our shared response in faith to God's call to salvation (proclaimed in Christ the Word and accepted by our joining in Christ's Body) is one which has been developed both within the World Council of Churches and by the Roman Catholic Church at Vatican II, since a great impetus to the study of baptism was given by the new cohesion of the ecumenical movement over the 1950s and '60s. The aim and hope of this renewed examination of baptism was that it would lead the different Churches towards identifying with each other and so towards eventual reunification, since there was a high degree of acknowledgement of each other's baptism between the Churches and since baptism, as the sacrament of entrance into Christianity, could be thought of as the ecumenical sacrament *par excellence* in a world which had not (as it still has not) reached full agreement with regard to the eucharist.

However, a tension still exists between the different Churches' interpretations of the meaning of baptism; and this is made obvious with regard to eucharistic communion, which should be the highest point of the fulfilment of our baptismal *koinonia*. For example, we have on the one hand ARCIC's right and true assertion that "many bonds still unite us: we confess the same faith in the one true God; we

have received the same Spirit; we have been baptized with the same baptism; and we preach the same Christ"³; while, on the other hand, we have the trenchant, and equally true, comment of Professor Torrance (written in a paper preparatory to the Lund Faith and Order Conference of 1952) that "to refuse the eucharist to those baptized into Christ Jesus and incorporated into his resurrection body [i.e. the Church] amounts either to a denial of the transcendent reality of baptism or to attempted schism within the Body of Christ". In order to explore the dichotomy between the universal agreement that we are made members of the Church as Body of Christ by baptism and the schism which is so apparent in terms of whom the different Churches will admit to Communion, the WCC Faith and Order Commission has, since the 1950s, sponsored and produced a series of studies of the theology and practice of baptism within its member Churches. Two recent results of this have been the report "Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist", presented at Louvain in 1971, and the statement "One Baptism, One Eucharist and a Mutually Recognized Ministry", issued at Accra in 1974. These studies have shown that it is an oversimplification to see baptism as the shared sacrament of unity without taking into account how different Christian traditions regard it. For example, some Churches use "baptism" to mean the sacramental water-baptism only, while others use the word to refer to the entire making of a Christian, including the initial gift of faith. Again, while all Churches agree that baptism confers membership of the Church, certainly not all would say that it confers full membership.

The differences of outlook on baptism among the Churches led the 1957 Faith and Order Conference at New Haven to observe that "the effort to use the rite of baptism as a simple approval to the unity of the Church turned out to be one of those apparent shortcuts which lead into a blind alley". However, the prospect is not in fact so gloomy. If the rite of baptism is used in this way, then the result obtained at the New Haven Conference will indeed come to pass; but, if we proceed instead from the *fact* of baptism as making us members of the Body of Christ, the Church, as making us members of the People of God which is God's Kingdom on earth, then the Churches can be drawn closer together through reaching a much greater degree of agreement on baptism. As long ago as 1439, the Council of Florence (seeking to promote Christian unity) taught that "the first place of all the sacraments is held by holy baptism, which is the gateway to the spiritual life; by it we are made members of Christ and the body of the Church"⁴; and the same point was remade at Vatican II, when the Roman Catholic Church spoke of its links with members of other Churches – "honoured with the name of Christian" in virtue of their baptism – and was firm to insist that all Christians "are consecrated by baptism, through which they are united with Christ"⁵; "they are properly regarded as brothers in the Lord by the sons of the Catholic Church"⁶. It is in this light that we should go on to consider how we are all made members of Christ through our baptism.

Baptism as incorporation into Christ

This model of baptism has been clearly described by Paul (cf. Rom. 6, 4-5; Eph. 2, 6). Following him, it became almost a commonplace of much patristic theology⁷ and has rather more recently been stated by both Aquinas and Hooker. Hooker is at pains to stress that our being made members of the Body of Christ is the purpose of the divine

institution of baptism⁸, while Aquinas takes a more analytical approach in writing that “baptism opens the gates of the kingdom of heaven to the baptized insofar as it incorporates him into the passion of Christ and applies its power to man”⁹. Vatican II has drawn out the implications of this idea in teaching that “through baptism we are formed into the likeness of Christ . . . in this sacred rite, a union with Christ’s death and resurrection is both symbolized and brought about”¹⁰. That is to say, in baptism we come to share in the threefold glory of Christ, as priest, as prophet and as king, by being made one body in him through the participation in the work of our redemption which our baptism both proclaims and effects. Our baptism is, as it were, complementary to Christ’s own baptism: for, just as then the voice of the Father spoke out over the Son, on whom the Holy Spirit came, so now we receive our baptismal adoption as sons in the name of the Father (whose name is spoken over us), of the Son (in whose redemptive self-offering we come to share) and of the Holy Spirit (who is bestowed upon us). Moreover, just as the baptism of Jesus showed his consecration as the Christ, his taking the sins of the many on himself and his identification with us, so the baptism of ourselves, the many, shows our consecration as members of his ecclesial Body, our acceptance of the redemption which he has wrought for us, and our consequent identification with him.

So, when the Church baptizes people in fulfilment of the gospel command that it should do (cf. Matt. 28, 19), it is Christ himself who baptizes, as the giver of the command, through human ministers – since baptism is a result of God’s initiative and not man’s. Our baptismal sharing in Christ’s life can therefore be described as having our lives subsumed into Christ’s and consequently remade by being made eternal; since baptism takes us up into the Church as Body of Christ, our passage through baptism is our passage from death in Adam to life in Christ, from the sinful life of the old man to the graced life of the new. In the early Christian centuries catechumens were taught that their going down into the baptismal water represented and effected their going down into the tomb with Christ, and that their coming up from it, newly baptized, signified and brought about their new life in the risen Lord. Our baptismal union with Christ is thus a real sharing in the history of our salvation: Christ’s death to sin once is our death to sin as well, and his life lived to God is also our Christian life (in this world and in the world to come) moving towards completion in the fulfilment of God’s Reign at the Last Day. In our shared incorporation into Christ, into which we are brought through the font of baptism, we are also gathered into the Church, the People of God: “since”, as Cyprian writes, “the baptismal rebirth only takes place with the one Bride of Christ, who is able spiritually to bring to birth the sons of God”¹¹. To look at the implications of this, we will need to move on from the baptismal model of our membership in Christ to that of our belonging within the fellowship of believers.

Baptism as incorporation into the People of God

Much scholastic and neoscholastic theology has concentrated a great deal on baptism’s effects for the individual at the expense of its effects for the whole community of believers; for example, Aquinas’s question in the *Summa Theologica* on the effects of baptism (3a, 69) is very strongly concerned with its effects on the soul of the baptized person. Yet, as Vatican II stresses, we are not called to salvation

merely as unbonded individuals. Rather, by our vocation to holiness, we are formed into a people which inherits the freedom and glory of the children of God; and it is through baptism that we enter into membership of the people of God’s Kingdom. This communitarian function of baptism is well commented on by Hooker, who writes: “for as we are not naturally men without birth, so neither are we Christian men in the eye of the Church of God but by . . . that baptism which both declareth and maketh us Christians. In which respect we justly hold it to be the door of our actual entrance into God’s house”¹², since baptism unifies us by bringing us into the house not made with hands which is the People of God. Therefore, as Vatican II has made clear, ‘the chosen People of God is one: “one Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Eph. 4, 5)’, so that its members “have the same filial grace and the same vocation to perfection. They possess in common one salvation, one hope, and one undivided charity”¹³. These gifts, in which all Christians (as pilgrims on the way to the fullness of life in heaven) share, are thus given in virtue of our membership in the Christian people, which in turn is conferred in and by the fact of baptism. As the Louvain Faith and Order report “Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist” puts it, “our common baptism is thus a basic bond of unity by which we are called as one people to confess and serve one Lord in each place and in all the world”: because baptism unites us under God as a royal priesthood, a holy people, giving thanks and praise for our redemption (cf. 1 Pet. 2, 4-10), and one way in which that thanksgiving is to be shown to God is by our bearing witness before the world to the baptismal *symbolum fidei*, which has been handed down to us through all the Christian generations.

It is in this shared heritage of faith that we are formed through baptism into a priestly people, dedicated to the service of God after the example of Christ; and so our baptismal priesthood is itself a participation in the High Priesthood of Christ, though full agreement has not yet been reached among the Churches on the relationship between the baptismal priesthood of all the faithful and the ministerial priesthood of ordination. For example, Luther (in *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*) has argued that all, in virtue of their baptism, have the power to exercise ministerial priesthood, which he identifies with the ministry of preaching and sees as being given by delegation from the rest of the congregation. Vatican II, following the Catholic Reformers and the Council of Trent, has maintained that a distinct sacramental ‘character’, or ineffaceable seal of the Spirit, is given in ordination – so that ministerial priests both share in the baptismal priesthood through their own baptism and receive the particular gift and grace of ordination to enable them to carry out their ministry fruitfully. Yet, as Vatican II has also noted, the ministerial and baptismal priesthoods stand in a distinct theological relationship to each other¹⁴; and a short but masterly explanation of this interrelationship has been given by ARCIC in its *Elucidation on Ministry and Ordination*, where the authors stress that both Christian priesthoods must always be seen as having the one High Priesthood of Christ as their source. Not only is each of them, in the way appropriate to itself, entirely dependent on Christ’s priesthood, but the ministerial priesthood, which has “a particular sacramental relationship with Christ as High Priest” should be seen within the framework of the entire Church’s ministry to the world and of the sanctification of all Christian people. If we emphasize the dependence of all Christian priesthood (in whichever form) on Christ,

the hope is increased for future ecumenical agreement on the relationship of the two priesthoods in the one People of God, since it is in baptism that all Christians are granted the ability to live according to their particular standing and function within the whole company of believers.

Because of the solemn nature of this incorporation into the baptismal priesthood, the local Church will, on behalf of all Christians throughout the world, need to be satisfied as to the candidates' suitability to receive the sacrament. In the case of adults, the sincerity (and absence of any ulterior motive) on the part of the candidates will need to be taken into account, as will the genuineness of their intention to lead Christian lives afterwards and the level of their Christian knowledge, which will need to be adequate save in exceptional circumstances (e.g. danger of death; cf. Aquinas, S.T. 3a, 68, 3). In the case of infants, the basic criteria will be the Christian background of the candidates' families and the local Church's capacity to help provide an environment of faith in which the children will grow up. However, the local Church, as representing the universal Church, will also need to be careful not to be too harsh in particular cases, since it has an obligation to baptize as and when such conditions as we have just seen are fulfilled: because (since baptism is conferred in and through the Church) the Church will – one may presume – be held accountable by God if it neglects or delays without due reason the baptism which, as the expression of faith, is so intimately bound up with our justification¹⁵. Because Vatican II, in stating that “all those justified by faith through baptism are incorporated into Christ”¹⁶, has remarked on the connection between our faith, our entrance into the People of God, and our justification, it is important to see how these three stand with regard to each other.

Baptism, Faith and Justification

One of the reasons behind the differences of approach to baptism in different Churches is the legacy of the Reformation debate on justification. If we are to get behind the residual misunderstandings on this between the Churches, we need to go back to Paul, who in Gal. 3, 26-27 draws out the relationship between faith and baptism by writing that “in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ”. Once the hearer has received the gospel and given his assent to it in faith, he must demonstrate that assent by being baptized. The gift of the Holy Spirit is thus a baptismal gift: though this gift is associated with “hearing with faith” in Gal. 3, 2, and its promise is received “through faith” in Gal. 3, 14, the gift itself is indissolubly connected with baptism in 1 Cor. 12, 13 – where the one Spirit is not only given to all but brings about the baptism of all into one Body. Thus Paul sees the grace of justification as taking root in us through faith shown in baptism. In Rom. 8, 30 this justifying grace is seen as our vocation to salvation, and in Rom. 3, 28 and 5, 1 faith is seen as the *sine qua non* if we are to receive the grace of justification fruitfully, but in 1 Cor. 6, 11 justification is so closely identified with baptism – as the expression of faith – as to be inseparable from baptism itself. Paul sums up his teaching by his insistence, in Tit. 3, 5-8, that justification is given through the mercy of God shown, in the gift of the Spirit, through the institution of baptism “so that we might be justified by his grace” (Tit. 3, 7). In fine, Paul is teaching that justification is essentially by grace – freely given on God's part and undeserved on ours – which moves us to respond to the gospel by faith, which in turn

moves us to seek baptism and so enter the Church; thereafter the grace of our vocation and baptism and the faith of our response will show themselves through the pattern of our Christian living and service, if we remain true to our vocation (cf. Eph. 4, 1-3).

This explanation of the relationship between faith, baptism and justification was later set forth by Basil, whose words on it are worth recalling. Basil strongly points out that “faith and baptism are two kindred and inseparable ways of salvation: faith is perfected by baptism; baptism is established by faith . . . Confession leads the way and brings us to salvation; baptism follows, setting the seal on our account”¹⁷. Our faith has to be shown and ratified in our baptism if we are to be justified through belonging to Christ, since baptism is the sacrament which celebrates the faith by which we, following the grace of God, make our response to the gospel of redemption.

However, the difficulty arises here for some Christians (and particularly for those of Churches which will accept as baptismal candidates only “such as are of riper years and able to answer for themselves”) of how this justifying affirmation of baptismal faith can be made by infants. Here we have to recall both the antiquity of infant baptism and, especially, the ecclesial dimension of the avowal of baptismal faith. In the first century A.D. it is quite conceivable, but not certain, that children would have been baptized with their parents when entire families were received into the Church; and, at least since the early third century, infant baptism has been practised in most Christian groups¹⁸. More importantly, the personal profession of faith at baptism is always made in the context of the Church's faith. In the case of adult baptism, this affirmation of faith is the act of the individual made from within the faith of all believers; in the case of infant baptism, the local Church makes the affirmation on behalf of the child, whom it undertakes to nurture in personal faith – though the child himself must later bear out the baptismal faith-affirmation by Christian living if his baptism is to bear fruit.

Among all the baptized, therefore, there is a grace-inspired and justifying unity in faith and sacrament. But, as Vatican II's *Decree on Ecumenism* (art. 22) puts it, “baptism, of itself, is only a beginning . . . for it is wholly directed towards the acquiring of fullness of life in Christ. Baptism is thus orientated towards a complete profession of faith”. One way in which we must at once profess and express our faith is by our work to serve the world. If our faith in Christ does not lead us to do the works of Christ (cf. Jas. 2, 17, 26) then our faith is, as the scholastics used to say, ‘unformed’ – that is, not infused by love in the way that baptismal faith must be if it is to be salvific for us (cf. Gal. 5, 6; Aquinas, S.T. 3a, 68, 4). We will only be able to open ourselves to God in any meaningful sense if our faith is founded on love (cf. Eph. 3, 17, 19); and so we will only be able to bear witness to God before the world if our conduct towards all people reflects Christ's love for us. Hence the last aspect of baptism which we shall look at is the connection between it and our ministry as Christians.

Baptism and Christian Service

Vatican II, in its *Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity* (art. 13), has laid on all Christians the charge that “wherever God opens a door of speech for proclaiming the mystery of Christ, there should be announced, with confidence and

constancy, the living God, and he whom he has sent for the salvation of all, Jesus Christ", and has also pointed out that we are all called to share in the Church's saving mission to the rest of the world by the fact of our Christian initiation¹⁹. For, just as Christ came to be a servant (cf. Matt. 20, 28; Mk. 10, 45; Phil. 2, 7), so the life of the baptized person must be marked by service. As ARCIC has put it, "to proclaim reconciliation in Christ and to manifest his reconciling love belong to the continuing mission of the Church"²⁰. This double duty of the Christian shows itself in three interlinked ways, namely life in Christ's service, life in the Church's service, and life in the service of the world. By coming to share, through baptism, in the death and resurrection which Christ experienced in order to save us from sin and self – "that we might live no longer for ourselves but for him"²¹ – we are taken away from the lordship of sin and brought under the lordship of Christ, related to each other in and under Christ the Head (cf. Rom. 12, 4-5, 1 Cor. 12, 27; Eph. 4, 4; Col. 3, 15 *passim*). Thus every Christian is called to a life of service, the mode of which will vary according to his particular place in the Church, for the upbuilding of the whole ecclesial Body (cf. Eph. 4, 2). But, since one of the Church's tasks is to extend the Reign of God in the world of men (cf. Matt. 28, 19a, 20), the baptized person must seek to promote that Reign as one of its citizens by bearing witness to it and by working for the world's sanctification.

One difficulty which we all have, however, is that the value of our Christian service will necessarily be diminished by our personal sins. Even though our baptism is the passage from the old life to the new, the proneness-to-sin of postlapsarian human nature (even as graced by baptism) will daily creep up on us; and our sins will weaken our life in Christ's service by besmirching the likeness of Christ into which we were formed in baptism, our life in the Church's service by causing the rest of the Body to suffer with us (cf. 1 Cor. 12, 26a), and our life in the world's service by causing us to be known to fail to live up to the message which we preach. Yet we can take heart, both from Aquinas's teaching that "baptism, through the grace which it confers, not only takes away past sins but also serves to hinder the commission of future sins" (S.T. 3a, 68, 3), and from the forgiveness of God (expressed in some Churches by the sacrament of reconciliation). So the life of the Christian in this world will have to be characterized by a continual re-acceptance of the law of Christ, contrition for sin, and renewed affirmation of baptismal faith as expressed in the promises of the baptismal ceremony. For baptism is one of the ways in which the Church enters into the *anamnesis* of Christ, which both makes the work of our redemption present to us and impels us to unfold that work to others through our living-out of the gospel in the Spirit's grace and according to the mind of Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 2, 16). Although 'in this present life, the new status of the baptized Christian as a son of God, a member of Christ's covenant people . . . remains in tension with life "in the flesh"', yet, at the same time, the baptized person is "'in Christ", already possessing the Spirit of Christ as the inner principle of the resurrection life"²²; and it is in that Spirit that we, being baptized, are called to bring others into the Church, the people of God in this age and the next, by moving them to seek and receive the baptism which is an actuality-filled sign and promise of the Kingdom's fullness at the end of time.

Conclusion

Despite the differences of outlook on baptism and of

approach to it across the ecumenical movement as a whole, it is to be hoped that, if we bear in mind the two models and the other contexts in which we have discussed baptism, will be able to appreciate our baptismal unity in Christ in such a way as to use it as a means of proceeding to a more effective expression of our unity as the People of God. As to whether such expression will take the form of a new awareness of our unity in faith, with a much higher degree of ecumenical co-operation than is often the case at present, or else of an organic reunification of the Church, that remains to be seen: which of us knows what the third Christian millennium will bring?

NOTES:

1. ARCIC, *Introduction to the Final Report*, 5.
2. ARCIC, *Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine*, 2.
3. ARCIC, *Introduction to the Final Report*, 1.
4. Florence, *Decree for the Armenians*.
5. Vatican II, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium, hereafter L.G.)*, 15.
6. Vatican II, *Decree on Ecumenism (Unitatis Redintegratio, hereafter U.R.)*, 3.
7. Cf., for example, Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. Myst.*, 2, 4; Gregory of Nyssa, *Or. Cat.*, 35; Ambrose, *De Sacr.*, 2, 23.
8. Cf. Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, 5, 60, 2.
9. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 3a, 69, 7.
10. L.G., 7.
11. Cyprian, *Ep.* 84, 6.
12. Hooker, *loc. cit.*
13. L.G., 32.
14. Cf. L.G., 10.
15. Cf. Hooker, *op. cit.*, 5, 60, 6.
16. U.R., 3.
17. Basil of Caesarea, *De Spir. Sanct.*, 28.
18. Hippolytus gives instructions concerning infant baptism (*Ap. Trad.*, 21). Cf. also Cyprian, *Ep.* 64. Tertullian was aware of infant baptism but against it (cf. *De Bapt.*, 18).
19. Cf. L.G., 33.
20. ARCIC, *Statement on Ministry and Ordination*, 12.
21. RC Order of Mass, Eucharistic Prayer 4; cf. 2 Cor. 5, 15.
22. WCC Commission on Faith and Order, *Report on the Meaning of Baptism, in One Lord, One Baptism*, ed. O. Tomkins (London, SCM, 1960), p. 64.

THE PLACE OF REASON IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

Towards a Theological Aesthetic

MARTIN ROBERTS

In attempting to elucidate the place of reason in Christian theology, we will raise fundamental issues, both at philosophical and practical levels, relating to the identity of Christian faith.

But why do we need to concern ourselves so centrally with reason in identifying Christian faith? Does theology need a rational metaphysics (and is a science of theology possible?) or should reason submit itself entirely to faith, admitting its own inadequacy in matters of religion? Or again can reason and faith be reconciled, rather than polarised, without compromising the revelatory quality of the latter, in a 'closed' Hegelian-type systematisation of reason? Why can't Christianity understand itself exclusively in terms of its own authoritative traditions or else operate at the practical level, regarding itself as a response and solution to the dictates of the moral conscience?

These may indeed be possible ways of approaching Christian faith (and each approach would involve a particular kind of theological self-understanding) but they all imply a somewhat sceptical attitude to the place of reason in Christian faith and its theological articulation. This is not surprising if we take seriously the impact and influence of enlightenment epistemology which has pervaded our thinking and outlook to this day. The critical spirit of the enlightenment, which we take for granted today, regards scepticism, provisionality and relativity as the qualities of an educated mind and sophisticated sensibility. But such a sensibility does not readily accord with the inner qualities (such as dependence, prayer, grace and so forth) implicit in the revelation-based nature of Christian faith. For if it is accepted that Christian faith possesses a revelatory quality (in so far as it arises out of and reflects upon the supposed 'revelation' of the Christ-event, over and above an independently derived religious philosophy) then that quality must necessarily be related to reason in such a way that, unlike 'closed' systems of reason, makes for an illumination of reason and its speculative (open-ended) dynamic as it encounters Christian revelation. That is, revelation elicits some rational expression of itself (in the sense of an open-ended speculative dynamic, if there is to be anything communicated to us or illuminated for us) which, by so doing, bursts assunder any 'closed' system of reason. In other words, if the integrity and indeed, possibility, of revelation is to be established, it must be conceded that revelation *both* points us beyond reason *and*, in the very process, elicits from us an open-ended speculative ascent, which bears witness to the reality of revelation. In this sense, reason and revelation belong together. But it is precisely *reason*, which, since the enlightenment, has been devastatingly criticised at this very point, namely, in its alleged capacity to reach out beyond itself or in any way to be cognizant of revelation.

It should be noted, however, that an attempt to square revelation with reason, in view of enlightenment epistemology itself manifests some of the characteristics of that epistemology in that it has to operate by exploration, in terms of an open-

ended speculative ascent to an alleged 'higher' illumination or revelation. Now this may mean that we have to sacrifice 'certainty' for the possibility of hope and creativity which, we believe authenticate themselves in their own processes.

In fact, post-enlightenment Christian thinkers to the present day, have produced systems or at least methodologies which attempt to square Christian revelation and its theological self-understanding, with modern, 'secular' sensibilities. The price paid for such an achievement is often costly both for reason and for revelation. Either reason is swallowed up in revelation, deprived of its speculative dynamic, or else revelation is reduced to the proportions of a 'closed' system of reason. The result, either way, is to do violence to the structure of reason and revelation, respectively, and in their relationship to each other. For reason, by its inner dynamic, thrusts beyond itself in a suprarational direction and that movement of the reason may at least imply something like revelation if it is to 'release' its own inner dynamic and be internally consistent with itself. Now revelation, as something intrinsically illuminative, may in turn elicit a speculative ascent of reason towards itself. But the relation between them may be open-ended and indeterminate, if their mutual *freedom*, as such, is not to be 'closed' in a fixed system. Thus, reason and revelation seem to require and suppose each other, both on their terms (that is, as requirements of their own inner dynamics, which includes their respective freedoms) and in terms of their mutual relatedness (in so far as they 'elicit' each other), their 'passing over' into each other.

Now Kant's critique of the speculative thrust of reason towards the suprarational, rules out the possibility of reason and revelation 'passing over' into each other (in a mutuality of freedom and giving) and instead, he confines the intent of the suprarational thrust of reason to an exclusively *practical* employment of reason. But the result is unfavourable to reason in its internal self-relatedness. It frustrates the self-transcending structure of reason. Perhaps an alternative to Kant's speculative/practical (and regulative/constitutive) division of reason with itself, is to take *on trust* the wholeness of reason (as both speculative and practical, regulative and constitutive), so that it may be allowed to display itself as a *self-authenticating* structure of 'revelatory reason', that is, the dynamic unity of reason and revelation, in an open-ended sense. Such an open-ended structure of reason, taken 'on trust' expresses, both intellectually and emotionally, theoretically and practically, a response to reality as essentially grace-bestowing. That is, the self-authenticating structure of 'revelatory reason', which we envisage, implies what may be recognised as a theology of grace, based on 'trust'.

Kant did not see this alternative, or perhaps he lacked the courage to 'trust' that reason may be structured in this way. But if reason turns out to be an open-ended, self-authenticating structure, in the way we have described, then that structure, we further contend, requires *theological* categories of interpretation. For it is the self-explanation of a revelatory ('open' rather than 'closed') structure of reason. Thus, man's reason, in its intrinsic thrusting beyond itself (towards revelation) discloses an internal movement of trust and commitment to that open-ended, self-explanatory unity of reason and revelation. In fact, it is by understanding the wholeness of reason and revelation in its open structure of freedom-in-giving (and upon which our reasoning is

ultimately dependent) that we come to speak of God as the 'in itself' of reason and revelation thus defined. Our knowledge of Him is then participational, the proper exercising of our own reason.

Having argued for the centrality of reason in Christian theology and its intrinsic connection with revelation, through its suprarational thrust beyond itself, an attempt will now be made to formulate a basic theological sensibility (given a post-enlightenment context) in terms of which the concerns of reason and a revelation-based theology can be adequately expressed. That is, we will outline an approach which, operating 'on trust' and in full recognition of the challenges of critical philosophy, nevertheless seeks to steer a course through Kant's reduction (at the speculative level) of reason, on the one hand, and the post-Kantian explorations of the practical reason (in the interest of faith, as opposed to knowledge, in the Kantian sense) on the other. In other words, we will be searching for a 'third' option which will make possible a theological sensibility which overcomes an 'either/or' attitude to the capacities of reason in relation to revelation (that is, *either* faith *or* knowledge, but not both, in Kant's estimation of the suprarational thrust of reason) in favour of a 'both/and' approach which, uniting the speculative and practical interest of reason, on trust, moves towards an expansive (open-ended) yet synthetic (because the inner dynamic of reason is 'released', preventing the self-frustration of reason) wholeness of reason with itself. We will then enquire to the 'in itself' of this theological sensibility, by asking how reason operates in the life of God.

It is worth mentioning here, by way of an extended footnote to our discussion, that our concern for a theological sensibility, such as we have described, is important not only for reason itself, but also at the practical level of experience in the Christian communities of faith. For within the Christian tradition, practical experience, unless it also submits itself to reason, can (and has) moved in directions which would invalidate the sort of theological sensibility we are striving towards. If one takes, for instance, the testimony of certain mystics, such as is found in the *Cloud of Unknowing*, it soon becomes apparent that the suprarational thrust of reason in mystical experience, involves a radical discontinuity between reason and revelation which, we believe, is dangerously un-Christian, reflecting rather badly on the God of Christian revelation, whose 'logos' is believed to be active in creation, incarnation and redemption.

But to return to our search for a viable theological sensibility, we will now examine the inner qualities and properties of our life of reason, as it thrusts beyond itself towards revelation, to see what basic *tendencies* are present, and how they 'disclose' that to which they tend (i.e. revelation). This will hopefully enable us to grasp more clearly the 'shape' of our theological sensibility.

Perhaps the first tendency we find in our reason's thrusting beyond itself, is that towards *convergence*. (It is 'first' in a systematic sense only, it has no 'actual' priority over any other tendency). That is, the thrust of reason towards revelation or reason's self-overtaking, produces a convergence in the reason whereby the mind is elevated to an intuition of itself within a greater 'whole', such as cannot be achieved by the processes of dialectical reasoning as such. It is the affective, intuitive and indeed religious grasp of that

which is strictly 'above' and 'beyond' the reason, that which fires the mystics' vision. However, 'actual' convergence (in the sense of eliminating the rational process) is never completed before another (and opposite) tendency is discerned, that towards *recurrence*. Far from eliminating the rational process, the heightened awareness gained in the tendency towards convergence actually renews the imaginative capacities of the suprarational thrust of reason to perceive new 'inscapes' (to use Hopkins's word) and connections which actually reinvigorate the recurrence of the dialectical processes of reason. But the tendency towards recurrence itself can never be fully realised without, in its turn, reinvigorating the opposite tendency towards convergence. Thus, convergence and recurrence are mutually inclusive tendencies which can be properly comprehended, not in terms of those tendencies themselves (for they can never be made fully 'actual') but only in terms of that *within* which (the mysterious 'in itself' of their mutuality) they are tendencies. Or, to use a Coleridgean phrase, we can only delineate their respective tendencies in terms of their mutually inclusive 'ultimate aim'. Now these two tendencies, towards convergence and recurrence, pertain to the suprarational thrust of reason, and to reason, in its dialectical processes, respectively. What their 'ultimate aim' is, can only be known as we are *referred* back to those tendencies and their dynamic interaction which, in the first place, pushed us towards their ultimate aim. In other words, there is no actual priority of 'ultimate aim', over against these tendencies, which is accessible to us. It is only given to us 'on trust', *in* these tendencies.

We have then, described a theological sensibility which is characterised by the tendencies towards convergence and recurrence. In fact, we can only grasp the interconnection of these tendencies aesthetically, as we move imaginatively between them. In other words, it looks as if our theological sensibility expresses itself as a *theological aesthetic*, that is, it can only be grasped as a theologically-defined aesthetic appreciation of the life of reason. This aesthetic appreciation is theologically defined in the sense that reason, thrusting towards revelation, discloses God-in-us, in the creative and ultimate dependence of our reason upon the God in whom we have come to trust, through our reasoning. In God, we perpetually 'lose' and 'find' our life precisely in our reason's tendencies towards convergence and recurrence.

But what are we to make of God and the place of reason in Him, given that theological categories are required to express our theological sensibility as essentially a theological aesthetic?

If the convergence and recurrence of reason and its suprarational thrust is ultimately dependent upon God, 'on trust', then the 'knowledge' of that mysterious revelatory reality (God) *in* which reason operates, can only be available to us as we are referred back, by God, to those tendencies of convergence and recurrence where reason manifests itself as such. This means that reason, in its fullness, is disclosed as the *ultimate* reality, in so far as it is perpetually initiated (in its self-questioning of itself), completed (in its tendency towards convergence) and reinvigorated (in its tendency towards recurrence). Reason is therefore, a projectively self-contained movement (taken 'on trust' and in an open-ended sense) of divine creation in which we 'find' and 'lose' ourselves. But precisely as a divine creation, reason 'images' in us the life of God himself, in so far as the divine reason is

made known to us in the religious 'ultimate aim' of our reason's employment.

If reason is then the quality of divine creation and the measure of the divine life itself, it may be noted that the undeniable mystery of God's reason is 'above' and 'within' our reasoning, but also 'beyond' it, in the sense that its grace-bestowing qualities create our very reasoning capacities in their ultimate 'tendencies' towards Himself. However, God's reason preserves the freedom and integrity of our rational response to *comprehend*, not to eliminate, that which is 'beneath' itself, namely, human reason. There is, even in this mystery of reason, in its divine/human dimensions, a comprehension, a mutuality, an illumination and interpretation, on the basis of grace and creation. For Christian theology, surely, the transcendence of God's reason must be incarnational, it must always allow for *our* responsive knowledge of Him, in convergences and recurrences of our reasoning, rather than the final elimination of our reason in the divine abyss.

God's transcendence therefore, is that of the mystery of grace and its expression in creation, making possible a correspondence between ourselves and Him in the diversified yet continuous life of reason. He is the 'in itself' of our theological sensibility, enabling the progressive cultivation of a theological aesthetic, as we respond to Him and to all things, in the life of reason.

To conclude: We have argued for a necessary connection between reason and Christian revelation, defending this connection both on epistemological and religious grounds. What we have ended with is an expansive yet synthetic reason which, operating 'on trust', as a theological aesthetic, enables us to appreciate the wholeness of the life of reason, including both the human and the divine. Our approach is certainly risky, in that it does not provide us with easily gained certainties, but it may provide hope, creativity and transformation. We can do no more than proceed on trust and see the wisdom of a position that does not insist on certainties which require 'closed' systems in which to cast the life of reason.

The Psalms Come Alive

JOHN H. EATON

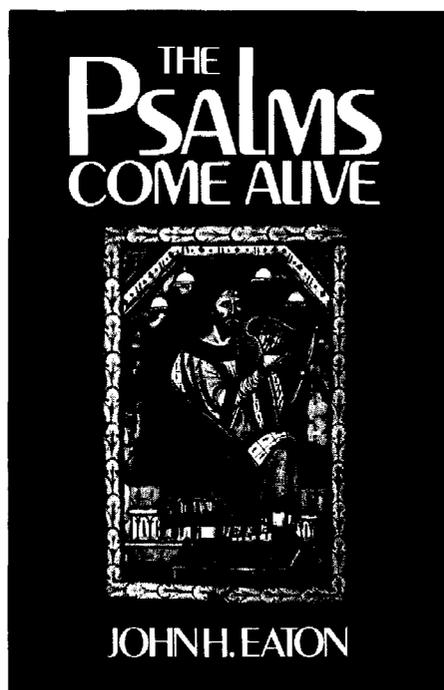
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John Eaton has been lecturer in Old Testament and Hebrew in the Department of Theology at Birmingham University since 1956, and he is now Reader in Old Testament Studies.

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DISCUSSION

REGARDING THE APOCALYPSE

ULRICH SIMON

'The obscene, sadistic fantasy of *Revelation* 6-20.' Thus my former colleague John Austin Baker in the *King's Theological Review*.¹ It is a remarkable statement from one who is now the Bishop of Salisbury. If known in Catholic and Orthodox circles it would be sufficient to demolish ecumenical hopes.

But what of the truth of this evaluation? After all my friend John Baker is a Biblical scholar, who even in the context of the nuclear debate, can hardly deviate from sound principles of exegesis. For example, he cannot wish to divorce the Apocalypse of John from the 'little' apocalypses, first in Mark 13 and then in Matthew 25-26. I have examined all this material in *The End is not Yet* of 1964. Then it was generally acknowledged that Jesus adhered firmly to an eschatological conception of the Kingdom of God. One did not have to follow Schweitzer and Weiss in their radical critique to place the Christ of the Gospels within the apocalyptic expectation. In the light of Qumran, especially of the War between the children of Light and Darkness, it almost seemed then that the Jesus of the Liberals had never existed and would never exist again.

Nevertheless it must be acknowledged that there always has been an 'educated' dislike of, and opposition to, the apocalyptic trend. After 70 A.D. and even more so after 135 A.D., the Jews in their official deliberations concluded that they owed their disasters to apocalyptic expectations and that the future of Judaism must be free from them. They did not always succeed, but on the whole Torah ousted *Chazon* (=vision). The Church, too, in her second and third generation had a powerful wing which would have excluded the Apocalypse. This interesting history of pro and contra has never ceased.

But I am not now concerned with the history of the book but with the question: Is *Revelation* 6-20 'obscene and sadistic'? Is this a 'fantasy'? The easy way out would be something like this: all human discourse is ambiguous, depending on who says what to whom and in what circumstances. Thus with the Apocalypse and its vocabulary: The Lamb opens the seals, noise of thunder, four beasts, a white horse, a bow, a crown, a red horse, a black horse, a pale horse . . . The Great Day has dawned. Now this is obviously the kind of poetry which cannot be associated with diocesan reports or minutes, committee procedures or computer abstracts. We are in a different world. But should it be evaluated as 'obscene, sadistic fantasy'? If so, Dante, Milton, Botticelli, Blake, Mozart, Verdi and many others must also be written off, for there is a *tradition* of apocalyptic fear and trembling.

True, there are some theologians who discount and even despise the 'constraints' of history and of culture. They are not impressed by the permanent witness given to mankind in poetry, painting, and music. Others, like myself, regard this well-spring of Christian creativeness as one energy of the Holy Spirit, the most available gift of the divine Presence.

Be that as it may, what is it that makes a Bishop label apocalyptic as 'obscene and sadistic' when others (perhaps bishops in prison!) cherish *Revelation* chs. 6 ff. as 'pure and manifest and appropriate' on the one hand, and 'gentle and tender and consoling' on the other? I have perhaps already indicated the dividing line, which is, after all, not so remote from the 'constraints of history'. Or shall I call it 'existential'? To be sure, *Revelation* is written by martyrs for martyrs at a time of martyrdom, but it is not therefore confined to that scope. All human beings who long for justice, yearn for Christ the Victor, loathe the enemy, such as falsehood and all the devilish horrors of a perverted 'civilisation', take their stand with those in white robes, baptized into the *militia Dei*, enduring the mental strife as well as the physical privations implied by the imitation of Christ.

Certainly the fervour of the apocalyptic expectation is strongest among those who have every reason to cry 'How long, Lord!'. They cannot be accused of vindictiveness by our liberal friends. In the hands of the Gestapo, forced into the Gulag, attacked by Amin thugs etc., one simply longs for 'the end'. But the Apocalypse chapters under review are mostly supportive of the Victory of Truth and the defeat of Antichrist. The Wrath of the Lamb is the marvellously paradoxical expression which serves here, and again one thinks of the iconography and the liturgy of the Lamb of God. I know of no passages in Scripture which have been and are more comforting than the readings for All Saints Day. Moreover Christians believe that these innumerable saints have not only overcome in death but that they are blessed, 'rest from their labours', are alive eternally. The marriage of the Lamb leads to the celestial banquet and the final acclamation of God as God. All this is spelt out not only in the text but also in the great commentaries, some of the last 40 years alone. I cannot believe that the Bishop of Salisbury has forgotten A. M. Farrer among so many others of distinction, who did not regard the Day of Wrath, the Fall of Babylon, the Songs of Triumph, the messianic kingdom, the eschatological combat, the new Jerusalem as spurious and unacceptable elements in Christian belief.

But, it may be said, the argument is about nuclear arms and all this stuff, Biblical and exegetical, is out of date. There is certainly a polarisation, as strong as ever, between those who repudiate the cosmic dream and the eschatological dimension, and those who do not. I heard Rabbi Hertzberg a few weeks ago who as a leader of American Jews openly lectured against Messianism and the Zionist dream. He pleaded for educational norms, tangible aims, institutional health. On the other hand the former Marxist Ernst Bloch, whose *Prinzip Hoffnung* has just been translated into English, and to whom Moltmann owes so much of his theology, pleads that a non-Utopian religion is nothing at all, and that Jesus opened the gates to the great dream. One may remember that the liberation of the Blacks in the USA started as Martin Luther King's Dream, and this dream has always been strongly entrenched in the Apocalypse. Its comfort has been other-worldly, but its action has been here and now.

The debate is not really about nuclear weapons, but about Christ and Antichrist, about truth and lies. The cosmic dimension in this struggle cannot be left out and only the apocalyptic can provide the imagery, whereas the philosophical (as in *Hebrews*) yields the rational structure. Does not the canon of Scripture demand that nothing is to be read in

isolation? Indeed if some NT scholars are to be heeded the Apocalypse is not to be separated from the corpus of Johannine writings.

1. John Austin Baker, 'Theology and Nuclear Weapons', *King's Theological Review* 6 (1983), p. 2.

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RE-REVIEW

Agape and Eros

Anders Nygren, S.P.C.K., 1983. Pp. 766. £12.50.

We have all been educated to believe that we should think of other people rather than ourselves. Indeed in the popular mind unselfishness and Christianity are almost synonymous. In so far as this attitude is part of the modern theologically trained mind it is attributable to the influence of the Swedish theologian Anders Nygren and his book *Agape and Eros*, described by James Gustafson as "a classic secondary work". Part 1 was published in England in 1932 and the two volumes of part 2 in 1938 and 1939. S.P.C.K. produced a revised edition in a new translation by Philip Watson in 1953. They have now produced a new edition of what is substantially the 1953 version.

Agape and Eros has had a major impact on all subsequent discussions of Christian love. Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, Reinhold Niebuhr and Gene Outka are just some of those whose discussion has been related to and in part based upon Nygren's treatment. Nygren argued that eros and agape are two fundamentally different forms of love. Although in Christian history they have often coalesced and influenced one another they are basically opposed and cannot fit together. The word eros has for us become associated with erotic and it is easy to make the mistake of assuming that the contrast between the two kinds of love is that one is sensual and the other spiritual. This, however, is totally misleading. Eros too is a spiritual love. Nygren believed it to have the following characteristics. First, it is an "acquisitive love". It begins with a person's sense of need and the attempt to find satisfaction for it in a higher and happier state. This means that eros is always based upon a recognition of value. Secondly, eros is "man's way to the Divine". Eros recognises value and is drawn ever upwards, away from the world, to find its satisfaction in beauty itself. Thirdly, eros is an "egocentric love". It is concerned with the individual self and its search for lasting happiness.

In contrast to eros, which begins with man, agape begins with God; not with God's needs, for he has no needs, but with his nature as spontaneous, overflowing love. The agape of God, expressed in Christ and his cross, awakens in man gratitude and self-giving. There is no natural longing for God in man but in response to God's agape we respond to God and obey him by offering an agape love for our neighbour. In agape there is no place for self-love. In self-love Christianity "finds its chief adversary, which must be fought and conquered". One of the crucial contrasts for Nygren is that whilst eros is based on a recognition of value, agape is a spontaneous love, relating to enemy as well as friend, irrespective of their value.

Although eros and agape are two fundamentally different types of love they have, according to Nygren, become thoroughly mixed and confused in the course of Christian history. In particular he criticises the creative and highly influential synthesis of the two in St. Augustine's concept of *caritas* for being grounded in a Neoplatonic eros. It was only with Luther that the New Testament understanding of agape began to break through again. "Amor Dei non invenit sed creat suum diligibile, amor hominis fit a suo diligibili."

Anders Nygren was a man seized by an idea, an idea which he pursued through numerous Christian writers and expressed in 764 pages. It is an idea we cannot ignore. It is also an idea which is badly wrong. Nevertheless there are some books whose creative wrongness is so much more helpful than the stream of books which are insipidly right. Some of Simone Weil's writing falls into this category, so does that of Marx. Like Marx, Nygren put such a big hand on the idea he had seized that he managed to smudge the whole picture. Yet the idea itself continues to haunt and question us. Ten years ago Helen Oppenheimer began to struggle against Nygren and the result is her excellent *The Hope of Happiness* (S.C.M., 1983). She herself acknowledges a debt to John Burnaby's *Amor Dei* (Hodder, 1938), which is also a reaction against *Agape and Eros*.

It is easy to see how wrong Nygren was by reflecting on any loving human relationship. The fundamental fact about such a relationship is that we *want* the other person. We want to be with them and share their company. How odd it would be if someone said they would do anything to help us except actually want us or be with us. So Nygren's first point that Christian love, in contrast to eros, is not an acquisitive love, is totally wrong. So his second point that Christian love, unlike eros, is not a way to the divine. For how can we come to respond to God's self-emptying humility in the incarnation and cross unless we recognise value in it. Our response to God cannot be an arbitrary act of will but must be a response to something recognised. And it is only because we have some idea of the value of love and humility that we are able to see their sublime source and standard in Christ. The third characteristic of eros is that it is an egocentric love. It seems unreasonable, however, to dismiss the reflection "Most people live pretty futile lives, I will look for what will bring me lasting happiness" as the wrong starting point. On the contrary, although not the only starting point, it is a perfectly proper and mature one. Furthermore, if it is true, as it seems to be, that in one way or another we are all looking for happiness, we have to ask whether this is not how God has made us. The only alternative is to attribute this universal longing to the fall. Yet if God really is our lasting happiness, and he has made us, this seems a bit churlish.

At this point a protest is necessary about Nygren's language. He says adamantly that he is only comparing eros and agape, not asserting that one is superior to the other. Yet the whole thrust of his book is that agape, as he defines it, as set forth in the New Testament, lost in history and recovered by Luther, is the only properly Christian love. Furthermore the terminology he uses has a built-in evaluative element. Both the words "acquisitive" and "egocentric" have such overtones in English that they prejudice the question from the start.

Eros is present in any human love worthy of the name but is it a feature of God's love? First, is there anything corresponding to a need love? The doctrine of God as Trinity suggests that there is, in that the love of the Father is *received* by the Son, as the love of the Son is received by the Father. Within the Godhead there is mutuality rather than one-sided giving. Then, although God did not create the world to compensate for a personal lack he has, by the very act of creation, put himself in the position of being vulnerable to his creatures. A couple who adopt a child may have plenty of children of their own and they have no need

to adopt. Yet, having adopted, the child comes to matter very much to them. Their love is one that can be rejected, so they can be hurt. Their love is one that can be reciprocated, so they can be gladdened. As with us, so with God. We can hurt him and we can delight his heart. Secondly, does God recognise value or only create it? Yet this is a false antithesis. He recognises the value he has created. We matter by virtue of our creation not simply because Christ died for us. God's love is not like someone mentally holding their nose as they coldly hold out the soup. Beneath the grime and smell and squalor he recognises our human face, our "irreplaceable centre of minding" (Oppenheimer). Thirdly, is God's love an "egocentric love"? Yes, for it is an expression of what he wants. Difficult though it is to believe he wanted us in the first place or he would not have created us; and he wants us to be with him for eternity or he would not have come amongst us to take us to himself.

The characteristics of eros, as described by Nygren, are all part of the love we attribute to God. Yet there is a problem. How do eros and agape relate to one another? Perhaps we have to affirm, simply as a matter of experience, that they belong together. Love both wants the other person and wants their well-being. Both aspects can degenerate, the one into possessiveness and the other into the will to dominate that refuses to be vulnerable enough to receive. In God both aspects of love are present in perfection; in us grace is at work purifying both our eros and our agape. There is still much to be said for St. Augustine's synthesis in which the divine humility wins our eros and holds it steady on its proper object. In our eros, according to St. Augustine, there is a tendency to self-sufficiency. *Superbia* has entered in. But "to cure man's *superbia* God's Son descended and became humble. Why art thou proud, O man? God has for thy sake become humble. Thou wouldst perchance be ashamed to imitate a humble man; imitate at least the humble God."

There is even more to be said for St. Bernard of Clairvaux, to whom Nygren devotes only two pages. According to St. Bernard there are four stages of love. First we love ourselves. Then we come to love God for the benefits he bestows on us. From there we go on to love God for his own sake and delight in him simply for himself. Finally, in a state achieved in its fulness only in heaven, we come to love even ourselves for his sake. It is a view that does justice to human nature as we know it, to the psychology of the spiritual life and to our understanding of love both human and divine. Nor need we think of eros as a stage that is kicked away when a higher platform has been reached. Eros, purified and perfected, has its proper place in relation to the platform as a whole. For divine grace refines and intensifies our wanting just as it brings about the miracle of self-transcendence in which we come to delight in God, and others, for their own sake.

Richard Harries

BOOK REVIEWS

Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah

George W. E. Nickelsburg, S.C.M. Press, 1981. Pp. 332. £10.00.

Most Biblical students confine themselves to a study of the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament; at best they only cast a sideways glance at the literature of the intertestamental period. This omission is a great pity since these writings are of fundamental importance for an understanding of rabbinic Judaism and early Christianity. For this reason, George W. E. Nickelsburg's *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah* is to be warmly welcomed as an invaluable guide to the literary treasures of this period.

In the introduction to this volume Nickelsburg elaborates his approach and method. Theological concepts, he argues, do not rise in a vacuum; rather they are a response to historical events and circumstances. Thus, his study is arranged historically; each chapter is presented with an historical introduction. Within this framework, the subject matter is treated as literature. 'We are interested,' he writes, 'not simply or primarily in ideas or motifs or in contents in some amorphous sense but in literature which has form and direction.'

Nickelsburg begins his study by outlining the historical background to the catastrophic events of the sixth and fifth centuries BCE. In this context he surveys various tales of dispersion such as Daniel 1-6, Tobit and the Epistle of Jeremiah. Chapter 2 concentrates on Palestine in the wake of Alexander the Great and includes discussions of such works as 1 Enoch 1-36 and Ecclesiasticus. In the next chapter Nickelsburg turns to the period of 169-64 BCE in which writings such as Jubilees exhorted Jews to stand firm in the face of persecution. Chapter 4 deals with the Hasmoneans and their opponents and treats such works as Judith, 1st and 2nd Maccabees and the Qumran Scrolls. In Chapter 5 six texts of Egyptian origin, written between 140 BCE and 70 CE, are presented.

In Chapter 6 Nickelsburg focuses on the period 67-37 BCE in which Palestine was subjected to Roman authority; important material from this period include the Psalms of Solomon and the Psalms of the Righteous and the Pious. The exposition of the Bible, as found in such writings as the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, is considered in Chapter 7, and is followed in Chapter 8 by a depiction of the events in Palestine in the second half of the first century CE and relevant literature. Finally in Chapter 9, Nickelsburg concludes with a discussion of the second revolt.

The five centuries that gave rise to the literature surveyed in this book were times of crisis, transition and creativity; fundamental changes shook the Jewish community and shaped the course of Jewish history. Nickelsburg's introduction is a lucid and readable reference work. It is not intended as a substitute for the actual texts themselves; its purpose, which it admirably achieves, is to serve as a supplementary handbook to these literary riches.

D. Cohn-Sherbock

The Living Utterances of God. The New Testament Exegesis of the Old

Anthony Tyrrell Hanson. Darton, Longman and Todd, 1983. Pp. 250. £9.95.

During recent decades there has been a great increase of interest in the way the New Testament writers use the Old Testament, which to them were simply the Scriptures. Professor Hanson has been one of the leaders in this. But it is not an easy subject to come to. The student must possess extensive knowledge of the Old Testament, both in the Hebrew and the early versions, particularly the LXX. He must also know a great deal about Jewish exegesis as it is seen in the writings of the rabbis, the Qumran Community and Philo of Alexandria. This essential background is set out in the first chapter of this book, with a large number of examples. *Halaka*, *haggada* and *pesher* are explained and illustrated. Much is covered in the limited space, but I felt that a fuller discussion of some of the reasons lying behind the 'mistranslations' of the LXX (e.g. Aramaic meanings, possible 'lost' meanings, translating with words of similar sound) would have helped the reader to see that the translators were not incompetents.

The main part of the book consists of a survey of the way the New Testament writers use the Scriptures. The reader's interest is held by the many concrete examples. We see exactly how scholars chip away at the quotations and allusions to reveal the pre-Christian background and the Christian interpretations. Some passages are familiar to New Testament students but all are presented freshly and as part of a well-structured argument. Other passages have not attracted the same attention from scholars, and the chapters on the Pastoral Epistles, the Catholic Epistles, and the Revelation to John are of special value because new material is now made available. He finds four categories of scripture references in the Pastorals: unconscious quotations, where the writer uses a source that contains quotations of which he is unaware, deliberate citations, the use of *haggada*, and the use of scripture to provide the structure of a narrative, as in 2 Tim. 4:16-18 (cf. LXX of Ps. 22) and 1 Tim. 2:3-5 (cf. Isa. 45:21-22). The writer of the Revelation stands apart from the rest of the New Testament writers in his application of the language and images of scripture to Christ and to the church, rather than making direct quotations.

So we are presented with a good description of the methods used by each of the New Testament writers. Hanson denies that they accepted anything as Scripture beyond that found in the Jewish canon - even Jude's quotation from 1 Enoch is not from an unknown apocryphon, may not have been thought of as Scripture, and is rejected by 2 Peter. In particular he stresses interpretation derived from existing Jewish exegesis, typology, the idea of salvation history, and the belief that the pre-existent Christ was present in Old Testament incidents.

As a Christian teacher of the New Testament, Hanson then turns to his second question: What sense can we as Christians today make of the New Testament interpretation of Scripture and how are we to understand the relation between the Testaments? He asserts that to refuse to answer this question would be a betrayal of the New Testament and

that if we cannot find any common ground we can hardly claim to hold the same faith. A fascinating discussion of Matthew's use of Isaiah 7:14 opens up the theme, which develops into a consideration of the nature of the Old Testament and the place it should have in the Church today. Hanson is honest and forthright. He denies that we can accept the concept of divinely guaranteed prediction, and argues that much New Testament interpretation fails for us because we cannot regard as history events which were so accepted by the writers. (Abraham is 'about as historical as King Arthur', p. 186). Typology can stand, but only if it is understood as showing that God acted in the same way in the Old Testament as in the New, not in its New Testament form. Allegory is impossible for us, as is the idea of the pre-existent Christ in the Old Testament. Yet we cannot understand the New Testament without the Old. We value the Old Testament primarily for its account of salvation history which leads up to Christ, and we should read it as a developing revelation. This is a sensitive discussion. Restrictions of space prevent a fully adequate consideration of the nature of the Old Testament. Not everyone will accept the centrality of salvation history. And some will no doubt question whether Hanson's hermeneutic fully links our 20th-century faith with that of the first century. The critical reader might have been more surely convinced of the importance of the Old Testament for the Christian if Hanson had allowed the neo-Marcionite case to be displayed more forcefully. Someone will certainly say: It may well be true that 'without Paul's strong conviction that the scriptures are full of references to Christ, the Christian church might have set off on its career in history without a bible' (p. 62), but it would have been better that way; to which Hanson might reply that without this conviction there would probably be no Church either.

This is an excellent book. It is the best introduction to recent study of the New Testament interpretation of Scripture available, and makes a valuable contribution to that study. It also contains a helpful discussion of the use of the Bible in the modern Church. For these two reasons every student of the Scriptures should read it.

Cyril S. Rodd

The Origin of Paul's Gospel

Seyoon Kim. Eerdmans, 1982. Pp. xii + 391. No price given.

Students of Pauline theology have become comfortable with a number of conceptions about his thought and how best to understand it. Thus, for example, it is seen as having developed over time, as being conditioned largely by the theologies of Paul's predecessors or opponents, as having only the most tenuous connection (if any) with the teaching of Jesus, and as being decipherable above all in relation to parallel ideas from 'Hellenistic Judaism'. In terms of method, the Acts of the Apostles, Ephesians and Colossians are frequently excluded from consideration.

Each of these approaches is controverted to one degree or another by Seyoon Kim in this scholarly monograph which is a revised version of his doctoral thesis written under the supervision of Professor F. F. Bruce at the University of Manchester. Kim's main point is that the key to understanding Paul's gospel and self-conception as

apostle to the Gentiles is to be found in his repeated claim to have witnessed a Christophany on the Damascus road. Without suggesting that prior to his conversion experience Paul's mind was a theological *tabula rasa* – and Kim devotes his second chapter to an account of Paul's upbringing in Jerusalem and career as a zealous Pharisee (probably of Shammaite inclinations) who knew the primitive Christian kerygma but violently opposed it – Kim argues that both the constitutive and distinctive elements of Paul's theology and apostleship were derived from that revelation. Of course, appeals to the Damascus experience run the risk of psychologising or romanticising Paul, but Kim resolutely avoids these options. Instead, in case after case, he shows how the 'logic' of Paul's Christophany experience corresponds with and expresses itself in the 'logic' of his Christology and soteriology.

Let me illustrate Kim's approach. First, Paul's eschatological doctrine that the Last Days had come and that the New Age had already begun derive from the 'revelation of Jesus Christ' (Gal. 1:12) to Paul on the Damascus road, an apocalypse which showed him that the general resurrection had begun with the resurrection of the crucified Jesus. Second, Paul's doctrine of justification by grace through faith and apart from works of the law derive from his own experience of divine grace when God called him to be an apostle even though he 'persecuted the church of God' (1 Cor. 15:9). So justification is not a doctrine developed by Paul in the context of polemic with Jews and Judaizers even if it finds particular application there. Third, Paul's re-evaluation of the law was forced upon him both by the revelation to him of the one whose crucifixion had placed him under the curse of the law (Dt. 21:23) as the exalted Son of God, and by the realisation that his zeal for the law had brought him into direct opposition to God.

In the area of Christology, Kim argues, fourth, that the revelation to Paul of the exalted Jesus not only made him recognise the truth of the primitive Christian confession of Jesus as Messiah, Lord and Son of God but also led him to develop those conceptions much further. Drawing on Old Testament and Jewish epiphany traditions with their visions of divine beings revealed from heaven in man-like (or 'son of man'-like) form, of exalted men revealed in the form of sons of God, and of God revealed to men through bearers of his image such as Wisdom and Torah, Kim shows how intelligible is Paul's description of the epiphany to him as the revelation of God's Son and how appropriate is his description of Christ as the 'image of God' (2 Cor. 4:4). Furthermore, because the revelation showed him Christ as the Son of God and image of God, Paul was led to identify Christ with the pre-existent, divine Wisdom. Not only so, for Christ as the image of God also provided Paul with the basis for his Adam-Christology: the 'last Adam' bears God's image just as the 'first man Adam'.

Clearly, these points show the book to be an important contribution to that most lively aspect of contemporary theological debate, the development of Christology. Kim proceeds by painstaking historico-philological exegesis and also provides useful summaries of relevant scholarly research. He is not afraid to controvert the authorities either, and in his discussion of soteriology argues against Morna Hooker in saying that Paul understood Christ's death as being both representative and substitutionary (p. 276 n. 3).

Nevertheless, several queries are in order. First, Kim is clearly arguing for the priority of an experience of revelation in the formation of Paul's theology and mission. However, because this 'revelation' (*apokalypsis*), together with its description and interpretation by Paul, are thoroughly indebted to the language and world-view of Jewish apocalyptic, one wonders if Kim goes too far in claiming that so much of Paul's thought can be traced to his Damascus experience. May not Käsemann's view of apocalyptic as 'the mother of all Christian theology' be nearer the mark? Second, Kim's position would be stronger if he could be less ambiguous about the nature of Paul's epiphany experience itself. But he seems to equivocate: 'This objective, external event had a soul-stirring effect on the very centre of Paul's being (2 Cor. 4:6; Gal. 1:16). It was for Paul an experience of an inner illumination . . . Thus it was a moment of decision to give up his own righteousness . . .' (p. 56). Third, although Kim is aware of J. H. Schütz's work on the sociology of Paul's authority, he makes no attempt to ask what part (if any) Paul's claims to a Christophany experience may have played in his relations with the churches and his rivals. For it is at least possible that social forces influenced the form and content of those claims.

Such questions aside, however, Kim's work is to be welcomed and will be so especially by those (like J. D. G. Dunn) who are convinced of the creative power of the earliest Christians' religious experience.

Stephen Barton

Sacrifice and the Death of Christ

Frances Young. SCM Press, 1983. Pp. x + 150. £3.50.

That brilliant thinker Vigo Demant, whose death at an advanced age the Church had recently reason to lament, once described how he had seen in a shop window in Richmond, Surrey, a notice announcing "These trousers will be offered at a Great Sacrifice"; and he remarked that he had been wondering what this would have signified to a Jew in Jerusalem before the destruction of the Temple. A similar reflection may have lain behind Dr. Frances Young's statement that "Sacrifice does not appear at first sight to be a potential 'growth-point' for interpreting the gospel now" (p. 3); but the whole of this admirable small book of hers is devoted to removing that impression. She quotes tellingly from two contemporary novels – John Steinbeck's *To a God Unknown* and William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* – to illustrate how radically and ineradicably the concept of sacrifice still resides in the human subconscious, and then makes a detailed study of the nature of the sacrificial background of first-century religion, both Jewish and Gentile, and in particular of the variety and significance of the developed Jewish sacrificial system; and from this she goes on to discuss the way in which, both in the New Testament and in later Christian writings, the Church has made use of the multiplex and fertile concept of sacrifice in interpreting and commending the saving work of Christ.

The second part of her book is on "Some consequences for Theology and the Church today". Posing frankly the question "Can sacrifice mean anything to us?", she answers that "we may have to consider the possibility that a

courageous and imaginative revival of the old symbolism may be the only way of bringing the realities to the consciousness of this generation", while adding that "it must be informed by a proper appreciation of the wider implications, the layers of meanings and overtones, the variety of significances of the symbols we try to use" (p. 103). And again she makes impressive reference to the contemporary media, and specially to the BBC drama *Judas Goat* and Nikos Kazantzakis's novel *Christ Recrucified*. However, the reader may well wonder, does this mean in the last resort more than that dwelling on the idea of sacrifice can have a beneficial psychological effect – inspirational, cathartic, and so on – upon the person who is its subject? What has it to do with the death of Jesus of Nazareth *sub Pontio Pilato*? The answer is given, briefly but effectively in the final chapter, on "God and sacrificial worship", in the assertion that sacrifice is not just a nostalgic idea but an act in which Christians take part today. "The central act of sacrifice performed by Christians is a fellowship-meal, through which believers share in the redemptive sacrifices of Christ by commemoration, a symbolic meal shared in his presence with fellow-believers, a meal in which the actions of breaking bread and drinking wine enable us to feed spiritually on his 'virtue' and vitality. In fact all types of sacrifice are summed here" (p. 137). And again: "The place of Christ's continuing sacrificial work is in the sacrificial worship and sacrificial living of the Christian community, and in involvement like his in the sufferings of his world" (p. 138).

This excellent little work was first published in 1975 by SPCK and is now reissued by the SCM Press. Between those dates (in 1977) Dr. Young contributed two essays to the highly controversial symposium *The Myth of God Incarnate*. Those who know her only from her earlier work may well find themselves asking with some surprise, *Qu'allait-elle faire dans cette galère?*.

E. L. Mascall

Foundations of Dogmatics Volume 1

Otto Weber. Eerdmans, 1981. Pp. 659 + xvi. £21.90.

The sheer scope and scholarship of this volume makes reading it an unsettling experience. This unsettling is aggravated by the nature of the 'dogmatic' method and also by the original date of the book's publication. It first appeared in Germany in 1955 and the subsequent delay in translation means that it effectively by-passes so much of recent theological history. The 'death of God' controversy led to some extent by disillusioned dogmatists, albeit Barthian, had not yet happened. Then also, the christological debates of the 1970s were still some way ahead temporally. Finally, and perhaps most important of all, Weber's reflections precede the immense changes wrought in Roman Catholic thinking by the Second Vatican Council. He writes at one point, 'Whoever is in agreement with the Reformation in this decisive question (*that of justification and ecclesiology*) can certainly accord the Roman Catholic interpretation of dogma all due respect, but must reject its basis categorically. It is interesting that particularly in the area of ethics (an area overlapped by Weber in this volume), James Gustafson, firmly from within the Reformed tradition can now speak so eloquently of the convergence of Catholic and Protestant

theological traditions in recent years. None of this invalidates Weber's monumental work, but it does require us to put significant emphases and judgements within carefully drawn parentheses.

Weber begins with a useful and fairly technical discussion of the nature of dogmatics. In his foreword he acknowledges his debt to Karl Barth, but refuses the appellation of Barthian for himself. The reader must ultimately make up his own mind on this matter. Certainly the Barthian bulwarks seem to hold the main structure firmly in place. God's utter transcendence is there, as is the centrality of revelation, and thus the crucial significance, in doctrinal method, of the person of Jesus Christ. Mysticism is abjured as an appropriate starting point for Christian theology and religious experience.

Having set out the structure of his edifice Weber moves on to a masterly historical outline of the dogmatic method in theology. Here he is equally at home in the Patristic period, as he is in the time of Reformation and Protestant Orthodoxy. Origen is taken to be one of the founder (albeit misguided) of the dogmatic approach, with his roots in the Hellenistic *Logos* philosophy. From here we are taken with care on a detailed tour of the Fathers, from the whimsically titled Theodotus the Cobbler and Theodotus the Money Changer, to the mainstream figures of Tertullian, Cyprian and Augustine. The only obvious error of fact I stumbled upon was the apparent confusion of the date of Augustine's death with that of Gregory the Great (p. 86). Following this, we are steered with great facility through the Middle Ages noting carefully the work of the schoolmen, Aquinas being tagged as the greatest dogmatician since Augustine, albeit once again, ultimately found wanting. His scholarship is naturally most compendious and detailed in the period of the Reformation and Protestant Orthodoxy, after which we are moved on to modern dogmatics, where Schleiermacher is rightly given pride of place. The book is of considerable value for this historical element alone.

At the end of this fairly rapid but detailed journey we are moved on to the questions of revelation and epistemology. Almost expectedly, with the increasing dominance of Holy Scripture in Weber's argument, natural theology comes under considerable fire. This is the beginning of an argument that ever gains momentum, centring all methodologically on God's revelation in the person of Jesus Christ. This requires him to spend nearly one fifth of the total volume on the nature of scriptural authority. This is a two-edged sword. It does provoke a subtle and useful discussion of these questions. It does also, however, rather overbalance the material in one direction. This difficulty is compounded by his natural lack of acquaintance with further developments since the writing of this book in biblical criticism. The problems and insights raised by redaction criticism were only beginning to be unveiled by Conzelmann, Bornkamm, Marxsen and others at the time when Weber was writing.

Finally, the last two fifths of the book are devoted to the implications of all this preliminary work for three areas of Christian doctrine. The areas covered are the Trinitarian nature of God, creation, and the doctrine of man. Little need be added to what has already been noted. Suffice to say that the implications of Weber's revelational, christological methodology are now worked out in practice.

It is difficult to give a summary critique of such a compendious work. Its sheer comprehensiveness makes it a significant reference work and also a methodological marker-buoy, although it is probably of more use to the seasoned theological traveller, than to recent embarkees. Its radical christocentrism does leave one with some crucial questions. These are effectively those posed continually by non-dogmatic theologians to their dogmatic colleagues. For example, is it really possible to be as dismissive as he is of contemporary thought? He writes: 'God as Creator cannot be spoken of in the context of the major forms of contemporary human self-understanding' (p. 472). It may be that he is here dismissing earlier reigning forms of existentialism and positivism. If so, much water has flowed since the early 1950's.

Almost certainly some of these criticisms reflect the thought of an Anglo-Saxon temperament and background – it will be interesting to see what is the response north of the Border to the effects of the passage of years before the completion of this translation.

Stephen Platten

The Great Debate on Miracles: from Joseph Glanvill to David Hume

R. M. Burns. Associated University Presses, 1981. Pp. 305. £12.00.

This is an interesting and timely book. It surveys and analyses the debate on the credibility and evidential value of Biblical miracle narratives between 18th century deists and their orthodox protagonists. The debate provides the background to Hume's essay 'Of Miracles' incorporated in his *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*. Over 100 pages of the *Great Debate* are devoted to a critical examination of the content and origins of Hume's essay. We have before us the fullest treatment yet of Hume on miracles against the relevant historical background and the first full-length treatment of the 18th century controversy on miracles since Sir Leslie Stephen's *History of English Thought in the 18th Century*. Because Hume's essay remains one of the central points of argument in contemporary philosophy of religion and because the miracles debate was of vital importance in the development of German Biblical criticism (as acknowledged in recent discussions of Reimarus) the appropriateness of my opening comment will be apparent.

In the course of his discussion Robert Burns argues for many conclusions that will surprise and challenge contemporary assumptions. Thus he contends that the debate on miracles was initiated by the defenders of the literal truth of the Biblical record; that they, and not their deistic opponents, were associated with the scientific revolution in England and its intellectual presuppositions; that Hume's arguments on miracles, including his general thesis on the evidential value of testimony, had all occurred in the debate before and been answered by orthodox theologians. Despite praise for its style, a decidedly low opinion of Hume's essay emerges. It contains, Burns alleges, little that is original, ignores the more sophisticated arguments of the orthodox and its author does little by way of countering the strong objections raised against his arguments after first publication.

Basil Blackwell

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Burns's detailed critique of Hume's strictures on miracle narratives is at the same time a defence of the epistemology of those, such as Locke and Butler, whom Hume was attacking. It was the orthodox who had the sounder theory of probability and evidence and the sounder conception of the status and character of natural law. Burns is thus at one with those recent writers who have argued that belief in miracles and respect for scientific method are quite compatible. Hume emerges as one of the fathers of the false view of science which has blurred this truth.

A surprising paradox arises from Robert Burns's conclusions. It is that whilst the moderate defenders of the credibility and evidential value of miracle narratives were not mistaken on any important matters of principle or method, they were none the less in error about the historical view of the Bible: "Modern biblical criticism has made clear that the Deistic and Humean assessment of the historical value of the New Testament writings was in many respects justified" (p. 241). The *entire* error of the orthodox in this regard, it is implied, flowed from their disregard of the irrational and bizarre character of the *details* of the miracle stories in the New Testament (see p. 80). I find this not altogether plausible as a sufficient explanation of Locke's and others' over-regard for the literal truth of these narratives. I for one, wish to cling to the idea that there is an important component of proper historical method which demands a stringent, if not quite absolute, scepticism as to the literal truth of miracle narratives, especially when these come from the ancient past. Leaving aside Hume's sensationalist and crude theory of knowledge, present knowledge may be given power to judge narratives from the past, if by 'present knowledge' we refer to that new body of information about the powers and capacities of natural objects (including man) established since the scientific revolution. We shall want strong evidence to question the scope of these scientifically established truths, and how could it come from the ancient past? The knowledge of what was physically possible was not present to anything like the same extent then, with the consequence that reporters and compilers of miracle stories could not have exercised the requisite critical capacities when passing them on or setting them down. Do we have here a strong reason of principle for withholding our assent to such narratives?

Robert Burns's book challenges all those like me enamoured of such beliefs about 'the presuppositions of scientific history' to re-state their case and provides strong arguments against looking at Hume's essay for the basis of such a re-statement.

Peter Byrne

From Nicaea to Chalcedon: A Guide to the Literature and its Background

Frances M. Young. SCM Press, 1983. Pp. x + 406. £10.50.

Dr. Young has produced a handbook of background for the student of early Christian doctrine. She presents "a series of essays on a number of significant literary figures, laymen, bishops and heretics of the fourth and fifth centuries, essays which offer biographical, literary-critical

and theological information" (vii). She begins with the church historians, Eusebius naturally enjoying pride of place, and follows his continuators as far as Theodoret. It at once becomes apparent that she intends the reader to appreciate the ancient writers as interesting characters in their own right, pursuing their own goals and principles, which do not necessarily conform to the dogmatic stereotypes in which popular textbooks seem (perhaps inevitably) to present them. Arius, Athanasius and Didymus are presented with sympathy and astute criticism, then the Cappadocians in their diverse skills and interests, literary, ascetic, controversial, pastoral. A miscellaneous chapter gives splendid sketches of Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, John Chrysostom, Nemesius (barely on a level with the others, but useful background for the last chapter) and Synesius. Finally the literature of the Christological controversies is set out from Eustathius of Antioch to Theodoret. In all these chapters the works of each writer are considered, with lucid accounts of the literary problems and the modern scholarship which attempts to elucidate them. With this is associated a racy account of the life of each writer and his contribution to theology. Two points are especially commendable. First, Dr. Young presents a rounded view of each author. With several of them that includes expounding their methods in biblical exegesis, and what she writes on Didymus, Cyril of Alexandria and Theodoret is particularly good. Secondly, she writes with warm appreciation of the Christian concern of writers whose faults she is well aware of. Students often think that the crimes of Athanasius or of Cyril disqualify them as saints and theologians. Dr. Young knows better. She also admires the Christian conduct of Nestorius and Theodoret, and sympathizes with Antiochene theology. Her opinions here make an interesting comparison with those of L. R. Wickham, a confessed Cyrillite, in his recent edition, which unfortunately was published too late to be included in Dr. Young's account (*Cyril of Alexandria: Select Letters*. Edited and translated by Lionel R. Wickham. Oxford 1983 [Oxford Early Christian Texts]). In addition to thorough and precise documentation in backnotes, there are two valuable bibliographies. One is a beginner's guide to the principal texts and studies in English. The other is an attempt at a complete bibliography of foreign works since 1960, the date of Quasten's *Patrology* (though articles in encyclopaedias and other reference works are not set out in detail). Finally there is a subject-index and a select index of Greek terms.

To students and teachers of matters patristic this will be a valuable book. On several of the writers she presents there is nothing comparable in English, or nothing in so compact a form. The scholarship is exemplary, the historical presentation vivid, the theological analysis mature and confident. If it is to be criticized, it must be chiefly in terms of its scope and of formal points, one of which is serious. As to scope, the incautious reader may easily and wrongly assume he has a balanced account of the church from Nicaea to Chalcedon. He has not. The obvious absentee is Latin Christianity in all its forms. Dr. Young will rightly rejoin that that would require another book at least as long. More to the point, some readers will soon come up against terms and ideas they have never met. Not only Origenism and docetism, but Messalianism, Eutychianism, homoiousianism and the like appear unexplained. The reader might have been given more consideration. The perils become apparent when the book's own indexer assumes that all references to Eustathius should go under one entry, making St. Basil's friend the

same as Eustathius of Antioch! Taken together the section on the "Tales of the monks" and that on the Cappadocians constitute an admirable introduction to early monasticism, and the untangling of the literary problems of the early Egyptian material is excellent. But the evidence of Cassian is not included, and the gap for English readers on the Messalians and the literature of Macarios/Symeon remains, in spite of its importance for understanding both what Basil was doing and what has happened in the East of Christendom since.

The serious formal problem concerns the indexes. A book as wide-ranging, selective and (in some respects) advanced as this requires a good index, and it can only have one if the publisher puts it high in his priorities. In this case the pagination was shifted by a few lines *after* the index was complete, and presumably no one bothered to think it would matter. Nor, apparently, was the subject-indexer aware of the elementary principles of indexing, accessible in a pamphlet from the British Standards Institution, *The preparation of indexes to books, periodicals and other publications*, London: BSI 1976 (BS 3700:1976). Even the Greek index is not satisfactory. The selection is arbitrary. Why include *anakephaliosis* for one slight reference, when the English *recapitulation* is not indexed? And why are Didymus's technical terms in exegesis, discussed head-on in pp. 86-88, excluded from the Greek index? Was it that the indexer was so foxed by the numerous typographical variants that she gave up the attempt to get the spelling and accents right and tore up the cards? Academic authors are simply not competent without training, much less the research students, greenhorns in publishing offices, and even schoolchildren, to whom index-making is often relegated.

But I would not leave a bad taste in the mouth. Dr. Young's book is a great boon, and should be bought and read.

Stuart Hall

Yesterday and Today. A Study of Continuities in Christology

Colin E. Gunton. Darton, Longman and Todd, 1983. Pp. 228. £9.50.

This is a book of great competence, academic rigour and constructive thought which takes seriously the historical and epistemological questions of Christology, without yielding to the temptation to play about with surface patterns of thought in deference to transient cultural fashion. The aim of the author is to face up to the basic difficulties for human understanding that arise from the 'co-presence' of the eternal and the temporal, the divine and the human, in the New Testament presentation of Jesus Christ. At the same time he seeks to show that the Church's historic teaching about Christ has a consistent inner dynamic which in spite of all diversity allows the real substance of the Christian Gospel to be expressed in its own intrinsic rationality in different ages, cultures and perspectives. He finds that only by deepening the possibilities inherent in Christology for our understanding of God can theology be truly radical, reaching down to the roots of the Christian tradition to let it flower more abundantly. Thus the renewal of Christology is to be sought not in rejecting the teaching of tradition but in

taking it further. The problem has been that Christology has not been orthodox enough, or that its lessons have not been learned.

The argument begins with an analysis of the contrast between what has been called a 'Christology from below' and a 'Christology from above' in which special attention is devoted to the thought of Rahner, Pannenberg, Hegel, Schleiermacher, Ritschl and Kierkegaard, as well as to ancient theologians like Origen, Arius, Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria. With the delicate analytical probing of a surgeon's scalpel Dr. Gunton lays bare the anatomical structure of Christologies that operate with approaches from below or from above, and shows how they inevitably slip over into one another, for their underlying assumptions, in some form of cosmological and epistemological dualism, are the same. Whereas ancient thought tended to abstract Jesus Christ from history by eternalising him, modern thought tends to abstract him from eternity by making his temporality absolute. 'A Christological method that is excessively from above runs into the first risk; one excessively from below, the second. One makes eternity absolute, the other time. Both methods, made absolute, determine the content and falsify the subject-matter.' The solution to which Dr. Gunton's argument steadily forces the reader is to be found in the search for elements of 'intrinsic intelligibility' in the biblical portrayal of Christ enabling time and eternity, immanence and transcendence to be brought together. There is no doubt to this reviewer that such an approach does far more justice to the truth and ontology of biblical and traditional Christology than those which Dr. Gunton criticises and which, when compared to the line he has taken, are found to be self-contradictory and methodologically rather superficial.

The general argument of Dr. Gunton falls into line with other recent analysis of the problems of dualism in ancient and modern culture, in science and philosophy as well as religion, as Dr. Gunton is clearly aware in the way he draws support from writers like Michael Polanyi. This relates not least to the resurgent interest in 'contingent rationality' and the restructuring of modes and patterns of human thought and expression that this requires of us. Such a stress, however, far from detracting from rigorous scientific and ontological modes of thought, reinforces and deepens them in a way that makes for greater consensus across the spectrum of human knowledge.

Many will find the last chapter of the book rather intriguing and challenging, and even (as I do) very timely, in which Dr. Gunton discusses the relations in ancient and modern thought of Christ to Christendom – from Eusebius of Caesarea to Don Cupitt. Thus in his examination of what is called 'the political Christ', so fashionable in many quarters today, it is shown rather incisively that those who play down the understanding of Jesus Christ as God incarnate, God himself savingly at work in the midst of human violence, guilt and suffering, fail to appreciate the real logic of God's love, and end up with rather authoritarian notions of the relation of God to humanity in Church and in society. Here in the practical implications of the Christian Faith, as in the 'docetic' and 'adoptionist' approaches to Christ, the false dualisms on which one-sided views rest make them pass over into their opposites – as Colin Gunton easily shows by making Cupitt's strange ideas stand on their head! It is very different, however, when the historical man

Jesus Christ is never construed apart from his meaning as the presence of the eternal God in time, and Christology is never separated from soteriology – although it is readily admitted that the biblical teaching about the reality of God and his freedom to involve himself in the world, without loss to his or the world's reality, runs against the philosophical assumptions which dominate both ancient and modern culture. Far from abandoning the classical tradition in Christology, however, we must learn, like the ancients and by standing on their shoulders, to rethink the Christian message by joining with others in rethinking the foundations of modern culture, as they rethought the foundations of classical culture and science with such immensely beneficial results for the whole of subsequent history.

There are some minor points of disagreement which I have with Dr. Gunton, such as his interpretation of Kierkegaard, and there are other points where I would like him to give a fuller account of the NT presentation of Christ to controlling Old Testament conceptions, or of the Trinitarian structure of the Faith embodied in the Apostolic Tradition which inevitably came to the surface in the Nicene clarification of evangelical belief. But I wish to express my admiration and gratitude to Dr. Gunton who has provided us with a work of really major importance for today which carries us past the confused and superficial thinking of many of our contemporaries, not least those who scurry back into 19th century ideas in their inability to face up to the profound thought of Karl Barth. May I be allowed to point Dr. Gunton and his readers to the important work of Hans Frei (whom Gunton cites from another work), entitled *The Identity of Jesus Christ. The Hermeneutical Bases of Dogmatic Theology* (Philadelphia, 1967), in which a highly original argument is developed in seeking to overcome the damaging effects of an underlying dualism in tearing apart image and reality in our understanding of Jesus Christ? These two books by Frei and Gunton deserve to be studied together, for they complement one another, each having learned in its own way from insights offered by Karl Barth, and the deeper appreciation of Nicene and Chalcedonian Christology to which they lead.

Thomas F. Torrance

A World to Gain. Incarnation and the Hope of Renewal

Brian Horne. Darton, Longman and Todd, 1983. Pp. 96. £2.75.

'It is meant,' says the author, '... to be a book about the world' (p. 2): not, that is, primarily a book 'about' Christian doctrine, but about the context (or contexts) of contemporary questioning within which Christian doctrine may become intelligible and – even more important – interesting. Why should incarnation and deification matter in the late 20th century? Because only in these central dogmatic images are both the hopefulness and the impotence of human beings taken seriously, resolved and held in fruitful relation, not *dissolved*. As the second chapter makes plain, the political interest of Christians derives not from obedience (or as some would have it, disobedience) to the teachings of the founder, but from reflection on the implications of incarnation as an event. God's involvement speaks of the

possibilities of sanctifying and making meaningful even the complex and sometimes sordid business of 'ordering the relationships between individuals in community' (p. 35). The path to involvement is opened up without any capitulation to a new legalism – because the authority invoked is not a scheme of prescriptions, but the form, the event, of God's humanity, in Jesus and, embryonically, his church. Chapters 3 and 4 interlock in their relating of the Christian vocation to the transfiguration of matter: to refuse the vulgarized Protestant-North Atlantic attitude to nature as object and instrument is, again, to take incarnation (not just creation) seriously. And good, transforming art of any kind is 'Christian' in that it is a witness to Christ as the focus of beauty – 'splendour of form' within the limits of damaged creatureliness (72-73).

This is an attractive and very rich essay. Each chapter could easily be a lot longer, but Fr. Horne is content to suggest a discussion rather than to pursue it relentlessly to a – perhaps premature – conclusion. This is excellent in a book of this scope; but I hope there will be fuller developments to come. Especially in the last chapter, the reader has the sense of a very fresh and sophisticated argument coming to birth. A fuller engagement with Adorno's critique on the one hand and Maritain's (now so unjustly neglected) writings on aesthetics on the other – with perhaps some help from a native practitioner and interpreter like David Jones in his magnificent 'Art and Sacrament' – this would be an absorbing and very worthwhile project.

However, there is nothing more annoying for an author than to be told what he ought to do next! Enough to say that this is a welcome book: clear and judicious, based on strikingly wide reading, imaginative and hopeful. Theology can always do with such reminders that it is an evocative as well as a problem-solving style of discourse.

Rowan Williams

Ministry

Edward Schillebeeckx. SCM Press, 1981. Pp. 176. £4.95.

In a recent letter to *The Times*, a retired Anglican bishop, comparing the situations of the Liberal and Social Democratic parties on the one hand and the Church of England on the other, expressed his regret that "the leaders in each case cannot agree". He attributed this to their several failure to pay attention to what he ingenuously called "grassroot" opinion. I don't expect he would have much time for Fr. Schillebeeckx either except perhaps in agreeing with him that there is "A case for change". And if Anglicans tend to agonise about what the change should be, at least they show a growing regard for its necessity. Indeed the Convocation of Canterbury has before it a motion "That this Convocation believes that the formularies of the Church of England, while allowing degrees of freedom of interpretation regarding the nature of the ordained ministry, so provide a coherent doctrinal understanding of it." Theological sophistry could scarcely improve upon that!

Schillebeeckx provides in this book a scholarly study of ministry which should be compulsory reading for all those who take part in the Convocation debate. Looking at the

evidence for the earliest church he concludes that ministry is an attribute of leadership, not the other way round. The Apostles were the natural leaders, but not the only ones. Those who headed up local communities of believers presided as well over their liturgical assemblies, and underlying it all was the principle of the apostolic tradition. This, he claims, rather than the structures of ministry as such, was the original form of church life. The good news was what was handed down from person to person, not a succession or an unbroken chain. Indeed the first few centuries witnessed the refining of the tradition out of which process emerged an ordered concept of ministry. As time went on this became something imposed, given, from above, from the hierarchy, rather than emerging from leadership at what the bishop would call "grassroots". "The prime concern is with an unbroken succession or continuity, less in the ministry than in the apostolic tradition or content of the faith" (p. 34).

The middle ages however – and are we even now vigorously engaging the legacy of the Schoolmen? – turned the original formula on its head. Instead of leadership of a community issuing in ministry, it became accepted that the minister deserved to be recognised as leader and indeed ministry was divorced even from the natural community to the artificial one of monastery and benefice; the new concepts of law soon buttressed new fashions and developed the novel – for Christians, but certainly not for pagans – idea of sacred power. The character of ordination became a thing one could recognise (on legal grounds) and declare

indelible. Schillebeeckx sums the process up in the sentence "circumstances . . . have taken a fundamentally different direction: a priest is ordained in order to be able to celebrate the eucharist; in the ancient church it is said that he is 'appointed' as a minister in order to be able to appear as leader of the community; in other words, the community called him as leader to build up the community, and for this reason he was also the obvious person to preside at the eucharist" (p. 58). The last chapter "Some perspectives on the future" is an interesting and well documented study of recent Roman Catholic thought and pronouncement – especially upon celibacy of the clergy which has had recent adaptation by the decision of the Roman hierarchy in England who have moved away from post tridentine absolutism. As an Anglican, I am tempted to ask "So what?". As a study of the subject of ministry, there is little in such short compass to compare with Fr. Schillebeeckx. He opens up lines of thought which will frighten the faint-hearted. So is it better to forget it all, and trust that as (presumably?) providence has brought us to the state we are in, it would be churlish not to accept the status quo? Clearly, our problems, as Anglicans, are not the same as theirs – the Roman Catholics. But are they in fact all that different? If the recent ARCIC considerations have revealed unsuspected agreement, then our own view of ministry needs looking at again. Certainly that is a need for the Church of England, and one which it has constantly evaded. An evasion which Convocation seems set on making orthopraxy. What's happening meanwhile? New forms of ministry are being invented and experimented with. Industrial mission, sector ministries,

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auxiliary ministries, women's ministry, the diaconate and/or women deacons, all these are things which are happening in the church today. To say nothing of the multiplication of suffragan bishops and, in lesser degree alas, diocesans. The bureaucracy of Church House tightens its grip (like that of the Church Commissioners) by means of floods of paper, committees and so called synodical government. But what about the nature of ministry itself? Is there really no time to discuss it?

Peter Moore

A Dictionary of Christian Spirituality

Edited by Gordon S. Wakefield. SCM, London, 1983. Pp. 400. £15.00.

The upsurge of interest in Christian Spirituality in recent years has produced a great need for a clear and concise tool of high standards such as this dictionary provides. It is of course not so detailed or scholarly as the great multi-volume *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, but it will be of inestimable use as a basic reference tool for academics, clergy, students and laity who are looking for brief introductions to persons or topics relating to prayer, mysticism, spirituality, and pastoral care. This publication is the first of its kind in English in recent years. The articles are brief but full of information; cross references and bibliographies increase their value. The list of contributors (well over 100) is impressive, and includes specialists in the field, like Rowan Williams and Sr. Benedicta Ward, as well as some surprises: Antony Flew, for instance, might at first be thought to make strange company with those writing on spirituality, though his article on ESP is useful and entirely appropriate. On the whole the balance is good, and the choice of entries shows realism and good sense: it is refreshing, for instance, to find an entry under Humour (though Joy comes in only under Fruit of the Spirit, not in its own right!). On the whole bibliographies point to the standard works in the field, and the number of very recent publications cited is impressive. There are occasional bibliographical disappointments: under "Merton, Thomas" the only citation is Monica Furlong's biography, for instance, and under "Communes, Communities" the author lists only his own book, though the article would clearly call for mention of Clark's *Basic Communities* (SPCK, 1977). But these lapses are occasional in a volume which will be much consulted, and is welcome indeed.

Grace M. Jantzen

Windows Onto God

Robert Runcie, Archbishop of Canterbury. SPCK, 1983. Pp. 232. £6.25.

Far from exhibiting the 'fatal facility of continuous utterance' which one article diagnosed as an occupational hazard for archbishops, this collection of lectures, speeches and sermons on a variety of occasions enhances our admiration for an archbishop who can speak so often and so well on topics ecclesiastical, social and political and so movingly on occasions that are personal and intimate. We

are grateful to have his addresses on the occasion of the Queen Mother's 80th birthday and the wedding of the Prince of Wales and Lady Diana Spencer. Whether he is addressing the General Synod, the National Society, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, the House of Lords or an audience at the Palais des Congrès in Brussels, the Archbishop speaks from a reiterated refrain that we 'live in a world of rebellion against its own best interests'. These talks collected here are not so much concerned with the inner core of Christian credibility or spirituality as with the demands made on all who call themselves Christian in times such as these. Belief and Witness, Christian Education, The Third World, the Pursuit of Justice, the Church and the Bomb are issues that flow naturally from the principles that the archbishop enunciated in his enthronement sermon with which this collection opens. The ecumenical issue is the subject of Byzantine Conversations, Rome and Canterbury and the Covenanting Proposals. Whatever the occasion and the content the Archbishop presents himself as a teacher, informing as well as interpreting. How does one man achieve content of this quality on such a variety of issues? I suspect that the Archbishop has perfected the art of using a devil – as lawyers understand that word! How essential and how wise! Whoever reads this collection will emerge better informed about matters on which he knows something and better educated into issues about which he knows little or nothing. We can only be grateful to the author that he has found time to make these speakings available.

Sydney Evans

Christians and Religious Pluralism

Alan Race. SCM Press, 1983. Pp. 169. £5.95

The Christian church began in Judaism and rapidly spread into the Gentile world, meeting many religions and cults. From the seventh century came the great challenge of Islam which lost Christianity most of north Africa, and much of the Near East and southern Europe for centuries. In return, Christian missionaries ventured far into Asia, the Nestorians reaching China, and made renewed and widely successful efforts from the 17th century onwards. But western Europe remained virtually untouched by any other religion, Judaism being ignored, and although our forefathers paid for missionaries to go to the 'heathen' there was little knowledge of or contact with people of other faiths. Now all that has changed, the comparative study of religions has amassed great detail about Asian and African religions and, even more significantly, many of their followers are here in our midst. There are over 200 Muslim mosques in Britain, 50 Sikh temples, 150 Buddhist societies and so on. This situation brings many problems, to theology with its claims for Christian uniqueness and to pastoral work with requests for use of church premises for non-Christian celebrations, demands for revision of R.E. curricula in schools and more generally the relations of Christian communities to the strangers in their midst.

Alan Race raises these problems but he is particularly concerned with the theology of religions: is Christianity "the one true absolute religion intended for all mankind?" What about the claims to revelation, or mystical experience, in other faiths? "Are Hindus saved?" Is it by the unknown

Christ or do they need the known Christ? Is there still a place for missions and of what kind? The Anglican chaplain at the University of Kent considers practical matters in passing but he is chiefly concerned with the theological task of relating Christianity to other religions, as important today as the relations of religion to science were in the 19th century. His book is short but important for its wrestling with almost insoluble theological questions.

Three possible attitudes are suggested: Exclusivism, Inclusivism and Pluralism. Exclusivism may be seen in verses quoted to all speakers on comparative religion, the words attributed to Christ in the Fourth Gospel, "no one comes to the Father but by me," or the claim by Peter in Acts, "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved". The Roman Catholic church long cherished the words of Cyprian, "Outside the church no salvation" and in Protestantism Karl Barth has stated "the most extreme form of the exclusivist theory". From the standpoint of the revelation of God in Christ 'religion' is dubbed unbelief and 'the religions' are sinful blindness. Although Barth in this part of his *Church Dogmatics* does not deal with the relation of the church to other faiths, yet there is "something disturbing" in his rejection of non-Christian faith, and even his missionary disciple, Hendrik Kraemer, seems to have found Barth's emphasis "artificial, somehow unreal, convulsive and overdone".

Inclusiveness is "both acceptance and a rejection of other faiths", it recognizes and welcomes spiritual power and depth but it rejects them as insufficient for salvation apart from Christ. The greatest impetus for an inclusivist theology of religions came from the Second Vatican Council, with its guarded recognition of virtues in other traditions. This also can be traced back to the Bible, with Paul's words at Caesarea and Athens, though curiously Race refers to Luke's "own Jewish religious past". Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and many others down to Karl Rahner's notion of "anonymous Christians", illustrate a widening of theological attitudes while attempting to hold on to Christian supremacy. Not all would follow Raymond Panikkar in claiming that "it is through the sacraments of Hinduism . . . that *Christ* saves the Hindu normally".

Panikkar perhaps belongs more properly to the Pluralism which sees "a range of other possible options" in the reconciliation of Christian charity and doctrinal adequacy. Having examined several writers, from John Hick to R. C. Zaehner, Alan Race boldly introduces the central problem of "incarnation and the Christian Theology of Religions". However, it turns out to be an application of the Exclusivist, Inclusivist and Pluralist positions, showing little except the "fierce particularism" of the first, the "pre-judgment" of the second and the likely "reductionism" of the third.

A short final chapter on a "a question of truth" selects the pluralist position as seeking "to draw the faiths of the world's religious past into a mutual recognition of one another's truths and values". This seems to be recognizing the parallel existence of various religions and saying *vive la différence*. But perhaps there has been too much concern with the past and with dogmas taken out of context, and too little encounter with the people, the living believers. It may be that inter-religious problems are too great to be solved in one generation but in the often-quoted words of Max Warren: "Our first task in approaching another people,

another culture, another religion, is to take off our shoes, for the place we are approaching is holy. Else we may find ourselves treading on men's dreams. More serious still, we may forget that God was here before our arrival."

Geoffrey Parrinder

Through a Darkening Glass: Philosophy, Literature and Cultural Change

D. Z. Phillips. Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1982. Pp. x, 196. £10.00

Professor Phillips's usual depth of insight is applied in this volume of essays to the way in which literature, both ancient and modern, can sharpen our moral perceptions in a way which, too often, philosophy fails to do. Rather than discussing the issues in abstract terms, he enters into investigation of significant literary works ranging from Sophocles to Edith Wharton and Ingmar Bergman and the Welsh poet R. S. Thomas. One need not have read all the works discussed to see the point of Phillips's remarks, since he presents just enough of the content of the original to set his comments into a context – and to send one to the nearest library to read the works from a new perspective.

Although each of the nine essays stands on its own, half of them having been published before, there are important common themes. One of the most important of these is the way our preconceptions can blind us to values and beliefs other than our own, and how careful "waiting on the novel" (or poem or play) can reopen us to these alternative horizons. Sometimes the preconceptions are anachronistic. In "What the Complex did to Oedipus", Phillips argues that reading Freudian conceptions back into Sophocles's play precisely reverses its point: on a Freudian analysis, Oedipus does what he has (unconsciously) wanted to do all along, whereas what Sophocles was trying to show is the curse upon a man who has done the very last thing he ever wanted to do – hence the tragedy of it all. Such presuppositions can have blinkering effects also upon literary critics. Phillips shows how a literary critic can use his own moral opinions as the criterion by which a novel is judged, when in fact the point of the novel was to present alternative views. Thus Speir, commenting on Tolstoy and Chekhov, finds Chekhov's work superior because it does not present any final answer to the problem of death, whereas Tolstoy tries to do this in *The Death of Ivan Illych*: but this is not a fair judgement about the literary worth of the works, since it is based upon the critic's view of death rather than by criteria internal to the novels. Similarly if we were to follow the critics who dismiss the writings of Edith Wharton as innocent and naive we would fail to see that what she is portraying is the now often lost value of just those attitudes.

Most damning of all may be the preconceptions of professional philosophers. In "Some Limits to Moral Endeavors", Phillips accuses moral philosophers like Hare, Meldon and Philippa Foot of presenting a distortion of reality, as though morality and rationality coincide neatly to give shape to a well-ordered life. But the disorder of life makes the best and most rational intention turn into a disaster, at times, and it is sometimes better to settle for the lesser of evils, with all its attendant remorse, than pretend that if only we are rational and mean well we will never be

participants in tragedy. It is not use doing moral philosophy "in the air"; and literature can present us with concrete moral and psychological insights more helpful than admirable theories of an unattainable good.

This realism of Phillips is much to the fore in the treatment of religious themes. In his analysis of Ingmar Bergman's films, he displays the decline of the concept of God, the contemporary failure to find any meaning in a divine order and reduction to an inarticulate longing that somehow things were different. He shows in his discussion of Faust how Faust's pact with the devil is a rejection of patience: alienation from his studies because he does not patiently give himself to them but desires them for his own egocentricity, inability to love because of a romantic idea of a love which can be "possessed in an instant" rather than one which "suffers long and is kind", incapacity for freedom, because he sees it as freedom from the necessity of penitence instead of freedom through penitence. A foreshortening of these qualities turns them into something demonic, whereas accepting them and their suffering is one form of waiting on God, of "seeking the poem in the pain".

The book does not make comforting reading. There are those who will say, with some justification, that part of the discomfort is at the caricature of rationality and moral philosophy which lurks behind some of the essays. Let that be an incentive to produce a work without such caricature, which nevertheless shows the moral seriousness, humanity and sheer readability of Phillips's book.

Grace M. Jantzen

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