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PERSON AND COMMUNITY

BRIAN HORNE

Prologue

For some years it was my duty (and privilege) to look after an old lady who began to suffer serious mental deterioration as she became more and more frail physically. Eventually, in an advanced state of senility she was admitted to a nursing-home where she continued to live for nearly two more years. I visited her regularly, but was hardly ever able to make contact with her at any level that I recognised as meaningful. And, like everyone else who has had to cope with another human being in this condition, I was distressed and perplexed. Questions — theological, philosophical and psychological — presented themselves to me: 'Where was "she"? What has happened to the "person"? How can one be sure, since there is no obvious contact between minds, that there is any "person" left at all? And what is a human"person"?' Soon after her death, I put these questions to one of my old philosophy tutors. His answer, as it turned out, was not unexpected: 'Memory, that is the clue.' Admittedly, we may have almost no way of knowing what is going on inside the head of a person who has become senile, but it is not unreasonable to suppose that what is going on is an act of remembering; and as long as the memory remains I would be prepared to argue that "personhood" exists. It was not unexpected because I had been groping towards a similar kind of definition in my own mind: personal identity was ultimately connected to one's capacity to remember; perhaps, even, personhood was the product of memory. But, even as I was formulating this, I was wondering about the adequacy of the definition and where the notion had originated. I had the suspicion that as a definition it was both incomplete and relatively modern.

I

The word and the concept of the person did not enter Christian Theology until the beginning of the third century when it was used by Tertullian (160-220), not as a means of describing human beings, but as a means of talking about the being of God: the triune being worshipped by Christians. Una Substantia, tres Personae.[1] However, Tertullian was not, as one might have thought, taking up a Biblical term. The Hebrew language of the Old Testament can provide no word for our English 'person'. It has words for soul, and mankind, and individual men and women but no equivalent of person. The roots of the word are to be found in Greek philosophy; but even here it is difficult to be specific about its precise meaning (there are two, perhaps three, Greek words that can be translated into 'persona', person). And the concept of the person, as a philosophical problem, is not an issue for either of the two greatest philosophers of ancient Greece: Plato and Aristotle.[2] When we turn to the New Testament we see that there are only two instances when a Greek word might possibly be translated into the English 'person': 2 Corinthians 2.10 and Hebrews 1.3. But we have to be very careful here too. The word 'person' appears in the Authorised version, but no reputable modern translator is prepared to translate either *prosopon* (2 Corinthians) or *hypostasis* (Hebrews) as 'person'. It is clear that the modern translators are deliberately avoiding an anachronism: the word and the concept seem to be too modern if one is trying to render the thought of the original writers of those documents accurately.

The third, fourth and fifth centuries saw a great deal of theological controversy about the concept of the person, but it was the philosopher Boethius (c. 487 — c. 524) who provided western European culture with its most concise and, in time, its most influential definition of person: an individual substance of a rational nature. But Boethius was led into this definition both by Greek philosophy (especially that of Plato) and the writing of the most powerful mind of an earlier century, Augustine of Hippo (354 — 430). From the thought of Plato, Boethius drew the concept of human nature as a kind of underlying substance in which individual human beings participated. These individuals owed their being to that prior substance to which has been added the element of 'rationality' as they emerge into individual and separate existences. But Boethius was not only a Platonist; he was writing in a tradition whose shape had already been determined by Augustine. It is in Augustine's *Confessions*, written in the closing years of the fourth century, that the idea of the person, the *human* person, is treated in depth. This book is an autobiography of a peculiar kind: it is more than the attempt to recount the story of a past life, it is also the attempt to discover meaning in that life by means of relating, and forming into a narrative, selected previous experiences. It might even be true to say that the shape of the writer's personal identity is constructed by this action; and memory is central to the whole enterprise. Augustine informs his reader that he is both fascinated and bewildered by the connection between the power of the memory and the realisation of personal identity.[3] He finds he can make sense not only of his life, but of himself by an act of remembering; and the tenth book is a long meditation on the significance and use of the memory. In it he considers the relation between two words: *cogito* (I think) and *cogo* (I gather or collect). To think is to do more than speculate abstractly, it is also to recall; memory is, therefore, an activity of the intellect, a rational operation. Hence Boethius, when trying to describe the being of God, could define a person as an individual substance of a rational nature and remain within the Augustinian tradition.

The definition passed into the thinking of the Western Church and, in the thirteenth century, when Thomas Aquinas addressed himself to the question of person, it was Boethius's definition that he used and was concerned to uphold.

> For person in general signifies the individual substance of a rational nature. The individual in itself is undivided, but is distinct from others. Therefore person in any nature signifies what is distinct in that nature...[4]

I mention and quote from Thomas Aquinas because of his central place in Catholic theology up until our own century. But it was not merely in Catholic thought that this notion of the nature of person has persisted and been developed; I doubt if there was a single thinker in the centuries that followed who was not influenced by the Boethian definition.

A picture of the way in which the concept was accepted and developed is provided by J. R. Illingworth (1848 — 1915) in his Bampton lectures for 1894 entitled *Personality, Human and Divine*. Illingworth was a prominent Christian philosopher and an important member of a group of thinkers that published the influential and widely-read volume of essays *Lux Mundi*. He was regarded as an enlightened traditionalist and saw himself fulfilling the task of interpreting orthodox Christian teaching to the man and woman of his own age. In his historical survey of the idea of personality, Boethius is, oddly enough, not mentioned, but Illingworth nonetheless confidently links the

philosophy of Descartes (1596 — 1650) with its famous dictum *cogito ergo sum* to the thought of Augustine.[5] He traces the continuous development of the concept through Leibniz (1646 — 1716) to Kant (1724 — 1804) who, according to Illingworth 'inaugurated the modern epoch in the treatment of personality.'[6] He goes on 'A person, then, for Kant, was a self-conscious and self-determining individual, and as such an end in himself.....'.[7] Illingworth was far from being a disciple of Kant, but he did write in and for an age which was deeply influenced by Kant's idealism and he feels he has to say the 'the fundamental characteristic of personality is self-consciousness.'[8] In a long footnote to this statement he begins by asserting that 'self-consciousness may be called the forum of personality.... The introspective Augustine developed the significance of self-consciousness more fully than any of his predecessors in the western world; while the schoolmen did little more than clothe his thoughts upon the subject in more accurate and appropriate phraseology.'[9] (There follow a number of quotations from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century — Bonaventura to Tennyson — in support of this claim).

And so we, in western European culture, have inherited (and usually assume almost without thinking) a notion of person which lays stress upon 'individuality'; and a vital part of this concrete individuality is, of course, the power of memory: interior, private recollections of the past.[10] We are, each of us, in the strict and non-pejorative sense of the word 'ego-centric', and we achieve our sense of identity by knowing ourselves as unique beings in contrast to everyone else. We believe ourselves to be at our most 'personal' when we realise and assert our distinctiveness. The emphasis is on separation, differentiation, uniqueness, self-absorption, introspection, isolation. It is easy to see how profoundly this notion has affected our religion, philosophy, politics, art and, even, our science.

I will give only two examples of modern phenomena which are directly reliant upon this concept of the person. First, without it there could have been no formulation of that idea which has become almost commonplace today: the idea of human rights. 'All men are by nature equally free and independent, and have certain inherent rights....namely the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property and the means of obtaining happiness and safety.' (The Virginia Bill of Rights, June 1777). What follows from this is the assertion of the priority of the individual over society (a concept that Marx was to reject a century later); and the concept of individual human worth, dignity and rights could only have grown in the soil of a religious and philosophical tradition which had been able to give each human being the capacity to define himself or herself in distinction from other human beings, and demand that society recognise certain inalienable 'rights'. Secondly, without some such notion of person, there could never have evolved that sense of the tragedy of human existence which has imbued western culture since the thirteenth century — and which has become more and more pervasive as our own century was reached.

> Dayadhvam: I have heard the key
> Turn once in the door and turn once only
> We think of the key, each in his own prison
> Thinking of the key, each confirms a prison
> Only at nightfall, as the real rumours
> Revive for a moment a broken Coriolanus
> (T.S. Eliot: *The Waste Land*)

This tragic motif in our culture differs from that of ancient Greece, for example, in that it is not related to the idea of implacable fate or knowledge of mortality. It is the awareness of individual isolation; in the perception of ultimate aloneness and the despair growing out of loneliness. It has become the dominant note in nearly all western European art as well as the preoccupation of psychologists and much western European philosophy. It reaches its most extreme, and expressive, form in certain kinds of existentialism.

'Aloneness is man's real condition'? Alienation and estrangement are basic terms for describing the human personality. There is no possibility of knowing anyone else and the attempt to overcome separation by love is illusory. The ego-centric self is continually reconstructing itself in isolation from other, unknowable, selves. This is the end of the line: this notion of person, the seed of which was planted in the fourth century, can produce no more flowers.

II

But there is a different, and complementary, way of approaching the problem of the person: it is the attempt to define the person not in terms of the irreducible ego, but in terms of relationship and community.

It can be argued that, from the very beginning, the Judaeo-Christian religious tradition has portrayed the human being as, essentially, a relational being. There are, for example, two accounts of creation in the book *Genesis*. The second, and more primitive, account depicts the creation of Eve as the creation of a being without whom Adam would be incomplete.

> Then the Lord God said, "It is not good
> that man should be alone; I will
> make him a helper fit for him" (2.18)

The account given by the later writer, in the opening chapter of the book, is no less concerned to stress the complementarity of two beings that God has created.

> So God created man in his own image,
> in the image of God he created him;
> male and female he created them. (1.27)

The relational character of the human being is seen as the image of the mystery of the creator's own being (and the theologians of the Early Church were quick to pick up the plural form of verse 26, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.....' as they sought scriptural proof for the Christian doctrine of the Trinity). And so it can be seen that throughout the Old Testament the communal life of the people of Israel is in the foreground. The great commandments given at Mount Sinai constitute a codification of relationships: they legislate for the nation's proper relationship to God in the first place, and, in the second place, for individuals' relationships with each other within the community of the nation. Outside the complex network of relationships which establishes the community, the individual ceases to have meaning and purpose. There is no mention of human rights as such: they may only be inferences drawn from the recognition of mutual duty, i.e. duty towards parents, children, neighbours, strangers etc. It is true that by the time of Jeremiah and Ezekiel (seventh and sixth centuries B.C.) the prophets are intent upon impressing upon individuals the idea of individual responsibility for some, nonetheless corporate responsibility remains and sin

itself is seen as a violation of relationship: original sin (the myth of the fall) as the violation of the relationship between God and His creatures, and all other sin as the violation of right relationships within the community. The community itself is revered as the properly ordered life established by the covenant and maintained by the law and within that network of relationships individuals discover their worth and purpose.

In his teaching, Jesus does nothing to change this essentially relational emphasis, though one must notice that his parables and acts of healing are directed primarily at individual men and women either as challenges to individual decision or for individual healing. Yet, the restoration to 'wholeness' whether by faith or healing is also to be seen as restoration to proper relationships with others and also the creation of a new set of relationships in the lives of many who had lost identity because they had previously been excluded from society. A new kind of community is also envisaged in which the essentially relational character of human life is even more strongly stressed. It is chiefly in the letters of Paul that the implications, for community, of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are spelled out practically, mystically and theologically. The old set of relationships which was Israel, and which was sustained by obedience to the Law, would now be transcended by a community which is established by incorporation into Christ by the power of the spirit; and it is to be called the Body of Christ. The writer of the letter to the Ephesians gives us a vision of growth into 'personhood':

> for building up of the Body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the status of the fullness of Christ. (4.13)

The individual, far from being an end in himself or herself, self-conscious and self-determining (Kant) can only become personal — that which he or she is called to be — when each is in proper relation to Christ and to one another. In this way, the individual is dependent upon the community in order to be able to grow into the person.

But the word 'person' had still not entered the Christian vocabulary, and it did not appear until the third century when (as we have seen) it was introduced by Tertullian and then taken up by the theologians of the Greek Church who, in exploring its possibilities, arrived at a notion that differed markedly from that which was later supplied to Latin Christendom by Boethius.

John Zizioulas begins his recently published essay *Personhood and Being* by recognising that 'Respect for man's "personal identity" is perhaps the most important ideal of our time' and he proceeds to his thesis that 'although the person and "personal identity" are widely discussed nowadays as a supreme ideal, nobody seems to recognise that *historically* as well as *existentially* the concept of the person is indissolubly bound with theology' and further that 'the person both as a concept and as a living reality is purely the product of patristic thought'.[11] There is neither space nor, perhaps, need to rehearse the arguments of this magisterial essay, I should like only to say that we should recognise that it is in the context of theological debate about the nature of God that the word person (hypostasis or prosopon) began to take on specific meaning and became a way of describing not only the nature of the Divine Being but also the nature of human beings. Anthropology is an extrapolation of theology. It is obvious that if the notion of person as a separate concrete individuality had been the only notion available to the Fathers it could never have been possible for it to be used to refer to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Instead of one God there would have been three centres of being: three gods. But then person in the Greek theology of the patristic period is not defined as ego-centric being: a person only comes into existence as a result of relationship, i.e. in a community. There can be no such thing as autonomous existence for a person. The Son of God is a personal title only because of the nature of the relationship the Son enjoys with the Father. Similarly the Spirit is defined by the relationships with the Father and the Son. The mutual interdependence of the three "members" of the Trinity enables the persons to be persons; they are defined not by an intrinsic characteristic but by their relationships.[12]

If this is correct (and I believe it is) and if Christian anthropology — our doctrine of man — arises out of Christian theology — our doctrine of God, one can begin to see what it must mean to talk of the human person. Since it is a basic article of faith that we are made 'in the image of God' we must therefore exist as beings in relation, and we must 'find' ourselves as persons in community. It is true that each one of us possesses and cherishes a sense of uniqueness, but far from being self-determining individuals whose sense of identity and consciousness of worth grows out of a knowledge of self-sufficiency our identity and value proceed from both our uniqueness as individuals and our relationships with others. Free and loving association (an image of the life of the Holy Trinity) will confer upon us the dignity of personhood. We are defined by our loves. We grow and mature out of lonely, and ultimately selfish, individuality into personhood as we freely enter more and more deeply into communion with others. The biological necessity (physical interdependence) is mirrored and completed by the theological necessity (spiritual interdependence); and love becomes the formative power of personality.

Life and love are identified in the person: the person does not die only because it is loved and loves; outside the communion of love the person loses its uniqueness and becomes a being like other beings, a "thing" without absolute "identity" and "name", without a face.[13]

III

The implications of all that has been said so far may be too obvious to need drawing out. At the risk of stating the obvious I will suggest two consequences of the previous theology.

First, it is a travesty of the Gospel to characterise the Christian religion as something to do only with individual spiritual redemption and not with the creation, purification and perfection of human relationships, i.e. society. This entails the effort at the achievement of that most social of all virtues: justice. And this in turn suggests the need for social reform wherever there is injustice; and the Church's involvement in such reforms. If it is to the Christian religion that we owe the concept of the person, and if we understand the relational content of that concept, there can be no purely individual redemption. We come into being as persons only in community, and where the community itself is corrupted by greed, oppression, poverty, the possibility for the free expression and exercise of love by members of the community is thwarted: in these conditions human beings are stunted, compelled to remain at the level of individuals without realising the potential

of personality. So if the Church is committed to the vocation of enabling the achievement of the truly personal in each individual, she will be committed to the task of ensuring that society is organised in such a way that human beings can enter freely into these relationships of spiritual and material exchange that we call loving relationships. It can be seen from this that at the basis of many of the theologies of liberation lies this notion of person as relational being. Love, it is argued, must be 'actualised as the unconditional determination to freedom and justice for others'[14] and the Church must press forward in the hope that the eschatological promises of God — justice, liberty, reconciliation, peace — are not only vague dreams for a future state beyond this life, but are promises whose beginning is here and now. Nearly half a century ago, before there were any 'theologians of liberation', Eric Mascall expressed the point with characteristic precision. 'And so from the Christian doctrine of man there proceeds a Christian doctrine of society; the Christian anthropology generates a Christian sociology'.[15] Such a sociology will recognise the need of human beings to live in a society which will provide the conditions to enable them to become persons by living, serving, worshipping and playing.

Secondly, the Church must be seen as the sacramental sign of community. If the world were 'unfallen' and all human society was capable of achieving perfect relationships there would be no necessity for this sign, for the world itself would then reflect perfectly the glory of God; but in a fallen world and in the midst of human wickedness she exists as a sign of the eternal love of God and must realise this sign in concrete form. She is not merely 'the act of salvation' — a place of escape from the corruption of mankind — nor a collection of disparate individuals gathered together for the purpose of worshipping the creator; she is the 'place' of the most profound communion of all, and the means by which individual human persons are drawn, by grace, into the life of the eternal, divine Persons of God.

> God did not make us "to remain within the limits of nature", or for the fulfilling of a solitary destiny; on the contrary, He made us to be brought together into the heart of the life of the Trinity. Christ offered Himself in sacrifice so that we might be one in that unity of the divine Persons.[16]

The Church exists, therefore, to bring a new perfected kind of person into being. That she has the power and obligation to do this is because she exists as the Person of Christ in the world.[17]

Footnotes

1 *Adversus Praxean* 11-12.

2 'In Platonic thought the person is a concept which is ontologically impossible, because the soul, which ensures man's continuity, is not united permanently with the concrete, "individual" man: it lives eternally but it can be united with another concrete body and can constitute another "individuality", e.g. by reincarnation. With Aristotle, on the other hand, the person proves to be a logically impossible concept precisely because the soul is indissolubly united with the concrete and "individual": a man is a concrete individuality; he endures, however, only for as long as his psychosomatic union endures — death dissolves the concrete "individuality" completely and definitely'. John Zizioulas, *Being as Community*, p.28.

3 *Confessions*, Trans, R.S. Pine-Coffin; Penguin Books, 10. viii.

4 *Summa Theologiae*, xxix, Art 4.

5 J.R. Illingworth, *Personality, Human and Divine*, Macmillan & Co. 1894. p.20.

6 Ibid, p.21.

7 Ibid, p.22.

8 Ibid, p.21.

9 Ibid, p.224.

10 This notion reaches its most profound literary expression in Marcel Proust's *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* published in 1922 in which self and memory are identical.

11 J. Zizioulas. *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, DLT, 1985. p.27.

12 'The survival of a personal identity is possible for God not on account of His substance but on account of His Trinitarian existence. If God the Father is immortal, it is because His unique and unrepeatable identity as Father is distinguished eternally from that of the Son and of the Spirit, who call Him "Father". If the Son is immortal, He owes this primarily not to His substance but to His being the "only-begotten".....and His being the one in whom the Father is "well-pleased". Likewise the Spirit is "self-giving" because He is "communion". Zizioulas, pp.48-49.

13 Ibid, p.49.

14 J.B. Metz. *The Relationship of the Church and the World in the Light of a Political Theology*, p.266.

15 E.L. Mascall, Man: *His Origin and Destiny*, Dacre Press, 1940, p.53. He goes on to make some trenchant remarks about the state of society in 1940 that might be applied equally to the state of contemporary Britain. "The individualism which is the professed doctrine of living of so many people today....is not only a direct denial of the Christian teaching about the nature of man, it is simply impossible to put into practice without rapid death from starvation.....we have now a state of affairs in which, instead of that natural and spontaneous unity of society which comes when men know that they are all engaged, in their different ways, upon the same task, we have an unnatural and unstable equilibrium in which the only forces making for coherence are hatred, fear and greed.' He produces the following Christian scheme:

   1 Man is for the glory of God.
   2 Things are for the good of man.
   3 Money is for the production and distribution of things.

   then comments on the modern perversion of the Christian scheme. What we now have may be represented as follows:

   1 Things are for the production of money.
   2 Man is for the production and consumption of things.
   3 God (if he exists) is for the convenience of man. pp 54-65.

16 *The Splendour of the Church*, Henri de Lubac, Sheed and Ward, 1976, pp 174-175.

17 This paper was first presented to the members of the Archbishops' Commission on Rural Areas.

LEAVING THINGS AS THEY ARE : A RESPONSE TO JOHN HICK AND PAUL BADHAM

BEVERLEY J. CLACK

Two recent lectures given at King's illustrate a trend within the philosophy of religion towards a generalising approach to the truth claims of different religious traditions. Initially, the titles of these lectures seem to have little in common; Professor John Hick on *The Buddha's undetermined questions and the conflicting truth claims of different religions*[1], and Professor Paul Badham's paper, *Towards a global view of immortality*[2]. This paper will attempt to show the similar presuppositions underlying these accounts, drawing upon both the material used in their lectures and in their most recent works, with a view to showing the problems which arise from such misunderstandings of the way in which religious language should be interpreted. In conclusion, an alternative way of considering religious belief will be advocated.

While John Hick's lecture dealt largely with the Buddha's distinction between religious questions which could be answered and those which could not, I wish to consider initially Hick's use of this principle when he subdivides the content of truth claims into the historical, the trans-historical and those which are "concepts of Ultimate Reality"[3]. Hick's concern is to find the common ground — if common ground there be — between the world faiths, and as such he considers these three categories in terms of the amount of conflict produced by each category.

He sees few important conflicts arising from the first category of historical truth claims; regardless of one's religious sympathies, few would deny the historicity of Christ, the Buddha or Muhammed. Within the category of trans-historical claims, that is, questions whose answers are beyond the scope of human knowledge (for example, theories about the origin of the universe, life after death etc), Hick denies the importance attached to such questions. These questions are unanswerable, for as finite beings we cannot by definition transcend the world in which we live.

It is on the level of claims concerned with ultimate reality that genuine conflict apparently lies. This 'ultimate reality' is spoken of as personal in, for example, the Christian doctrine of God, and impersonal, as in Buddhism; it is therefore difficult to see how differences between faiths on this level are to be overcome. Hick's solution to the problem is two-fold. He begins by defining this 'ultimate reality' as 'the Real'. Such a term is capable, he believes, of encompassing all religious responses to reality:

> In Christian terms it gives rise to no difficulty to identify God, the sole self-existent reality, as the Real. With Islam, the Real, al Haqq, is one of the names of Allah. Within the Hindu family of faiths it is natural to think of the ultimate reality, Brahman, as sat or satya, the Real. Within Mahayana Buddhism the Dharmakaya or sunyata is also spoken of as tattva, the Real. In Chinese religious thought the ultimate is zhen, the Real[4].

While such a breakdown of religious belief to the lowest common denominator is undoubtedly useful when attempting to conduct some form of dialogue between the world faiths, it has to be asked whether this deconstructing of religious imagery is beneficial for the wider context of the believer's life. Would Christian worship, for example, benefit from calling God 'the Real' rather than 'Father'? It seems unlikely that such an impersonal pronoun would be adequate in this context.

Hick goes on to claim that such questions concerning the "reality of the real" can rightly be described as unanswerable questions. We cannot know what God is really like; religious beliefs about the divine nature are, in Kantian terms, the products of the reflective abilities of the human mind. The truth of such ideas lies not in their relationship to the external reality who is God, but in their soteriological effectiveness, ie. in how they affect the life of the believer:

> Their truthfulness is the practical truthfulness which consists in guiding us aright[5].

As such, the individual names for the Real are not particularly important; what matters is the kind of lifestyle which arises from holding certain beliefs about the divine life.

This sounds a strong argument, and it allows Hick to deny a realist account of religious doctrines while holding to a realist conception of God. In other words, we cannot *know* that God is triune in his being along the lines of the trinitarian confession of faith within Christian belief; rather our ideas about God are human expressions concerning him which our lives express. Hence, the meaning of belief in the triune God is to be found in the way in which we relate to others as God relates to himself. It is a belief which springs from our cultural background. Such an account means that other truth claims need not be excluded; human doctrines about God are precisely that, human. All religions are ways of seeking the one reality who is God.

From this statement it becomes apparent that Hick's realism is of a significantly qualified kind. He denies the legitimacy of adopting a "naive realism"[6] which fails to take account of the human nature of religious doctrines, describing his own position as that of a 'critical realist'[7]. Such a position allows Hick to maintain a realist concept of God as existent and objective, whilst allowing him to accept the forms of religion to be based upon human spirituality:

> We can therefore only experience the Real as its presence affects our distinctively human modes of consciousness, varying as these do in their apperceptive resources and habits from culture to culture and from individual to individual[8].

Initially, this sounds a highly attractive position to adopt. God is defined as an existent reality, while differences between the religions are not important as they reveal different ways of approaching the one reality which is God. However, it is with this claim that the problem arises. If God is 'real' in the sense of being an existent reality, then surely some truth claims about him are going to come nearer to the truth of his reality than others. A further and more extreme problem concerns the possibility of knowing what God is like *at all* under Hick's schema. Hick is content to see the main religions as pointing towards that which is truly Real; yet this does not seem to do justice to the varied forms of discourse about God which have been produced by the world faiths. Something seems to have been lost by attempting to remove more distinctive and individual language in favour of maintaining the general precept that God, or the Real, exists.

Despite his insistence upon the paramount importance of accepting the existence of God, Hick's position comes remarkably close to that of the 'non-realists'. A non-realist considers the idea of God in terms other than that of traditional theism. God is not an existent, objective being who is all-powerful, all-knowing, immutable etc etc. Rather, God is the sum of human spirituality, the goal for moral endeavour, or made 'real' in the use of religious language and the praxis of the believer[9]. However, to hold such a position is not enough for Hick:

> Critical realism holds that the realm of religious experience and belief is not in toto human projection and illusion but constitutes a range of cognitive responses, varying from culture to culture, to the presence of a transcendent reality or realities[10].

Hick places a negative rendering on the nature of non-realism. To hold that religion is based purely in the human means for Hick that we are under the spell of an 'illusion'. While I share Hick's concern that a non-realist position may lead to a sense that the believer is deluded, I believe that it is only a *form* of non-realism which can take adequate account of the differences between believers without the contradictions inherent in Hick's account. Having so dispensed with a referential account of religious language, it seems odd that Hick should still wish to adhere to a notion of God which is eminently referential. We may not be able to know what God is like, but we can know that he exists. I should like to claim that such dichotomy springs from Hick's misunderstanding of the way in which religious language operates, a theme which will be considered once Paul Badham's account of immortality has been discussed.

Badham, who himself draws much from Hick's approach[11], gives an account of immortality which attempts to show agreement between different religions as to the nature of "life after death". Indeed, in his lecture, he claimed that 'all' religions adhere to a particular understanding of the path the soul is to take after death. Once dead, we move to a "mind-dependent" state. However, it would not be a satisfactory state of affairs if we were to continue as disembodied selves, for Badham wishes to agree with much that has been written concerning personhood as a psycho-somatic unity, and thus there will be a day of resurrection when the soul will assume a new and glorious heavenly body.

The problem with such a general account of 'what the religions say' is that it must necessarily reduce the material to a common level. Hence, Badham interprets the Buddhist understanding of nirvana to be a state of bliss, rather than the end of selfhood and thus the end of all striving. He combines the ideas of immortality of the soul, a predominantly Greek idea, with those concerning resurrection from the Hebraic tradition. He does to an extent qualify this position by redefining 'resurrection'. Such a concept can only be used appropriately if it "does not entail the resuscitation or re-creation of our present bodies"[12]. Badham arrives at this position through consideration of the knowledge which we now have of the nature of physical decay. It would be ridiculous if we continued to believe that at some point in time the graves would open and we would rise, our bodies intact.

Badham's understanding of what 'resurrection' has traditionally meant does not do justice to the belief itself. Resurrection, more so than 'immortality', has stressed the sovereign nature of God. It is God who breathes life into us; it is God who has the power to raise the dead. Further, in an age which has come to recognise the psycho-somatic unity of human beings, a concept of resurrection speaks of the totality of the human being, in marked contrast to the Cartesian view of the self underpinning modern concepts of immortality.

Badham's account of 'life after death', in its attempt to attain a coherent view of what may await us after death, fails to do justice to the language employed by believers. Drawing upon his use of the Christian belief in 'eternal life', this omission can be most clearly seen. In order to achieve a position which takes account of the various insights into the next life espoused by the religions, Badham must necessarily displace the language of eternal life from the context in which such language is used. In other words, the language to do with 'eternal life' ('life after death', in Badham's words), is removed from other language and beliefs about this world, the nature of reality, God etc. Badham's concern with 'eternal life' lies not with the role that such a belief plays in the life of the believer, but with "the question of its truth or falsehood"[13].

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that Badham joins Hick in rejecting the position of the non-realists. Rejecting D Z Phillips' view that talk of eternal life is to be understood in terms of the life which the Christian leads here and now, Badham claims that:

> Talk of 'resurrection' tends to become vacuous when it is taken to relate solely to our present existence[14].

It would actually be more correct to say that the language of eternal life is misunderstood when it is isolated from the experience of resurrection in the believer's life and used as a hypothesis for a future state of existence.

This misunderstanding reaches almost comic proportions when Badham turns to supranatural events to back up his thesis. He cites 'out of body' experiences as providing evidence for the existence of the soul after death:

> Near-death experiences are therefore of the utmost importance to research in life after death, for the evidential features in the reports made by resuscitated persons about their supposed observations provide some of the strongest grounds for supposing that the separation of the self from the body is possible[15].

While accepting such quasi-scientific grounds for verifying his thesis, Badham rejects other equally strange paranormal events which would apparently bear witness to alternative beliefs about the nature of continued existence. He rejects the reports of people who remember past existences which would apparently support ideas of reincarnation. His reason:

> The evidence for reincarnation points not to immortality but to extinction[16].

As only a few individuals bear witness to such experiences and as the memories tend either to fade or need to be recovered under hypnosis, the individual who existed in the previous incarnation would appear to have little to do with the subject who remembers isolated events in that person's life[17]. As such, 'I' cannot hope to live again, as the 'I' of this present incarnation will not be remembered in the next. While this may be the case, the problem inherent in Badham's thesis at this point becomes

most evident. While claiming to be considering the evidence that the world's religions give for 'life after death', Badham begins with a Graeco-Christian understanding of immortality and then fits the 'evidence' to it. Generalising of this kind leads not to clarity of the positions held by different believers, but to a conglomeration of ideas and impressions which may or may not reflect the specific insights of a community into the nature of existence.

Both Hick and Badham are concerned to give a general account of religious belief. They ignore the differences between the world faiths in order to say that all believers are moving towards the same goal. In Hick, this focus of concern is God; in Badham, the life beyond. While this undoubtedly is for the worthwhile reason of destroying intolerance and bringing about interfaith dialogue, it must necessarily mean that the distinctive nature of a faith's language is lost. We might appear to be saying different things, but ultimately we are not. Thus, God can be spoken of as both impersonal and personal in Hick; nirvana and heaven are one and the same in Badham.

This leads to the preliminary point I wish to make in response to this material. Hick and Badham illustrate what happens to concepts when removed from the context in which they are situated. For Hick, this means a negation of the distinctive elements within a religion in favour of an overall understanding of the focus of religious concern. Hence, it is not the kind of God that matters but the idea of God as an existent possibility. I believe there is a danger in so considering the concept of God. The regulating nature of belief in God for one's life is replaced by belief in an external reality which may have some or little effect upon one's life. Consequently, while newspapers continue to report the dropping-off of church attendence, most people would claim to entertain the possibility of an Ultimate Being. Yet if this has no effect upon one's life, what sort of belief is this? Isn't it rather like holding to the belief that there are green men on Mars? — an interesting, but ultimately unimportant belief when living out one's life from day to day. This may be an unfair criticism of Hick's position, but it does show the problem of removing God from the context of the tradition in which beliefs about him are expressed.

For Badham, the problem is seen more acutely, for immortality becomes an abstract, external truth with little importance attached to its place within a given tradition. By removing a concept from its context, misunderstanding about the way in which that concept is used automatically arises. Hence, D Z Phillips in his 1983 Marett Lecture, *Primitive Reactions and the Reactions of Primitives* sees such misunderstanding about the way in which religious language is used as giving rise to metaphysics[18]; it is only within the context of the religious life that meaning can be given to concepts such as 'eternal life', 'God' etc. Any other approach leads to a false, quasi-scientific account which has little to do with the life of faith.

Furthermore, religious concepts only make sense within the context of the faith in which they are formulated. The problem comes when this context is not taken into account. Badham, for example, like many other 'liberal' Christians, finds the concept of hell problematic[19]. Indeed, if one considers it as some kind of cosmic bonfire, eternally consuming and torturing the souls of the damned, it is not easily reconcilable with the idea of a loving God. However, if seen within the context of the individual human experience, it takes on a new significance. A life lived without a moral vision could indeed be termed as 'hell'. The actions that we do, or fail to do, matter. This idea of the present reality of judgement is alluded to in John's Gospel:

> No one who believes in him will be condemned; but whoever refuses to believe is condemned already. (Jn 3v18)

Removing this statement from the realm of this world into a hypothetical next leads to the problems of interpretation facing Badham. Within its rightful context there is no such problem.

It is not enough merely to refute the method which underlies the arguments of Hick and Badham; an alternative way of considering belief must be advanced which, while not destroying the distinctive insights of different belief systems, maintains the empathic approach which Hick and Badham expound.

Both Hick and Badham offer a reformed realism in their approach to religion. God does exist, but religious understandings of him cannot be understood referentially; rather, they are specifically human responses to the experience of the reality which is 'God'. In response, I would like to outline a form of non-realism. Perhaps I should say *reformed* non-realism, because I believe that the critique which Hick gives of the non-realist position underlines the problems of not clearly defining what constitutes such an approach.

Hick's critique of 'non-realism' takes in a wide variety of views and positions. He focuses his critique upon the work of Don Cupitt and D Z Phillips, choices which show the breadth of his definition of 'non-realism'. Cupitt would readily accept his position to be 'non-realist'. He is concerned with religious praxis as a human achievement. There is nothing which gives external meaning to our life; we have to create our values, our own spirituality. God is not an external, existent reality but "a personal religious ideal, internal to the spiritual self"[20]. Phillips' position is quite different. His concern is to return the meaning of religious language to the context in which it is used in the believer's life. He rejects the metaphysical superstructure which is imposed upon such beliefs by philosophical theologians. While he rejects the philosopher's God, he would deny the idea that God is not 'real'. If God is not 'real', the religious life is a non-sense. God is real within the believer's use of religious language, and consequently within the believer's life. It does make a difference whether one believes or does not believe in God.

The connection which Hick makes between these two quite different figures shows that care is needed when describing a position which is concerned to stress the this-worldly nature of belief without recourse to a metaphysical superstructure. I wish to outline such an approach which, while not ignoring the differences between the worldviews of the faiths, will prove beneficial for dialogue.

At the outset, Phillips' claim that God is 'real' must be taken seriously. Hick and Badham assume realists to have the monopoly on such language about God. Yet 'real' in relation to God need not mean that God is an objective existent reality. Rather, God can be described as real in the sense of being the eternal perspective which we put upon life[21]. If such a definition of God is accepted, religious belief need not be considered as an "illusion"[22]; holding a perspective upon life which sets out the possibility of finding lasting, 'eternal' significance in this

world will radically change the way in which one both views and acts within the world. At the same time, discussion of which religion most closely approximates the transcendent reality of God will not arise. If religion is man's response to the eternal in the midst of this life, and not a response to an eternal which is beyond it, then the culturally relative positions held by different groups will not be a problem. Nor does this mean that the soteriological significance of faith cannot be judged, for "by their fruits shall you know them."

When such an approach is applied to the interpretation of religious language, the benefits are clearly seen. The religious language of a given tradition is the distinctive way in which believers express their beliefs. We cannot move, as Badham attempts to do, from religious language and the context in which it is used, to a quasi-scientific position. This is not to say that the language of belief is without a wider context. However, this wider context is found in the way in which the believer subsequently relates to this world, not to some hypothetical next.

Religious language, and the beliefs expressed in this medium, forms a visionary approach to life. By this, I mean that the task of religion is to create ways of looking at the world which both enhance its importance as the sphere of our life while also challenging us to new ways of being. Hick and Badham have become so ensnared by the metaphysical superstructure which they connect with religion that they fail to do justice to the significance of human existence. This leads them to claim that the ideas of the religious faiths, while being different responses to the one reality, are ultimately saying the same thing. The generalising tendency which they manifest apparently arises from their understanding of religious beliefs as pointing beyond themselves to an ultimate reality; within the specific lectures considered, for Hick, this is God, for Badham, the immortality of the soul. Such accounts fail to do justice to the integrity and uniqueness of the different belief systems. It is only when the individual systems are seen as precisely that — individual and unique — that their ideas can be appreciated. It is by considering such concepts within their contexts that such an understanding can be attained. In Wittgenstein's much quoted phrase, it is by leaving things as they are that the philosophy of religion can learn to appreciate the religions. To place religious beliefs outside the context of religious praxis destroys this possibility. A non-realist position of the kind outlined above ensures the importance of considering both the context of belief and the belief itself on its own, unique terms.

Footnotes

1 Philosophy and Theology Graduate Seminar, 23 October 1989
2 Philosophy and Theology Graduate Seminar, 13 November 1989
3 As this question forms a large section in his most recent work, the following quotations will be taken from *An Interpretation of Religion* Macmillan 1989 (hereafter, IR)
4 IR p11
5 Ibid p375
6 Ibid p174
7 Ibid p174
8 Ibid p174
9 Three kinds of non-realism can be identified in the work of Don Cupitt, Stewart Sutherland, and, while the term needs to be significantly qualified, in that of D Z Phillips
10 IR op cit p175
11 Paul & Linda Badham, *Immortality or Extinction?* SPCK (hereafter IE) p122: "One can see Hick's proposal as providing a global approach to the theology of death. It attempts to draw the major speculations about our possible destiny from the philosophical and religious writing of both east and west into a coherent and unified hypothesis".
12 Ibid p6
13 Ibid pxi
14 Ibid p21
15 Ibid p78
16 Ibid p117
17 cf Ibid p117
18 Published by W Walters, Swansea; cf p11: "What we have is a confusion which springs from a misunderstanding of the logic of our language, a misunderstanding which has a deep hold on us. These misunderstandings give rise to metaphysics."
19 cf IE op cit chapter iv *Doctrinal Support for Belief in a Future Life*
20 Cupitt quoted IR op cit p201
21 A possible example in Stewart Sutherland's *God, Jesus and Belief* Pt II 'The Eternal in Human Life'
22 cf IR op cit p175, cited above

RESEXING THE TRINITY: THE SPIRIT AS FEMININE.[1]

ANDREW WALKER

In her editorial in the autumn issue of *Theology* (Sept/Oct 1990), Dr Grace Jantzen is surely right when she insists that feminist theology can not be dismissed as merely trendy: the high level of scholarship belies this prejudicial characterisation.

But Dr Jantzen is also surely right when she admits 'that there are considerable differences amongst feminist theologians.' (p339) Daphne Hampson, for example, could properly be called a 'post-Christian theist'.[2] Perhaps Sarah Coakley's work could be understood to be a 'radical orthodoxy'[3], whilst Alwyn Marriage's is really a reformed orthodoxy.[4] We can detect in Marjorie Suchocki's work an attempt to marry radical feminism with process theology.[5] And in the marvellously eclectic Rosemary Radford Ruether we can witness a liberationist/deconstructionist/reconstructionist at work. It is Ruether who has convincingly demonstrated the various responses of feminists to God and anthropology ranging from liberalism, to conservative and radical romanticism (and beyond)[6]

In this paper I want to look at one strand of feminism which in Ruether's terminology would be best described as conservative romanticism.[7] It seeks to improve the dignity and self-worth of women by identifying the feminine in the Trinity. This is more than an attempt to switch labels so that we may call God 'mother' as well as or instead of 'father'. Rather the conservative romanticism I wish to identify concerns the attempt to identify the Spirit, as person, in terms of the feminine gender. The Spirit is then read back into womankind in terms of divine image. This way, it is hoped, women can be properly included — by the nature of things — in the Godhead and also find their proper personal identity and station in society.

It is of course not the case that many feminists take this particular approach. The more radical tack is to transcend gender concepts completely and with them also personal categories. The seminal work here is Mary Daly's *Beyond God the Father*[8] where we are presented with a God of Power Justice and Love (p 127). Indeed Daly's predilection for substituting non-personal nouns for personal ones is compounded by her preference for substituting verbs for nouns. Janet Morley's trinitarian blessing exemplifies a full-blown Dalyesque:

> May the God who dances in creation, who embraces us with human love, who shakes our lives like thunder bless us and drive us out with power to fill the world with her justice.[9]

I personally do not find the radical feminist approach an improvement on the traditional doctrine of the Trinity, but I do not want to quarrel with it here.[10] To recapitulate, I wish to concentrate on the 'romantic feminism' which seeks to understand the Holy Spirit as feminine. Whilst I believe this approach to be unfortunate I think it important to recognise that in some ways the attempt to feminise the Spirit is both admirable and understandable. A short gloss on theological anthropology in the early church will demonstrate the way in which women have not always been seen to be full partakers of the imago dei.[11]

St Gregory of Nyssa when talking of the creation of men and women speaks of a double creation. First there is a spiritual creation where both men and women partake of the divine image and equally so. In anticipation of the Fall, however, God (whom Nyssa depicts as canny if not downright cunning) calls into existence a second creation where material form is manifested in the sexual natures of male and female.

In principle, however, men and women, for Gregory, are equal partakers of the divine image moving from what Sarah Coakley calls a sort of humanoid state into fallen humanity — where the woman is now helper of and submissive to the man — and eventually by grace men and women become adopted into God's androgynous nature thus transcending the sexual differentiation of the Fall.[12]

(Recent statements from the Vatican have insisted that the resurrected and ascended Christ remains male, but I am not sure that St Gregory would have said that. This is no small matter in the fierce debate over the ordination of women if, as the epistle to the Hebrews would seem to suggest, Christ as High Priest is understood eschatologically rather than incarnationally).

Augustine in contrast — and on this issue St John Chrysostom is closer to him than Gregory — rejects the splitting of androgony into male and female natures for he believes that sexual differences are intrinsic to creation. Furthermore he sees the man as the true embodiment of the divine image though he talks about image in terms of properties in contradistinction to Chrysostom's *imago dei* which is viewed in terms of the man's superior spiritual and natural authority.

In many schemas of the early church, even where men and women are held to be created equal in the sense of both possessing the divine image as Genesis 1:27 would have it, two factors combined to place the woman in a position of inferiority.

1 The Fathers understood the begottenness of the Logos in eternity not to denote event but to highlight the one nature and being of Father and Son. When they came to Eve's begottenness in space and time they tended to say, to parody Arius, 'there was a time when Eve was not'. In Arian fashion they saw the subsequent nature of women to mean secondary or less than the fulness of the male prototype.

2 Eve is the first to sin in the Genesis narrative and this is taken to mean is therefore more culpable than Adam. The perfidiousness of Eve is then projected on to all women. Tertullian's hounding of the second sex is well illustrated by his infamous remarks, '....you are the Devil's gateway; you are the unsealer of the tree; you are the one who persuaded him whom the Devil was not brave enough to approach; you so lightly crushed the image of God, the man Adam; because of your punishment, that is death, even the Son of God had to die...'[13]

Women as the second and therefore secondary sex were doubly cursed, then, because the second sex sinned first. Women were often viewed in terms of this doubly-dimmed divine image so that an antinomy was created between the male as rational (*nous*) and therefore more like God's image and the female as carnal, lower, bodily, subordinate, dependent, and therefore less like God's image. Bodily materials, superabundant in women, were potentially dangerous if not treacherous.

Women, however, could become more spiritual (though more so in terms of *pneuma* rather than *nous*) and more like men

and ipso facto God if they overcame their bodies in ascetic endeavour.[14] This became an increasingly acceptable form of spiritual and social advancement for women in the early middle ages (though even in the 3rd century there were Syriac women ascetics — heads shorn to show their at-one-ment with men)

But motherhood (and more so martyrdom) were pathways to honour in the early church for women and the positive values of the helper/server as well as the inferior qualities of womanhood developed into their own archetype. No doubt influenced by the example of his saintly sister, Macrina, Gregory of Nyssa stressed in his writings the virtues of feminine supportiveness, intuition, and altruism. No woman could match the matchless majesty of the *theotokos*, ever virgin and mother, but nonetheless a secondary spiritual archetype of femaleness emerges militating against the baseness and lewdness of the bodily female archetype.

It is the unquestionable acceptance of a spiritual feminine archetype that binds together those writers who wish to identify the Spirit as in some sense feminine. This holds true for Alwyn Marriage and Naomi Goldenberg but also for Leonardo Boff and the Orthodox writer Fr. Thomas Hopko.[15] Admittedly the archetype is not always conceived in the same way and only Boff of the above writers has tried to link the *theotokos*, womenkind, and the Spirit ontologically. Nevertheless it is the acceptance of a female archetype on the one hand and the belief that this is linked to the Spirit as person on the other hand that creates a family resemblance between these writers.

In the case of Fr. Hopko, whose thesis I shall evaluate a little later on, it is to his credit that he rejects the base and lewd version of femaleness for positive spiritual and human values. Radical feminists will identify, however, Hopko's feminine archetype, which is altruistic, supportive, intuitive, peaceful etc, as designed to ensure that women in society are destined for the wooden spoon. (In fact Hopko's article is an attempt to demonstrate that women are equal to men but distinct in function: this distinctiveness, for him, excludes them from the priesthood).

Hopko suffers like Marriage in convincing us, whether we are radical feminists or not, of the legitimacy of the spiritual feminine archetype (or the masculine archetype for that matter). Empirically most neurological investigations of men and women recognise only minor differences in intelligence and aptitude. Cross-cultural studies demonstrate that the givenness of biological distinction between the sexes does not match gender roles in any isomorphic way.

In anthropology it is clear that to talk of feminine and masculine is to talk of a cluster of attributes archetypically understood but scattered throughout the human population both male and female. This is somewhat analogous to the fact that no one human race contains unique blood groups that can not be found in all races.[16]

Typically, however, empirical counter-evidence does not seem to cut much ice with archetypal thinking whether it comes in neo-Platonic forms (such as Hopko's and Marriage's), Jungian depth psychology, or Husserlian pure consciousness. Such evidence is always put down as distortion, perversion, atypicality, or merely surface evidence. This is not to say that there are no deep structures (of language for example) or transcendental realities beyond sense data, but it is to say that in the case of feminine archetypes we should at least posit the possibility that they are social constructions and culturally determined realities.

To depict the so-called feminine attributes as having their ultimate identity in God the Holy Spirit may satisfy a Christianised Platonic framework, but it is hardly commensurate with the Biblical witness. As we have already seen (see note 10) the Holy Spirit may be Comforter and facilitator of relationships, but the Spirit is also lord, creator, mover, overshadower, baptiser. Conversely, the kenosis of the Son both in terms of the 'divine condescension' of the Logos and Jesus' road to Calvary can not be read off as an iconic faithfulness to some archetypical notion of divine maleness.

And yet as problematic as the role of archetypes may be in linking women with the Spirit, the real difficulty lies elsewhere. The question is this: how is the ontological link to be made between the Spirit as person (yet functionally conceived as the *vinculum amoris*) and womenkind? Alwyn Marriage in her book *Life-giving Spirit* is not altogether clear about this, but Fr Hopko is. Whilst he would not wish to be called a feminist, even of a conservative kind, his methodology is designed precisely to show that there is a symmetry between womankind and the Spirit of God. Let us see if he succeeds.

Hopko presents his view of the Holy Spirit as Orthodox, and he disavows any association with sophiology for he rightly sees that any identity between Wisdom and Spirit has a bias towards gnosticism. Hopko also insists, though only in a footnote, that there is 'nothing "feminine" in divinity, as there is nothing "masculine". Divinity is beyond sexuality as it is "beyond being" itself".[17] Having espoused apophaticism, however, Hopko then goes on to say a great deal about sexuality in the Godhead, but in a most curious way.

The Father in Hopko's schema follows the Cappadocian tradition in being not only *primus inter pares*, but also the source, or cause, of the Trinity. But in his essay, unlike the tradition, the Father is strangely absent as a person. He is rather like Irenaeus' Father whose two arms comprise the Son and Spirit, except for the fact that Hopko's Father has little function other than to be the trunk that holds them together. (I am not suggesting for a moment that Hopko has an inadequate doctrine of God; only that in *this* essay God as Father is of no great consequence to his argument).

I am sure that Hopko believes that neither the Father nor the Son can be said to be male in their eternal persons any more than the Spirit can be said to be of the feminine gender.[18] I assume he believes that gender is an inappropriate concept for divine persons.[19] Nevertheless what he does is this: leaving the Father as an androgynous but all pervading backdrop he brings into focus the Son and Spirit. He says that there is 'a direct analogical, symbolic and epiphanic relationship between Adam and the Son of God, and between Eve and the Spirit of God....'[20]

He is not talking about an isomorphic equivalence between Son/Adam and Spirit/Eve as historical hypostases. He means that there is an interplay, a synergy, an epiphany — to use his own word — between the divine persons of Son and Spirit and male and female nature.

The equivalence between divine persons and created natures is a fundamental category mistake on which the whole of Hopko's thesis falls. The coherence of the Trinity in

Orthodox theology is the *perichoresis* of persons unified by love as one being. Or as John Ziziouslas puts it their 'being is communion'.[21] There are no complementary natures that coinhere in Trinity. To suggest that created human natures reflect the coinherence of uncreated divine personhood is meaningless.

The *imago dei* in humankind is not a reflection of divine personhood mediated through created nature unless created natures shares in divine personhood. To put it less aphoristically and tautologically: you cannot read off human natures from divine persons if you are going to employ a patristic taxonomy of *hypostasis, ousia,* and *physis.* In short to claim that male nature reflects eternal sonship or that female nature bears an epiphanic relationship to the Spirit as feminine archetype is not warranted by patristic methodology.

But Hopko's thesis does not stop there. Having told us that there is no sex in the Trinity but that there is an epiphanic relationship between divine Son/masculine nature and divine Spirit/feminine nature he goes on to tell us 'there is a taxis in the divine Trinity according to traditional orthodox theology — an order, and one might even say a hierarchy, if one does not interpret this as some sort of ontological and essential "subordinationism" — so there is a taxis in humanity, an order and hierarchy.'[22]

There are two things here. First, as we have already seen, you can not equate a taxis of divine persons with a hierarchical order of created nature so that maleness is to be given greater honour over femaleness. To risk repetition *ad nauseam*: person and nature are not equivalent categories in patristic thought.[23]

Second, non-essential subordinationism in the Trinity can not mean a descending order of Father, Son and Holy Ghost in the sense that the Spirit willingly self effaces herself before the Son in the proper and unique sense that the Son willingly submits to the Father's will. At its crudest Hopko's model begins to look like patriarchal father, dutiful son, and submissive daughter who also defers to her brother. It is perfectly proper to say that the Spirit does eternally defer to the Son, but then so do all the divine persons defer to each other in mutual reciprocity.

It is not Hopko's intention, but through his identification of the Spirit archetypically as the discreet and veiled handmaiden the Trinity begins to take on an ominous lopsidedness. The Spirit, as person, is hemmed in, cramped, and fleeting like an eternal Cinderella. Functionally, though not ontologically, the Spirit begins to fade into the background, like a good servant girl, which is precisely what the filioque achieved for the western tradition.

Fr. Hopko does not mention it but the ancient order of deaconesses would appear to come to his support for the women deacons were declared to be the icons of the Holy Spirit. This, however, begs more questions than it answers. Was it womanhood that was iconic, or lay personhood? If it was the former this falls into the category mistake already discussed in this paper. If the latter them presumably both men and women could be icons of the Spirit. (Can only men be icons of the Son?) Suffice it to say that it is clear from the Apostolic Constitutions of the fourth century that the order of deaconesses came into existence as a measure of economy and it has not been normative in the Eastern Orthodox churches since the early middle ages.[24]

The purpose of this brief paper has been to examine some of the attempts to identify the Holy Spirit as archetypically feminine and which then try to read this 'femininity' into womankind. I have attempted to show that the adoption of the altruistic feminine archetype has the merit of seeing positive spiritual value in women's lives, but the demerit of disenfranchising women from positions of power and authority. This is analogous to Auguste Comte's attempt in his now forgotten Positivist Religion of Humanity to award women the highest honour in terms of spiritual deveopment (remembering that it was Comte who coined the word, altruism) but refusing them any place in either the market place or the academy.

For the romantic and conservative feminist the problem exemplified by Hopko's work is that even if it were possible to identify in some way the Spirit as feminine you can not adequately show, either ontologically or analogously, how the taxis of divine personhood equates to a hierarchy of human natures or to a distinctive complementarity of the sexes.

Footnotes

1 This paper was originally read to a seminar group on the 26th September 1990 in the short paper section of the Trinity Conference organised by the Institute of Systematic Theology, King's College, London.

2 D. Hampson, *Theology and Feminism*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford (1990).

3 S Coakley, '*Creaturehood before God: Male and Female*', Theology (Sept/Oct 1990) pp. 343 ff.

4 A. Marriage, *Life-giving Spirit: Responding to the Feminine in God*, SPCK, London (1989)

5 M. Suchocki, *God, Christ and Church*, Crossroads, New York (1986).

6 R. Ruether, *Sexism and God Talk.* Towards a Feminist Theology, SCM, London (1983), chap 4.

7 Though it must be stressed that Ruether's romanticism is to be understood negatively and is in no sense related to the Romantic movement which would be more sympathetic to the intuitive and the feminine archetype.

8 M Daley, *Beyond God the Father*, Beacon Press, Boston, (1985),

9 Included in comments sent (undated) to the B.C.C.'s draft of the study guide on the Trinity.

10 Suffice it to say that it suffers similar problems to those reformist approaches which seek to replace persons with functions. In many of our liturgies today it has become commonplace to replace Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer. This schema is not only overtly modalistic, which in itself is common enough in the western theological tradition, but it fails on a basic level of biblical adequacy. To say for example that the Spirit is sustainer is hardly a comprehensive description of attributes or economic functions. Is not the Spirit the Lord and giver of life, the mover upon the waters, the one who overshadows the maiden of Israel, endows Jesus with power, raises him from the dead, and baptises the church with fire?

11 Two useful surveys on attitudes to women in the early church are Peter Brown, *The Body And Society*, Faber & Faber, London (1990), and Elizabeth Clark's, *Women In The Early Church*, Michael Glazier, Delaware (1983).

12 See her remarks in *Theology*, Sept/Oct 1990, pp.349-350. Nyssa's view is coloured by his Platonism whereby the divine image can not be seen in any corporeal sense. More positively, unlike Augustine, Nyssa sees nothing intrinsically wrong with the natural passion of sexual intercourse.

13 Quoted in Elizabeth Clark's *Women In The Early Church*, p 39.

14 The identification of women's spirituality with intuition, caring and altruism, helped facilitate, I suspect, the idea that women could be icons of the Spirit who is Comforter, the go-between Father & Son (*vinculum amoris*).

15 Alwyn Marriage, *Life-giving Spirit*, Naomi R. Goldenberg, 'Dreams and Fantasies as Sources of Revelation: Feminist Appropriation of Jung', Carol P. Christ & Judith Plaskow (edts), *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion*, Harper & Row, San Francisco (1979), Leonardo Boff, *The Maternal Face of God: The Feminie and its Religious Expressions*, Harper & Row, San Francisco (1979), T. Hopko, '*On the Male Character of Christian*

Priesthood', K Ware, G. Barrois, T Hopko (edts), *Women and the Priesthood*, St Vladamir's press, New York (1982)

16 Though admittedly there are distinct clusterings and oddities. For example the people with the most similar bloodgroups to Great Britain - in terms of statistical scatter - are the Aborigines of Australia.

17 '*On the Male Character of Christian Priesthood*', note 14, p.108.

18 Cf the B.C.C. study guide, *The Forgotten Trinity*, where page 32 states, 'To project maleness into the Trinity is a dangerous and ultimately a blasphemous exercise'. British Council of Churches, London (1989)

19 It can not be said that the Father is male in the usual anthropomorphic sense. He is called 'father' in the tradition because Jesus calls him father and this scriptural warrant for the relationship is theologically reinforced by the fact that we are all, men and women who 'have put on Christ', the *totus Christus*.

20 'On the Male Character of Christian Priesthood', p.106

21 John D. Zizioulas, *Being As Communion*, Darton Longman & Todd, London (1985)

22 'On the Male Chracter of Christian Priesthood', p,123

23 It is surely the great achievement of the Cappadocians that they pioneered the usage of *hypostasis* as a distinct reality in contradistinction to its earlier usage as a virtual synonym for *ousia*. (This was made necessary because of the conceptual inadequacy of the dramaturgical *prosopon*)

24 See Elizabeth Clark's book, *Women In the Early Church*, chapter four

MARTIN RADE — 50 YEARS AFTER

JOHN CLAYTON

The German theologian and churchman Martin Rade (1857-1940) died in Frankfurt fifty years ago this year. In Britain, as in Germany, he is mainly remembered as the founding editor of *Die christliche Welt*[1], and as the eventually spurned mentor of one particularly outspoken Swiss pastor turned "dialectical" theologian.

In consequence, Rade generally rates a mention in the footnotes as a "religious journalist" or as Barth's erstwhile teacher at Marburg. He may even appear in a "group biography" of Protestant Liberals. Seldom, however, does he figure in his own right in the historical theologian's grand narrative of modern religious thought.

Christoph Schwöbel of King's College has done much over the past decade to rescue Rade's name from the footnotes and to restore it to the text of twentieth-century theology: first through his monograph on Rade as theologian,[2] then through his edition of the Barth-Rade correspondence,[3] and finally through his recently completed edition in three volumes of Rade's selected writings.[4]

These volumes have all been well received in Germany and have done much to enhance Dr Schwöbel's, no less than Dr Rade's, reputation. Anyone wanting to understand more fully the development of modern religious thought is in Dr Schwöbel's debt for having elucidated Rade's unique contribution to the history of modern German theology.

Why do Martin Rade's accomplishments as Christian theologian deserve more notice than they have so far received by historical theologians in their relentless search for the living among the dead?

On the one hand, it must be conceded that Martin Rade was not a "great thinker". His name is not one which anybody would instinctively include in their canon of leading modern theologians alongside the names of Schleiermacher and Newman, or Troeltsch and Niebuhr. Nor did Rade produce in his lifetime a single book that one could justifiably list amongst the ten or even twenty most influential books in the history of modern theology. For intellectual historians, this may be reason enough to allow Rade's name to continue resting undisturbed in the footnotes to which it was long ago consigned.

On the other hand, Martin Rade was what could be called a "representative thinker", by which I mean a thinker who uniquely embodied the dominant concerns of his age. Rade continually had his finger on the pulse of German society, and he consistently responded theologically to the fundamental issues of the day. That being so, his collected writings may actually prove a more reliable guide to his times than are those of some more celebrated *fin-de-siècle* German theologians.

As constructive theologian, Rade's likeness is more nearly captured when we portray him as a "concrete" or *contextual* thinker than when he is drawn as an "ideological" or *positional* theologian. He was certainly a more independent-minded thinker than one might have surmised from the historical theologian's familiar image of him as a typical "liberal" or "Kulturprotestant".[5]

When, on the basis of these *Ausgewählte Schriften*, we consider his life's work as a whole, it becomes clear that the theological agenda were set for Martin Rade more by the requirements of the concrete situation in which he found himself than they were by the ideological demands of some party programme, by whatever name it be called.

Martin Rade's theological writings appeared over four decades, beginning in the early 1880s. Of his major publications, only the *Glaubenslehre*[6] appeared beyond that period, but it may well have been born out of season.

The span of Rade's active authorship was not the easiest time to be a theologian in Germany. Outward political unification of the separate states had been achieved by 1871 with the King of Prussia as Kaiser; but the nation remained inwardly disunited in virtually every respect.[7]

The strain of the times was felt by all social institutions, including the universities and the churches.

German universities were transformed in the period, partly as a result of more open access and the education requirements of the burgeoning middle class. The older Humboldt ideal of humanistic learning gave way to an increasingly specialized professional training in which there was a loss of any sense of wholeness, whether of the university as a totality or of the sub-disciplines within a specific faculty.[8] Learning had become a commodity and, as Harnack observed wryly, universities had in effect become "education factories".[9]

Repercussions from such fragmentation were felt particularly within the Protestant theological faculties. During the first third of the nineteenth century — in the heyday of philosophical idealism — theology had played a central part in German university life and enjoyed widespread respect for its academic accomplishments; by the final third of that century, however, the intellectual climate within universities had become less friendly to theological studies, with an increasingly vocal minority openly questioning the academic propriety of confessional theology.

Some voices, and not only those hostile to theology as such, favoured its being replaced within the universities by a more broadly based comparative study of religions, the aims of which would be wholly "scientific". Less radically, others favoured a loosening of the "confessional" constraints on academic theology, which would then become free enquiry (*freie Wissenschaft*) into matters Christian.

In this rapidly changing and potentially less hospitable intellectual environment, shaped more by scientific "positivism" than by philosophical "idealism", there ensued a wide ranging debate about the academic status of theology and its role in the modern university. Although there were some — including in their different ways Harnack, Troeltsch and Rade — who were determined to defend theology as a unified discipline, some representatives of biblical studies, historical studies and various "practical" subjects often seemed more concerned about justifying their own sub-discipline's "academic" standing before an empirically orientated conception of *Wissenschaft* than they were about maintaining the unity of theology as an academic discipline.

Those — such as Rade — who steadfastly defended the academic integrity of theology and its wider significance did so

against a backdrop of the steady marginalization of theology within the academy.[10] The standing of theology at the beginning of the present century was made more precarious by the fact that it alone of all the faculties within the university had failed to share in the great expansion experienced within the German university system at the end of the nineteenth century.

Between 1892-3 and 1913-14, the total number of students in German universities increased from about 28,000 to about 61,000. In the same interval, the number of students studying in Protestant theological faculties increased from about 3,600 to only about 4,300. When expressed as a percentage of the total student population, even that modest increase masks an underlying erosion in the proportion of students choosing to read theology in Protestant faculties. Between 1892-3 and 1913-14, the proportion of students registered in faculties of Protestant theology declined from 13% to 7% of all students registered in German universities.[11]

At the beginning of the twentieth century, there were intensive discussions within Germany about the need to expand the university system in order to cope with the increased student population. Given the steadily downward drift in demand for theology amongst German students at the time, however, it is hardly surprising that there were publicly expressed doubts about the desirability of establishing theological faculties in any of the planned new urban universities.

The formal proposal in 1911 to establish a new university at Frankfurt, for instance, omitted theology from the list of faculties, citing for justification the decline in student interest in the subject over the past thirty years.[12] In the controversy that ensued, the Prussian minister of education helped defuse the issue slightly by reassuring parliament that, even if not included amongst the first faculties of the University, there was nothing to prevent the addition of a theology faculty at some future date.

Martin Rade was amongst those who argued for including the study of theology within the "new" universities. He could hardly make his case stand on the grounds of heavy student demand![13] But he could, and did, argue for such faculties on other grounds, including the academic legitimacy of theology within the academy and its wider cultural significance beyond the university.[14] Basically, Rade was convinced that a theological faculty was necessary in order for a university to be academically sound: "a new university without a theological faculty is misshapen from birth [*eine Mißgeburt*]".[15]

Wherein lay the academic justification of university theology, according to Rade?

True to his origins in the version of Ritschlianism that had been mediated to him by Harnack at Leipzig,[16] Rade defended the legitimacy of theology's place in the university by arguing that it was to be counted amongst the historical sciences.[17] This suggests that Christianity is to be approached in the same way that one would approach other historical phenomena. The methods of enquiry appropriate to them were also appropriate to Christianity and *vice versa*. And, indeed, this is precisely what Rade was in all his writings keen to substantiate.

Academic theology is not, in his view,[18] some expressly "religious enquiry" [*religiöse Wissenschaft*] which has to be set over against the "secular enquiry" [*profane Wissenschaft*] of the other faculties. Theology has to do, not with another and invisible world, but with the world which we ourselves inhabit. It concerns not some transcendent and inaccessible being called "God", but what real people actually believe about "God".

In keeping with this conception of theology, Rade had wanted his *Glaubenslehre* to be an account to which an adherent of any religious tradition or none could turn in order to learn what Protestants believe today.[19] And when in that work he attempted to elucidate a doctrine, such as the Holy Spirit, he was inclined to turn first to the liturgy and the hymn book in order to uncover from piety the meaning of that doctrine for Protestantism today.

It was also this conception of theology which allowed Rade to argue — this time against Harnack[20] — that the subject should not be restricted to the study of Christianity alone, but that the study of theology should be broadened in order to include within itself the historical study of other major religious traditions as well.[21]

And it was this same conception of theology which allowed him to suggest that there might be more reason to establish at the then new university of Frankfurt a faculty of Jewish theology than to set up yet another faculty of Christian theology, whether Protestant or Catholic.[22] The strictly *academic* justification of theology seems, therefore, for Rade to reside in the sorts of issues it raises and the kinds of methods it applies, and not in the culturally privileged status accorded to any one scheme of religious belief and practice.

Though Rade defended on properly academic grounds the presence of theology in the university, his own concern with theology was not merely academic. Contrary to the dialectical theologians' widely touted image of "liberal" theology as detached from the churches,[23] Martin Rade was firmly convinced that university theology existed also to serve the life of the church. This shows itself in at least three different ways.

First, the *academic* grounds on which he defended the place of theology in the university were also at the same time for Rade genuinely *religious* grounds.

The plea for intellectual freedom both in the pulpit and in the lecture hall was in Rade's case based less on the Enlightenment ideal of autonomy than it was on the Reformation ideal of the *libertas christiana*.[24] Modern critical theology, according to Rade, is "a true daughter of the Reformation" in that — as one of the historical sciences — it is constantly correcting itself as required by conscience, whilst at the same time refusing to submit itself to the dictates of any external authority.[25] Thus, the historicizing of the authoritative texts of the Christian religion as required by the methods of investigation appropriate to the university is held by Rade to be entirely compatible with or — more accurately — to be peculiarly expressive of a Protestant view of religious authority. But at the same time, the historicization of Christianity frees also Protestantism from its more repressive forms.

Second, Rade's extensive editorial activity was undertaken at least in part in order to mediate between university theology and the educated church membership.

Both the encyclopaedia *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, which Rade instigated but did not himself edit,[26] and the still influential *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, which

Rade co-edited from the end of 1906 to the end of 1917,[27] aimed to serve the needs both of the academy and of the wider religious community. Both publications sought in different ways to protect theology as a unified discipline against the fragmentation occasioned by over-specialization; and both publications attempted to publish the most up-to-date theological work in a non-technical language that would make it accessible not only to those working in the various subdisciplines of theology and to those working in cognate disciplines within the university, but also to the educated membership of the churches, whether lay or ordained.

Obviously, *Die christliche Welt*, the periodical which Rade guided from its beginning in 1886 until his retirement as editor in 1932,[28] aimed to make ethical and theological issues accessible to the educated readership within the churches. Unlike other new periodicals aimed at the new *Bildungsbürgertum*,[29] however, *Die christliche Welt* was not content simply to report in popularized form recent developments in the academic world. This was sometimes done, of course, as when an entire issue was given over to the "Christ-myth" debate.[30] But Rade also actively encouraged novel theological ideas to appear first in *Die christliche Welt*, some of which came to have a lasting impact on university theology. He commissioned the leading theologians of the day to write heavyweight articles. Troeltsch's demanding analysis of the concept "essence of Christianity", for instance, appeared first as fortnightly instalments in Rade's periodical.[31] And many of the most important blasts from the new "dialectical" theologians were broadcast in *Die christliche Welt* at a time when more cautious editors may have denied them the space.[32] Rade's experiments were not always successful, as when he had attempted to encourage debates across generations on the nature of theology.[33] But, in any case, Rade used his position as editor of *Die christliche Welt* not simply to report theology, but to make theology happen. And this is wholly consistent with the image of him as a concrete or contextual theologian.

Finally, both as Lutheran pastor and as university professor, Rade was in entirely practical ways engaged theologically with ethical issues which concerned the church and society of his time.

From at least his years as a student at Leipzig, Rade was occupied with the practical implications of Christian faith.[34] There is no point, however, in looking for a systematically worked out statement of his moral theology.[35] Here, as nowhere else in his writings, Rade did his theological thinking through reflexion on direct engagement with the social and political issues of the day. Theory was derived from practice.

Rade also showed himself willing to discard a cherished theoretical scheme, if required to do so by the facts of concrete human existence. For example, he abandoned the Ritschlian social ethic, with its characteristically Lutheran emphasis upon "vocation", when he came to see that in modern industrial society that doctrine had had the effect of legitimating a fundamentally flawed social order.[36]

Throughout his life, Rade was concerned with the rights of minorities and with the plight of the under-class. Again, he used his position as editor to advantage by speaking his mind on issues of public concern.

In the columns of *Die christliche Welt*, Rade opposed anti-semitism at a time when it was becoming more acceptable, even in the quality newspapers.[37] Later, in his final year as editor, he spoke out strongly against the brutality of the Nazis' "mindless race fanaticism".[38] Rade also supported social welfare for the poor, adult education for workers and women.[39] He argued that social problems such as prostitution were unlikely to be dealt with properly so long as it was men who made and enforced laws.[40] And he championed the cause of women more generally.[41] He argues that they should be given equal opportunity for advancement to top positions within the professions.[42] He also gave his editorial blessing to their full participation in the decision-making bodies within the church and to their ordination.[43]

The practical thrust of Rade's theology is shown moreover by his early participation in the "Evangelisch-Soziale Kongreß" (ESK) and later, after the First World War, by his direct involvement in national politics.

The ESK was established in 1890 by an unlikely consortium of Protestant churchmen and academics in order to find ways to counter the growing disaffection of the urban working class from the churches.[44] From 1896 onwards, the organization was dominated by Rade's circle under the leadership of his brother-in-law Friedrich Naumann. Rade's contribution to the work of the ESK was wide ranging,[45] but special attention should be drawn to his pioneering use of the social-scientific technique of group questionnaires in order accurately to measure working-class attitudes toward a range of religious topics.[46]

Rade was not content simply to talk about the social and political issues of the day. Increasingly from about 1907, he involved himself also in real politics.[47] He came to the conclusion that the Christian ethic can have political consequences only if Christians themselves become active in politics.[48]

He had already won a taste for political action before the First World War through his having organized opposition to the treatment of the Danish minority living in then North Schleswig.[49] During the War itself, Rade gingerly steered a moderate course in *Die christliche Welt*, avoiding the extremes both of militaristic jingoism and of "wet" neutrality, with the result that he was soundly criticized by militant nationalists[50] in Germany, as well as by at least one former pupil in Switzerland.[51]

After that War, from which he had emerged a pacifist, Rade was unstinting in his efforts on behalf of democracy, peace and international understanding. He was realistic enough to know that the success of democracy in Germany required total support for the uncertain Republic that had began in Weimar. In party politics, Rade joined the German Democratic Party (DDP), serving for a time as its chairman in Hesse and as deputy leader of the party in the Prussian Assembly. In church politics, Rade campaigned for the creation of "a democratic church in a democratic state".[52] And he seized opportunities as they presented themselves to secure for Germany greater understanding abroad, in the hopes that his nation might someday be allowed to work for international peace alongside other countries in the League of Nations.

In all of his writings on such issues, Rade achieves an even-handed reasonableness that is compelling in its authority. One thinks, for instance, of his remarkable attempt in 1922 to interpret for an American reading public the religious situation in a defeated Germany.[53] More remarkably still, he achieved

much the same temperate tone in his efforts at about the same time to help the German people come to terms with their military defeat and to recognize the political, social, and spiritual tasks that lay ahead.[54]

Rade's immediate hopes for Germany and for a free church in a free society were crushed by the subsequent turn of events. Although he did not live to see the worst of times, Rade did survive long enough to see shattered everything for which he had worked all his life in the church, in the university, and in politics.

Now — *fifty years after* — Germany is again united, old enmities seem to have broken down, and Europeans look a little more hopefully, if still a little anxiously, toward a new *fin-de-siècle*. Are the signs now perhaps more propitious for a recovery of the theological vision of Martin Rade and "the friends of *Die christliche Welt*"?

At a time when many of the brightest amongst England's younger theologians are increasingly inclined to reject liberalism in pursuit of the post-modern experiment, one cannot but be struck by the fact that — Germany having over a long period itself attempted a succession of anti-liberal experiments, both theological and political — many of the brightest amongst Germany's younger theologians have been rediscovering the vision of Martin Rade, Ernst Troeltsch, and their circle.

One can only wish them well.

Footnotes

1 I am grateful to the Librarian of Westminster College, Cambridge, for having allowed me access to the College's holdings of *Die christliche Welt*, without which writing this review article would not have been possible.

2 *Martin Rade: Das Verhältnis von Geschichte, Religion und Moral als Grundproblem seiner Theologie* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1980).

3 *Karl Barth-Martin Rade: Ein Briefwechsel* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1981).

4 *Martin Rade: Ausgewählte Schriften* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1983, 1986, 1988).

5 Actually, it is far from easy even to state what it would be to be "typically" *kulturprotestantisch* or "typically" *liberal* — a difficulty compounded by the fact that both terms have served as definite descriptions and as emotive expressions, that is, as badges of honour (or of shame) awarded to viewpoints about which one has deep feelings. For guidance about the difficulties encountered, see Hans-Joachim Birkner, "Liberale Theologie" in *Kirchen und Liberalismus im 19. Jahrhundert*, eds. Martin Schmidt and Georg Schwaiger (Göttingen, 1976, pp. 33-42, and Friedrich-Wilhelm Graf, "Kulturprotestantismus: Zur Begriffsgeschichte einer theologiepolitischen Chiffre", *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte*, 28 (1984), 214-268. For Rade's account of his own difficulties with the labels "liberal" and "kulturprotestantisch", see his article "Religiöser Liberalismus", *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 19 (1938), 243-261, and his earlier entry on "Kirchlicher Liberalismus" in the first edition of *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, III, cols. 1626-9.

6 The first volume, covering the doctrines of God and of Christ, was published in 1926; the second volume, on the doctrine of Spirit, appeared in 1927.

7 For a useful overview of the experience of fragmentation in German public life which so deeply affected Rade's generation, see the introductory chapter to Harry Liebersohn's *Fate and Utopia in German Sociology, 1870-1923* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988).

8 See Charles E. McClelland, *State, Society and University in Germany, 1700-1914* (Cambridge, 1980).

9 Adolf von Harnack, "Vom Grossbetrieb der Universität" [1905], in *Aus Wissenschaft und Leben* (Gießen, 1911), volume I, pp. 10-20. Cf. Reinhard Riese, *Die Hochschule auf dem Wege zum wissenschaftlichen Grossbetrieb* (Stuttgart, 1977).

10 The circumstance for theology was possibly not quite so bleak as this may suggest. Just as there are those (such as Harry Liebersohn) who argue that cultural pessimism was not quite so pervasive at the time as received account would have it, there are others (such as Friedrich Wilhelm Graf) who argue that theology had not become quite so marginalized as I have suggested. As regards the standing of theology within the university, it all depends upon whether one puts greater weight on the self-confident rhetoric of contemporary theologians or on the less optimistic impression left by university statistics from the period. For his important reassessment of the place of Protestant theology at the turn of the century, however, see Graf's "Rettung der Persönlichkeit: Protestantische Theologie als Kulturwissenschaft des Christentums" in *Kultur und Kulturwissenschaften um 1900: Krise der Modern und Glaube an die Wissenschaft*, edited by Rüdiger vom Bruch et al. (Stuttgart, 1989), pp.103-31.

11 To put this in wider historical perspective, it is revealing to compare these statistics with those from the first third of the nineteenth century. In the academic year 1831-2, for instance, there were 3,100 students reading Protestant theology out of a total student population in Germany of only 13,000; that is to say, almost one student in four was studying Protestant theology. For more complete university statistics and their interpretation, see Konrad Jarausch, *Deutsche Studenten, 1800-1970* (Frankfurt a.M., 1984) and Charles E. McClelland, *State, Society and University in Germany, 1700-1914*.

12 See Erich Foerster, "Frankfurt a.M.: II. Universität, in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (2nd. edition; Tübingen, 1928), II, cols. 660-662.

13 *Die christliche Welt*, 25 (1911), cols. 308-9.

14 See, for instance, Rade's defense of "Die Bedeutung der theologischen Fakultät für die heutige Kultur" in *Akademische Rundschau: Zeitschrift für das gesamte Hochschulwesen und die akademischen Berufsständ*, 11 (1913), 632-50.

15 *Die christliche Welt*, 26 (1912), col. 266.

16 For insight into the theological consequences of Rade's having been introduced to Ritschlian thought through Harnack, see Schwöbel's monograph, *Martin Rade: Das Verhältnis von Geschichte, Religion und Moral als Grundproblem seiner Theologie*, pp. 17ff. The enduring quality of the Harnack-Rade connexion initially established during Rade's student years in Leipzig is underscored by Harnack's having dedicated the second volume of his collected *Reden und Aufsätze* (Gießen, 1904) to "my friend, Martin Rade", and by Rade's having subsequently dedicated his *Glaubenslehre* to Harnack. See also Rade's touching tribute to his former teacher which was published in *Die christliche Welt* on the occasion of Harnack's sixtieth birthday [25 (1911), cols. 424-5].

17 "Die Bedeutung des geschichtlichen Sinnes im Protestantismus" (1900), now in *Recht und Glaube*, volume 3 of *Ausgewählte Schriften*, pp. 98-122. When it was first published in the *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, Rade's article attracted hostile reactions from the likes of Wobbermin and Traub. See his reply to his critics, "Zum Streit um die rechte Methode der christlichen Glaubenslehre", *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 11 (1901), 429-34.

18 See *Recht und Glaube*, p. 98.

19 *Glaubenslehre* (Gotha, 1926), I, ix.

20 In opposition to Max Müller and other champions of the comparative study of religions, Harnack had held that nothing essential could be learned from studying "other" religions which could not be learned from the proper study of Christianity alone: "He who knows this one religion, knows the whole of religion." See, "Die Aufgabe der theologischen Fakultäten und die allgemeine Religionsgeschichte" [1901], now in Adolf von Harnack *Reden und Aufsätze*, II, 161-78. Shortly after Harnack's dictum was originally published, Rade registered in the columns of *Die christliche Welt* [15 (1901) cols. 920-2] his dissent from its evident Christian tribalism, thus provoking a less than temperate reply from Harnack, which also appeared in *Die christliche Welt* and was subsequently reprinted in Harnack's *Reden und Aufsätze*, II, 179-87.

21 See, e.g., his entry on "Religionsgeschichte" in the first edition of *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Tübingen, 1913), IV, cols. 2183-2200, where he identifies Harnack as the unwitting founder of "the history of religions school". On the impact of the historical and comparative study of religions on Rade, see Schwöbel's monograph on *Martin Rade: Das Verhältnis von Geschichte, Religion und Moral als Grundproblem seiner Theologie*, pp. 68ff, and also his editorial introduction to *Wirklichkeit und Wahrheit der Religion*, volume one of Ausgewählte Schriften, pp. 14ff.

22 *Die christliche Welt*, 26 (1912) cols. 266, 483-5.

23 At least as regards Rade, this distorted image has been shattered by the total impact of Schwöbel's research and editorial work, which serves to

substantiate his claim that — for Rade — the contemporary church, as the concrete community of faith, is "the starting-point and the final objective of theology". *Wirklichkeit und Wahrheit der Religion*, p. 11.

24 See, e.g, the selection of Rade's writings included in *Recht und Glaube*, as well as Schwöbel's illuminating introduction to that volume. See also Rade's "Unkonfessionalistisches Luthertum: Erinnerung an die Lutherfreude in der Ritschlschen Theologie", *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 18 (1937), 131-151.

25 "Die Amtsentsetzung des Pfarrers Schrempf", *Die christliche Welt*, 6 (1892), cols. 759-768. See also *Der rechte evangelische Glaube* [1892], now in *Recht und Glaube*, pp. 39-61.

26 See Friedrich Michael Schiele's editorial foreword to the first volume of *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Tübingen, 1909) p. v. For the objectives of the new encyclopaedia, see especially pp. viii-ix.

27 See especially the announcement "An der Leser" in the final issue of vol. 16 (1906) and the first issue of vol. 17 (1907), in which Rade and his co-editor Herrmann set out the journal's new editorial objectives.

28 Schwöbel rightly identifies *Die christliche Welt* as Rade's "life's work". *Martin Rade: Das Verhältnis von Geschichte, Religion und Moral als Grundproblem seiner Theologie*, p. 49; cf. pp. 44-50, 120-132, 206-220. See also the still valuable study by Johannes Rathje, *Die Welt des freien Protestantismus* (Stuttgart, 1952).

29 On the cultural significance of the new genre of periodicals which were occasioned by this new readership, see Karl-Ulrich Syndram, "Rundschau-Zeitschriften: Anmerkungen zur ideengeschichtlichen Rolle eines Zeitschriftentypus", in *Ideengeschichte und Kunstgeschichte: Philosophie und bildende Kunst im Kaiserreich*, edited by Ekkehard Mai et al. (Berlin, 1983), pp. 349-70.

30 See *Die christliche Welt*, 24 (1910), No 7.

31 "Was heißt 'Wesen des Christentums'?" appeared in *Die christliche Welt* in six instalments between 7 May and 16 July 1903. Readers then, as now, found parts of it heavy going. "Bedtime reading it's not", Rade allowed, "but for anyone used to the diet of our best secular magazines, surely not all that difficult to digest." *Die christliche Welt*, 17 (16 July 1903), col. 693.

32 It is striking that no fewer than sixteen of the items selected by James M. Robinson for his version of *The Beginnings of Dialectic Theology* (Richmond, 1968) were articles that had originally appeared in *Die christliche Welt*.

33 One thinks particularly of Harnack's famous "fifteen questions" to "those theologians who are contemptuous of academic theology", which were published in *Die christliche Welt*, 37 (11 January 1923, cols. 6-8), and Barth's effusive reply, which followed in the issue dated 8 February (cols. 89-91). The "conversation" closed with an unsatisfactory pair of "open letters" between Harnack (cols. 142-144) and Barth (cols. 244-252). What we already know of the background to this debate from Barth's letters to Thurneysen is now usefully supplemented by the relevant correspondence in Schwöbel's edition of *Karl Barth — Martin Rade: Ein Briefwechsel*, pp. 183-189, a volume which should be regarded as essential reading by anyone wishing a more nuanced understanding of Barth's theological relationship to Rade and the "friends of the Christian World".

34 On the relation between faith and praxis as a leading theme in every phase of Rade's life, see Schwöbel's introduction to *Religion, Moral und Politik* [vol. 2 of *Ausgewählte Schriften*] and his monograph *Martin Rade: Das Verhältnis von Geschichte, Religion und Moral als Grundproblem seiner Theologie*.

35 The nearest one comes to such is his article on "Sitte, Sittlichkeit, Sittengesetz" in Hauck's *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche* (Leipzig, ³1906), vol. 18, pp. 400-410; now in *Religion, Moral und Politik*, pp. 115-131.

36 See "Religion und Moral: Streitsätze für Theologen" [1898], now in *Religion, Moral und Politik*, pp. 42-54. See also the fourth section of *Die Religion im modernen Geistesleben* [1898], now in *Wirklichkeit und Wahrheit der Religion*, pp. 27-79, esp. 55-61.

37 See *Die christliche Welt*, 26 (1912), col. 166.

38 See *Die christliche Welt*, 46 (1932), col. 651.

39 See *Die christliche Welt*, 25 (1911), cols. 957-8.

40 See *Die christliche Welt*, 26 (1912), col. 653.

41 See *Die christliche Welt*, 26 (1912), cols. 265-6.

42 See *Die christliche Welt*, 25 (1911), col. 237.

43 See *Die christliche Welt*, 25 (1911), col. 452. More radically, however, he argued that any suitable member of the church — male or female, lay or ordained — should be allowed to exercise "priestly" functions, including the right to celebrate both sacraments. See "Das königliche Priestertum der Gläubigen und seine Forderung an die evangelische Kirche unserer Zeit" [1918], now in *Recht und Glaube*, pp. 167-196.

44 Amongst recent studies of the ESK, which was founded 100 years ago this year, see in particular E. I. Kouri, *Der deutsche Protestantismus und die Soziale Frage 1870-1919: Zur Sozialpolitik im Bildungsbürgertum* (Berlin and New York, 1984); Harry Liebersohn, *Religion and Industrial Society: The Protestant Social Congress in Wilhelmine Germany* (Philadelphia, 1986); and W. R. Ward, *Theology, Sociology and Politics: The German Protestant Social Conscience* 1890-1933 (Berne, 1979).

45 For Rade's reflections on the Congress and its accomplishments, see "Vor 50 Jahren" in *Evangelisches Ringen um soziale Gemeinschaft: Fünfzig Jahre Evangelisch-Sozialer Kongreß 1890-1940*, edited by Johannes Herz (Leipzig, 1940), pp. 9-13. See also Schwöbel's monograph, *Martin Rade: Das Verhältnis von Geschichte, Religion und Moral als Grundproblem seiner Theologie*, pp. 50ff, and his editorial introduction to *Religion, Moral und Politik*.

46 See *Die sittlich-religiöse Gedankenwelt unserer Industriearbeiter* [1898], now in *Religion, Moral und Politik*, pp. 55-114. See also R. -W. Becker, *Religion in Zahlen: Ursprung und Wege der quantifizierenden Erforschung religiöser Orientierungs- und Verhaltensweisen* (Heidelberg, 1968), p. 25 [cited by Schwöbel in *Religion, Moral und Politik*, n. 20, p. 16].

47 See Schwöbel's introduction to *Religion, Moral und Politik*, pp. 32ff.

48 See *Unsere Pflicht zur Politik* (Marburg, 1913), now in *Religion, Moral und Politik*, pp. 144-180. See also the political essays reprinted in Rade's *Das religiöse Wunder und anderes* (Tübingen, 1909).

49 See J.-P. Leppien, *Martin Rade und die deutsch-dänischen Beziehungen 1909-1929: Ein Beitrag zur historischen Friedensforschung und zur Problematik des Nationalismus* (Neumünster, 1981).

50 Not least because of views expressed in his two meditations in *Die christliche Welt* on "Der Bankrott der Christenheit" 28 (1914), 849-50, and "Der Gott der Völker" 28 (1914), 869-71. In the latter of the two, Rade dared to suggest that German Christians should pray also for their enemies. In the Germany of the time, as in an England of more recent memory, a dangerous suggestion for a cleric to make!

51 See the relevant correspondence in Schwöbel's edition of *Karl Barth-Martin Rade: Ein Briefwechsel*, as well as Schwöbel's editorial introduction which, when taken together with what one finds on pp. 175-90 of his *Martin Rade*, gives the most convincing reconstruction yet of Karl Barth's reaction to the events of August 1914.

52 See Schwöbel, *Religion, Moral und Politik*, p. 38.

53 "The Present Situation of Christianity in Germany", *The American Journal of Theology*, 24 (1920), 339-367. Though temperate in tone, the article does put frankly the German point of view on such questions as war guilt, with the result that the American editors felt it necessary to add a footnote (p. 339) reminding readers that opinions of contributors are not necessarily those of the editors — a footnote for which the editors of the successor to *The American Journal of Theology* had apparently felt no comparable need when in the following year they published French Protestant Maurice Goguel's companion piece interpreting "The Religious Situation in France" [*The Journal of Religion*, 1 (1921), 561-577], a piece in which he praised the *union sacrée* between the churches and the State which had been established at the outset of hostilities with Germany.

54 "Christentum und Frieden" (1922), now in *Religion, Moral und Politik*, vol. 2 of *Martin Rade: Ausgewählte Schriften*, ed. Christoph Schwöbel (Gütersloh, 1986), pp. 181-202.

BOOK REVIEWS

Jesus, Paul and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians

James D.G. Dunn. SPCK, 1990. Pp.x + 277. £15

The book comprises nine essays and lectures which Prof. Dunn published in various places between 1982 and 1988, together with an account of more recent writing on the same topics, often in response to Dunn himself. The pieces are arranged in topical order, moving from the Gospels to Paul. Thus it is argued that the radical attitude of Jesus to sabbath, food laws, etc. goes back to the historical Jesus himself (in a rather less aggressive form than we have it in Mark); that the Pharisees were active in Galilee in Jesus' lifetime, influential and passionate for their halakot, and that their hostility to Jesus is likely to be historical; that Paul's sense of mission to the Gentiles was a central part of his Damascus road experience, and probably derived from a pre-Pauline use of the "curse" argument of Gal.3.13; that the Greek of Gal.1-2 implies a recognition by Paul of the authority of the Jerusalem apostles; that the Antioch dispute in Gal.2.11-14 was about ritual purity, at a time when Jews felt their religion to be under mounting threat; that Paul was not against the Law as such, but only against "works of the Law", i.e. circumcision, food laws, sabbath, etc., the "boundaries" of Jewish self-definition, trust in which was a wrong attitude leading to "boasting"; and that Gal.2.16 shows the apostle in process of radicalising his gospel.

There can be no hesitation in admiring Dunn's learning and industry, and the sharpness of his mind. The footnotes are a testimony to the breadth of his reading, and provide an up-to-date bibliography on many of the topics in current discussion; and the argument is forceful and well-documented. Furthermore, there are valuable insights here. The sense of mission to the Gentiles is central to Paul's Damascus road experience, and not a corollary of it; the admission of the Gentiles is indeed the basic thrust underlying all Paul's theology; the Law was a function of national identity, not the basis of individual claims to be righteous; there must be some bridge between Paul and Jesus; there are some persuasive suggestions about the basic argumentation of Galatians.

Nevertheless hesitations do arise, over Dunn's judgement: I found myself not really agreeing with any of the pieces fully. Even over the centrality of the Gentile mission the Gal.3.13 explanation seems artificial: surely Paul's conviction that God willed the salvation of the Gentiles was there before his conversion, and accounts for his persecution of Hellenists for admitting them on what he had at first thought were the wrong terms. It is this universalism which at Damascus suddenly saw its resolution in Christ, and it is this which is glimpsed but not made really basic to the "new perspective on Paul". I do not think that Paul ever thought of Jerusalem as having authority over him; he is only able to speak of "not running in vain" because he had talked the pillars over. Nor is it at all believable that Paul would have commended his gospel by having Titus "keep a high standard of ritual purity" in Jerusalem: the issue at Antioch was the straightforward one of which butcher the meat had come from for the agape.

The second essay gives a good impression both of Dunn's sophisticated argument, and of the reasons for suspecting it. Did Jesus really challenge the food-laws by saying that nothing which goes into a man defiles him (Mk.7.15)? Well, some of the expressions are Marcan, so the Marcan form is probably edited; the Matthaean form goes more easily into Aramaic than the Marcan, and is less aggressive; Jesus' original words probably came down to both evangelists in oral form, and Matthew has substituted the earlier, softer version; a form like Matthew's also comes in Thomas, which seems to be familiar with our Q traditions, so Matthew probably had the wording from Q; the context suggests that the historical dispute was about purity. It is a puzzle why Paul does not cite Mk.7.15 to answer the problems over food in his churches, but his similar language in Rom.14 shows him to be familiar with a line of reflection that grew out of Jesus' teaching. So Jesus sowed the seeds of radicalism which were to find a fuller expression in Mark and Paul.

I do not think any of this is right. Mark has "edited" (written) the whole Gospel so his expressions are to be found everywhere. Matthew is more purely Semitic than Mark, so his Greek goes more easily into Aramaic; and his conservative sympathies lead him constantly to water down Mark's radicalism. Matthew is simply softening Mark; and the repeated *stoma* in his version is one of his favourite words. If Q is allowed to expand to fill the parallels with Thomas it will cover many of the M sections and Matt.R sections (as here) and will end up as Matthew's Gospel. Paul does not cite any version of Mk.7.15 because none yet existed; the saying was inferred by the Marcan community from their "Pauline" image of Jesus. Peter and James stood by the traditional food-rules at Antioch for the same reason.

Dunn is probably the leading British NT scholar, and he has a world reputation; but for all that his book contains good things (and is compulsory reading for scholars), it seems to me to be flawed by a hidden agenda. It is not an accident that the conclusions are all so reassuring. It turns out that Jesus said something very close to the radical things in Mark and Paul; that the Pharisees formed a constant opposition to Jesus' Galilean ministry, despite Sanders' scepsis; that the Jerusalem leadership were fine Christians as well as Paul; that Paul does not habitually contradict himself over the Law, as blinkered Räisänen claimed. It is difficult not to see a doctrinal association with so many comforting results; and, as the apostle says, doctrinal associations corrupt good scholarship.

Michael Goulder

The Johannine Question

Martin Hengel. SCM, TPI, 1989. Pp xvi + 240. £10.50

The volume of scholarly literature which addresses issues of the Johannine writings and their context is immense. It is all the more welcome that we have in this book the analysis and hypotheses of one whose erudition has contributed so much to our understanding of the origins of Christianity and its world. The material of this book represents the expansion of the Stone Lectures given at Princeton in 1987 and the 'preliminary sketch' of findings yet to be published in a fuller German manuscript. The present text, translated by John Bowden, follows the pattern of Hengel's previous publications of having extensive endnotes, which must amount to at least half of the total manuscript length and even in smaller type set take up 86 pages.

Hengel addresses the question of the authorship and con-

text of the Johannine corpus (including the Apocalypse), concluding that the entire body of literature should be seen as the work of one man, the elder John, who is the 'beloved disciple' of the gospel, but not to be identified with John, the son of Zebedee. He begins with a reappraisal of the second century evidence. There are strong indications, both in writers from the period (Irenaeus, Tatian, Apollinaris, Melito, Justin, Papias, Valentinian gnosticism, apocryphal gospels and acts) and from the strength of early attestation of the gospel (from the second century: $\mathbf{P}^{52}$, $\mathbf{P}^{90}$, probably $\mathbf{P}^{66}$) that the gospel was widely accepted. The attempt by the Roman elder, Gaius, to dispute its authenticity and attribute it to Cerinthus is the product of doctrinal disputes with Montanism, not of historical tradition, and still operates with the common assumption about the gospel's date (Cerinthus was a contemporary of John). Irenaeus had reliable sources of information about the gospel (Papias, the Roman archives, Asia Minor traditions). These spoke of 'John, the disciple of the Lord' and Hengel argues that they reflect a wider tradition which enables us to speak of the elder John at Ephesus, who headed up a school of major influence in Asia Minor around 60 - 70 and lived till the time of Trajan (98-117). Papias' list of disciples shows he knows the Johannine tradition (especially John 1:35-51 and 21:2). It includes both John the son of Zebedee and at the end, in a separate listing, Aristion and John the elder. Eusebius has suppressed his mention of the early martyrdom of John, the son of Zebedee, attested in Philip Sidetes, and his probable mention of the elder's authorship of the fourth gospel. Papias had known John as the great teacher in Ephesus, called 'elder', not as a designation of office, but because of his age and authority. Hengel buttresses his claim that this elder John wrote the gospel by appealing to his hypothesis concerning gospel titles, that these must have been published with the original, so that the writings could be identified for liturgical use. 'John' was not a common name in Asia Minor and reflects a Palestinian origin. Accordingly, it was this John, not one of the twelve, but a disciple, who established the Johannine school at Ephesus and to whom the corpus should be attributed.

Turning to the corpus, Hengel counters arguments about difference in style and theology between the gospel and epistles by pointing out difference in occasion and purpose and by appealing to the phenomenon of old age. The letters, 2 and 3 John, owe their preservation to publication along with the so called first epistle, which is best understood as a homily written for circulation and reading in worshipping communities. All three reflect the situation where trouble has arisen within the community, particularly through the intrusion from outside of teachers. The Johannine community is not a sect. It belonged within wider mainstream Christianity in which Gnosticising tendencies flared up in a number of places. John warns that not all itinerant teachers are to be believed (1 John 4:1). The false teachers and the secessionists dissolve the unity between the man Jesus and the Messiah the Son of God (4:2f), equally important for future hope (2 John 7). They espoused the view of Cerinthus or one close to it and taught that the Christ came upon Jesus at his baptism and left before his crucifixion. This left no place for understanding Jesus' death as atonement, stressed realised eschatology and encouraged ethical complacency. But, in sharp contrast to many recent reconstructions of the Johannine history, Hengel argues that the heresy did not arise from a reading of the fourth gospel, for it was still in preparation and John was reluctant to publish. Rather the gospel itself indirectly reflects the struggle. 'The Word became flesh' has clear antidocetic intent, as have the accounts of the spear thrust and of the post Easter display of the wounds. The gospel does not express naive docetism. Even the miracles reflect an antidocetic stance.

The final redaction of the gospel took place after John's death, ie. some time after 98 CE. John had worked on it over his decades of teaching. Hengel assumes he had known the first three gospels. Written works took little time to become widely known and used. John wrote his gospel in antithesis to the Synoptic gospels, intending it as a new kind of scripture. A group of his disciples published the final work, identifying him as the beloved disciple and deliberately blurring the distinction between him and John of Zebedee in order to enhance the link with Jesus. The final chapter of the gospel reflects real experience: some had thought the old man would survive to the parousia. John's earliest extant work is probably the Apocalypse, written in response to the persecutions of Nero, and perhaps reworked by a pupil in the time of Trajan.

Hengel has made a strong case of cumulative evidence for the influence of John the elder in the Johannine community and beyond. It depends on a very positive assessment of Papias' testimony, on the postulate of continuing independent tradition in Roman archives and of the Asia Minor connections and on his gospel superscript theory. Against the latter is the absence of such a use of 'gospel' in Justin.

But Hengel's handling of the primary texts, the Johannine corpus itself, raises many questions. How credible is it that John would not have published his gospel in some form during his teaching career? The lack of manuscript evidence for earlier versions or the speculation about reluctance to publish are not convincing arguments. Hengel's argument that the gospel material would not credibly support or reflect naive docetism is offered without sufficient substantiation and fails to take into account the effect of the dramatic irony technique which inevitably produces stage figures larger than life. Johannine miracles are hardly analogous to those of other men: in the gospel they are signs of the divine sent one.

Hengel strongly rejects hypotheses which portray the gospel as the product of a community, 'a quarrelsome collective', and argues for the stylistic unity of the gospel and epistles. Yet his own hypothesis is only relatively different from this position. His final redactors do far more than append the final verses of the gospel. It lay before them 'probably in small parts' (p.99). He concedes they possibly added the passages about the beloved disciple. They also inserted passages based on the 'elder's notes or sketches, perhaps deriving from his oral lectures' (p.105). Has Hengel adequately assessed the extent of such redaction and what it means for the argument from stylistic unity? Must John have been the kind of a teacher who kept all writing tasks to himself? And, looking to the proposed common authorship of gospel and epistles, Hengel's glossing over the differences in terms of imperative and indicative focus and of the alleged Greek of old age does not adequately support his argument against multiple authorship. His assertions, for instance, of the centrality of vicarious atonement in the gospel are very much open to question, as I have shown recently in my *Christology of the Fourth Gospel*. The proposed common authorship of the Apocalypse too requires much fuller argument if it is to convince many.

A related question concerns his rejection of signs sources or gospels, particularly theories according to which they are reworked polemically. This makes me look forward all the more to Hengel's more detailed analysis to see how he, in turn,

explains the claim that John is written 'in opposition' (p.91) to the Synoptics. Such questions, including the way the collections of signs which he presupposes for the community (p. 102) have been integrated in the gospel, can only be dealt with adequately through analysis of specific passages.

Hengel stresses the presence of aporia and rightly cautions against finding a source seam at every point of unevenness. The strength of Hengel's presentation is precisely this caution which marks most of the work. It calls for a critical and open reappraisal of positions well -argued in the past and too often neglected, and retains appropriate tentativeness in offering its own hypothesis. The careful blending of an extensive survey of the external evidence and tentative scholarly reconstruction whets the appetite for a presentation of the hypothesis which argues it through a more detailed treatment of the internal evidence, the Johannine corpus itself.

William Loader

Beyond New Testament Theology. A Story and a Programme

Heikki Räisänen. SCM/TPI 1990. Pp xviii + 206. £6.95

Historical exegesis is one thing, theological exegesis of the results should come later. Experience is the primary goal of New Testament exegesis, its interpretation is secondary. These linked distinctions are explained, nuanced and urged in a review of essays in 'New Testament Theology' from the eighteenth century (J.P. Gabler) to the present day. And, yes, Räisänen knows well that there is no value-free historical exegesis and that interpretation accompanies all experience and experiences. But our ideal aim in study of the early Christian documents should be to discern the kinds of experiencing that are likely to have elicited the particular cultural expressions that are there preserved for us, and then present a coherent overview of findings to date. Having reached our conclusions we are certainly free to allow them to inform our own 'actualising' interpretations of existence, our own more or less systematic theologies. But our results may well be no more than interesting, helping us understand our cultural origins. And, on the other hand, we also have to accept the risk that we may find ourselves estranged.

Within the compass of two hundred pages or so the options are effectively illustrated and clearly explained. We are reminded of the names that figure on most rolls of western (mostly European) New Testament scholars of the last two centuries, and introduced to others we are (kindly) not expected to recall. We note the temptation to look to find a normative, timeless core (say, the teaching of Jesus or of Paul - or Luther), or a strong underlying coherence; or, in particular, to avoid the embarrassments of eschatology. We are warned that exegetes who announce their approved good intentions can be found doing worse than others who promise less.

Who (apart from those already convinced) is meant to be persuaded — and how? The target appears to be colleagues in 'the Academy' who still seem to Räisänen to jump from rigorous papers and monographs to pious syntheses determined by the church market. They should realise that the only proper but also the only likely selling points are a concern to understand the roots of western culture, and an interest in some of the possibilities of religious experience: openings within the wider Academy and through it among the general public. Pitting my unresearched guesses against Räisänen's I'd have thought there is little call to go back to such distant and enigmatic roots. At most there may be some demand for what he occasionally mentions, 'the history of the (recent) influence' of the New Testament and of a few select passages, such as Romans 13.1-7. Christian origins as such could well be subsumed under late classical studies, and left as a struggling minority interest. Christian religious experience would be better culled from more recent and more promising data, for the religious studies, sociology, social anthropology or psychology departments.

The only obvious demand for the kind of 'history of early Christian thought in context' proposed would seem to be precisely the churches, and there only the minority of members whose commitment to Jesus as God incarnate is seen as entailing a continuous quest for 'What must the truth have been, and be, if it appeared like that to people who thought and wrote as they did' (L. Hodgson). For the rest what is wanted is apologetics with touches of historic verisimilitude, or the kind of literary approach in which the New Testament canon could as well have been written (in whatever form) yesterday for me to 'read', more or less sensitively and consistently, as I will. (I do not think Räisänen appreciates how different from his own main proposals are the 'reader response' approaches he also welcomes.)

Just one detailed comment: Räisänen discusses the difficulties of talk of 'experience' and (as noted above) is aware that experience does not come naked waiting for us to choose how to clothe it, interpret it, even if fresh experience can still lead us to re-interpret something past. He also refuses to concentrate on any narrowly defined 'religious' experiences among early Christians, insisting much more on ongoing experience in everyday contexts. This is surely to be welcomed. By contrast he also notes how little in the New Testament and other early Christian writings is at all attempting to express 'experiences' — and still wants to concentrate here. Yet what does much more come to expression in the documents are series of attitudes and aspirations. For sure, (interpreted) experience is implicit in them. We presuppose similar experience(s) in others who do and say what we do and say unless firmly disabused (Wittgenstein). But there is little point asking about 'the experience itself'. It is in shared or meaningfully disputed attitudes and ideals and aims and their attempted realisation or avoidance in action that we find common ground with our contemporaries, and may hope in some measure to understand them. This is often what the first Christians chose to write about. We do best to concentrate here if we wish at all to understand their writings.

If Räisänen is right, what we do with any understanding we achieve has to be another question again. Only if we agreed to share the aims, attitudes and aspirations we found might we in fact share the experience — without being able to tell that we were. Experience sounds like a strong selling point, but is probably the most elusive.

F. Gerald Downing

A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation

Edited by R.J. Coggins and J.L. Houlden. SCM Press, 1990. Pp xvi + 751. £35.00 (hb)

Theology has become such a wide-ranging and diverse study that its many component parts seem impossible to manage within any co-ordinated framework, so that one needs a kind of telephone directory to make one feel that one is getting around comfortably. SCM have provided us with a number of useful alphabetical arrangements of theology in their series of dictionaries, the latest of which affords a glimpse of the vast variety of approaches to the Bible that now exists, a variety that the present dictionary has by no means exhausted. This dictionary is not like other Bible dictionaries; its principle concern is not so much with the contents of the Bible as with its interpretation. This is a subject whose importance seems to have come into sharp focus in recent years, reflecting, among other things, a certain loss of confidence in the main line approaches to Biblical interpretation.

A host of distinguished scholars have contributed articles ranging over such diverse topics as magic, the Bible in music, poetry and pastoral care, literary criticism, historical criticism, structuralism, feminist interpretation and psychological interpretation, to name but a few. There are articles on the biblical books themselves, which as well as introducing their particular contents and characteristics, also outline the history of their interpretation, and their resulting significance for the interpretation of the Bible as a whole. The other main areas covered include articles on significant movements and periods in the history of interpretation, discussions of methods and approaches, and technical terms used. There are also articles on some, though by no means all, of the important figures in the history of Biblical study. To list all such scholars would have been tedious, repetitive, and probably impossible, so the editors have limited themselves to those of special pre-eminence, or who do not tidily fit into any of the principal categories, or whose influence has not generally been recognized. Thus, for example, one will find an article on Karl Barth, but not F.C. Baur, mention of whom one must trace by reference to the index.

The index is very selective, so that there is the possible criticism to be made that there might have been greater consistency of approach throughout this volume. Whilst the editors point out that it was enormously difficult to be comprehensive, it might have been possible to give clearer guidance as to the importance and inter-relationship of the material in the course of its presentation. To take an example, the figure of Rudolf Bultmann was clearly considered of sufficient importance to merit the excellent two page article by Robert Morgan. As a result no mention is made of Bultmann in the index. A large number of asterisks guide the reader to other topics of interest and relevance to Bultmann, scattered throughout the dictionary. At the end of the article the reader is referred also to the articles on form criticism and the historical Jesus, subjects of undoubted importance to Bultmann, but without prior knowledge or the desire to work through the asterisks systematically, one might not notice the very detailed discussion of demythologization by D.E. Nineham, which is devoted almost entirely to Bultmann, and outlines a very important area of his work. One asterisk among so many others seems inadequate to draw the reader's attention to those articles which might guide him or her towards a more complete comprehension of the subject in hand. A similar criticism can be made in other areas: for example, the outstanding articles on the historical Jesus and modern Christology cover closely related questions, they even duplicate a number of points, so that one wonders whether they might not have been brought into closer association. The medium of dictionary is not wholly satisfactory.

Despite this, the dictionary very definitely draws its reader into a world, a very fascinating and exciting world, precisely because its possibilities seem so endless. Perhaps for this reason, and because the subject of biblical interpretation is so compelling, this dictionary (probably more than its predecessors) produces a very enjoyable and rewarding read in its own right. One is sent scurrying from page to page, and in the process the vastness of the subject opens up before one. This, however, makes it difficult to know which are likely to be the most fruitful approaches to biblical interpretation, and, of course, this is something about which the reader himself has to decide. It would be inappropriate to level the charge of arbitrariness or confusion at a dictionary. It must be seen as a starting point for exploration, an overall geography of the terrain, the bibliographies listed at the end of each article providing the means of more detailed investigation.

As to the articles themselves, in the nature of the genre, it is beyond the competence of a single reviewer to provide detailed comment. There are a number of outstanding, and, one is tempted to say, very important contributions, and these are snapshots of the present state of the subject. Other contributions, depending upon one's perspective, seem of minimal value and quality. Nevertheless this is a valuable contribution to a subject that will become increasingly important in years to come.

Peter Wibroe

God and the Cosmologists

Stanley L. Jaki. Scottish Academic Press, 1989. Pp.xi + 286.

Stanley Jaki's latest book, which repeats and extends some of his previous work on the theological significance of modern science, is in effect an extended elaboration of the cosmological argument and a sustained polemic in favour of Roman Catholic Christianity. Sitting ducks are exploded, flying ones winged and, sometimes, missed. The great strength of this writer is that he knows where he stands, but there is a corresponding tendency to underestimate his opponents (Kant, for example), personalize arguments against them and ascribe what he holds to be their mistakes to errors in logic.

Not that he fails to expose the desperate attempts of some scientists and philosophers of science to evade what he takes to be one of the crucial implications of science since Einstein: that we are, once again, faced with the question of the universe, and must therefore be prepared to ask the question of its origin and meaning. 'Most reliable philosophically is... the message that the universe is real, and that it is no less specific than any real thing' (p22). This he believes many modern thinkers are systematically evading, and his most withering hostility is reserved for Copenhagen theorists of all kinds.

The particularity and specificity on which modern science depends become the basis for assaults on the positions of those who would hold that the universe as it is now revealed to us can

derive from some homogeneous matter or can in some way create itself. Jaki cites the words of Eddington, that 'undifferentiated sameness and nothingness cannot be distinguished philosophically. The realities of physics are unhomogeneities, happenings, change' (p.37), and many instances are given of the quite astounding particularity and contingency of the universe and its contents. It is here that the book is strongest, as it is in exposing the absurdities of attempts to evade the facts and the claiming of scientific sanction for positions which are reached on unscientific grounds (for example, Weinberg's) on the supposed meaninglessness of the universe.

The author has without doubt produced some remarkable and convincing evidence of almost a desperation on the part of both philosophers and scientists to avoid asking the cosmological and theological questions that arise in connection with recent discoveries about the evolution of the universe. They parallel the similar phenomena charted by Peter Fuller, in which modernist interpreters of art fundamentally misinterpret their subjects in order to bring them into line with modernist presuppositions. It is almost as if some moderns wish to remain blind to the theological questions that have not gone away despite centuries of attempts to make them disappear.

However, the weakness of sustained assaults on modernity such as this is that they tend to subvert their own bases. From one point of view, science is a, perhaps the, characteristic modern activity. 'Modernity' is undoubtedly not the same as modernism, and yet there is a mediaevalizing air about Dr Jaki's polemic which seems to protest too much. Now, one must grant, and gladly, the historical thesis that modern science owes as much, perhaps more, to the Middle Ages than to the Enlightenment. The treatment of Pierre Duhem by rationalists who were simply unprepared to accept a revision of their beliefs is evidence for much of what this book has to claim.

And yet to hang so much on the cosmological argument, and to propound instant dismissals of Protestant and Anglican theology for their failure to adopt this supposedly self-evident approach, is to miss two major points. The first is the historical link between Reformation, and particularly Reformed, theology and the development of modern science. It was, for the most part, not in Catholic countries that the new sciences flourished. The second is a philosophical point, as is appropriate in a review of a book which makes such play with the philosophical incompetence of others. The fact is that there is not so great a difference between Aquinas' and Spinoza's definitions of God, even if they did shape them in a radically different way. We owe to Hartshorne a spelling out of the logical closeness of Aristotelian natural theology to pantheism, Dr Jaki's — justifiably — sworn foe. It can be argued that the essential link in all this is a trinitarian one, for only by trinitarian conceptuality can one relate God and the world, while affirming at once the reality, contingency, rationality and goodness of the created order. There are brief references and no more to the incarnational determinants of the tradition this author wishes to recommend. It is therefore in the limited range of Dr Jaki's theological armoury that is to be found the real Achilles' heel of his otherwise entertainingly argued and, it seems to me, fundamentally correct thesis.

Colin Gunton

The Gospel in a Pluralist Society

Leslie Newbigin. SPCK, 1989. Pp.xi. + 244. £8.95

Quite a lot of recent theological material on the question of religious and cultural pluralism has come from those writing in the liberal theological tradition (see chapter 12 of this book for evidence). Newbigin's book provides a penetrating critique of, and alternative to, this tradition. Plurality is an unalterable and welcome part of British society, pluralism is not. He defines pluralism as the "belief that the differences between the religions are not a matter of truth and falsehood, but of different perceptions of the one truth" and suggests that this is a "widely held opinion in contemporary British society" (p.14). Newbigin's project can be placed firmly within the "postliberal" ethos, so clearly articulated in the works of Michael Polanyi, Alasdair MacIntyre, Peter Berger, George Lindbeck (from whom I borrow the phrase "postliberal") and others. Newbigin draws from all these writers (although less so from Lindbeck) and from Barth through the filter of Hendrikus Berkhof. The value of the book is at least threefold. First, it is lucid and forcefully written, going to the heart of the epistemological issues. Secondly, it is certainly a book that successfully introduces to a popular audience many of the debates taking place in academic circles. Finally, it offers a critique of "pluralism" that must be answered. I shall address some of the book's weaknesses in due course.

Newbigin's argument is one that he has put forward in other recent publications, and although he applies it differently, fundamentally he does not move far into uncharted waters. He sets about uncovering the presuppositions of modern western secular liberalism, child of the Enlightenment. This world view distinguishes sharply between objective "facts" (science) and subjective "beliefs" (morality, religion), the latter being relegated to a matter of private choice and relative taste. Autonomy, freedom and critical doubt are virtues as opposed to tradition, revelation, and dogmas. He criticises the epistemological roots of this tradition using the model of scientific enquiry based on Polanyi's writings. The modern fails to recognize that all world views (including her own) operate within a tradition, which thereby has authority, and with certain presuppositions that are matters of "faith". One must always ask on what grounds the relativist deems that her theory of relativity is true. There can be no neutral recourse to reason for as Macintyre has shown, reason does not operate in a vacuum but within different forms of life and cannot be exalted as a cross-cultural universal arbiter. Newbigin argues that it is only society's "plausibility structures" that force religious truth claims into subjectivity rather than good solid arguments. Before developing this vision of postliberal biblical Christianity, he attends to the apparent problems of relativism that might follow from this understanding of religion (which are often raised in relation to Lindbeck and Phillips for example). Here Newbigin is not always sensitive to the problems of incommensurability potentially implicit in his model. If Christianity is totally immune to the critiques of the Enlightenment, might it not also be the case the other way round?

The middle part of the book goes on to argue for the credibility of God's election of a chosen people, his revelation in history, the centrality of Jesus Christ for our understanding and worship of God and for the clues found therein to the meaning of history. Mission is seen as the only natural expression of the reception of the good news. In the final section (my

distinction) of the book, Newbigin explores the issues of pluralism in its cultural and religious senses. Here there is some penetrating writing where he uncovers the ironies of contextualization (indigenization) and argues that the only core within Christianity that is transcultural is the "Bible, the sacraments, and the apostolic ministry" (p.147). In passing, he also criticises liberation theologies (which he sees as allied to feminist and black theologies) for the way in which scripture often serves a predefined cause; or, when the cause of the oppressed and poor is located in scripture, for the imbalanced analysis of scripture. He offers a searing critique of a number of pluralist theologians (such as John Hick and some leading World Council of Churches officials), showing how many of their central assumptions are precisely those he has criticised earlier in the book. He then explores the way in which the gospel, though always rooted in a culture (any culture), is also capable of offering a critique of that culture. He suggests that the only way Christians can cure their own culture-blindness viz. the form of the gospel they preach, is to be in communion with Christians from other cultures. There are also chapters dealing with supernormal powers drawing heavily on the work of Walter Wink and some interesting reflections on 'The Congregation as Hermeneutic of the Gospel', whereby the life of the churches is the testimony of the gospel. Newbigin is thoroughly Trinitarian and ecclesiocentric.

I have a number of reservations about Newbigin's book. While I agree with much of his critique, I think he draws the battle lines too sharply which could eventually undermine his own cause. Let me give an example. All too often Newbigin criticises movements and trends rather than dealing with their representatives in specific detail. For instance, in his criticisms of liberation (and black and feminist) theologies, not a single representative author is cited. The radical diversity between liberation writers goes deeper than Newbigin's two fold distinction and many have addressed precisely the types of criticisms he makes. This can also be said in relation to his treatment of Marxism, Roman Catholic theology (regarding reason [p.52ff] and Rahner [p.174]), and his treatment of Islam (as if it were entirely monolithic) — to name a few topics. This lack of attention to nuance weakens his case. My other main reservation is that, despite words to the contrary, it is difficult to know how Newbigin has learnt from the Enlightenment or any of the world religions. Less important, but irritatingly, some publishers of books cited are given, others not; some scholars are mentioned with little consequent discussion (eg. Hans Frei, p.99), proving them redundant except to the initiated; and *The Myth of God Incarnate* is incorrectly called *The Myth of Christ Incarnate* (p.211). Nevertheless, this book provides a stimulating and much needed balance to the debate.

Gavin D'Costa

Different Gospels. Christian Orthodoxy and Modern Theologies

Andrew Walker (Ed.). Hodder & Stoughton, 1988. Pp. 253. £7.95

For detective stories it is usually bad advice to start reading the book from the end. Knowing 'who dunnit' does not help sustaining a sense of suspense as the plot unfolds. *Different Gospels* is, of course, not a detective story and there seem to be good reasons for beginning with the last contribution, an address by the American sociologist Peter L. Berger which lent the whole volume its title and provides a useful perspective for interpreting the whole enterprise. Berger's reflection on 'the social sources of apostasy' combines two lines of approach: a sociological analysis of social conflicts in mainline American Protestantism and a biblical meditation on Gal. 1:6-7,9, Paul's condemnation of those who preach a 'different gospel'. The divide that has opened up in American Protestantism is for Berger part of a larger cultural conflict which is to be analysed in terms of a class struggle: the battle between the old middle-class, based in the business community and the traditional professions, and the new middle-class centred on the service industry and within that sector especially the 'knowledge-industry' (comprising educators, communicators, therapists, bureaucrats concerned with life-style engineering and, of course, lawyers). This class conflict has produced a 'religious fall-out' in which clergy, church officials and intellectuals have, in Berger's view, joined the bandwagon of the new knowledge-class with its left-of-centre politics and its progressive cultural agenda, while large sections of the church membership remain devoted to the preservation of the political aims and ethical and religious values of the old middle-class. Berger makes no secret of his sympathies in this conflict, his preference for the cultural values and political aims of the old middle-class, and he does not hide his irritation with the new worldliness he encounters from the pulpits. ('I am always amused when clerical types who only yesterday emerged from some pietistic underworld to discover politics and sex, take it upon themselves to lecture me on worldliness: *the world is my proper vocation* — I know it fairly well; I especially know it in its modern and modernising structures; I spend most of my days weltering in the affairs of this world — *I don't need you to tell me about worldliness*.' [237]) His main concern, however, is that the churches have assumed a role in this class conflict which reduces them to 'military chaplaincies...doing what chaplains have always done on battlefields — solemnly blessing the banners of their side and assuring the troops that their cause is God's.' (231)

Berger contrasts this tendency with the Pauline teaching in Galatians: the church is constituted by the Gospel of Christ. The liberation from sin and death which is the primary liberation of the Gospel brings with it a 'lesser liberation', that of 'relativizing all the realities of this world and all our projects in this world' (236). Consequently, Berger interprets the politicizing of the church (by left and right alike) as a new form of 'works-righteousness', as taking leave of the Gospel which ultimately turns the church into a cultural and political pressure group. This process denies the church the only catholicity it can possess, the catholicity of the Gospel, and has ultimately self-damning effects. Berger's *ceterum censeo* is therefore: 'Serving the church today, I believe, must begin with an understanding of the specific forms of apostasy that confront us today, to recall the true meaning of gospel, church and ministry, and then to put our ecclesial houses in better order.' (244)

Berger's contribution is the last essay in the third part of the book which is devoted to 'Contemporary Issues Facing the Church and Society'. This part begins with Colin Gunton's 'The Spirit as Lord: Christianity, modernity and freedom', theologically the weightiest paper in the collection. It is also characterised by a sense of balance that is not everywhere present in this volume: the critique of modernism, Gunton argues, must attempt to realize the legitimate aims of modernity without simply replacing the old authoritarianism with the new authoritarianism of modernist ideology. How such a response to modernism might proceed, is demonstrated in a critique of the a-historical and individualistic understanding of

freedom in some strands of modernist thought and its concomitant immanentist understanding of God. Colin Gunton contrasts this with a conception of freedom developed within the framework of trinitarian theology, where freedom is seen as the gift of the Spirit as Lord whose personal otherness is interpreted as the constitutive ground of personal freedom in community. Such an understanding of freedom, Gunton argues, does not commit humanity to the abortive attempt at self-divinisation, but enables us to be freely what we are: humans. This paper is followed by a thoughtful critique of the Theology of Liberation in Latin America by Alan J. Torrance, who raises the question whether it might perhaps show signs of an incomplete liberation from the dualist framework of the European Enlightenment, and by a decisively argued analysis of current theories of religious pluralism by Gavin D'Costa.

Part II of the book is headed 'Doctrinal Issues in the Light of Modernist Thought'. This title is perhaps a little misleading, because only the first two contributions are concerned with classical doctrines: a fine reflection by Thomas A. Smail on the Trinity and the resurrection of Jesus and a rather conventional apologetic article by Alister McGrath on the resurrection and the incarnation as foundations of Christian faith. The difference between these two articles points to illuminating differences in the strategies of presenting the anti-modernist case. While Smail uses the doctrine of the Trinity as the hermeneutical framework of the interpretation of the Easter event in attempting to explore the internal coherence of Easter faith, McGrath takes the reductionist criticism of the incarnation and resurrection as his starting-point and then encounters the difficulty that theological content cannot be generated by simply criticising the critics.

The strength of Keith Ward's contribution on 'Miracles' is that he does not only counter Hume's criticism of miracles as violations of a law of nature, but that he places the whole question in the context of a comprehensive reflection on divine agency. From this perspective miracles can be seen as 'points at which the dynamic power of God breaks into the world in manifestation of his purposes' (109). His article is well supplemented by the geneticist R.J. Berry who describes the reductionist denial of the possibility of miracles as an act of faith which cannot claim superior scientific support. This part of the book concludes with three contributions on the uses of scripture: an illuminating and informative essay on C.S. Lewis' reflections on biblical exegesis by Alasdair Heron, a passionate plea by J.D.G. Dunn for the historical value of the New Testament as the basis for Christian beliefs about Jesus and a piece by Peter Toon and the Bishop of London with the title 'Meditating upon Sacred Scripture' which seems somewhat misplaced in this collection.

The first part of the book comprises four interviews : a thoughtful dialogue with Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh, reflecting on his 40 years in Britain, and a talk with Cardinal Suenens, calling for a spiritual renewal of the church. The interviews with Lesslie Newbigin and Thomas F. Torrance offer a lively reading experience. Newbigin pleads for the attempt at understanding reality from the perspective of the Gospel and represents a decisive case for defining Christianity from its centre in Jesus Christ and not by drawing dogmatic demarcation lines around its periphery. Torrance eloquently defends the need for a unitary and comprehensive view of reality, based on the Christian Gospel and developed in close contact with 'hard science'. Torrance's contribution is also remarkable for his defence of Barth's theology against its evangelical critics who are roundly accused of representing 'a positivism of holy scripture' which amounts to 'a mythologising, an anthropologising of God' (52).

A book like *Different Gospels* is bound to be controversial; it is intended to be. Some whose theological outlook is determined by the assumptions underlying European thought since the Enlightenment (which are interestingly identified in Andrew Walker's introduction), will no doubt dismiss the book as a reactionary attempt to restore the glories of a bygone era. Others who have become increasingly sceptical about the benefits of the modern intellectual situation in the West as it is shaped by the principles of the Enlightenment will welcome the book as a call to return to the resources of the Christian tradition in the attempt at dealing with the problematical after-effects of modernity. Whatever one's sympathies may be, *Different Gospels* indicates an important change in the cultural situation in the West. This situation is now characterized by a new openness in which the cultural and intellectual assumptions which defined for almost two hundred years the perimeters of theological debate — for the heirs of the Enlightenment as well as for their critics — are now themselves under scrutiny and no longer serve as the boundaries for discussion. Whether this new situation will deteriorate into a relativism where 'anything goes' or will open up new possibilities of creative theological dialogue will to a significant extent depend on the willingness of all parties concerned to commit themselves to a process of shared exploration which is motivated by a common concern for the truth of the Christian message. It seems that the essays in *Different Gospels* which are devoted to the constructive exploration of the resources of the Christian tradition have more to offer to this endeavour than those who concentrate on the anti-criticism of Christianity's modernist critics.

One issue which is raised by the book is the way in which 'Christian orthodoxy' should be understood. The very fact that the authors come from very different denominational, cultural and intellectual backgrounds indicates quite clearly that their concern for 'orthodoxy' is an eminently ecumenical concern. They also agree in the rejection of a traditionalist attitude that attempts to go back behind the Enlightenment and in their (sometimes scathing) refutation of a simplistic fundamentalism. Nevertheless, there seem to be at least two distinctive approaches to the question of orthodoxy. The first is that represented in paradigmatic form by Peter L. Berger's and Lesslie Newbigin's contributions where that which prevents theology from preaching a 'different gospel' is expressed in terms of the Gospel of Christ interpreted as justification by faith (cf.236,241) or as the definition of Christianity by its centre in Christ. The second approach is most clearly expressed by Walker (but also present in McGrath, Metropolitan Anthony and others), where the foundations of Christianity are understood as 'the common credal truths of the historic church' (7). The one approach defines what is essentially Christian in terms of the act of faith as a response to the Gospel (the *fides qua creditur*), the other sees orthodoxy as referring to the credenda, specific doctrinal contents of belief (the *fides quae creditur*). The difference of approach is not a new one, but the questions it raises are far from resolved: Is it possible to be orthodox in the sense of the unconditional trust of faith in the promise of the Gospel without subscribing to the 'common credal truths of the historic church'? Can assent to those credal truths define orthodoxy or can that become a kind of theological 'works-righteousness' (in Berger's sense, cf.233) that entirely misses the point of the Gospel? Or is it possible to construe the relationship in such a way that the *credenda* of the Church

describe the conditions for the possibility of faith? It is at this point that theological reflection is called to make progress, if the appeal to 'Christian Orthodoxy' is to provide orientation in the post-Enlightenment era.

Christoph Schwöbel

Theology and the Justification of Faith. Constructing Theories in Systematic Theology

Wentzel van Huyssteen. Eerdmans Paternoster 1989 Pp.xxi + 205. £14.95

This book is to be welcomed because it comes from South Africa, even without the euphoria that greeted Mandela. And most of us, unlike Mandela, have not studied Afrikaans and so the learned contributions of a Professor of Theology in Port Elizabeth who has been writing about Pannenberg, about Thomas S. Kuhn and others, in various books and articles over the last twenty years have been isolated from us until the publication of this edition in English. In turn he gives us useful summaries of various German texts by Gerhard Sauter and again Wolfhart Pannenberg which have not been translated.

Coming from South Africa you may expect what you will not find here. The Preface speaks of 'doing theology in the present complex South African situation' but apart from a tantalising reference to an argument with John De Gruchy who had accused our author of tending to depoliticise theology so that it could not speak directly to political issues — a charge which Van Huyssteen denies — we are not conscious of being in the front line, for or against apartheid. Unlike De Gruchy, Professor Van Huyssteen was not one of the *Kairos Document* Signatories but then neither was Desmond Tutu or Allan Boesak! The tone is more detached but the author's commitment clear. He writes in South Africa, is a member of the Reformed Church and says the key question about heresy now is not the unity of Christ, as at Chalcedon, but the unity of the church and its denial by apartheid.

The author's aim is to help Christians give 'a credible and critical theoretic account of our Christian faith'. The emphasis could be on *our* faith, for chapter by chapter we examine some challenges to theology from logical positivism, the critical rationalism of Karl Popper, the accusation of William Bartley of theologians 'retreat to commitment', the paradigm theory of Thomas S. Kuhn and the attempts of different theologians to make a creative response and one which merits a hearing in any university. 'Theology', we are told, 'is an attempt to reflect as authentically and creditably as possible on whatever we have, through our religious commitment, come to know and experience as God's revelation'. There is no one way of doing this and no theologian, it seems, gets full marks. This makes this work a useful commentary on other theologians and for those who, like myself and the author, inhabit the Reformed tradition, some useful self-criticism about our use of the Bible.

Of those criticised I felt that Barth was treated least fairly. It seems unfair to criticise a man who died in 1968 for what he last wrote in 1928 and 1932 and it seems unfair to brand as a ghetto theologian the man who even in the Barmen Declaration of 1934 steeled the Church for her struggle against the racist policies of Adolf Hitler. And before anyone repeats the standard charges of a 'positivism of revelation' they could usefully ponder a study by Simon Fisher on Barth's earliest theology and the precise meaning of Bonhoeffer's elusive phrase. But then if a book makes you read other books, it is a good book for any theologian in a pastorate or college to have. It is a challenging read.

Donald W Norwood

God is Green

Ian Bradley. DLT Pp. x + 118. £6.95

Professor Gunton's assertion that "the victory of Christ is in part the re-establishment of the rule of God over a demonized creation, so that it too may reveal and praise its creator" (*Actuality of Atonement*, p.80) summarises well Ian Bradley's concern in *God is Green*. His aim is, essentially, an apologia concerning the essential 'greenness' of the Christian faith against the criticism that Christianity fundamentally encourages the present ecological crisis.

Bradley's aim in writing this book is twofold. Firstly, his major concern is "to show that the Christian faith is intrinsically Green, that the Good news of the Gospel promises liberation and fulfillment for the whole creation and that Christians have a positive and distinctive contribution to make to the salvation of our threatened planet and the preservation of the natural environment" (p.1).

But subordinate to this concern are three less explicit but equally important concerns: to show how the original Christian message has been distorted; to suggest that we return to the model of incarnation in order to understand better the goodness of creation; and to see the greenness of Christianity get through to the person sitting in the church pew.

The book is divided into five easily digestible sections: in fact, it is a short systematic ecology. Chapter one outlines the Christian basis for God's concern for all creation. Here, Bradley refutes the notion that the Christian faith is inherently anti-matter, and consequently a major contributor to the rationale underlying the present exploitation of nature. Rather, the author seeks to show that the Bible gives a clear foundation for protecting creation. One of the major means by which we may re-apply this Christian rationale is to extricate ourselves from the anthropocentric paradigm that has for so long been the curse of western theology. Instead of interpreting Genesis 1 in terms of man's dominion over nature, we should interpret it as "God's total lordship over the entire cosmos' (p.16). It is God's lordship over creation that sets the ground-rules by which human beings treat the natural world.

By contrasting the Hebrew world-view with that of the Greeks, and highlighting the significance of the Jubilee year, the Sabbath year rest and gobbets from the book of Job, the author shows that God's concern for the created world goes far beyond the human and embraces the extra-human.

In chapter two, 'The dance of creation,' Bradley is concerned with reinstating into our perception of creation the sense of its sacredness. The loss of the sanctity of creation has resulted in its being "seen as a laboratory rather than as a mystery," (p.34). The "pervasive power" of both "human anthropocentrism and the dualistic philosophy of the Greeks and Gnostics" are the causes of nature's profanity. However, a brief survey of the psalms combined with various devotional

writings dispels this myth. Indeed we need to recover the "idea of the dance of creation...from its biblical and medieval roots if we are to restore the Green heart of Christianity" (p.44).

In chapter three Bradley attempts to deal with the Gordian knot of any Christian ecology: the doctrine of the fall. He rightly points out the catastrophic damage the western interpretation of the fall has had on subsequent doctrines of creation: nature is seen as shameful and guilty, ultimately demonic. Rather, we should opt for a more eastern and teleological interpretation of the fall, interpreting it as the outworking of necessary chaos; necessary because without it, creation would merely be a perfect machine. Here Bradley is at his best, comparing the Christian story of creation and fall with current issues. For those wishing to preach in a manner that brings the greenness of Christianity to the pew, then this will provide ample stimulation.

It is in his christological chapter that Bradley displays his allegiance to Irenaeus' doctrine of recapitulation by the *cosmic* Christ. It is the book's shortcoming that it does not more fully expand the significance of the incarnation to ecology, for in many ways this chapter is its weakest link. However, the book is not intended to be a doctrinal 'heavy' as can be perceived by the practical and modern last chapter on "The role of human beings" where the author's own literary and poetic interests serve to show how the "concept of dominion... fits our unique status as beings created in the image of God and our unique ability to communicate with him...(making) us as much the servants of nature as its masters."

The book makes very easy reading. It is not by any manner of means the last word on the greenness of Christianity, but its usefulness lies in introducing us to a possible paradigm within which to begin our much needed search for a clear and theological response to the current ecological debate.

Graham McFarlane

Still Living with Questions

David E. Jenkins. SCM, 1990. Pp.x 226.

Journalistic jibes about his 'doubts' notwithstanding, David Jenkins is conspicuous among contemporary ecclesiastics for his relentless pursuit of the *meaning* of Christian belief. If his episcopal office requires him to defend the faith it is not inappropriate for him to enquire just what it is that has to be defended. In any case defence should not mean simply protection, whether from questions or anything else. The best way of defending the faith is to live it and take it into daily engagement with the challenges facing individuals and society today. That is Jenkins's instinct.

What is remarkable about Jenkins is not that, as a bishop, he believes a reduced creed, but that he believes so much, and so passionately: 'The answer we give to the question whether Jesus Christ is Lord makes literally all the difference in the world and to the world'; 'If Jesus Christ is Lord, then — starting from him — we may be clear that God is, that he is properly thought of as the Father with purposes consistent with his holiness, righteousness and love, and that God the Father can be relied upon as being involved in this world with a view to bringing his purposes out of it.'

These two statements come from a paper given by Jenkins in 1965. *Still Living with Questions* is largely a reissue of *Living with Questions* (1969) with the inclusion of some more recent material. It is hard to detect any essential change between the earlier and later Jenkins, least of all in the two Easter sermons of 1969 and 1989 respectively. In both, the message is that if Christ is not risen, then our contemporary and future history, personal and communal, is in vain. But it is not in vain 'for Christ is risen, he is risen indeed.' Throughout these sermons and addresses there is a passionate desire to release the gospel into the enterprise of being human in today's and tomorrow's world. This is abundantly clear regardless of his audience, whether clergy or theologians, doctors, students, educationalists or members of other faiths. This is the dynamic which generates his questions, and if Jenkins has doubts they are not about the gospel but about the facility of institutional Christianity to express that gospel adequately. Jenkins rightly diagnoses a neurosis in contemporary church and society which yearns only for simplistic affirmations and guaranteed survival.

It is important that Jenkins is taken seriously in contemporary theological discussion. That does not mean uncritical acceptance by 'liberals' any more than dismissal by conservatives as a mouthpiece of heresy. For example the authority of tradition and the roles of doctrine and theology in relation to personal faith — perennial and age-old questions — emerge anew in these pages. There is no authority on a par with God himself (p.221) and therefore in face of God all theology and doctrines are relative. But does this justify our saying that 'the only theology which does justice to the reality defined by Jesus Christ is a broken theology in which all theories are systematically and constantly being broken up so that they may be open to further possibilities' (p.88)? A crucial insight has prompted a rather cavalier statement here, rather like saying that because my car has a built-in obsolescence I may as well drive it up the nearest lamp-post now and get another right away. That there may be a grave inadequacy in all theologies could equally mean that they need careful handling for the sake of preservation *until* the 'further possibilities' are discernible.

Keith W. Clements

What Language Shall I Borrow? God-Talk in Worship: A Male Response to Feminist Theology

Brian Wren. SCM Press 1989. Pp. xi + 264. £9.95

Brian Wren's argument goes like this. Every naming of God is a borrowing from human experience. Language slants and angles our thinking and behaviour. Our society makes qualities labeled 'feminine' inferior to qualities labeled 'masculine'. Women and men are formed with identities steeped in those labelings, in structures where men are still dominant (though shaken) and women still subordinate (though seeking emancipation). It follows that using only male language ('he', 'king', 'father') to name and praise God powerfully affects our encounter with God and our thinking and behaviour. Male dominance and female subordination, and seeing God only in male terms, are not God's intention but deep human distortion and sin. Women and men are called to repent together from domination and subordination. We can name and praise God 'in ways less idolatrous' and more freeing, in ways 'more true to the Triune God and the direction of love' in Jesus Christ. (See pp. 1-2).

What, according to Wren, follows about Jesus and us? Jesus knew and named God as Father in a patriarchal society, but in such a way that it was called into question, as he inaugurated the loving community in which all human beings are to be treated as equal. Then, women in society had no hope of emancipation from male control. To name God in female terms was not an option. Now is different. Naming God as Father is still one important way of meeting God, but that name no longer has the power, in our context, to subvert partriarchal norms. Now, naming God in female terms is faithful to Jesus's intentions, shows the equality of women and men, shows women are fit to image God, and powerfully questions our patriarchal society. Jesus coined the right metaphor for his experience, life-style and time. We can and must be faithful to his way in ways which are not limited to verbal imitation. (pp.186-187). The above arguments have problematic features which readers can trace and sort out for themselves.

For Brian Wren, the prime function of biblical God-language is to affect the imagination and evoke an active response to the Holy One who encounters us (pp. 104-5). Like G.B. Caird and R. Otto, he thinks that possibly the language of experiential encounter with holiness is the only non-metaphorical Biblical language for naming God (p.95). 'Allowing God-images to *clash* is important, because it reminds us that we are approaching that which is beyond all images' (p.132: this illuminates the phrase 'less idolatrous', p.2 — quoted above).

The traditional pious tone of such iconoclasm may sound less plausible in a more linguistic idiom. Wren claims, 'There is no point in pontificating about what metaphors like "God as father" *ought* to mean. There can be no dogmatized or delimited set of approved meanings once such metaphors enter the public domain...' (p.107). However, elsewhere he appears to attempt what is here called pointless and impossible.

The inconsistency is significant, raising or strengthening questions about Brian Wren's understanding of metaphor, language and meaning. How far is he influenced by a notion of meaning as private intention (i.e. intention outside 'the public domain' to name things or experiences sincerely), rather than relying on shared, regular and regulative usage, within and across social and cultural contexts? A type of individualism is implied by Wren's notion of meaning. Why should we imagine that the naming of experience is the essence of language, or that the meaning of words is given by the objects (whether mental or non-mental) for which they allegedly stand? Wren seems not to appreciate the later work of Wittgenstein.

Questions about Brian Wren's understanding of meaning connect with others about his theology. Is the point of his trinitarian expressions to be found in the clash and transcendence of images, or in the importance of loving relationships (p.108, 132 and ch.8, etc)? He may need both interpretations. For, without the first interpretation, how could the second be distinguished from the view that trinitarian theology is the projective displacement of the human loving family, as in Ludwig Feuerbach's *The Essence of Christianity*? See Feuerbach chapter 4, 'The Mystery of the Trinity and the Mother of God', — essential reading for all concerned with feminist theologies. Without the second interpretation, how could the first be distinguished from a value-neutral agnosticism? Arguably, trinitarian theology should try to do better than the dialectic of these two interpretations, and the overcoming of misunderstandings of language may belong to such a better way.

Brian Wren seems closer to a better way when he writes of, '...the otherness of a mysterious closeness, ungraspable by us though embracing all things...' (p.57), and of holy love, as follows: 'The best God-metaphors are those that move us deeply and enable us to encounter or be encountered by the dynamic dance of incandescent love that Christian experience names Trinity' (p.107). Why not then go on to articulate the triunity of God as his being true to himself in being true to us in the humanity of Jesus, and in enabling us to enter truthfully into this truthfulness? Is ideological abuse of Christian language and imagery, to 'justify' unjust relationships, etc., only possible when the transforming actuality of God in Christ is underestimated, as in deficiently trinitarian thinking of God, humanity and creation?

Brian Wren's title is taken from the hymn, 'O Sacred Head, Sore Wounded', where the phrase relates to the atonement achieved in the death of Jesus. 'What language shall I borrow/ to thank thee, dearest friend?' Wren's response to the language and imagery of the atonement includes a note concluding '...All these metaphors...describe something, for someone, about the unnameable experience of salvation' (pp. 257-8, note 1). Elsewhere, he expresses with considerable confidence aspects of the experience which he takes to be the literal essence of Christianity. Generally, he does not attend sufficiently to the relativity of distinctions between literal and metaphorical language. (See E.F. Kittay *Metaphor* 1987 and C. Gunton *The Actuality of Atonement* 1988).

Brian Wren reminds us repeatedly of how women have been and are treated unjustly, superstitiously and stupidly by men, who abuse the name of God in so doing. He reminds us, too, of the promise of more authentic forms of being female or male. It would be helpful to have more critical discussion of the notion of patriarchy and of relations between biological sexuality, cultural gender, personal identity and notions of freedom and equality. A more considered response to feminism would take more account of economic and contraceptive changes. A more trinitarian approach to the concept of sin would not need to hand it over to a tradition of sociological diagnosis. How all of this relates to Christian traditions and what we should be doing in this situation may become clearer to those who learn from Wren's arguments, instruction, entertainment, difficulties and provocation. His book has been praised by a variety of reviewers on both sides of the Atlantic. The style is the author himself. This spirited work deserves spirited readers.

Ian McPherson

Keeping the Faith. Essays to Mark the Centenary of Lux Mundi.

Edited by Geoffrey Wainwright. SPCK. 1989. Pp. xxv + 399. £17.50.

The chance both to assess how well the original remit of *Lux Mundi* has progressed, namely, 'to put the Catholic faith into its right relation to modern intellectual and moral problems', and to develop that original intention satisfactorily, is surely an impossible task for one book to accomplish. Other centenary editions have attempted to present a somewhat narrow and restrictive Anglican (liberal-catholic) response, (*The Religion of the Incarnation* Bristol Classical Press, 1989). This book, however, resists such a temptation, and proffers the

original issues to a more catholic scholarship which reflects "the different climate of the twentieth century." In so doing, it acts as both a response to the issues raised a century previously, and an insight into the direction in which theology must go 'if the church is to succeed in keeping the faith' and 'be bold enough to proclaim Jesus Christ as the "Light of the World".'

Not surprisingly, then, it is a christological hermeneutic that pervades the various contributions. However, if the intention of *Lux Mundi* was more concerned with ' "the religion of the incarnation" than with the incarnation itself' (p99), to paraphrase Alasdair Heron's christological contribution, the question begs asking as to what extent this preoccupation has altered over the ensuing century? In other words, to what degree is this christological hermeneutic any more applied here than by the original contributors?

One of the interesting factors about these essays is the way in which they serve to build up a composite analysis and criticism of western, Enlightenment theology and, in turn, present the meaningfulness of Jesus Christ and Christian tradition to modern issues. A clear example of this approach can be found in Daniel Hardy's, "Rationality, the Sciences and Theology" which argues that a christological understanding of Wisdom enables us to affirm the 'intrinsic connection of knowledge and rationality, as mediated in materiality and history, to the nature and presence of God," (p.281). It is in Jesus Christ that the materiality of human existence and the wisdom of God meet, and it is a materiality into which the Church is called.

When applied to Christian ethics this hermeneutic is used by Keith Ward to show how the 'Christian vision of morality' (p.237) , in participation with the Holy Spirit and as disclosed in the cross of Jesus Christ, transcends and transforms our natural morality. Indeed, this element of transformation is continued in Leslie Newbigin's contribution, "The Christian Faith and the World Religions." It is the life's story of Jesus Christ that 'makes sense both of one's personal story and the story of the human race' (p.335). It is an affirmation both that Jesus Christ's life, death and resurrection is the central and particular affirmation of the oneness of the human story and that the Church does not contain the full story this side of her own transformation.

An equally satisfying development is the way in which other contributors extend the incarnational to the trinitarian. This trinitarian necessity is not lost by Robert Jenson who concludes his contribution, "The Christian Doctrine of God," with a clear trinitarian riposte; 'It is time and past time to let the tradition and our necessities teach us of God's triune "uselessness"' (p.51). Alasdair Heron applies this critique to the original contributors who failed 'to think through the implications of their incarnational concern for the doctrine of God..(who) did not even begin to develop the idea of a *trinitarian theology of the crucifixion*' (p.121).

What, however, is the strength of this collection of essays, its christological and trinitarian insights, is also its weakness, but a weakness not sufficient to tarnish the benefits derived from the collection. The western preoccupation with the religion of the incarnation rather than the incarnation itself remains visible with a minority of the contributors. Perhaps no more so than in Richard Norris' contribution, "Human Being." Whilst it is a clear critique of Augustinian anthropology, the christological omission to his argument suggests a caveat in need of addressing if Heron's criticism of Lux Mundi is to be overcome by present christological scholarship.

Graham McFarlane

The Making of Orthodoxy — Essays in honour of Henry Chadwick

Ed. Rowan Williams. C.U.P. 1989. Pp xxv + 340

This volume of sixteen essays, in honour of the doyen of English Patristic scholars, covers a wide range. It is not possible to comment on all of these and attention is drawn here to only a few. Professor Frend studies the non-theological factors which influenced the development of orthodox and schismatical movements and shows that the variety of opinions anathematized by Councils of bishops indicate a diversity of interpretations of Christianity. Frend issues a timely warning against the dominance of textual studies in Patristics and argues that a balance with other branches of learning needs to be restored. Too great a concentration of authority in the hands of scholars of one discipline can have far reaching and damaging effects on the situation of others. The demise of early Church history in many English theological faculties makes his warning even more timely.

Dr Bammel studies the interaction between Origen's cosmological ideas and his exegesis of the figure of Adam. She argues that, for Origen, Adam symbolises Christ and Eve the Church. Adam follows his bride in her descent to this world. It is always difficult, and usually a mistake, to systematize Origen's scattered hints but I think Bammel makes a good case for Adam being a real historical figure in Origen's thought whose fall took place at a lower level, and after, the fall of rational creatures. The difficulty with Origen is however that his emphasis changed with the particular text he was interpreting. A recent study has shown that this was true of his teaching on Subordinationism and it seems likely that his treatment of Adam was likewise variable.

T.D. Barnes studies 'Panegyric, history and hagiography in Eusebius' Life of Constantine'. He follows the arguments of Giorgio Pasquali in 1910 that the *Vita* is not seriously interpolated, as Norman Baynes and others later believed, but is a conflation of two drafts which was unfinished when Eusebius died in 338. It was published after his death by another hand. Barnes thinks that this explains the divergence between the speech in the *Vita* about the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem which concentrates on Constantine's motives for its building and the speech which the text of the *Vita* promises to quote which was to deal with the costly decoration of the Church. I think that Barnes' reconstruction of what happened (pp 101-102) is unduly complicated and the simpler explanation that speeches vary according to audiences addressed is more likely. Barnes however correctly stresses the substantial accuracy of *Vita Constantini*; Eusebius was not an imperial propagandist but an honest scholar who sought to write a reliable history of his times.

Benedict Green studies the reception of Matt. 28,19 in Eusebius and argues that doctrine, in this case, influenced liturgical formation and not vice-versa as has often been thought. This article contains many good things but the attempt to show that Justin Martyr may have been converted

to Christianity in Syria and that he was baptised with the Syrian form seems far-fetched. Moreover where is the evidence that Justin's trinitarian language in the *Apology* has an anti-Marcionite ring?

The late Richard Hanson, with characteristic lucidity and pugnacity, discusses the achievement of orthodoxy in the fourth century. His contribution is a summary of the argument of his *magnum opus, The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God.* Hanson holds that orthodoxy did not exist in 318, the traditional date of the beginning of the Arian controversy. It was only achieved in the fourth century by a process of trial and error — in other words it was a construct. This essay contains many *obiter dicta* : 'We have no right to assume that Athanasius or Basil of Caesarea or Meletius of Antioch were mere power seekers because they engaged in politics as well as in theology, any more than we have to make the same assumption about Thomas a Becket or Oliver Cromwell.....' ; 'By 381 Marcellus was dead and his followers were anxious to assure everybody that they did not believe that Christ's Kingdom would have an end. But there the clause remains, a fossilized protest against an extinct heresy ..... This Clause (in the Creed) can be regarded as a kind of Tutankhamun of theological controversy.'

In a highly original, if controversial, essay, J.C.O'Neill argues that early Christian monasticism did not begin with Antony and Pachomius but had always existed in the Church as a direct continuation of Jewish monasticism. Much of the inter-testamental literature such as the *Testament XII Partriarchs* and a host of other MSS was handed down in Christian monasteries in the first and second centuries. The weakness of this theory lies in the paucity of direct evidence for monastic communities in this period. O'Neill's interpretation of *Ep.Barn.* 4,10, *Ep. Diogn.*5 and Tertullian *Apol.* 42 seems forced. While it is true that institutions can exist unnoticed underground this does not explain the suddenness with which monasticism appeared in the third century. O'Neill speculates that certain N.T. books, such as Colossians, were addressed to monastic communities but again what is the evidence for this? The weakness of this essay is that the writer confuses asceticism with monasticism. Asceticism certainly existed from the time of Jesus — and always has. But this does not necessarily lead to monasticism, i.e. living either as solitaries or in communities.

Sister Charles Murray is the only contributor to this volume who does not subscribe to the view that orthodoxy is a construct, rather than something given from the earliest age of the Church. She has much of interest for the student of Christian art in showing that doctrine can be communicated non-verbally as well as conceptually. However Dr Murray does not consider the strong objection to artistic representation made in certain circles in the early Church in the period before Iconoclasm. Is it true that art as a theological idea always perpetuates orthodoxy? The belief that the existence and nature of orthodoxy was taken for granted by the whole Church (p.289) is refuted by many other contributors to this volume.

There has only been space to mention a few contributions to this notable *Festschrift* which also contains a full bibliography of Dr Chadwick's writings. Overall the book represents a fine tribute to a great scholar.

L.W. Barnard.

Past Event and Present Salvation: The Christian Idea of Atonement

Paul S. Fiddes. DLT, 1989. Pp.x + 243. £10.95

This excellent book sets out to offer a non-academic introduction to the doctrine of the atonement. The author sets his discussion in the framework of our post-Enlightenment historical consciousness by focusing on the question, "How can a particular event in the past have an effect on our experience of salvation today?" He rightly perceives that salvation cannot be handled in detachment from theodicy, and that the image of healing — both of the fragmented personality and of conflicts within and between groups — governs contemporary thinking about salvation.

Fiddes' style is clear and persuasive — a model of theological exposition. Though seldom excitable, his writing is frequently touched by pathos, as is appropriate to his theme. The standard of accuracy is high: the only typographical errors I noticed were E.P. Saunders (p.44) and Karl Jung (p.121). The book was evidently completed before publication of Colin Gunton's *Actuality of Atonement.*

Fiddes wants to overcome the sterile (and unworkable) dichotomy between objective and subjective interpretations of the atonement, that manoeuvres us into postulating either a change in God but not in humanity or a change in humanity but not in God, through the atonement. Fiddes insists that, through his Christological participation in our human plight, even unto death on the cross, there has come about a "change in God" — one that effects a "change in us". Like the process theologians, Fiddes postulates an openness in God to new "experience". Through Christ, God "faces what is new for him, not in order to change his attitude, but to change ours". I would guess that we need to turn to Fiddes' previous book, on divine passibility, for a defence of the viability of this concept.

Fiddes' distinctive contribution is found in his development of Abelard's view, freeing it from the constricting assumption of divine impassibility, and giving a larger role to the Holy Spirit. Fiddes commendably vindicates Abelard from the persistent charge of "exemplarism" (Christ's death as the supreme example of the human response to God). In both Abelard and his interpreter here, the "showing forth" of God's love on the cross is at the same time a "pouring forth" of the Spirit of love into our hearts, effecting a real transformation.

Altogether a pastorally helpful study, that lends itself to both theological education and private reflection — "middle-brow" theology as its best.

Paul Avis

Theology and Church

Walter Kasper. SCM, 1989. Pp. x + 231. £12.50.

Walter Kasper, Professor of Dogmatic Theology at Tübingen, is one of the best guides to Catholic theology currently available. Highly respected for his orthodoxy and churchmanship, as well as his scholarly breadth and engagement with modern questions, his works convey an unusually keen sense

of balance. The present volume is a collection of essays in two parts, the first devoted to theological anthropology and the second to ecclesiology (without doubt two of the most pressing topics on the current agenda of dogmatics). Like all such collections, this book requires the reader to adapt to a certain repetitiveness and a rather lurching progression of thought. Nonetheless, it makes rewarding reading for anyone seeking a critical but essentially positive treatment of the challenges of post-conciliar Catholic theology, and indeed of modern theology generally.

Kasper is occupied throughout by a constant concern over the present 'estrangement between church and culture,' the same cleft which so exercised the Second Vatican Council. For Kasper, this is 'the real drama of our times.' In his introductory essay on theological method we find him already struggling with the relationship between theory and praxis, now rendered so intractable by the breakdown of religion and metaphysics as an integrated framework for holistic thinking. While firmly rejecting any retreat into neo-scholasticism as an answer to the crisis of modern theology, he does not shy away from a positive solution: the reforging of a theological method that is at once churchly (i.e., bound to the ecclesial *communio*), scientific (i.e., sharing a scholarly commitment to objective truth along realist lines), and praxis-oriented (i.e., open to the challenge of the here and now). According to Kasper, *fides quaerens intellectum* remains 'theology's great programme.'

It is also, he says, the programme for a new humanism. Western humanism is in need of the reshaping which an open, thoughtful Christian theology can give it. After laying a foundation for what follows by means of a discussion of the personal nature of God as trinitarian Love, he moves on to the burning question of the relation between theonomy and autonomy. It is this matter which dominates the remainder of Part One. Kasper maintains that theonomy and autonomy are not contradictory notions, though they have often been treated as such both in the church and in the world. Theonomy rather presupposes human freedom/autonomy as its necessary condition, and brings the latter to its own proper fulfillment 'in the encounter with infinite freedom.' The corollary of this position, however, is that a theological definition of human freedom entails a critical perspective on 'all ideologies and utopias.' If the former represses human freedom, the latter 'expects too much of it,' with the result that freedom 'is ultimately deified and hence demonized.' It needs instead to be oriented to God through the eschatological determination which is given it in the person of Jesus Christ.

The final two essays in Part One, which deal with Christ in relation to man and to the Trinity respectively, attempt to press this approach further. Working on the Thomistic principle (modified away from its usual dualistic framework) that 'grace presupposes and perfects nature,' Kasper argues for a christological method which 'outbids' secular anthropology, rather than either rejecting it or merely reproducing it: with Jesus we find man 'surpassing everything that is possible in purely human terms.' In this way the question of God is not sidelined by the question of man, nor the reverse. Theology can again speak to modern man. The ultimate significance of christology for anthropology proves to be bound up with Christ's remarkable 'being for others,' which can only be interpreted successfully within a trinitarian framework — all of which must lead to a new relational metaphysics centred on the person and love. Along the way Kasper draws openly on central Orthodox and Reformed insights, as well as touching sympathetically on the development of modern perspectives on human being (though his appraisal here appears to be more cautious than Pannenberg's, for example). He continues to hammer away at the above/below distinction in methodology which he began to confront some time ago in *Jesus the Christ*.

Part Two offers essays dealing with the church as "a universal sacrament of salvation," as "the place of truth," and as "communion". A penultimate chapter homes in directly on the ongoing challenges presented by Vatican II: in the face of serious conflicts over its interpretation, Kasper insists "that the council's hour is still to come." The "identity/relevance dilemma" which faces the modern church in a pluralistic culture — not just the Roman church, though here he speaks specifically of a "crisis of Catholic identity" — remains prominent and supplies the tie which binds the book together. Quite appropriately, then, the final chapter deals with the Eucharist, even if Kasper does not exploit this area in terms of his theme to the degree one might expect.

Kasper's main sparring partner throughout would appear to be Karl Rahner, whose approach to the relevance problem is thought to compromise the church's identity. He is critical of Rahner's attempt "to bring about a complete reversal in the interpretation of the sacraments," in which, instead of proceeding from the spiritual reality of the sacramental event to its worldly effect, "he wanted to effect a movement from the world to the sacrament." This (if nothing else) ignores "the apocalyptic vision which starts from a continual struggle between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world, a conflict which does *not* gradually come to an end with the progress of history, but which, on the contrary, reaches a climax and is intensified as history draws to a close." Rahner's approach puts the church at risk of becoming only "a religiously solemn elevation of the world, and hence its ideology." Here Kasper touches on a matter that is no small difficulty in contemporary theology (in spite of our apparent fascination with the adjective "eschatological").

The essay on the church as communion may be singled out as worthy of close scrutiny by those with an ecumenical interest. According to Kasper, "the revival of the ancient church's concept of *communio* represents a turning point of the first order in the history of theology and the church." For Rome it marks a departure "from the one-sided 'unity' ecclesiology of the second millennium of the church," which has in fact contributed to its division. Kasper believes that it is only by the full reception of this *Leitmotif* of the last Vatican council that the church can both recover its own harmony and provide a meaningful answer to the world's longing for community. Here it is most important that the church also recognize that it is not *itself* the answer to this longing, except insofar as it serves as a sign and instrument of fellowship with God through Christ and in the Spirit.

Two comments will have to suffice by way of conclusion, though any number of issues might well be raised in response to this wide-ranging volume, the arguments of which are generally presented in too sketchy a fashion to be fully convincing. First, it may be questioned whether Kasper's — largely implicit — *integration* of anthropology and ecclesiology is as profound as his larger programme (especially a new relational metaphysics) might lead us to expect. Further probing in this direction would have been helpful. Second, it may be wondered whether Kasper's ready division between anthropology and cosmology (the latter is more or less set aside) betrays a

failure to stay abreast of modern speculation in both areas, and of the questions modern man is asking. Likewise, his supposition that the *humanity* of Jesus is not a problem today — a claim often heard, to be sure — seems to bypass the whole problem of the *meaning* in today's world of the resurrection and ascension of Christ, i.e., of the climactic events in which it is alleged that he "surpasses purely human possibilities" while yet remaining human. Connected with this, of course, is the question of the intelligibility of Christ's "enduring presence in the church," on which the notion of *communio* rests. Exploration of these and related matters is essential to the programme of anthropological and ecclesiological dialogue which Kasper wishes to encourage.

Douglas Farrow

Karl Barth: Centenary Essays

Ed. S.W. Sykes. CUP, 1989. Pp.171. £22.50

In his Introduction, Stephen Sykes identifies the common aim of the five essays in this volume as that of helping to remove the obstacle of 'Barthianism' from the path of intelligent discussion of Barth in contemporary English-language theology, and of helping to stimulate dialogue with other systems of thought.

Ingolf Dalferth is the first to put his shoulder to this twofold task by plotting Barth's basic philosophical position as an ontological, semantical, and epistemological realist. Barth's realism, however, is not of the classical sort, for the reality to which his theological statements refer is eschatological: the living Christ present in the power of His resurrection. Although this reality is not given in our normal experience apart from the Spirit, it is in fact most concrete, being both ontologically and criteriologically prior to empirical reality. The world of common experience is only enhypostatically real. Accordingly, Barth's dogmatic proceeds in two basic stages: first, the generation of basic theological categories; and second, the *tour de force* of presenting a vision of empirical reality in terms of those categories by way of the *analogia fidei*. Dalferth concludes that Barth has given theological method one of its decisive turns by establishing that there is no external, 'empirical' perspective which in principle cannot be interiorised into the perspective of faith.

Colin Gunton follows with an essay on human freedom and the triune God. Against a common line of criticism he argues that for Barth human freedom is 'determined' or 'caused' — rather than displaced — by God. The logical coherence of 'caused freedom' lies in the nature of the cause, the triune God. This renders causality non-compulsory; for, Gunton tells us (though with more tantalising suggestiveness than satisfying precision), it is personal rather than mechanical, consisting in the divine accompanying of the creature by Word and Spirit. Nevertheless, he concedes that the logic of Barth's too-modalist doctrine of the Trinity does militate against an adequate account of human freedom; for the Christological over-determination of his dogmatics marginalises the work of the Holy Spirit and identifies divine and human operations too closely.

Barth's contribution to ecumenical ecclesiology is the subject of Stephen Sykes' own essay; and he finds it pre-eminently in the understanding of authority in the Church as a by-product of a spiritual ascesis of openness to correction by the Word of God. On this point, he shows a fine grasp of what really makes Barth tick, when he muses on the 'strange thought that we might, in the long run, be able to treat this formidable Calvinist dogmatician as a spiritual writer' (p.83). But for Sykes Barth's understanding of authority in the Church poses, without answering, the unBarthian question of how the innovatory Word is to be 'managed' in everyday, sociological reality.

It is in order to surmise why the theological conversations which Barth had with his Catholic counterparts in September 1966 reinforced his positive disposition to the Second Vatican Council, that Philip Rosato sets out to reconstruct them. He discerns two general foci of concern in the set of questions formulated by Barth and published in *Ad Limina Apostolorum*. The first asks whether Vatican II conceives the Church to be primarily in the business of transmitting biblical revelation or in that of engaging in dialogue with those possessing non-biblical conceptions of God. The second asks whether the Council thinks of the Church's primary calling as that of providing the sacramental mediation of grace or of bearing witness to the Gospel. Rosato surmises that the Catholic responses to these questions were, respectively, that multi-faceted dialogue was an internal factor of biblical transmission from the very beginning, and that sacramental mediation is a permanent guarantee of evangelical testimony. He doubts, however, that Barth would have found these answers acceptable, and concludes (rather limply) that the reason for his positive assessment of Vatican II lies in its orthopraxy of ecumenical openness.

Richard Roberts provides the concluding chapter by giving an interpretative account of the Protestant reception of Barth's theology in the Anglo-Saxon world. He begins by tracing the history of its initial reception. In Britain (especially England) the earliest reactions to Barth were determined by an ancestral estrangement from things German exacerbated by a suppression of the theological challenges posed by the trauma of World War One. After the publication of E.C. Hoskyns' translation of the 2nd edition of the *Roemerbrief* in 1933 the tendency to 'normalise' Barth's extreme dialectical rhetoric grew stronger, and 'the partial, fragmented, and delayed' reception of Barth was redeemed only by the work of Hoskyns, the biblical theology movement, and then T.F. Torrance. During the post-war period Barth has only had occasional influence upon some of the episodic developments that have constituted British theology. In the USA, which also didn't see itself as being in a state of cultural and theological crisis, dialectical theology initially seemed just as alien and extreme as in Britain; but American Neo-Orthodoxy, dominant from the late 1930s to the late 1950s, later constituted 'the most impressive indigenous assimilation of the theology of crisis' (p. 141). Since the collapse of the Neo-Orthodox hegemony, Barth's influence has been disseminated but integral to the succeeding stages of development in post-war American theology. After describing 13 different types of response to Barth's thought, which were made after it had taken root, Roberts concludes that Barth has been a major but not a decisive influence upon Anglo-Saxon theology, which has yet to pass adequately through his theology and its total *Sitz im Leben*. He judges that the forging of such a passage might not only help to displace the dominant Anglo-Saxon interpretation of the theology of Karl Barth as totalitarian, but would involve us in the task of healing the rupture between tradition and modernity that lies at the heart of 'the torn soul of European culture';

and 'to dare to venture a healing there,' he tells us, 'would be to probe a universal wound' (p.158).

Though slim and expensive, this is a good book. It should cause Barthianism to give a little more ground to Barth.

Nigel Biggar

Christ, Ethics and Tragedy: Essays in Honour of Donald MacKinnon

ed. Kenneth Surin. Cambridge University Press, 1989. Pp. xi + 206.

In post-war British theology, Donald MacKinnon, erstwhile Norris-Hulse Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, occupies a prominent place. Erudite, subtle, often allusive and opaque, his work covers a vast range of topics in philosophical theology. It is appropriate that a writer who prefers questioning to answering, and articulates his questions in such a profound and engaging way, should generate a series of essays which, without exception, move far beyond MacKinnon himself.

Richard Roberts demonstrates the influence of Barth on the 'early MacKinnon' theology and suggests that a partial and qualified rehabilitation of this theology would do much to shake the Church of England out of its doctrinal malaise today. Kenneth Surin provides a subtle essay on kenosis and incarnation which will become required reading for anyone working in this area. Inevitably, the issue of theological language is given substantial treatment. Fergus Kerr discusses MacKinnon's obstinate support of realism (as against idealism), rightly questioning some of the assumptions behind the idealism/realism debate; a sensitive piece on representation and resemblance comes from Patrick Sherry; and Roger White offers a thoroughly practical treatment of parable.

MacKinnon's essays on tragedy and atonement in the 1960's receive much attention. Brian Hebblethwaite, in the most vigorous essay of the book, directly opposes MacKinnon, revealing his well-known allegiance to universalism. Rowan Williams, toward the end of an essay on Trinity and ontology, observes the lack of an adequate doctrine of the Spirit to ground MacKinnon's convictions about the tragic. In what is to my mind the most compelling (and moving) essay, David Ford proposes that the notion of 'the face of Christ' provides an especially fruitful perspective on the question of atonement and tragedy.

Ethical concerns are taken up by the remaining writers. Barrie Paskin, Lecturer in War Studies at King's College, London, argues that in international affairs, a proper sense of pride can sit alongside the Christian virtue of humility. John Millbank believes that a number of strands in MacKinnon's work have failed to escape certain pervasive, but unhelpful, strands of post-Kantianism in modern theology, and includes comments on Hauerwas (who is given the right of reply).

A recent writer characterised MacKinnon's thought as 'a combination of self-consciousness, openness and ethical realism'. It is a tribute to the influence of the book's redoutable dedicatee that all three are much in evidence here.

Jeremy Begbie

The Ocean of Truth. A Defence of Objective Theism

Brian Hebblethwaite. Cambridge University Press, 1988. Pp.x + 165. £7.50

The underlying problem addressed in Brian Hebblethwaite's text is not simply that two members of the Cambridge Faculty of Divinity have argued with one another for a long time without either being able to modify the other's position. It is that it is improbable that at any time they both professed the same sort of Christianity. They would always have needed to argue with one another about the appropriate linguistic mode in which Christian truth is to be expressed. It is not necessarily the case that truth is best expressed metaphysically; nor that the 'objective' reality of God may not be discovered via an 'interiorised' conception of religion.

The very title of the book takes a swipe at a brilliantly successful TV series and book which has presented just about the only material on religion which has come anywhere near the intellectual clout of Bryan Magee's series on philosophers. Brian Hebblethwaite's writing is as ever, elegant, lucid and beautifully organised, and he is trying to persuade us that the heart of traditional doctrine can be set out in terms which indicate its possible transcendence of any historical and cultural setting. The trouble is that the terms in which he commends the doctrine themselves can seem to float weightlessly and indifferently beyond the believer. The strength of his case (p.39) is to reconsider religious language and ritual as highly expressive modes of discourse and action. To say, however, that this is the only context that can be supposed capable of sustaining religious values in the world (to poach some more of his language) is to propose that we need sustained argument (which we do not have) for the central importance of appropriate liturgical forms, and should be to deny that 'metaphysical' philosophy is the right mode in which to signify 'factual' belief and divine transcendence. And it is all very well to talk of divine presence as 'grace', but like courage and hope, it is among the most neglected topics in theology, so it is no wonder if self-assertive making of value seems preferable. Women at long last have learned that being *derivatively* free and dependent, receptive and responsive in subsidiary creativity has hardly begun to solve their problems, so the position represented by Don Cupitt may exhibit the fact that males rumbled the point a long time ago.

Brian Hebblethwaite engages in a critique of Don Cupitt's eclectic scavenging among some of the most brilliant and complex writings of the last few centuries with Wittgenstein a primary bogy, and advances his own phalanx of theological realists in order to make a pincer-attack on Kant and Buddha as the two most important figures for Don Cupitt. What Brits make of either is again a problem, but what is even more fascinating is the values Brian Hebblethwaite expounds in his chapter on 'The grounds of theistic belief'. We may indeed agree with him about the importance of finding or creating things of surpassing beauty, and about the fact that human beings can and do manifest transparent moral goodness. We may rejoice in the evidence of affection, friendship, 'the ecstasy of sexual love' and 'the other-regarding, sometimes self-sacrificial love of the neighbour'. His commendation of theism unfortunately does not exhibit these values in their *lived* possibilities, and our present liturgical incompetence and indifference both to beauty and to ecstasy are all too powerfully manifested in the banalities of church life. It is Don Cupitt's sheer gusto and appetite for what is going on now that does as

much to commend his position as anything, not the strength or weakness of the formal arguments. Of course, Brian Hebblethwaite is right to think that 'objective theism' is central to the Christian tradition, and to comment in an appendix on the problematic status of Christian ministers who do not believe it. One of his most important paragraphs (p.145) includes his sense that it is the failure of Christians to live by or convey this truth that enables people to experience as *liberating* what he calls 'this pale, diminished shadow of authentic Christian faith'. Yet his own intellectual tradition at present seems to lack the capacity to re-present that authenticity as an exhilarating intellectual possibility and as a central element in 'joie de vivre'.

Ann Loades

For the Sake of the Gospel

Edward Schillebeeckx. SCM Press. 1989. Pp. x + 181. £9.50.

One of the most consistent complaints against western theologians is of their detachment from the practical life of the world. Words like 'academic' and 'university' are used of theology and theologians in a purely pejorative sense. Edward Schillebeeckx gives lie to this accusation in almost every page of this volume. The genre of the book first dispels any such criticism: it is largely sermons given, Sunday by Sunday, to a particular Christian community. Even where the pieces are longer and more sustained theological arguments, however, they remain rooted in the problems and questions raised by living the Christian life.

Schillebeeckx's homiletic style is a model for all preachers who wish to produce sermons based on biblical exposition. It is more didactic than the average English sermon style. The sermons often begin with a direct reference to the Gospel or to one of the other scripture passages used in the liturgy. This is not always the case, however, and virtually always the sermon's conclusion is applied. It relates to everyday realities of the Christian life. Schillebeeckx is effective, when he feels it is necessary, at painting something of the first century Palestinian landscape. He is effective also in describing the theological themes implicit in the minds of the biblical writers. Often, particularly in the case of his exposition of John's gospel, this exposes a latent existentialism in his thought. One might reasonably criticise him for falling into some of the same traps which ensnared Bultmann in some of his New Testament scholarship two or three decades ago. Also, on occasions, the morals to be drawn lack an allusive quality; they can be too obvious. In a sermon on the Johannine 'cleansing of the Temple' he asks rhetorically whether our Temple, that is the Church, needs cleansing.

This leads us into another area where Schillebeeckx cannot be attacked as pure theoretician. Throughout, the political implications of the gospel are crystal clear. This is true when he is expounding Luke's portrait of Jesus as 'the friend of the poor and the outcast'. It is true also in the more overtly political pieces relating to the 8th May movement in the Netherlands, which has been strongly critical of the Papal line on politics and the gospel with a defiant clarity. He notes at one point: '(God) gives a divine future to the goodness and justice people really bring about and have brought about here on earth in a fragmentary but real way'. Throughout the book, the commitment to God's Kingdom coming on earth as well as in heaven is explicit. He is always concerned, however, to make it clear that politics does not cover the whole of reality. The Church is also a mystical body. Spirituality and pastoral care are an integral part of what he believes the gospel message to be.

The comments which are critical of the Papacy are part of a wider concern in these writings for ecclesiology. Schillebeeckx has become well known for the radical implications of his writings on ministry in the Church. His concerns in these writings relate particularly to the notion of leadership in the Church. He points to the unhealthy pyramidal models of the Church, and argues instead for co-responsibility and conciliarity. He is particularly concerned that throughout the Roman Catholic Church there is a move away from the principles of Vatican II towards what he calls an anti-conciliar attitude. In his sermon on the Papal visit to the Netherlands he identifies two roots to this anti-conciliar movement. The first lies with the present Pope. It is the tendency, toward a personal charismatic centralised leadership. He writes: 'Moreover it is not just my impression but also that of many others that the manifold visits of the Pope implicitly bring with them an undervaluation of the local bishops and of what they think good in their situation for the believers who are entrusted to them.' This leads him to identify the second anti-conciliar root, in the collusion of the local bishops with this centralised model. They too undervalue the distinctive colour of their own local church.

This second point directs us to a corollary of Schillebeeckx's arguments on anti-conciliarity. This is implicit throughout the book and relates to the tension between the local and the universal. He is keen to emphasise the importance of retaining the local end of this tension. Undoubtedly this remains high on the ecumenical list of priorities, and it will certainly continue to be a significant issue in dialogue between Anglicans and Roman Catholics. Arguably, Schillebeeckx's favourite text throughout these essays is particularly relevant: II Corinthians 1:24, which he translates as: 'Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy.' For Schillebeeckx this is the conciliar text par excellence, the text for a co-responsible Church. Certainly Schillebeeckx's arguments on ecclesiology could bear much ecumenical fruit if taken seriously by both Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

The areas that we have mentioned focus Schillebeeckx's main concerns in this book. It would be an oversight, however, to miss out one further genre. This includes a number of pastoral biographical addresses. They include addresses on Dominic, Thomas Aquinas, Pope John XXIII and Cardinal Alfrink of the Netherlands. They also include a homily on the jubilee of his profession and that of Lucas Grollenberg. In each of these there is a delightful sense of the domestic, combined once again with sharp theological insights. Theology, pastoral discernment and spirituality remain part of one clear integrity.

Schillebeeckx's writing is always clear, warm and engaging. The sheer breadth of his academic achievement is remarkable. He is at home in philosophy, New Testament exegesis, pastoral theology and even historical reflection. Perhaps the criticism which springs most immediately to mind is Schillebeeckx's failure to criticise his own liberalism. That, however, may rather be a criticism of his own Church rather than Schillebeeckx himself. It is particularly a criticism of current Roman Catholic ecclesiology. The very centralisation which he attacks fails to engage with its liberal critics. Instead it snipes from under the cover of a fossilised and over-bearing tradition. The

paradox is that no-one reading this book could ever come away believing that Edward Schillebeeckx is ignorant of the tradition or uncommitted to it.

Stephen Platten.

New Religious Movements. A Practical Introduction

Eileen Barker, HMSO, 1989. Pp xxi + 234. £11.95.

On radio I once heard Eileen Barker being accused of being 'soft on cults'. There are also some Evangelical groups who fear that Dr. Barker's brain-child, Information Network Focus on Religious Movements (INFORM), fails to warn of the true dangers and heretical teachings of the cults.

Both these views of Dr. Barker's work strike me as unfair. A renowned sociologist of religion, Eileen Barker has taken the trouble to come out of the proverbial academic tower and write in beautifully constructed and literate English on the thorny issue of new religious movements (NRM's). She speaks from the Academy but to the general concerned reader: parents, relations, friends of members of NRM's and also for pastoral and counselling services.

Her book, *New Religious Movements*, which describes itself as a practical introduction, is not then for the academic audience, but for the general public. The fact that this practical guide is under the imprint of HMSO publications (and very handsomely produced it is too) indicates both the level of support that INFORM has from the Home Office, and also of the concern that governmental agencies have with the new cults.

The book has two aims. First to give some general background information about the NRM's, and second to offer some preliminary suggestions about what should be done when friends, relatives, parishioners (or whoever) become involved in a NRM.

Eileen Barker makes it quite clear in her introduction that she will not enter into theological controversies. Neither will she assume all NRM's cause irreparable harm. INFORM, the organisation she founded and directs, aims to give out clear information, put worried people in touch with support groups, and help point people towards counselling if it should be needed.

Of course the line between descriptivism and prescriptivism is a fine one. One wonders how Dr. Barker (who eschews theologising) does her moral philosophy? On what grounds can it be said that one movement is harmful but another is not? Eileen Barker is acutely aware of these difficulties (though as I shall later argue, I am not sure she adequately tackles them). She wants to play 'honest broker' between the cults and a worried general public.

I believe that there are two assumptions underlying both INFORM as an organisation, and *New Religious Movements* as a book. Assumption one, which I share, is that people who join NRM's are much like you and me. The idea that cultists are the weak or the dispossessed is not supported by empirical data. Neither can it be clearly shown that NRM members have a similar psychological profile.

I also share Dr. Barker's second assumption which, stated baldly, is the view that most people who join a NRM join voluntarily, and a great many voluntarily drift away.

These two assumptions are not based on blind prejudice but on familiarity with the field. In fact this familiarity leads to an overarching paradigm of Dr. Barker's work: the world of NRM's is so complex and diverse that it is impossible, at this time, to make sweeping generalisations about the nature and influence of such movements.

It is here that Eileen Barker's 'handbook' comes into its own. We are shown both in the main text and in several appendices the vast range of New Religious Movements and the syncretistic nature of so many of them. NRM's are a function of modernity that are made possible because of world travel, immigration, social pluralism, and the cross fertilisation of ideas. But Dr. Barker shows that whether we are looking at the so called human potential movements, the Unification church, or the neo-evangelicalism of the London Churches of Christ, we need to keep in mind that most of these movements are volatile. Perhaps of greater importance is the fact that most of them are also tiny.

Dr. Paul Booth, INFORM's executive secretary, told me that they are investigating some 80 movements many of whom have only a few hundred members. Very few have thousands of members in this country. Indeed the so-called house-church movement (which figures only in bibliographical reference) has more adherents than all (genuinely new) NRM's in this country put together. Given that her organisation certainly investigates them, one wonders why Dr. Barker does not say more about them in her book? Perhaps this is a question of definition of New Religious Movement (to which I shall return).

The fact, however, that Dr. Barker's practical guide to the cults demonstrates that most of them are tiny, and many dwindle away almost as quickly as new ones arise, enables us— the general public— to gain some sense of their social importance and moral danger. It is also no small matter to discover that whilst there are undoubtedly cults that can and do harm people, many of them are merely stopping posts for people on their way from crisis to crisis, or on their way to maturity.

This, of course, is small comfort to those families who have lost children to Scientology or the Unification Church, but it does help us to gain some sense of perspective when approaching the emotive subject of cults.

As a practical introduction to the cults, *New Religious Movements* is hard to fault; it is clear, informative, and as sensible as an English pair of brogues. I have two criticisms of the book, however, that I feel are not totally unwarranted. The first concerns the definition of the term New Religious Movement. This issue is ducked throughout the book and is not addressed (somewhat oddly) until appendix 2. When we get there I cannot help but feel that despite the fact that many things are said about this recent sociological nomenclature, the term New Religious Movement turns out to be barely more than a friendlier way of saying cult. It is not often clear how NRM differs from the sociological category of sect. This problem is compounded by the fact that in practice INFORM investigates not only some of the older sects, such as the 'Mormons,' and the newer sectarian style Christian movements, but also the more syncretistic Eastern/and or Western

non-Christian organisations.

Of course we may say, with some practical sensibility, that we are basically looking at religious movements since the Second World War. But how do we differentiate between a cult and a contemporary sect? Are Opus Dei, Restorationist House Churches, and the amorphous New Age Movement all to fit snugly under the rubric, New Religious Movement? I grant that this might be considered a pedantic criticism of a book that does not offer itself as an academic textbook, but if there are real problems with the explanatory power of the term NRM's, it would surely be better to deal with it straightaway in the introduction.

My second criticism is of a different order. INFORM as an organisation has self-consciously entered not only the information market, but the moral arena. As far as *New Religious Movements* goes Dr. Barker in her concluding remarks (pp. 137-139) offers a number of views which are contentious. Consider number 4:

> 'The vast majority of those who become involved in an NRM suffer no serious damage as a result of their involvement. Many will testify that they gain considerable benefit.' (p.137)

But how are we to measure this morally? Who is to decide issues of 'serious damage', and 'considerable benefit'?

And then in her fifth point Eileen Barker outlines what she italicises as potentially dangerous situations in regards to NRM's. Here they are (with some questions of my own in square brackets):

1 A movement cutting itself off (either geographically or socially) from the rest of society. [Could this not equally apply to monasticism?]

2 A convert becoming increasingly dependent on the movement for definitions and the testing of 'reality'. [Could this not also fit Sufism and The Salvation Army?]

3 A movement drawing sharp, unnegotiable boundaries between 'them' and 'us', 'godly' and 'satanic', 'good' and 'bad' — and so on. [Is not this what we find in Fundamentalist Islam, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Charismatic Christianity?]

4 Important decisions about converts' lives being made for them by others. [Buddhist and Christian monasteries would be apposite here.]

5 Leaders claiming divine authority for their actions and their demands. [St. Simeon the New Theologian, St. Francis of Assissi, Charles Fox, John Wesley, Jonathan Edwards, etc — not to mention Charles the First or Oliver Cromwell — could meet this charge. And certainly this would be true of St. Paul and Jesus of Nazareth.]

6 Leaders or movements pursuing a single goal in a single-minded manner. [Mother Teresa for example?]

My attempt to introduce a disjunction between the list of potentially dangerous situations and a list of people we might think ought not to exemplify them (but nevertheless seem to fit) is to highlight the problem of differentiating between problems of cults and the 'problems' of any religious (and perhaps political) organisations.

Indeed as Canon Martin Reardon has pointed out in his paper to the Anglican Board for Mission and Unity, pastoral guidelines need to be drawn up which should be normative for any religious movement whether new or old, traditional or cultic. (GS Misc 317. Gen Synod of the Church of England). Are New Religious Movements so different in their methodologies and techniques from charismatic Christianity in the Church of England? Is the Bugbroke Christian fellowship more demanding than Opus Dei? Is it more difficult to leave the 'Moonies' than forsake holy orders in the Roman Catholic Church?

Personally, I object to many so-called New Religious Movements on theological grounds, but moral grounds are more difficult to define given a commitment to religious toleration and freedom. If we are to establish a code of conduct for religious movements it runs the risk of a) encroaching on all religious freedom, or b) establishing a code which is for a pre-selected (and possibly arbitrarily selected) group of religious movements or cults. Given this, the issue of definition in regards to New Religious Movements is no small matter.

Eileen Barker is sensitive to most of these issues as a careful reading of *New Religious Movements* will show, but she is not always clear on them. The problem, it seems to me, is that INFORM, which informs the content of her book, is trying to be descriptive and yet cannot avoid being prescriptive on some matters. I applaud the boldness of this, and admire Dr. Barker for emerging from behind the safety of academic neutrality, and actually trying to help people.

New Religious Movements succeeds admirably on the level of information, and is a balanced and sensible approach to the whole issue of cultish religion. It is less convincing when it comes to defining for us what actually constitutes a new religious movement and how its dangers differ from other religious formations. Lastly, INFORM, it seems to me, needs a code of ethics which is not only even-handed — it is already that — but morally intelligible.

Andrew Walker

Irish Biblical Apocrypha. Selected texts in translation

Máire Herbert and Martin McNamara. T. and T. Clark, 1989. Pp. xxiii + 196.

Martin McNamara's introduction to these translations sets the texts in the context of the broader problems of classifying apocryphal material. The Irish material has still not been thoroughly looked at but it is possible to see the outlines of its history. A huge store of Christian mythical lore, based on Scripture and the Latin apocrypha, together with legends which came from the continent and eschatological and cosmic imaginings, was abroad in Ireland in both the earlier and the later Middle Ages; a proportion of that which disappeared or went underground in continental Europe continued to be used in Ireland, indeed to be held in respect, and employed with a freedom not found elsewhere. The Norman conquest in 1169 overlaid the traditional Irish apocrypha with new influences from the continent, and introduced a new era. But in the primitive material remained embedded what may be apocrypha of very early, perhaps of Eastern origin, which may have

arrived in Ireland by way of Visigothic Spain.

The choice of texts in this short collection has been determined by the need to represent Old and New Testament examples, and to cover the life of Christ, apocryphal acts of the Apostles and stories concerning Mary, with matter on the world to come. Some well-known examples are included, for the sake of balance, but an effort has been made to concentrate upon unfamiliar items. The translations are plain, but there are following notes, grouped together at the end. Because it is not yet possible to summarise the position, no attempt has been made to discuss textual questions in detail. There is, however, an outline of the issues which arise in connection with each text. This is a most valuable introductory volume to the genre. It would perhaps have been helpful to have included in the introduction an account of the relationship of these texts to miracle stories and other cognate genre.

And here and there a fuller apparatus would have been welcome. But the volume admirably serves its purpose of whetting the appetite and should prove a much-needed tool of research in this field.

G.R. Evans

BOOKS RECEIVED

Rubem A Alves *The Poet, The Warrior, The Prophet.* SCM Press Pp. 148.

Michael Banner *The Justification of Science and the Rationality of Religious Belief.* Clarendon Press Pp. x + 196.

Ian G Barbour *Religion in an Age of Science.* SCM Press Pp.xv + 299. £15.00

Fiona Bowie & Oliver Davies *Hildegard of Bingen, An Anthology.* SPCK Pp.xiv + 157 £6.99

David Brown *Newman -A Man for Our Time, Centenary Essays.* SPCK Pp.viii + 168 £5.99

James H Charlesworth (Ed) *Jews and Christians, Exploring the Past, Present, and Future.* Crossroad Pp.258. $19.95

Bruno Chenu, Claude Prud'homme, France Quere, Jean-Claude Thomas *The Book of Christian Martyrs.* SCM Pp.viii + 215 £9.50

Don Cupitt *Creation out of Nothing* SCM Pp.x + 213

Robert Davidson *Wisdom and Worship* SCM Pp. 148. £9.50

Sheridan Gilley *Newman and his Age.* DLT Pp.x + 485. £25.00

T J Gorringe *Discerning Spirit, A Theology of Revelation.* SCM Pp.vi + 144 £8.95

Kenneth Grayston *The Gospel of St John,* Epworth Commentaries. Epworth Pp.xxv + 177. £7.50

Basil Hall *Humanists & Protestants 1500 - 1900.* T & T Clark Pp.x + 380.

Morna D Hooker *From Adam to Christ, Essays on Paul.* CUP Pp.viii + 198.

Stanley L Jaki *The Savior of Science.* Scottish Academic Press Pp.vi + 260 £10.50

Kathryn Kerby-Fulton *Reformist Apocalypticism and 'Piers Plowman' - Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 7.* CUP Pp.xii + 256.

George Lawless, OSA *Augustine of Hippo and His Monastic Rule.* Oxford Pp.xix + 185.

Daniel Liechty *Theology in Postliberal Perspective.* SCM Pp.xiii + 114 £7.95

Ann Loades (Ed) *Feminist Theology: A Reader.* SPCK Pp. 340. £9.99

John Macken SJ *The Autonomy Theme in the Church Dogmatics, Karl Barth and his Critics.* CUP Pp.ix + 232. £27.50

Rex Mason *Preaching the Tradition, Homily and Hermeneutics After the Exile.* CUP Pp.ix + 235 £35.00

Dominique Morin *How to Understand God.* SCM Press Pp.ix + 117 £6.95

Aidan Nichols OP *From Newman to Congar.* T & T Clark Pp. 290 £9.95

Helen Oppenheimer *Marriage* Mowbray Pp.xi + 129 £5.95

Michael Pearson *Millennial Dreams and Moral Dilemmas.* CUP Pp.x + 328 £32.50

Heikki Raisanen *The 'Messianic Secret' in Mark's Gospel.* T & T Clark Pp.xvii + 289 £17.95

C S Rodd *The Book of Job,* Epworth Commentaries. Epworth Pp.xviii + 142 £6.95

Efraim Shmueli *Seven Jewish Cultures.* CUP Pp.xv + 213 £30.00

David BruceTaylor *Job, A Rational Exposition.* Merlin Pp.309 £16.95

Gerd Theissen *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity.* T & T Clark Pp.xiii + 210 £16.95

Hans Urs von Balthasar *Mysterium Paschale.* T & T Clark Pp.xi + 297 £19.95

Claus Westermann *The Parables of Jesus in the Light of the Old Testament.* T & T Clark Pp211. £8.95

Ben Witherington III *Women and the Genesis of Christianity.* CUP Pp.xv + 273 £8.95

John Ziesler *Pauline Christianity,* The Oxford Bible Series. OUP Pp.ix + 166

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Beverley Clack teaches Philosophy of Religion at Roehampton Institute of Higher Education.

John Clayton is Reader in Philosophy of Religion in the Department of Religious Studies, Lancaster University.

Brian Horne is Lecturer in Christian Doctrine at King's College.

Andrew Walker is Lecturer in Religion and Education at King's College.