

so much that is true, in terms of a primeval awareness of the rhythm of life and death, the mystery of harvest and the providence of sun and wind and rain, has somehow to be assimilated, and a beginning at least might be made with the things that men make—the cup that becomes a chalice, the handkerchief that ends as a maniple.

Of course, the place of the Indians in American life to-day, and, more specifically, in the life of the Church, can only be a note in the margin, and one does not suggest that the splendid churches of New York or Boston should take on an Indian 'style', which has no sort of relevance to the world of the Manhattan Irish. But the place of the sacred arts in the life of the Church is not a mere matter of arbitrary choice or taste: it is a figure of the Church's own understanding of the world of created good and of its need for redemption.

And so Aristotle, who had a shrewd sense of what cause and effect must mean, is an appropriate patron, not only for the Metropolitan Museum and the great collections, but for Christians quite particularly, if, that is to say, they look at the past, not with nostalgia merely, but as the dynamic inheritance that enables them to live for the future.

A Survey of New Testament Studies

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I.—*The Prayer-Book of the Primitive Church.*

From the early Church back to Jesus! If one were to sum up in one phrase the scope and purpose of modern New Testament study, this one, of Joachim Jeremias,¹ could hardly be improved upon. One starts with the primitive Christian community; for by the time the earliest of the New Testament writings was composed, numerous groups had emerged of those who believed the gospel and were already striving to live their new faith. The New Testament enshrines the traditions by

¹J. Jeremias: *The Parables of Jesus*, S.C.M. English translation, 1954, 18s.

which they lived. It was written in response to their needs, among them and for them. In that important sense the New Testament is their book, the 'prayer-book of the primitive Church'. These early Christian communities, springing up first at Jerusalem, then at Antioch, and then throughout the Roman empire, were striving to respond to a single historical event. What Jesus was, what he did and what he taught, these first Christians had received from 'eye-witnesses and ministers of the word' (Lk. i, 2). And we receive it from them. Under the Holy Ghost we depend upon them utterly for our knowledge of our Saviour. It can be said then that the reality with which the New Testament faces and challenges our world is a body of believers swiftly growing and spreading throughout the empire of Claudius, Nero, Vespasian and Titus, each single member of which has his gaze steadfastly fixed upon a human figure at a point slightly further back in history, a point not directly visible to us. The community as a whole is responding with all its life-force to what it sees of 'the Man on the other side of Easter Sunday morning'. And what does it see? Scientific methods evolved in the age of rationalism have taught many New Testament scholars of to-day to ask this question with rigorous scepticism; to remember that they are dealing not with the accounts of detached spectators, but with the sacred traditions of believers and worshippers, with the tenets of men who feel themselves personally involved in their own message, who are utterly convinced that they themselves are in process of being saved from eternal hell and brought to eternal heaven by the events which they record. The New Testament, such scholars insist, is not a history book but a prayer-book. How much of it therefore is objective fact about Jesus, and how much subjective interpretation superimposed by the primitive Church?

This was the question which liberal Protestants were putting to themselves about the turn of the century.² The task of New Testament scholarship as they saw it was to reach back beyond the theologizing of the primitive Church to the bare facts about 'the Man on the other side of Easter Sunday morning,' the Man who had inspired this tremendous movement in the most paradoxical way by dying a criminal's death on a cross. The Jesus of history was what they wanted, behind and beyond the Jesus of Faith. The grotesque results of this quest rarely survive to-day. The portrait, embarrassing in its absurdity and sentimentality, of

²Easily the best and most comprehensive history of New Testament criticism is W. G. Kümmel's *Das Neue Testament*, Verlag Karl Alber. Freiburg/München 1958. 78s.

a prototype of scoutmasters 'striding over the hills of Galilee' with all the moral earnestness of a nineteenth-century reformer still crops up occasionally in popular works on the New Testament. (Perhaps more than a touch of it is to be found in the introduction to Rieu's New Testament). But serious scholars have long recognized the impossibility of separating theology from history in Jesus. Indeed modern research on the New Testament could almost be said to begin with this abandonment of the 'liberal' quest for the natural hero behind the pious legend.

2.—*The Question of Eschatology*

It was Albert Schweitzer³ who led the way to this abandonment. Caustically, but not altogether unjustly, he accused the liberals of reconstructing their pretended 'historical Jesus' after their own nineteenth-century image and likeness. In stripping their 'noble ethical reformer' of what they regarded as the accretions of subsequent pious interpretation, they had denied to him, amongst other things, the element of eschatology, the doctrine of the last things, which figures so prominently in the gospels as they have come down to us. Schweitzer argues that this factor of eschatology, so far from being an expression of the early Church's piety projected onto her founder, was actually the driving force of Jesus' own mission from first to last. The true Jesus was a mysterious and compelling personality, possessed by the conviction that the eschatological and apocalyptic hopes of his People were about to be fulfilled in his own person. The present age was to end, and a new and glorious age was to begin with himself as its king. When he sent out the twelve to proclaim the advent of the Kingdom, he actually expected the end of the world to come before they returned. Disappointed in this expectation, he re-thought his message to fit the changed circumstances. The only way to realize the eschatological hope was through his own suffering and death as Messiah. This was his secret message to the twelve from Caesarea Philippi onwards. Henceforward he looked forward to his crucifixion and death as a predestined means of forcing the realization of the eschatological hope. He journeyed to Jerusalem and died in the belief that his death would be followed immediately by the inauguration of the eschatological age. God decreed otherwise. Thus Christianity originated in a noble delusion of its founder, inspired by Jewish apocalyptic and eschatology.

This delusion was shared by St Paul who, as a Pharisee, was subject

³A. Schweitzer: *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. The third edition (1954) of this classic has been reprinted by A. and C. Black, London, 1956. 21s.

to the same pre-Christian influence.⁴ At first he too looked forward to an imminent end of the present order. Subsequently however, as the expected consummation did not materialize, his eschatological expectation was transformed into the specifically Pauline mysticism. This consists in the fact that the cleavage between heaven and earth, eternity and time, is transcended for the believer so that 'in Christ' he lives in the heavenly dimension even while he remains on earth. This state of being 'in Christ' is achieved and renewed through the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist. Moreover the 'interim ethic' which Jesus had preached, envisaging only a period of months before the expected consummation, is now adjusted to the new mystical conception, and becomes an ethic of being *in Christ*.

For Schweitzer, it will be seen, eschatology is essentially and exclusively 'futurist'. Once the expectation ceases to be directed towards the future it ceases to be eschatological. This position has been radically modified by C. H. Dodd, who evolved a theory of realized—as opposed to future—eschatology. Christ was not deluded in regarding his own death and resurrection as the long-awaited eschatological event. At this point in the past the 'absolute' the 'wholly other' inserted itself into history; Jesus assumed the eschatological rôle of the Son of Man. In his Person the *eschaton* entered space and time. 'And as the Kingdom of God has come, and the Son of Man has come, so also judgment and blessedness have come into human experience. The ancient images of the heavenly feast, of Doomsday, of the Son of Man at the right hand of power, are not only symbols of supra-sensible, supra-historical realities; they have also their corresponding reality within history. Thus both the facts of the life of Jesus and the events which he records within the historical order are 'eschatological' events, for they fall within the coming of the Kingdom of God.⁵ The eschatological event then, has already taken place in Christ's incarnation, life, death and resurrection and has introduced the eschatological age in which we live. As constitutive elements of a single eternal reality, these events are present to all ages.

Immensely far-reaching and influential as this conception of realized eschatology has been, it has been fiercely criticized, notably by R. H. Fuller,⁶ on the grounds that it removes the essentially future reference

⁴A. Schweitzer: *Paul and his Interpreters*. A. and C. Black. London 1956. 21s.

⁵C. H. Dodd: *The Parables of the Kingdom* now available in 'Fontana Books' paperback series. 2s. 6d.

⁶R. H. Fuller: *The Mission and Achievement of Jesus*. Studies in Biblical Theology 12. S.C.M. London 1954. 8s. 6d.

in eschatology. Fuller contends that thus to place the eschatological event in the past 'destroys the cruciality of the Cross'. The events of Jesus' life and death did indeed constitute a divine intervention, but what happened then was related to the eschatological event as its prelude and prolepsis, as growing seed to harvest. It was not itself the eschatological event. It was a vital part of Jesus' message that that lay in the future, somewhere beyond his own life and death.

A rather similar solution is proposed by W. G. Kümmel.⁷ This author feels that Jesus predicted the End 'within the lifetime of his hearers' generation . . . It is perfectly clear that this prediction was not realized and it is therefore impossible to assert that Jesus was not mistaken about this'. Having established by critical methods that Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God both as a present and as a future reality, he finds these two apparently conflicting statements to be not merely reconcilable but complementary upon the view that ' . . . the approaching eschatological consummation will allow the Kingdom of *that* God to become a reality who has already in the present allowed his redemptive purpose to be realized in Jesus . . . in Jesus the Kingdom of God came into being, and in him it will be consummated . . . Promise and fulfilment are therefore inseparably united for Jesus and depend on each other; for that promise is made sure by the fulfilment that has already taken place in Jesus, and the fulfilment, being provisional and concealed, loses its quality as a *skandalon* only through the knowledge of the promise yet to come'.

The tendency to relegate to a secondary status the apocalyptic element in New Testament eschatology is carried much further by J. A. T. Robinson in his brilliant and influential study, *Jesus and the Future*.⁸ He discerns two distinct lines of expectation in New Testament eschatology. The first he designates 'inaugurated eschatology'. The climax of Jesus' ministry comes when he is received up into the presence and triumph of God, thence to pour forth his Spirit on all the Church. From this moment onwards Jesus exercises judgment and power over the whole earth, and will continue to do so until this age is brought to its final consummation in the complete reduction of all its powers to the authority which he has been given. The immediate sequel to his death and triumph was the ghastly events of the Jewish rebellion which ensued within the lifetime of many of Jesus' hearers. These could already be

⁷W. G. Kümmel: *Promise and Fulfilment*. Studies in Biblical Theology 23. S.C.M. London 1957. 12s. 6d.

⁸J. A. T. Robinson: *Jesus and His Coming*. S.C.M. Paperbacks. London 1957. 9s. 6d.

glimpsed from the closing years of his own earthly life. ' . . . This catastrophic climax is already seen and interpreted as an integral part of the coming of the Son of Man begun already in the ministry of Jesus'. 'Inaugurated eschatology' represents the authentic teaching of Jesus himself, and that of the earliest preaching and creeds of the Church. Subsequently it was overlaid and, as Robinson would hold, distorted by the secondary tradition of an apocalyptic Second Coming of the Son of Man upon the clouds of heaven 'with great power and majesty'. Whence did this arise? It arose mainly from the uneasy realization within the early Church that certain key elements in Old Testament eschatological prediction, as well as in the teaching of Jesus himself, had not really been fulfilled in the circumstances of his death and resurrection. 'As in the Old Testament, unfulfilled prophecy was to prove the father of apocalyptic; features in the traditional picture of God's coming to reign, combined with those in Jesus' own teaching which did not appear to have been accounted for, materialized into a second, mythological event still to be awaited'. It was this secondary apocalyptic tradition which influenced the early thought of Paul. Subsequently, as can be shown from his later epistles, he turned to the 'inaugurated eschatology' of the more primitive traditions, and so came nearer to Our Lord's own teaching on the subject.

Other scholars have modified Dodd's 'Realized Eschatology' in the same direction, so as to include in it a strong element at least of futurity. Dodd himself, in his later work, admits that the original formula is open to misunderstanding; and when Jeremias proposed 'sich realisierende Eschatologie', Dodd approved of, but declined to translate this modified version.⁹ It has subsequently been rendered 'Eschatology in process of realization'.

A more conservative position than those so far noticed is that of O. Cullmann. In his *Christologie des Neuen Testaments*¹⁰ he points out that the idea of an *intermediary* eschatological age ('eschatologische Zwischenheit') is already known in late Jewish tradition. To that extent the idea of a first coming inaugurating this intermediary age, to be followed by a second and final consummation, is less unprecedented than has often been supposed. Late Judaic speculation tended to divide world-time into three ages: before the creation, from the creation to the end of the

⁹C. H. Dodd: *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, Cambridge University Press 1953. 50s.

¹⁰O. Cullmann: *The Christology of the New Testament*. S.C.M. London 1959. 42s.

world, from the end of the world onwards to eternity. Christianity takes over this framework but places the 'Christ-event' ('die Christustat') in the centre of the second age, thus making it the central point of world-time as a whole. All that comes before it leads up to it, all that follows leads away from it towards that final supreme consummation already foreseen by the Old Testament and Judaism, but here regarded as the Second Coming of Christ himself.

Finally B. Rigaux¹¹ in a recent survey reminds us that the 'delay of the End' is at least as much an Old Testament as a New Testament problem. This seems to me an important point. It belongs to the very *genre* of Old Testament messianic and eschatological prophecy that predictions originally directed to the imminent future should later be projected into the far future and ultimately to the boundaries of space and time. One would not say that they were deluded or mistaken in their original formulation because of this subsequent adjustment. They were open from the first to this process of progressive 'eschatologization'. New Testament eschatology fits into the same framework. It finds a preliminary and intermediate fulfilment in the events of Christ's death and resurrection, the destruction of Jerusalem which followed within a few years, and the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost. Simultaneously it is open to and demands its final fulfilment in the events which are still to take place at the end of the world. Between these two points lies the 'eschatological pause' of the present age, during which the Kingdom of Heaven grows and works invisibly towards its predestined consummation under the power of the Holy Spirit sent by the glorified Christ. But what of the nature of this final consummation? Surely on any terms, even on those of Robinson's 'inaugurated eschatology', this can only mean in some sense a direct confrontation of the whole world with the glorified Christ as its irresistible overlord and judge. And if this is correct, does it not come very close indeed to what the apocalyptic passages describe for us in terms that are, no doubt, dramatic and figurative, and borrowed from a long-established stock of imagery, requiring special interpretation. When Catholics accept the apocalyptic tradition (which Robinson considers a secondary distortion) as inspired and true, they are not thereby committing themselves to a crudely literal interpretation of it. Rather they are accepting this description of the Second Coming, dramatic and

¹¹B. Rigaux: 'L'Interpretation du Paulinisme dans l'Exégèse Récente' in *Littérature et Théologie Pauliniennes*, Recherches Bibliques V, A Descamps et al. Desclée de Brouwer Tournai 1960.

highly coloured as it is, as the divinely chosen and adequate expression of that final consummation already predicted in the non-apocalyptic passages.

Russian Opinion

THE ORTHODOX AND THE COUNCIL

Last year, an article by Cardinal Bea in *Il Messaggero*¹ on the prospects for the forthcoming General Council came under severe criticism in the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*.² The Cardinal, who is, of course, the President of the Secretariate for Christian Unity in Rome, was censured in particular for his references to the Orthodox Church. He had referred, *inter alia*, to 'frequent internal quarrels' among the heads of the Orthodox Churches as a sign of their loss of true unity. In reply, the writer in the *Journal* naturally denied that misunderstandings are either frequent or serious, confessing with a sound plan for debate that those concerned are not therefore perfection incarnate.

There has certainly been some friction between Moscow and Constantinople in the last forty years, but it would be difficult to corroborate the Cardinal's remark as regards Orthodox Churches within the Soviet Union, since news of any serious dissension there would almost certainly be repressed by the Government as part of its present policy. As regards conditions within the Moscow Patriarchy alone, there were published recently in the *Journal*³ extracts from a circular on discipline, and there the faults listed for the bishops were hardly alarming: they inflict too severe punishments, which then have to be revoked; they try to palm off troublesome priests onto other dioceses; they employ too many officials; there is a tendency among the younger generation to easy living. Even if there were worse sins than these among the patriarchs themselves, it would still be difficult to prove that episcopal good manners are the exclusive or invariable privilege of those inside the Church, with for example Bishop Milner's behaviour in our own country to be explained.

More serious is Cardinal Bea's claim in this same article that the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption are contained in Orthodox liturgy and are generally believed by the faithful. The Cardinal is speaking through-

¹Text in *Documentation Catholique*, 15 January 1961.

²*Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*. 1961, 4.

³1960, 8, p. 52.