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CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY

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15th Annual Symposium on Exegetical Theology

“Biblical Eschatology for the New Millennium”

Tuesday, January 18, 2000

- 9:00 a.m. “‘Apocalypse Now’: Inaugurated Eschatology in the Book of Revelation.” Dr. Charles A. Gieschen, Assistant Professor of Exegetical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
- 10:00 a.m. Chapel
- 10:45 a.m. Formal Welcome and Introduction, Dr. Dean O. Wenthe, President and Professor of Exegetical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
- 11:00 a.m. “The Heart of the Apocalypses: A Teaching for All Times.” Dr. James C. VanderKam, John A. O’Brien Professor of Theology, University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana
- 12:15 p.m. Lunch
- 1:15 p.m. “Proleptic Eschatology in the Old Testament.” Dr. James G. Bollhagen, Professor of Exegetical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
- 2:00 p.m. “Tracing Eschatological Themes in Isaiah.” Dr. Walter A. Maier III, Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
- 2:45 p.m. “‘We are yours, O David’: The Eschatology of Chronicles.” Dr. Daniel L. Gard, Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
- 3:30 p.m. Coffee Break
- 4:00 p.m. Vespers
- 4:15 p.m. Short Exegetical Paper Sectionals. (Special Paper during sectionals: “Sophists, Other Secular-Minded Braggarts, and 1 Corinthians 4:6.” Dr. Gregory J. Lockwood, Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary)
- 5:15 p.m. Dinner

Wednesday, January 19, 2000

- 8:15 a.m. "Looking to the Past to See the Future: The Old Testament as Eschatological Portrait." Dr. Dean O. Wenthe, President and Professor of Exegetical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
- 9:00 a.m. "Eschatology and Lectionary." Dr. Douglas McC. L. Judisch, Professor of Exegetical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
- 10:00 a.m. Chapel
- 10:30 a.m. Coffee Break
- 11:00 a.m. "Eschatological Events in New Testament Perspective." Dr. Walter A. Maier, Professor of Exegetical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
- 11:45 a.m. Lunch

**23rd Annual Symposium on the
Lutheran Confessions: "At the Dawn of the
Third Millennium: Fanaticism,
Eschatology, and Death"
and the**

**13th Annual Symposium on the
Lutheran Liturgy: "The 250th Anniversary
of the Death of Johann Sebastian Bach
1750-2000"**

Wednesday, January 19, 2000

- 1:00 p.m. "Death and Martyrdom: Eschatology in the Early Church." Dr. William C. Weinrich, Academic Dean and Professor of Historical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary

- 2:00 p.m. "Eschatology and Fanaticism in the Reformation Era: Lutherans and the Anabaptists." Dr. Carter Lindberg, Professor, Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts.
- 3:30 p.m. Coffee Break
- 4:00 p.m. "Eschatology in the Theology and Music of Bach." Dr. Robin Leaver, Professor of Church Music, Westminster Choir School, Princeton, New Jersey, and Drew University, Madison, New Jersey.
- 5:15 p.m. Bach Cantata #106: "God's Time Is the Best Time." Schola Cantorum, Kantor Richard C. Resch, Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions, Concordia Theological Seminary
- 6:30 p.m. Dinner
- 8:30 p.m. Reception: Luther Hall

Thursday, January 20, 2000

- 8:30 a.m. "Pietism and Mission: Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Millennialism." The Rev. Lawrence R. Rast Jr., Assistant Professor of Historical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
- 10:00 a.m. Choral Matins
- 10:30 a.m. Coffee Break
- 11:15 a.m. "The Death and Resurrection of Jesus as Eschatological Event." Dr. David P. Scaer, Professor of Systematic Theology and New Testament, Concordia Theological Seminary
- 12:15 p.m. Lunch
- 1:45 p.m. "Eucharist and Eschatology." The Rev. Kurt Marquart, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
- 3:00 p.m. Coffee Break
- 3:30 p.m. "Liturgy as Eschatology." Dr. Arthur A. Just Jr., Professor of Exegetical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary
- 5:00 p.m. Symposium Reception and Banquet: Grand Wayne Center, 120 W. Jefferson Blvd.

Friday, January 21, 2000

- 9:00 a.m. "Sectarian Apocalypticism in Mainline Christianity at the Millennium's Dawn." The Rev. Larry Nichols, Pastor, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Greenville, Rhode Island.
- 10:00 a.m. Choral Matins—Dr. Dean O. Wenthe, Presiding
- 11:00 a.m. Questioning the Speakers
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch

Missing CTQ Issues?

If you are missing any back issues of the *Quarterly*, bring your list to the 2000 Symposia. Back issues will be sold—.50 for issues up through Volume 60:4 (October 1996) and \$1.00 for Volume 61 and after. Cash or check only, please. Some issues are limited in the number available.

Not coming to Symposia? Send your back issue request to the CTQ office, include a check for the issue total plus \$3.00 shipping cost (U.S. addresses), and we will send them to you. Please add \$6.00 for overseas addresses.

Demagoguery or Democracy? The Saxon Emigration and American Culture

Lawrence R. Rast Jr.

Lutheranism in America faced tremendous challenges in the first half of the nineteenth century. Already a numerical minority among American Christians, it entered the new century facing a developing religious culture with which it found itself frequently at odds. As the Baptists and Methodists rose and conquered the American religious landscape during the period between the Revolution and 1820, American Lutherans found themselves confronted with a series of choices, not least among which was how they would order their doings as churches or synods.

In 1857-1858, Wilhelm Sihler, first president of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, would advise pastors on how and how *not* to organize their congregations and reach a consensus on mission and ministry: “. . . not with the help of oratory or by organizing a party or by emphasizing the authority of your office not by forcing completed constitutions on congregations, but by discussing individual needs of the congregation and thus letting the constitution gradually grow out of the congregation.”¹

Some might consider Sihler's advice a formula for demagoguery, literally seeking to influence people by pandering to their prejudices and passions. It is not—a demagogue specifically uses oratory to create factions and parties among his hearers to serve his own ambitions. Others

¹Wilhelm Sihler, “Von Spaltungen in hiesigen lutherischen Gemeinden,” *Lehre und Wehre* 3 & 4 (1857-1858). Cited in Carl S. Munding, *Government in the Missouri Synod: The Genesis of Decentralized Government in the Missouri Synod* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947), 218.

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might call it democracy in action, because Sihler is not calling for the formation of parties. Still others might just call it common sense.

Whatever interpretation one adopts, it is well known and documented that strong democratizing tendencies were at work in American politics in the early national period.² In the early years immediately following the revolution against England, a second revolution changed the shape of American life—the radical democratization of American politics. The question was whether America would be a society characterized by republican virtue or by democratic individualism.

Briefly stated, republicanism, while stressing the rights of the individual, is ultimately oriented toward the community as a whole. The individual places the good of the community before his own desires should they come into conflict with one another, because that individual knows, in the end, that his service to the community will bring rewards to him and his family. Democratic individualism put the needs, wants, and desires of the individual at the heart of matters—sometimes at the expense of the community. When coupled with laissez faire economics, radical democracy provides the potential for the ultimate expression of selfishness.³

Where does the church fit into all of this? American Christianity also experienced tremendous changes in this same period. The context is critically important. The English colonizers of the United States were primarily of Reformed

²See, for example, Jean V. Matthews, *Toward a New Society: American Thought and Culture 1800-1830*, Twayne's American Thought and Culture Series, Lewis Perry, general editor (Boston: Twayne, 1991); Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City & the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850* (New York and Oxford: Oxford, 1984); Harry L. Watson, *Liberty and Power: The Politics of Jacksonian America*, American Century Series, Eric Foner, consulting editor (New York: Hill and Wang, 1990).

³Daniel T. Rogers, "Republicanism: The Career of a Concept," *Journal of American History* 79 (June 1992): 11-38; Christopher Laesch, *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics* (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1991); Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1955).

background—southern Anglicans, New England Puritans, and even the many pietistic sects of the middle colonies shared a tacit allegiance to Calvinistic theology and its characteristic doctrine of double predestination, if only in their rejection of it. Thus, even Jonathan Edwards, in the midst of the Great Awakening of the 1730s, gave all credit to God when he wrote his *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God* (1737). The awakening, thought Edwards, was God's work, brought about by the Holy Spirit through biblical preaching on the topic of justification by faith. Edwards' best-known sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," horrifies Lutherans for its complete lack of the gospel. Yet it is the work of a consistent Calvinist. Edwards could not preach the gospel indiscriminately. If God willed to convert, he would—if he did not, he would not.

Human nature is like a drunken peasant, Luther is reported to have said. Having fallen off the horse on one side, he gets back up and promptly falls off the other. Using Luther's analogy, the chief dipsomaniac of American Christianity and the Reformed tradition generally was Charles Grandison Finney (1792-1875). He helped institutionalize the theological shift from Calvinism to radical Arminianism. No longer did preachers see awakenings as being totally dependent on the will and grace of God; the new preachers believed in their methods. The correct use of the proper methods would necessarily bring about regeneration, which Finney defined as "a radical change of character." Finney and his followers strove to drive their hearers to the point of spiritual despair, and then to place the resolution of the matter into the arena of the hearer's free will—"God has voted for your salvation; the devil has voted against you; now you must break the tie; you must decide. The choice is yours!"

Couple this theological shift with the political and economic developments we have already noted, and the ingredients are all present for a second American revolution. American theology of the Arminian stripe, linked with market capitalism, linked with popular political democracy equals America. The emphasis is on the individual who seeks to serve his personal, individual desires. The only way to keep the all-consuming

desires of the individual from destroying the social fabric is through an elaborate series of checks and balances.

This process of democratization, along with its attendant system of checks and balances, is the subject of Nathan Hatch's enormously influential study, *The Democratization of American Christianity*.⁴ It was in the churches, argues Hatch, that the people forged their fundamental ideas about the nature of individual responsibility. The preachers of the day stimulated this defining process by seizing the opportunity to lead. They expressed their leadership primarily by organizing religious movements "from the ground up." They did so by using vernacular sermons based on the life experiences of their hearers, popular literature and music, protracted meetings, and, most importantly, new ideologies that both denied the hierarchical structure of elitist religions and promised to exalt those of lower status to at least an equal level with their supposed superiors.

The leaders were accepted because they challenged the people to take their personal destiny into their own hands, to oppose centralized authority and hierarchical conceptions of society. They empowered the people by giving them a sense of self-trust. As the people learned to trust their religious impulses, they in turn spoke out boldly in defense of their experiences. Common people exhibited a new confidence in the validity of their personal religious experience, and when they began to demand that religion offer an avenue to express this new found individualism, the American church was revolutionized.

According to Hatch, freedom from the domination of the hierarchical clergy required three steps. First, the new preachers refused to defer to the seminary-trained theologians. Second, they empowered the laity by taking seriously their religious practices, affirming and validating the people's experiences. Finally, they exuded enthusiasm about the potential for their movements, and the people caught the vision. "They dreamed

⁴Nathan Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

that a new age of religious and social harmony would naturally spring up out of their efforts to overthrow coercive and authoritarian structures.”⁵

In this context, Lutherans faced a series of choices that crystalized around, among other issues, the doctrines of church and ministry. What shape would the church take in democratic America? What authority do general, national bodies have over and against particular, local congregations? What is the relationship of the priesthood of all believers to the Office of the Holy Ministry? What is the ministry of the laity, or does it even have one?

These were the questions that faced Lutherans in America. This paper examines the Saxon immigrants who later formed the Missouri Synod, and discusses the influence that American political culture may have had on the structures they developed. We will find that the Saxons addressed these questions and fashioned a doctrine of the ministry that worked well within the democratizing context. Carl Vehse especially provided the direction that enabled the Saxons ultimately to confound the attempt to establish an episcopal form of church polity, and he did so by specifically appealing to democratic sentiments of independence as expressed in the American context. Coming out of a disastrous experiment with episcopacy, the people who formed Missouri were not about to allow a return to that form of polity. In fact, for a brief period they teetered on the edge of a pastorless anarchy. The question in both cases is simply this: was American democratic culture crucially important for the development of their thought and practice? I believe it was. Suffice it to say at least that America’s democratic setting gave Lutherans in general, and Missouri in particular, the freedom to erect institutions that embodied their answers these questions.

The Saxon Emigration and Episcopacy

The story of the Saxon immigration has been told often and well. Still, a brief rehearsal of its main features, chronology, and

⁵Hatch, *Democratization*, 10-11.

especially the documents and thought relating to Martin Stephan and the episcopacy will help provide a context to my comments and interpretation of the story.⁶

Lutherans in Prussia, Franconia, and Saxony, Germany faced difficult times in the early 1800s—conditions totally different from the freedom America offered. The various area governments established what was allowable in terms of both doctrine and practice, belief and worship. Confessional Lutherans were not free to believe and practice the truth as they had learned it from the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions; the state defined the limits of their freedom.

Two movements of thought defined their experience: Rationalism and Pietism. Rationalism placed human reason above God's word and argued that those portions of the Scripture that proclaimed Jesus' miracles or stressed God's intervention in ordinary life had to be legends made up by the human writers of the Bible. Human reason became the final judge of what was true and what was false. Unfortunately, God's inerrant and infallible word was no longer the final source of authority, and the Lutheran Confessions were scorned. Pietism grew out of Lutheranism. It criticized Confessional Lutheranism for what it argued was its "overemphasis" on doctrine at the expense of the Christian life. Pietists believed that it was more important what one did than what one confessed. "Deeds, not creeds" became one of the catch-phrases of groups influenced by Pietism. Further, it downplayed the differences of doctrine and practice between the Lutherans and the Reformed.

The dominance of Pietism and Rationalism made life very difficult for confessional Lutherans. Pietists and Rationalists were not willing simply to allow the Lutherans to worship in peace according to their theological convictions. They

⁶The standard histories that detail the events are Walter Baepler, *A Century of Grace* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947); W. G. Polack, *The Building of a Great Church* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941); and, especially, Walter Forster, *Zion on the Mississippi* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953).

demanded compromise. As early as 1798 Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia began to move toward a union of Lutherans and Reformed. On September 27, 1817 he pronounced that there would be only one evangelical Christian congregation at his court—Lutherans and Reformed would no longer be allowed to have separate gatherings. Not yet satisfied, though, in 1830 he issued the ultimatum that the name “Evangelical” replace the specific names “Lutheran” and “Reformed.” Finally, Friedrich Wilhelm mandated the use of a common worship service for all of Prussia in 1834.

In Saxony a group of theological students gathered around leadership of the great evangelical preacher, Martin Stephan of Dresden. Stephan had calmed the pietistic fears of these young men, including several who later were instrumental players in the founding of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod: Otto Herman Walther, C. F. W. Walther, Theodore Bünger, E. G. W. Keyl, and others. Their problem was a common one. Having read their Bibles well, they were quite aware that God wanted them to live good lives. Their dilemma was that they knew they did not live the life that the law demanded. Worse yet, their association with one another provided no comfort in their distress. C. F. W. Walter himself describes the reading practices of the group: “The less a book invited to faith and the more legalistically it insisted upon contrite brokenness of heart and upon foregoing complete mortification of the old man, the better a book we held it to be. Even such writings we usually read only so far as they described the griefs and exercises of repentance; when a description of faith and comfort for the penitent followed we usually closed the book, for, so we thought, this is as yet nothing for us.”⁷ There was no comfort—there was no hope. Finally, in absolute desperation, they wrote Pastor Martin Stephan who proclaimed the gospel of God’s free grace and favor to these pathetic, self-absorbed pietists, and the gospel set them free! They now rejoiced in the assurance that they were saved by Christ, not by their own works.

⁷Walter cited in D. H. Steffens, *Doctor Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1917), 42.

But all was not well in Dresden. The state interfered with Pastor Stephan's preaching and teaching. It is true that Stephan did at times flaunt the authority of the civil government and scandalize the populace. He met with members of his congregation at odd hours, sometimes meeting with married and unmarried women at late hours.⁸ Stephan and his devoted followers interpreted the government's interference as outright "persecution of the gospel," and, when they could no longer abide it, they formed a *Gesellschaft* (emigration company), which handled the arrangements for the move of over 700 Germans to Saint Louis, Missouri, and, eventually, Perry County, Missouri.⁹

One of the chief concerns of the *Gesellschaft* was the structure of the new colony—its polity—along with the needs of their pastor. "It was determined that the ecclesiastical structure of the colony would be strictly hierarchical. . . . Power was to be divided between the clergy and a privileged wealthy class of laymen, with the balance of power lying predominantly with the clergy. Within this ministerium, the final authority was to rest with 'the primate' or 'first divine,' Martin Stephan."¹⁰

When the *Gesellschaft* left Germany for the United States in November 1838, it appeared to many of the emigrants, at least as they later reflected upon the events, that Stephan's character changed. Some noted that he became surly and aloof. Further, he began to press for a recognition of his office as bishop of the soon to be planted colony. O. H. Walther drew up a statement of investiture through which Stephan would receive de facto rule of the colony both in its spiritual and temporal affairs. On January 14, 1839, on board the *Olbers*, "Stephan's Investiture," as the document came to be called, outlined the absolute obedience of the people to their bishop.

Your Reverence has, according to the gracious council of God, remained standing as the last, unshakable pillar on

⁸His indiscretions in this regard eventually led to criminal charges being filed against him. See Munding, *Government*, 76-77.

⁹Forster, *Zion*, 113-170.

¹⁰John C. Wohlrahe Jr., "The Americanization of Walther's Doctrine of the Church," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* (January 1988): 4.

the ruins of the now devastated Lutheran Church in Germany, to which all those have clung in the name of the Lord who have still earnestly cared for the right way to salvation, the true Church, and its holy Confessions. Among these there were also five servants of God's Word, by whom you were loved and honored as a spiritual father, and approached for counsel and judgment in all important matters which pertained to their own welfare or that of their congregations. Accordingly, you have already for a long time occupied the position of a bishop and performed episcopal functions among us. However, this has become even more apparent since the plan, considered according to God's Word, of transplanting the Lutheran Church from Germany to the United States has been put into execution. You have been recognized by all individual congregations and congregation members as the father of all, as highest shepherd of souls, and as leader; without the name of bishop you have exercised the office of bishop with paternal kindness, firmness, justice, care, and wisdom. Now that you are about to step on the soil of America, it becomes urgently necessary that this inner, tacit choice receive external and public expression. We have been instructed by you in many things, and from this instruction an abiding conviction has resulted in us that an episcopal form of polity, in accord with the Word of God, with the old Apostolic Church, and with our Symbolical Writings, is indispensable. Such a form of polity, in which a greater or smaller number of clergymen are subordinated to a bishop in the government of the Church and form a council with him and under his leadership, is therefore our joint, fervent, and earnest desire. It is also our abiding conviction that the real purpose of emigration, as it is expressed in Par. 2 of our Emigration Code, can be attained only under a free episcopal form of polity.

In consequence of all this, therefore, we approach you with the reverent, urgent plea: Accept, Reverend Father, also for the future office of bishop among us, bestowed upon you by God, and grant that we may now already express with

this name our unqualified confidence in your fatherly love and pastoral faithfulness toward us, and the assurance of our sincere, complete, and childlike obedience toward you.¹¹

Apparently, though, things did not go as smoothly for Stephan as he would have liked. It seems as though a goodly portion of the emigrants grumbled about the power granted to the bishop and the power and authority he held over their entire lives. Stephan continued to complain that he was not receiving the honor due him as bishop. Among those who were most unhappy with Stephan and who were openly criticizing him was O. H. Walther. On February 16, 1839, Stephan managed to extract reaffirmation of his authority from the clergy and laity. A significant part of this "Pledge" is a confession of sin/promise to do better statement by O. H. Walther.¹² In this "Pledge of Subjection to Stephan," the Saxon emigrants make two critically important points. First, they state again that episcopal polity is scriptural, apostolic, and confessional. It is the proper form of church polity.

We reaffirm with sincere hearts that we are determined to adhere steadfastly and firmly to God's Word and the old-Lutheran confession of faith. We further declare that we are determined to hold fast with heart and soul, to keep most faithfully, and to live, suffer, and die under the episcopal method of church polity, the introduction of which among us a beginning has already been made and which, when established according to the Word of God, has been used by the Apostolic Church, has been recognized by the true Church at all times, has been retained by the Lutheran Church of Sweden until this very day, and is in accord with the Symbolical Writings of the Lutheran Church.¹³

¹¹Forster, *Zion*, 288-289.

¹²His personal confession of sin against and pledge of obedience to Stephan forms the last section of the "Plan of Subjection." See Forster, *Zion*, 295-296.

¹³Forster, *Zion*, 294.

Second, they explicitly give Stephan authority over their spiritual and temporal lives, explaining that his rule in both spheres is necessary as the means by which they shall achieve eternal life.

Further, we solemnly pledge ourselves, as we have already promised by signing the Emigration Code, par. 3, to submit with Christian willingness and sincerity to the ordinances, decrees, and measures of His Reverence in respect to both ecclesiastical and community affairs, and not to regard them as an irksome yoke, but as the means of promoting our temporal and eternal welfare.¹⁴

One might think that Stephan had built an impregnable fortress around himself with these total submissions to his authority. However, his world was about to collapse. Shortly after Pastor G. H. Löber preached a sermon in which he commented on the sixth commandment, several women of the *Gesellschaft* confessed to sexual indiscretions of various sorts. All involved Bishop Stephan. The Saxon pastors, faced with allegations of the sort that lead to the removal of clergy from office, deliberated on how they would proceed. Apparently the evidence of his crimes was solid and compelling. Having considered the matter for almost a week, they opened the matter up to Carl Vehse, a leading layman, who urged immediate action. The pastors agreed. As the episcopal council of the colony, they would confront Stephan with his sin, and, if necessary, depose him.

On Monday, May 27, as they prepared to leave Saint Louis for Perry County and the confrontation with Stephan, the pastors delivered a document titled "Explanation" to the office of the *Anzeiger des Westens*, one of the main German newspapers in Saint Louis. When it appeared on June 1, 1839, it had more the sound of a confession than a mere explanation.

Only a few weeks ago we, the undersigned, felt constrained openly to reject the many evil rumors from Germany which had been directed against our erstwhile

¹⁴Forster, *Zion*, 294.

Bishop Stephan also at this place. Unfortunately, however, during the past few weeks we have made the discovery that we were the dupes of a deceit so shameful as to fill our hearts with horror and revulsion. Stephan was indeed guilty of the secret sins of immorality, unfaithfulness, and hypocrisy, and it was just to us that the unsolicited confessions were made which exposed him; we have immediately made the necessary communications regarding these confessions to others.

Since we have in the past defended this man through ignorance and in voluntary allegiance to him, therefore, now that God through His gracious providence has opened our eyes, we publicly renounce the reprobate.¹⁵

The story of the actual deposition of Martin Stephan is recorded by Carl Vehse in his *Stephanite Emigration to America*.¹⁶ In summary, Stephan refused to meet with the council—despised them in fact. For their part, some of the deponents refused to stay too close to Stephan for too long, lest he capture them again with his deceptive words. In the end, though they charged Stephan with sexual immorality and financial malfeasance, the actual basis for the deposition of their bishop was for an entirely different reason.

After you, Martin Stephan, erstwhile Bishop of the evangelical Lutheran congregation which immigrated to North America from Saxony, have been accused before the subscribed Council of the sins of fornication and adultery, committed repeatedly, and of prodigal maladministration of the property of others, also because you have become guilty of false doctrine, but on the other hand have not recognized the Council legitimately placed over you, have thereby not only evaded the investigation pertaining [to these charges] and yourself forfeited the right of defense, but have also, by rejection of the Council,

¹⁵Forster, *Zion*, 413.

¹⁶Carl Eduard Vehse, *Die Stephan'sche Auswanderung nach Amerika: mit Actenstücken* (Dresden: Verlagsexpedition des Dresdner Wochenblattes, 1840).

rejected the Word of God, the church, the office [of the ministry], and all divine order: we hereby declare by virtue of our office

That you have forfeited not only your investiture with this spiritual office, but also the rights and privileges of a member of the Christian Church, in the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Enacted in Perry County, at the mouth of the Brazo, May 30, 1839.¹⁷

The document is fascinating for both what it says and does not say. First, Stephan is accused of immorality and financial malfeasance. However, he is removed for false doctrine. And the nature of that false doctrine is rejection of the episcopal council (mainly clergy) “legitimately placed over” Stephan; the same body that had “invested” him. What we have here is a form of Lutheran “conciliarism”! Put another way, the Saxon clergy had no intention of displacing the hierarchy. They proposed to replace Stephan’s monarchy with a predominantly clerical oligarchy—a consistory of sorts.

This exploration and review of the literature of the disaffected Saxons shows, on the one hand, just how far they had initially entrusted themselves to Stephan. On the other hand, it suggests to the contemporary reader how pronounced the emigrants’ dismay and anger at Stephan’s betrayal must have been. His treachery certainly colored their later actions.

The Saxon Emigration and American Democracy

The power vacuum left by Stephan’s removal demanded to be filled. The first option, adopted by the clergy, was simply to replace the monarchy with an oligarchy. Now the clergy council would fill the place formally inhabited by the bishop. Fully committed still to the episcopacy, they saw no need to modify the form of polity in substance, only in the style of its administration.

¹⁷Forster, *Zion*, 418.

Others in the community, however, had differing ideas about the colony's future direction, particularly Vehse. Vehse had been a close confidant of Stephan in Dresden, where Vehse served as state archivist. One of the most highly educated of the laymen in the *Gesellschaft*, Vehse was quick to offer a different vision of the manner in which the colony should proceed. Where the clergy advocated a mildly modified status quo, Vehse insisted on an outright revolution. He submitted "Zeugnisse über das Predigamt," a set of six propositions, to O. H. Walther on August 5, 1839.¹⁸ In these he maintained the supremacy of the spiritual priesthood over the preaching office and argued that "the office of the ministry is only a public service and, only when it is committed to an individual by a congregation is it valid."¹⁹ Episcopal polity, he argued, was the cause of the Stephan debacle—it placed absolute power in the hands of sinful men and encouraged them to indulge their desires. Stephan was only one such case of many. And if allowed to perpetuate itself, the same would happen again and again. Who would be the losers in this new papacy? The faithful people of God, who would suffer under the tyrannical whims of their leaders.

Vehse, along with H. F. Fischer and B. Jäkel, submitted an expanded version of their position in the form of a "Public Protestation against the False, Medieval-Papal and Sectarian Stephanistic System of Church Polity" on September 23, 1839.²⁰ Turning the existing system on its head, Vehse argued that Scripture and the Confessions demand a congregational form of church government.

¹⁸Mundinger, *Government*, 96-97.

¹⁹Wohlrabe, "Americanization," 5. Vehse, *Emigration*, 114: "The office of the ministry is conferred by the congregation; the parson receives it from them, Col. 4:17. The ministers are not organs of the spiritual body in the sense that the body would die if they were cut off; the body lives on also when a preacher is lacking, for Christ is the only head of the church, and all life comes from Him."

²⁰This "Protestation" and other significant materials were later published by Vehse as *Die Stephanische Auswanderung Amerika*, noted above. The version here cited is Carl Eduard Vehse, *The Stephanite Emigration to America*, translated by Rudolph Fiehler (Tucson, Arizona: Marion Winkler, 1975).

Vehse divides the work into three chapters. In the first, he outlines “the rights of congregations over against the clergy in religious and churchly affairs.” Significant among these rights are the tenth: “congregations, as congregations, are in honor to be preferred before the clergy”; and the fifteenth: “the doctrine of the universal priesthood of all believers must be maintained as a bulwark against reassertion of papal authority.”²¹ The second chapter is divided into six sections in which Vehse collects statements from Luther, Spener, and other authorities on the church, polity, *Ecclesia representiva* (the church represented by the clergy), hierarchicalism, the Office of the Ministry, and the ministry of souls (its scope and limitations, that is, private confession).²² He rounds out the work with statements from Luther concerning the legitimacy of the emigration.²³

The real work gets done in the first part of the first chapter. By framing the discussion in terms of the “the rights of congregations over against the clergy,” Vehse immediately sets the two in an adversarial relationship. That the congregations are the higher or superior of the two is reflected in the fact that “congregations, as congregations, are in honor to be preferred before the clergy.” Finally, he plays his most overtly political card by arguing that “the doctrine of the universal priesthood of all believers must be maintained as a bulwark against reassertion of papal authority.” The language of a bulwark brings to mind the American system of checks and balances. The meaning for Vehse is clear—left to their own the clergy will always retreat to tyranny and papacy. Only the priests, the congregations, can check this from becoming a reality.

²¹Vehse, *Emigration*, 36, 37.

²²Vehse, *Emigration*, 37-40.

²³Vehse, *Emigration*, 40. Vehse had a twofold purpose in the document: first to advocate a congregational form of polity; and second, to convince the people that the emigration had been sinful and that all the participants should now return to Germany. This leads to an interesting question that demands an answer. Simply put, if the Scripture demands congregational polity how did Vehse expect to establish this polity in the hierarchical, consistorial state church of Germany? Vehse’s actions upon his return to Germany certainly need to be examined carefully.

The language of American democracy permeates the document. And yet, most Missouri Synod interpreters argue that the short time of the Saxon presence in the United States precludes any direct influence of American thought. A careful reading of Vehse shows otherwise. Carl Vehse was remarkably well informed as to the character of America. Clearly, the Saxons were absorbed by polity on the trip over, as their attempts to establish episcopacy show. It is absurd to argue that once the controversy with Stephan broke out that they would have failed to investigate other forms of polity, particularly the congregational polity that prevailed in so much of American Christianity. The examples lay all about them. Vehse himself wove together American and European themes as he discussed the polity churches should have:

It is to be recognized that where the church has its natural freedom, that is, where the government does not concern itself about it, as in the United States, the general outward church polity, the *potestas ecclesiastica* and the *jus circa sacra*, belongs to the congregation, . . . Such authority cannot in the least pertain to the clergy, since their kingdom is inward and not of this world.²⁴

He also says:

After all has been said, it is still a big lie to say that since the Reformation the clergy have been deprived of their rights – it is congregations that have lost their rights. The matter of concern here and now, since the church enjoys freedom in the United States, is not for rehabilitation of the clergy but rather for restoration to the congregations of their ancient rights so that the clear ordinance of God may be kept.²⁵

²⁴Vehse, *Emigration*, 54.

²⁵Vehse, *Emigration*, 56. Vehse considers the question as to why Stephan chose freedom-loving America, when he was an autocrat (3) : "It might be wondered that the spiritual despot Stephan chose to emigrate to the United States of North America, the freest land of the earth. But anyone who knows his deep disinclination against all intrusion of secular authority in churchly affairs will find it understandable that he chose precisely this nation, which

Noteworthy also is the fact that the preferred paper of the Saxons, the *Anzeiger des Westens*, was committed to the democratic party. C. F. W. Walther was a regular reader, and Mundinger claims that the paper was "read almost exclusively in his congregation, since the Republican *Westliche Post* was under the ban because of its anti-church attitude." Indeed, Walther himself was a member of the democratic party.²⁶

All of this is to say, simply, that if there was a demagogue among the Saxons, it was Vehse. His partisan rhetoric inflamed the passions of the Saxon immigrants and had as its goal to turn them against their pastors. He fostered an environment of party spirit that very nearly destroyed the Saxon community. The nature of his agitation was in the realm of polity, that is to say, he was politically motivated, all of his theological claims to the contrary. He set himself up as a leader of the disaffected, and insisted that nothing good could come out of the emigration—all should follow him back to Germany.

In Vehse we see Hatch's democratizing principles clearly at work. Appealing to popular sentiment by rejecting hierarchical structures, Hatch's democratizers raised themselves to positions of power by a threefold process: refusal to defer to seminary-trained pastors; empowerment of the laity; and offering enthusiastically a vision of what the people could accomplish themselves. Vehse fits the mold perfectly. Capturing Hatch's first and third points, Vehse criticized the university-trained pastors and offered a contrasting vision of how the minister should carry himself. "Here in North America the posture and entire relationship of the clergy toward the laity is so lively, free, and benevolent, and yet so mannerly and respectful that the pompous isolation of the German clergy, who increasingly devote themselves to their 'refined, artistic, pulpit oratory' and

concerns itself not at all about the church, but rather allows each individual the utmost freedom in such matters, before all others. Here he might, undisturbed by secular authority, carry through his medieval-hierarchical plan, even if the congregation with which he emigrated from Europe might have felt otherwise. Further, America offered adequate guarantees of freedom of person and property, and land was to be had for the taking."

²⁶Mundinger, *Government*, 207-208. One may see especially note 18.

to learned writing for the so-called literate people, . . . suffers sadly by comparison."²⁷ Second, he empowered the laity, arguing on the basis of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, that they held the keys of the kingdom immediately – pastors only mediately. Thus in his forty-fourth section he argues that “in emergencies a congregation may also have uneducated preachers. Examples are Ambrose and Augustine.” Again, in the forty-fifth section he states, “Such unlearned preachers, indeed even ordinary Christians, may in case of need administer the sacraments.”²⁸ Finally, he and his co-writers outline their vision: “whereas we now entirely reject the whole Stephanite system in its entirety and its parts which . . . was entirely contrary to pure Evangelical Lutheran teaching.”²⁹

Vehse’s understanding of Lutheran doctrine and its surest advocates is telling. He appeals first of all to Luther. His second source is Johann Arndt, proto-pietist, whom he claims is “the most significant figure” of the seventeenth century. Finally, the most significant Lutheran of the eighteenth century was Philip Jakob Spener, whom Vehse praises as a “leader of those last, truly zealous messengers of the Gospel, the Pietists.” His recommendation of these writers, two-thirds of whom are Pietists, is thoroughly effusive and unrestrained: “Whoever holds to these three sterling heroes of our church, whoever learns to know them intimately, and grows to understand them – will not go astray!” In contrast to the zealous Pietists are the “proud clerics” of the orthodox party. The contrast between

²⁷Vehse, *Emigration*, 136. Vehse does admit that his familiarity with the numerous denominations of America is “superficial.” However, his long discussion of the American character and geography belies his humility. One may see 23-25.

²⁸Vehse, *Emigration*, 86. Vehse’s argument that the laity may administer the sacraments in an emergency runs directly contrary to the teaching of C. F. W. Walther. Walther writes (*The Congregation’s Right to Choose Its Pastor*, translated by Fred Kramer, edited by Wilbert Rosin [Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary, n.d.], 107: “almost all orthodox Lutheran theologians declare that no layman should administer holy communion, and we heartily agree with them, . . . The reason is that in the case of the Lord’s Supper no genuine case of necessity can arise.”

²⁹Vehse, *Emigration*, 107.

the two groups could not be clearer. "The Pietists, in their controversies with the orthodox authorities which Stephan in later years ever more loudly invoked against the followers of Spener, were right in almost everything!"³⁰

Vehse's rhetoric appears to have carried the day, at least initially. The Saxon clergy found themselves in an impossible position. Vehse incited the people to party spirit. C. F. W. Walther left his congregation in Perry county, likely removed because the people had lost confidence in their pastors.³¹ Further, as Mundingner argues, Walther found himself compelled to address the claims of Vehse, and eventually chose to make Vehse's position the foundation of his teaching on church and ministry (office).³² At this point, Mundingner offers a suggestive interpretation:

In this extreme exigency Walther made a virtue of necessity and adopted a realistic course. He accepted the principles of church government which his lay opponents had gathered from the writings of Luther. To these he added from Luther certain provisions which safeguarded the dignity of the ministerial office: his transfer theory, the doctrine of the divinity of the call, the absolute authority of the Word of God, and the permanence of tenure.³³

Mundingner has it almost right. However, as demonstrated above, Walther was basing his argument at least in part on Vehse, who in turn based his argument on the writings of Luther, the Pietists, and the American setting. Over the next decade and a half, particularly in his theses for the Altenburg Debate and his *Kirche und Amt*, Walther solidified his position. He sought to avoid the extremes of both Stephan and Vehse, striving to affirm, in the wake of the two men, the autonomy of

³⁰Vehse, *Emigration*, 32.

³¹Mundingner, *Government*, 213.

³²One may see J. F. Köstering, *Auswanderung der Sächsischen Lutheraner im Jahre 1838*, zweite auflage (Saint Louis: Druck und Verlag von A. Wiebusch u. Sohn, 1867), 42-52.

³³Mundingner, *Government*, 213.

the local congregation, the advisory nature of Synod, and the dignity of the *Predigamt*.

The story of the Saxon immigration, the removal of Stephan, and the development of a democratic polity suggests a number of applications and conclusions. In the first place it is significant because a good deal of Missouri Synod historiography (one might say “all”) has argued that the polity developed by our forebears was drawn directly from Scripture and the Confessions without any intermediary. American culture had no influence on its development whatsoever. The result is an uncritical linking of polity with ecclesiology. This joining has left us open to the radical development of democratic thought in the twentieth century—a completely different context than the one in which Walther and his colleagues found themselves. Democracy in the postmodern setting does not carry within itself the ability to resist the will of the majority—what Alexis de Tocqueville called the “tyranny of the majority.”

In our time, radical congregational autonomy and rampant individualism characterizes much of Missouri. Perhaps part of the reason lies in the democratic nature of our polity. Any number of congregations and pastors push the logic of democracy beyond Walther’s boundaries and insist that because Synod is only an advisory body each congregation is free—has the right—to do what is right in its own eyes. Synod then becomes a collection or aggregation of absolutely autonomous entities. The nature of democracy is compromise. Walter Forster provides an accurate and fair description of Walther’s work:

What Walther actually accomplished in 1841 was, first of all, that he gave a new direction to a line of thought which had already been laid down by Vehse; that he eliminated a few of its extremes and thus developed a position far more acceptable to the reasonable elements in both major factions; and that he defended this theological standpoint and its practical application to life in the communities, with clarity and ability.³⁴

³⁴Forster, *Zion*, 521.

Consider the points that Walther brought to Vehse's system, those designed to protect the dignity of the ministerial office. First, the *Übertragungslehre* (the transfer or conferral theory of the ministry); second, the doctrine of the divinity of the call; third, the absolute authority of the Word of God; and fourth, the permanence of tenure.³⁵ Regrouping them, one, two, and four hang together, and are based on number three, the authority of the Word of God. But one need not look too far to see that the authority of the Word is under fire, even in so-called conservative congregations. Most Americans reject the inerrancy and infallibility of the Scripture. Our postmodern world argues that there are no absolutes whatsoever. Once that ground of authority is undermined, the *Übertragungslehre* ceases to be any kind of safeguard. Pragmatic logic says, "If we can give it, then we can take it back. Who is to stop us?" Finally, permanent tenure is compromised by unbiblical removals of pastors.

Ours is a day of "everyone a minister," of "divine disposal," of "contemporary worship." How well is our polity serving us at this point? Not particularly well, apparently. I submit, however, that the problem is not "Waltherianism" — the fault does not lie in Walther's doctrine of church and office as articulated in *Kirche und Amt*. The problem lies in the misinterpretation of the nature of polity.³⁶ Congregational autonomy has become an excuse for a congregation or pastor to do whatever it pleases. Synod is merely "advisory," having no

³⁵Mundinger, *Government*, 213.

³⁶Walther clearly believed that, while the doctrine of church and ministry was clearly settled in the Scripture and Confessions, polity was an adiaphoron. "It could very well be that there are times and situations when the church would benefit by placing decisive and governing powers into the hands of individuals or representatives. For example, who would dispute that the German consistories in their own time were a blessing to the church, . . . Anyone who knows a little history could not possibly deny that the Swedish church under its *episcopal structure* was gloriously edifying. . . . However, if we take a look at the situation *here*, we would be hard pressed to find an organizational structure better than that in which congregations freely rule themselves and yet join together to form a synod. . ." C. F. W. Walther, "Synodical Address—1848," translated by Paul F. Koehneke, *Concordia Theological Monthly* 43 (July-August 1972): 435.

say whatsoever in the affairs of its radically independent local congregations. This, I would offer, may best be described not as Waltherianism, but as Vehseism—radical individualistic congregationalism. And that anti-Waltherian understanding of polity threatens to rend the very fabric of our Synod.

Some would argue that the only solution to the challenges facing American Lutheranism, and by association the Missouri Synod, is a return to an episcopal form of church government. Such appeals miss the Lutheran point that adiaphorous political forms do not carry within themselves the ability to solve the problems facing an institution. Further, such efforts at reestablishing a hierarchy ignore the simple reality that we live in a representative republic that views such polity with, at the very least, suspicion. Put another way, democracy is a fact of our American existence. It is not going away soon. Democratic forms of church polity will remain. That is simply the way things are.

But democratic polity, for all its obvious problems, is not evil per se. The baggage it carries because of and in our secular, postmodern culture may make things difficult for the church. But that is the nature of life under the cross. Whatever else we may conclude, Mundinger's ultimate assessment of Missouri polity is striking in its historical implications: "The peculiar type of decentralized government adopted by the congregations which formed the Missouri Synod was different from any polity that had ever existed or was then existing in German."³⁷ In other words, the polity developed by the Missouri Synod was uniquely American—something of which we need not be ashamed. The question, though, is how best can this polity serve the whole church, clergy and laity, without pitting one against another, so that we may move forward into a second 150 years of faithful confession linked inseparably with a vigorous mission. The time is now for us to start coming up with some answers.

³⁷Mundinger, *Government*, 199.

A Critique of the Fourfold Pattern¹

David P. Scaer

A common life experience is that, as we encounter new things, we have the feeling of having already been there. Reading through the assigned chapter from *Theologia* was déjà vu. Somehow most of us have been there before. For me it is a journey taken several times, a path called by different names. Thus we have discussed whether the seminary was a graduate school or a professional school, never entertaining the option that it might not fit either category. Of course a seminary in the apostolic sense is defined in its relation not to academia but to the church. Not a church as organization with an administration, however, but a church, which in celebrating the eucharist demonstrates to itself and to the world that it is the body of Christ. Even the discussion in substituting the Master of Divinity nomenclature for the Bachelor of Divinity presumed that a seminary education was comparable to a secular graduate

¹From time to time educational institutions are required to undertake curricular review to insure that they are meeting the purposes for which they were established. In preparation for this process at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, which is essential to maintaining accreditation, several faculty members led discussion in September 1999 on six of the eight chapters of *Theologia* by Edward Farley (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983, 1989). Farley traces the development and reasons for dividing seminary studies into biblical, historical, systematic, and practical departments. Its subtitle, *The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education*, already suggests that division is inherently problematic and should be reviewed. Recognized as revolutionary in its critique at the time of its publication nearly twenty years ago, its call for a more holistic study of theology may have been largely unheard. This essay on chapter 6, "A Critique of the Fourfold Pattern," is based on the writer's own experiences with curricular changes at the seminary. Numbers in parentheses are pages in *Theologia*, should the reader want to pursue the topic in depth. This essay is offered as part of the dialogue on how theology should be done.

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school and hence deserved the appropriate academic degree.² One should not be surprised if eventually all fully qualified seminary graduates receive doctorates. It will be argued that seminary graduates should be given a title comparable to optometrists. A seminary program is certainly just as demanding as optometry, if not more so.

In each chapter of *Theologia* Farley presents the same theme from different angles—that the fourfold schema of biblical, historical, systematic, and practical theology should be reevaluated. Rather than reiterating this part of his discussion, I will present my own reactions based upon my tenure at this institution.³

Instead of calling this chapter “A Critique of the Fourfold Pattern,” it might have been called “Humpty-Dumpty After the Fall.” I look forward with anticipation to that gifted colleague who will follow me and collect the broken egg shells and miraculously reassemble them into a whole egg, preferably hard-boiled, so that the internal contents are more resistant to future scrambling. My task is not reassembling broken bread crumbs into a new loaf, but further grinding the crumbs back into the original flour and water. Apparently in some seminaries the only thing holding the fractured shells together is the nostalgia of the annual academic catalog and the four departments, each with its own warlords defending their boundaries. Not only has theology been divided into a pie of four pieces, but it has been splintered into “clusters of specialities” (139-141), each with its own set of literature (144).

Two items must reevaluated. First, why are there four departments? Secondly, are we aware that in many cases secular

²Some time shortly after John Tietjen became president in 1969, Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis sent out Master of Divinity certificates to all graduates who had the B. D. Coming shortly before Christmas, each arrived with a souvenir calendar with a picture of the recently constructed Luther Tower. The seminary at Fort Wayne soon followed suit in adjusting the curriculum for students already on the campus and requiring two additional courses for its alumni with the B.D.

³The author joined the seminary in Springfield in September 1966.

non-churchly disciplines are determining how theology is being done? We are paying the fiddler and someone else is calling the tune, and that someone else doesn't really care about and is not listening to our melodies.

My assignment on this September 1999 morning was anticipated by a May 1997 conversation with the Anglican bishop of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. After I had extracted from his episcopally consecrated Grace that he had been a Seminex graduate and hence had LCMS roots, I answered his query about my present duties as a teacher of systematic theology and New Testament (more precisely the Holy Gospels, particularly Matthew, of which it can be said that it was the most important book ever written). His curt and annoyed reply was to question how one person could teach two disciplines—an educational philosophy that has from time to time found footing in our midst and that I knew in an all too real way. No one teaching systematics should be allowed to teach New Testament, at least not without a request from the department entrusted with that duty. In August 1999, under more pleasant circumstances, an ELCA clergyman, who said he was cringing at the thought that Anglican bishops would be ordaining Lutheran pastors even as he was receiving the sacrament from Anglican hands, also wondered how one person could remain current in the literature of such two diverse fields as systematics and New Testament. He reflected the current academic philosophy that disciplines are marked off and governed by contemporary scholarly literature (139). Both conversations may be considered direct lineal prophecies of the chapter assigned by Mr. Weinrich and awaiting me. Even before reading the book, I knew what it was about, because I had lived it.

Farley's appraisal of each department guarding its own turf is really how seminary faculties look upon themselves regardless of whether they are liberal, Neo-Evangelical, or, in our case, confessional. Dividing, subdividing, and dividing that which is already subdivided is, however, not only the bane of theological study. The old joke is that after a young man had graduated from medical school, he did an internship in ear, nose, and throat. After he had completed his specialization, he

told his financially overburdened father that he intended to specialize further and concentrate on the nose. At this his father asked him which nostril would be his chief concern. With all the benefits of specialization in medicine, the specialist becomes virtually incapable of recognizing diseases in fields other than his own. We may have already come to this juncture in the study of theology where the theologian finds himself incapable of teaching others to preach and the preacher brags about his inability to do theology, especially in his preaching. He is practical, so he claims. Or, tragically, he finds himself intimidated by those who claim a theological expertise for themselves.

Fractured curricular thinking has been prevalent in our circles for some time as is evident by the accepted LCMS platitude that in today's terms Luther would have been an exegete. Such an assessment is not only cliché, but shallow, because it reads back into the sixteenth century a frame of reference that did not crystalize until two centuries later. In modern terminology Luther embraced all disciplines. He was as much a systematician (as evidenced by the doctrinal essays including three of the Lutheran Confessions) as he was an historian (as demonstrated by his extraordinary command of the ancient sources) as he was a practical theologian (who served for several years de facto pastor of Saint Mary's) as he was an exegete. He was as much the theologian in the pulpit and caring for sick and dying as he was in the lecture hall. The same assessment could be made for Melancthon, who, even without ordination, saw biblical studies in the service of preaching and, though a classicist, also wrote three of our confessions, most notably the Augsburg Confession. Trained in linguistics, he wrote the *Loci*, which is recognized as the first Lutheran dogmatics. To say that one clergyman is a practical theologian or a parish pastor and another is theologian is not only a disservice to our Lutheran heritage, but is exemplary of the disintegration of theology into autonomous and, in some cases, incompatible parts. Claiming a speciality uncovers a hidden arrogance on the one making such assertions for himself.

Farley calls particular attention to homiletics. Sermons begin with the original situation of the biblical text and proceed to the contemporary situation without "any theological appraisal" (144). Such preaching displaces church tradition, which in our case is the confessions and dogmatics. A sermon is so concerned with the listeners' needs—as if the pastor could really know this or be able to identify them even in a congregation of fifty people—that the sermon is anything but theological. In some cases we might discover that homiletics is treated as an autonomous discipline with its own rules of rhetoric and delivery. Saint Louis alumni might remember that in the 1950s sermon delivery was taught by a speech teacher who, without ordination, had never stood before a congregation or an altar. It was as much a course in calisthenics as pulpit gesturing. A speech in the Roman forum was in form no different than a sermon delivered by Peter in Jerusalem or Paul in Athens.

Homiletics attempts to find its closest link in the theological curriculum to biblical studies, but often the task proceeds without the input of historical theology and the unifying aspect of systematic theology (144). Perhaps in our case a student begins to learn how to preach without a fully formed sacramental theology and so his sermon can predictably fit a general Protestant genre. He could preach the sermon in a Presbyterian or Baptist church whose congregations would find it a familiar fare. A fundamentalism that claims an immediate access to the Holy Spirit through the text apart from the history of the church is raw biblicism and a spiritually arrogant denial of the creed's affirmation in "one holy catholic and apostolic church." Equally tragic, it does not do justice to the unity of Christian doctrine. The fragmented results of liberal exegetical thought in the nineteenth century were a negative cause in the rise to Neo-Orthodoxy in the twentieth century. It offered a relief to the fragmented biblical results by providing that unified theology that the critical scholars were incapable of producing. Today narrative theology may also have been looked upon as an attempt to provide a unified theology in the wake of form criticism, which fragmented the Gospels into molecules and atoms.

Throughout Farley claims that function and goals have long determined the courses that go into curriculum. No longer does the received tradition (confessions, dogmatics, history) determine the shape of the curriculum, but this is determined by asking what the church wants (127-128). Schleiermacher, you are still with us! Someone else will have to review how many times our seminary's curricula have been changed at the request of a synodical convention or board. Before reading Farley's analysis, many of us have known that our motor has been running rough and that some wires from the distributor cap have been attached to the wrong spark plugs. We have felt the disunity of the theological curriculum, but never really diagnosed underlying cause of the malady. For us, one practical but failed solution in a search for theological curricular unity has been team teaching, but this has more of the aroma of an administrator putting into practice principles learned in acquiring his degree. Team teaching did not come from the sense that theology is a holistic discipline and that it is not the sum total of its parts. Theology is built from the top down and not by assembling parts. For us, the theological totality is Christ whose perfect revelation and presence can be found for the believer first in baptism and at their zenith in the Lord's Supper. Unless we are willing to say this, any doctrine of the real presence is meaningless, a doctrine safely ensconced in dogmatics. Curriculum is a theological and not really an educational task. Education degrees may produce administrators, but they do not guarantee the quality of teaching or provide the unifying structure that the teaching of theology requires if it is to be a churchly discipline.

Farley's biting analysis in its extreme form fits all of the mainline and university-related seminaries and schools of theology, institutions that are intent on demonstrating their academic credentials. This attitude has attracted theologians at least since the Age of the Enlightenment. Thus in our time Bultmann's exegetical method was Heidigger's existentialism clothed in Lutheran terminology, especially the law and the gospel. Moltmann updated Hegel, and, by seeing a progress in history, was a philosophically distant cousin of Lenin. Tillich

was up front in using philosophy to clarify and vindicate the themes of faith (137). Contemporary systematic theology in nearly every case is a philosophy wrapped in biblical and traditional theological terms, a problem for novice students who believe that every word should have only one meaning. On the surface, Barth may seem to be saying nothing more than what was said by Reformation and post-Reformation theologians, but he was not. Any catalog of a major mainline denominational seminary will prove this point.

A review of the last forty years of our own seminary's curricula will indicate that, even though our theology has remained at the core of our seminary studies, we have not remained immune from the same knee-jerk approach to curriculum change that responds to contemporary currents in society and the world. A survey of curricular adjustment shows that functionalism or external factors, that is, what the church needs or wants, has been determinative in our adding and subtracting courses from the curriculum, never asking how this related to the Christological core of Lutheran theology. Current fads in the secular world determined adjustments to the curriculum. Feministic studies have found a central place in mainline denominational seminaries, play a major role in the meetings of the American Academy of Religion, and have invaded the Society of Biblical Literature. Our seminaries are among the few religious educational institutions where they have not been added to the constitutive core of studies. Of course, this involvement of secular courses in theological studies was proposed by Tillich and articulated by John Tietjen in saying that the world sets the agenda.⁴

In our own midst we are not asked to listen to what the world wants, but to what the congregations and the people want. When it comes to the teaching of the liturgics, the standard urged is what the congregations are doing or would like to do, even if their ideal services are indistinguishable from the Assemblies of God. The call comes that we are to listen to the

⁴John Tietjen, "The Gospel and the Theological Task," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 40 (June, July-August): 434-443.

people. No change in the curriculum has taken place, but a full court press has been set up on the seminaries. A few real life examples from our history prove the point. A course on ethics was added as a response to the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s. It did not evolve out of the basic premise of Christianity that loving one's neighbor was second only to loving God. Love of the neighbor is not an ethical principle suspended in a theological vacuum, but it is only the practice of sanctification, which in turn is the other side of the coin of justification. Justification in turn is the reality of Christology in the life of the believer. In turn, Christology is the perfect manifestation of God whose trinitarian existence is what love is all about. Not incidental to ethics is that the Father loves the Son and in response the Son loves the Father. The God who loves the Son and in the Son loves us invites us to respond to Him and to one another in love. In placing a course in ethics in the curriculum, such an Augustinian concept of God (which is also a biblical one) never entered the discussion. How ethics was viewed can be seen in that the first instructor assigned to teach that course was a specialist in Afro-American studies, called Black Studies then, and now pursues that discipline at Syracuse University. The content and shape of ethics were determined by the external environment. A later bifurcation led to two supposedly distinct courses, one on social ethics and another on theological ethics—an amazing distinction because in a seminary curriculum ethics must be theological and ethics by definition has to do with proper behavior in society. There is a kind of irony in the entire procedure, inasmuch as we were adopting a program of separating ethics from theology, which was a hallmark of both the Enlightenment and Schleiermacher, against whose theologies our seminary and its Synod were founded.

Let us pursue this helter-skelter approach to curriculum, since the inclusion of ethics is only one item. Several alleged cases of pastoral mismanagement brought a course on parish administration into the curriculum. One can assume that some successful business persons were annoyed by the lack of their pastor's organization and wrote some letters or formally

petitioned the Synod. After all, more and more church members saw the church as an organization that should be operated by sound business principles. And why not? One district lists as one of its officers a “vice-president for marketing.” Counseling as a profession—that is getting paid for doing it—was popularized in the wake of Sigmund Freud and soon found its way into the seminary curriculum. Already in 1950s psychology was required at one seminary and had become a norm in evaluating a student’s fitness for ministry. Like atoms doomed to splitting, another bifurcation took place. Crisis counseling was spun off like a subsidiary corporation. One of a minister’s obligations became helping people to live happy or holistic lives, content with themselves and their families. All this was done without paying attention to the words of Jesus that one’s enemies would be members of his own household.

After the statistical growth spurts in the late 1940s and 1950s which led to large church and membership increases, the Synod found itself afloat without the sweet trade winds of the Holy Spirit. (During the LCMS heyday, two congregations were opened every month and it seemed as if one-half the seminary graduates started a mission congregation.) When the statistical doldrums emerged in the 1970s, solutions were found by adding courses in evangelism and missions. Of course the evidence may prove that the proliferation of these courses corresponded to a statistical stagnation or decline. We have never examined the principles of witnessing in evangelization and mission work to see if they may have been taken over from the Baptists (who are often still revered as the evangelists and missionaries par excellence). Every pastor should be a Billy Graham—and some copied his style and others may have preached his sermons.

I do not know what crisis generated a course in parish education. Based on past additions, some pastor was thought to be a poor teacher and again external forces were directed to the seminary. Having this course taught at a seminary by a parochial school teacher assumed two things. One, that a pastor in teaching confirmands was essentially doing what the professional teacher was doing five days a week, which of

course, is not so. In making a commitment to the parochial school, the parents are legally required to have the children there. With a confirmation class the pastor must depend on the willingness of the children and really on the commitment of the parents, who may find soccer or ballet or violin practice more advantageous to their children's future. Secondly, in my memory, the philosophical assumptions inherent in the principles of education used by the professional educators were never analyzed. Education and its principles remain sacred cows, objective truths that stood above and outside of scrutiny. Proportionately decreasing incoming receipts to the LCMS headquarters almost led to a required course in stewardship. In the end the seminary was required to show that sound principles of stewardship could be found in the established curriculum. In all these cases—and there might be more—external factors determined what students were to learn.

In comparison with the curricula of mainline denominational seminaries, ours possesses an integrity. We, however, are not above reproach. The unity of theology has not determined our goals. External goals have been imposed on the curriculum. Past additions to our curriculum may be compared to decorating a Christmas tree with lights and ornaments placed to enhance the appearance of the tree, but that never become essential parts of the tree. In Farley's model the tree in some seminaries—perhaps most seminaries—has been replaced by a pole decorated with ornaments. In our situation too many ornaments may eventually weigh the tree down. The student is taught how to do it, but he knows less and less what "it" is. Function replaces essence.

Just how have we gotten to this situation where the auxiliary disciplines are considered more and more vital for the preparing of a pastor? Farley names Pietism and the Enlightenment as culprits, an assessment that may apply to our situation. Historically Pietism saw theology as a matter of the head and extrinsic to the true religion of the heart, which expresses itself best not in a regular practice of the eucharist but in personal devotions and the private gatherings of Christians. Public worship, especially the eucharist, took on the characteristic of an adiaiphoron, at least in comparison to faith. The

eighteenth-century Enlightenment amputated theology from the church and placed it in the university or the academy, as this sphere is some times called. As long as the seminary is seen only or even chiefly as an academic institution in this Enlightenment sense, then daily chapel services, for example, Matins and Vespers, and a weekly eucharistic worship, are not and cannot be integrated into the seminary life. Pietism detaches theology from faith and Enlightenment Rationalism isolates theology from the church by giving its responsibility to the academic world. Michael Horton, a leading conservative Reformed theologian, contends that a seminary does not have to or perhaps should not have a chapel because it is not church. In the Pietistic schema, theology, especially dogmatics, becomes an activity of the head and not of the heart. Theology informs neither faith nor the preaching to create faith and ultimately becomes peripheral to church life. Pietism's ripest fruits are ecumenical alliances where faith as an activity of the heart replaces theology as the core. In practice the Bible is seen as accessible to the uneducated as it is to those trained in the biblical disciplines.

Basic to the Enlightenment ideal is that the knowledge from and about God was essentially no different than other kinds of knowledge, all of which under the proper circumstances were equally accessible to the mind. In this arrangement, in which all forms of knowledge have an equal claim on the truth, theology or religion is pushed to the peripheral as a cultural phenomenon. So in some schools of the Concordia University System – as it is reported – the teaching of religion is assumed into other departments like the social studies, as if it were another kind of humanities course. In the new academic galaxy, theology comes to occupy the inferior position, a moon rotating around a planet, neither of which produces its own light. As a luminary in the scholarly heavens, its light is borrowed and reflected from the respectable sciences. It must be examined to see how this process was foundational in the curriculum of the Concordia Senior College (1957-1977) and taken over into the present university system.

Farley addresses seminary and not college curricula, but in our system the forerunners of our current colleges were founded as pre-theological institutions with “pre” serving only as a prefix to the important substance of “theology.” In reviewing the curriculum, we have to look at the legitimacy of “the fourfold pattern” of having separate, perhaps at times autonomous, departments of biblical, historical, systematic, and practical theology. This is what Farley’s book is all about. Eventually it may be more significant to be aware that secular disciplines, or as Farley calls them, the auxiliary disciplines, will completely control our theological agenda. Consider Farley’s judgment:

the auxiliary disciplines . . . provide the scholarly apparatus for the theological disciplines and which give them the character of “sciences.” Thus, we have linguistics, archaeology, history, ancient chronology, hermeneutics, rhetoric, sociology, psychology, and various philosophies. The satellite disciplines likewise contributed to the definition of each theological area, the result being that each area, while retaining its justification as part of theological study from the clerical paradigm, is defined by a designated subject matter, frequently a la literature, correlate with methods drawn from auxiliary, secular disciplines (128-129).

A closer examination of the record may find that my memory has a meager evidence for an all too mild critique.

Theology and the Great Tradition of English Bibles

Cameron A. MacKenzie

When I was a young man, on two separate occasions my father surprised me with gifts. I expected a present upon graduating from high school and then from college, but I did not expect the gifts that he gave me. On the first occasion, he presented me with a copy of the Concordia Triglotta and on the second, with a facsimile of the first edition of the King James Bible (1611). The surprising element on these two occasions was certainly not in the giver, my father; I knew well his commitment to the Lutheran Confessions and to the Holy Scriptures, especially in its Authorized Version. No, the surprise was entirely on my part—and I remember thinking upon both occasions: Now what am I going to do with that? And for some time I really did nothing at all with either except to keep them safe and sound—unread and unexamined.

But I suppose my father knew me better than I knew myself, or else the gifts themselves planted a kind of seed that would sprout some years later when I was called into the holy ministry and would pledge myself to the Book of Concord and later still when I would undertake the study of English Bible versions as a part of my service to the church at Concordia Theological Seminary. So upon reflection, both commitments seem rather natural or even providential.

Of course, what my father had done is what Christians are always doing—handing down the faith that they have received from others. But as each generation appropriates the Christian tradition, it not only receives, it modifies its heritage—emphasizes certain elements while neglecting others, reinterprets the faith according to its own circumstances, and, in sum, makes its own contribution to the story of the church.

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Describing, analyzing, and explaining not just the story, but the process that creates the story, is the task of a church historian.

My own particular interest in the broad sweep of Christian history has been the English Bible. It is a commonplace among Christians of all sorts that theology must somehow be rooted in the Bible. What is not always recognized, however, is that theology also shapes the Bible, that is, the Bible as most Christians experience it, the Bible in translation—and not only theology, but also values, beliefs, attitudes, and culture. For those who undertake to translate the Scriptures arrive at the task with certain commitments already about the nature and purpose of their work, and those commitments influence the outcome of their labors. So a central theme in my work has been to show the significance of such factors upon the form of English Bibles, that is, to analyze the various versions of the English Bible for what they reveal about the ideological or theological milieu in which they were produced.

For the most part, my work has focused on the sixteenth century, the first great period for the production of Bibles in English. This investigation is equally valid for the nineteenth century when the Revised Version was produced, and is still true today when the variety of English Bibles is greater than in any previous period. People produce new translations for reasons that are evident in the texts that they publish.

Furthermore, even today, some of the more popular versions are a part of the Great Tradition of English Bibles; they deliberately attempt to retain something of the language and diction of the Authorized (King James) Version. A careful examination of the editions that belong to this tradition reveals similarities and differences that reflect particular attitudes toward the divine word. In other words, the ongoing efforts to put the Bible into English without sacrificing entirely whatever it is that people admire or are accustomed to in the older versions have resulted in a family of Bibles going back to William Tyndale and extending to the New American Standard Bible (Updated Edition, 1995).

Each of these versions in its own way represents a reappropriation of the Christian tradition; but in each case the translators have approached the text with a double commitment—first, to the work of predecessors in the Great Tradition, but second, to what they believe is true about the Bible in their own situation. They may be motivated by concerns regarding the adequacy of the underlying Hebrew and Greek texts, or by the clarity of communication in the English text, or by the changing sensitivities of the English-speaking reader. In every case, however, they are convinced that the truth as they understand it no longer is found quite so readily in the earlier versions of the English Bible. So in reworking the tradition—accepting, modifying, or discarding it—they reveal their own fundamental commitments—intellectual, theological, and cultural.

The tradition itself begins not with the Authorized Version, but almost ninety years earlier with the work of William Tyndale, who inaugurated what we might call in the story of the English Bible, “the age of confessional Bibles,” the period that begins with the publication of Tyndale’s New Testament in 1525-1526 and concludes with the Authorized Version in 1611. This is, of course, the era of the Reformation when both Protestant and Catholic translators of the English Bible recognized that what they were doing and the way they were doing it were the results of their particular Christian confessions. Although Protestant versions dominated the sixteenth century, English Catholics subjected these versions to scathing criticism and in 1582 produced an English New Testament of their own, and in 1609-1610 also an Old Testament. The versions of this period, as well as what theologians said about them, demonstrate the importance of theological commitments to those who translated them.

But did it all begin with Tyndale? Tyndale, in fact, was heavily influenced by the great Reformer himself, Martin Luther. Many of Tyndale’s publications are a translation or paraphrase of a Lutheran original; and even in his translation of the Bible (the New Testament and major parts of the Old

Testament), though he worked from the original languages, Tyndale also employed Luther's German Bible.⁵

More important in terms of his Lutheranism was Tyndale's attitude toward the Scriptures. As is clear from the prologues, prefaces, and notes that accompanied his translations, Tyndale viewed the English Bible as a vehicle for teaching true religion, which he summarized in good Lutheran fashion as law and gospel:

All the Scripture is either the promises and testament of God in Christ, and stories pertaining thereunto, to strength thy faith; either the law, and stories pertaining thereto, to fear thee from evil doing. There is no story nor gest, seem it never so simple or so vile unto the world, but that thou shalt find therein spirit and life and edifying in the literal sense: for it is God's Scripture, written for thy learning and comfort.⁶

But how did such convictions regarding the purpose and message of the Bible influence the form of the translation? Did Tyndale's Lutheran convictions affect the words and phrases that appeared in his text? In the opinion of Tyndale's Catholic contemporaries and critics, the answer was clearly, "Yes."

Tyndale's first New Testament appeared in 1525-1526; and in 1528, Cuthbert Tunstall, bishop of London, licensed the humanist politician and Catholic apologist Thomas More to read heretical books for the purpose of refuting them. The result of that commission was a wide-ranging response to many elements in the Protestant program, including Tyndale's translation of the New Testament. More entitled his work, *A Dialogue . . . Wherein Be Treated Divers Matters as of the Veneration and Worship of Images and Relics, Praying to Saints and Going on Pilgrimage. With Many Other Things Touching the Pestilent Sect of Luther and*

⁵David Daniell, *William Tyndale: A Biography* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 111-124.

⁶William Tyndale, "Obedience of a Christian Man" in *Doctrinal Treatises*, Parker Society Edition (Cambridge: University Press, 1848), 310.

Tyndale, by the One Begun in Saxony and by the Other Labored to Be Brought into England.

What is it that Thomas More found so objectionable in Tyndale's version of the Bible? He did not reject the notion of an English Bible per se, but the specific version that Tyndale offered to the English-reading public. Further, while affirming the general value of a vernacular text, he objected to Tyndale's Bible as a deliberate perversion of the sacred word, prepared for the purpose of foisting heresy upon the unsuspecting:

It is . . . to me great mervayll that any good crysten man havynge any drop of wyt in his hede wold any thyng mervayll or complayne of the burnynge of that book yf he knowe the matter. Whyche who so callyth the newe testament calleth it by a wronge name excepte they wyll call it Tyndals testament or Luthers testament. For so had Tyndall after Luthers counsayle corrupted and chaunged it frome the good and holsom doctryne of Cryste to the devylysh heresydes of theyr owne that it was clene a contrary thyng.⁷

Although More went on to claim that deliberate mistranslation affected more than "a thousande textys" in Tyndale's work, the actual "mistakes" he enumerated were only seven. He charged Tyndale with having used the word "seniors" for the traditional term "priests"; "congregation" for "church"; "love" for "charity"; "favor" for "grace"; "knowledge" for "confession"; "repentance" for "penance"; and "a troubled heart" for "a contrite heart."⁸

Setting aside the question of accuracy, More was certainly correct in discerning a theological motive behind Tyndale's choice of terminology; for in each case, Tyndale avoided a term fraught with theological significance and instead used more neutral terminology. But the choice of a neutral term was itself

⁷Thomas More, "A Dialogue Concerning Heresies," in *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, volumes 1- (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963-), volume 6, part 1, 285.

⁸More, "Dialogue," 285-290.

an implicit rejection of traditional theology; and one can hardly fault More for supposing that Tyndale, following Luther in this respect, had stacked the deck against the Catholic position by choosing the terms he did. "Fyrste," More argued,

[Tyndale] wolde make the people byleve that we sholde byleve nothyng but playne scripture in whyche Ponte he taketh a played pestilent heresies. And then wolds he with his false translacyon make the people wene further that suche artycles of our faythe as he laboreth to destroy and whyche be well proved by holy scripture were in holy scripture nothyng spoken of but that the prechers have all thys .xv.C. yere mysse reported the gospell and englyshed the scripture wronge to lede the people purposely out of the ryght way.⁹

More's argument that Tyndale had employed a specific vocabulary in his translation in order to support Protestant theology is actually confirmed by Tyndale's response, an *Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue* (1531). Although Tyndale defended his terminology on philological grounds, as well as by citing both Erasmus (More's good friend) and the Latin Vulgate, he also readily admitted that he had chosen his terms in order to correct erroneous theological opinions.

For example, Tyndale argued that by using the word "congregation" instead of "church" the people would understand "the whole multitude of all that profess Christ" rather than just "the juggling spirits"; and he defended his choice of "repentance" over "penance" on the grounds that his opponents used the latter term to teach the doctrine of justification by works of satisfaction whereas the biblical text conveyed "Repent, or let it forethink you; and come and believe the gospel, or glad tidings, that is brought you in Christ, and so shall all be forgiven you; and henceforth live a new life." For Tyndale, Bible translation was a vehicle for teaching true

⁹More, "Dialogue," 290.

doctrine. Its vocabulary should reflect that truth and avoid confirming error, even if traditionalists were displeased.¹⁰

Although Thomas More affirmed the desirability of an English Bible in his debate with Tyndale, the English Catholic community did not produce one until well into the reign of Elizabeth.¹¹ Instead, English Protestants dominated the field, and Tyndale's pioneering work was soon superseded by numerous additional versions, which, while incorporating large measures of Tyndale's prose, also revealed somewhat different attitudes toward the Bible.

A product of Henry's reformation, not Luther's, Cranmer's prologue avoids any explicit reference to Protestant positions regarding justification or the sacraments and does not explicitly reject the piety of the old church. Nevertheless, Cranmer does contend for lay reading of the Bible on good Protestant grounds, the sufficiency of Scripture:

Here may all manner of persons . . . of what estate or condition soever they be . . . in this book learn all things what they ought to believe, what they ought to do, and what they should not do, as well concerning Almighty God, as also concerning themselves and all other.¹²

Cranmer, however, avoids spelling out the content of the faith ("what they ought to believe") and goes so far as to warn the Bible reader against "frivolous disputation" regarding the Scriptures. He does not want the vernacular Bible to become an occasion for religious dissent or social discontent. Instead, its purpose is to promote virtue. From the Bible, husbands, wives, children, and servants may all learn their duties; and "herein

¹⁰William Tyndale, *An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue*, Parker Society edition (Cambridge: University Press, 1850), 14-16, 23.

¹¹More, "Dialogue," 332. By 1533, however, More had changed his mind since he did not believe the times were right for an English Bible. One may see his "The Apology," in *Complete Works*, volume 2, 13-14.

¹²G. E. Duffield, editor, *The Works of Thomas Cranmer* (Appelford, Berkshire, England: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1964), 37.

may princes learn how to govern their subjects: subjects obedience, love, and dread to their princes."¹³

As the title page of the Great Bible indicates, those who authorized this version had in mind not so much a reformation in doctrine but the creation of a civil and obedient people. As the word comes from God (yes, He is there—above and smaller than the king), it passes to officials of both church and state who in turn mediate it to the people at the bottom of the page—men and women, young and old—who are all calling out, “*Vivat rex. God save the king!*”¹⁴ Ironically, then, the work of Tyndale who fled Henry’s England was used to promote Henry’s rule and power in England.

Perhaps closer in spirit to Tyndale were the Protestant exiles of Mary’s reign who used his and Coverdale’s work to produce yet another version of the English Bible, the Geneva edition of 1560. By that time, Geneva had become a center for Protestant biblical scholarship, especially under the influence of Theodore Beza.¹⁵ There, a team of English exiles led by William Whittingham, erstwhile scholar at Christ Church, Oxford, and soon to be Dean of Durham under Elizabeth, published an English New Testament in 1557, a psalter in 1559, and the entire Bible in 1560.

From the standpoint of the English text, their work is essentially a revision of previous English Bibles on the basis of the Hebrew and Greek (Tyndale’s work was their starting point for the New Testament and the Great Bible for the Old). The influence of Genevan Reformed scholarship, however, is clear

¹³Duffield, *Works*, 37-38.

¹⁴*The Byble in Englyshe...* (n.p.: Grafton & Whitchurch, 1539), title page. One may also see the bibliographic description in T. H. Darlow and H. F. Moule, *Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of the English Bible, 1525-1961*, revised edition by A. S. Herbert (London: The British and Foreign Bible Society, 1968).

¹⁵S. L. Greenslade, editor, *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, volume 3: *The West from the Reformation to the Present Day* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 62-67, 119-122, 441-445. One may also see Irena D. Backus, *The Reformed Roots of the English New Testament* (Pittsburgh: The Pickwick Press, 1980) for Beza’s influence on the English versions.

as well. John Calvin has replaced Martin Luther, literally, in the 1557 New Testament, which utilized as its preface a translation of a piece by Calvin prepared originally for a French Bible in 1535.

The 1560 complete Bible does not include Calvin's preface, but his theology permeates the book—in annotations, prefaces, chapter summaries, and even running titles on the pages and the index. Its notes affirm justification by faith, double predestination, *sola scriptura*, and total depravity, while papal primacy, the sacrifice of the mass, the cult of the saints, and the use of sacred images are all condemned. By reading carefully, the student of the Geneva Bible could learn everything he needed to grow in knowledge of the true, that is, Reformed, faith, to avoid falling into error and heresy. And, unlike the Great Bible, the reader might find encouragement and confidence even when opposed by the powers of the state, for not only do the Genevan notes affirm that "if anie command things against God, then let us answer, It is better to obey God then men," they also instruct the clergy to model themselves after Elijah in his dealings with Ahab: "The true ministers of God ought . . . to reprove boldly the wicked slanderers without respect of persons."¹⁶

Several years later another version of the Great Tradition appeared, the Bishops' Bible of 1568. Essentially a reworking of the Great Bible on the basis of the original languages, it was prepared for use in the churches of England by Elizabeth's first archbishop of Canterbury, Matthew Parker. Although still a manifestly Protestant work, including Protestant notes and prefaces, it was a far cry from the Geneva version. Official England pervaded the book, including portraits of the queen on the title page and of her two chief advisors elsewhere.¹⁷

¹⁶*The Bible and Holy Scriptures conteyned in the Olde and Newe Testament* (Geneva: Rouland Hall, 1560), annotations on 1 Peter 2:18 and 1 Kings 18:18. For the theology of the Geneva versions, one may also see Cameron A. MacKenzie, "The Battle for the Bible in England, 1557-1582" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 1991), 20-42.

¹⁷MacKenzie, "Battle," 105-130.

Already in the first years of Elizabeth's reign, then, there were two competing versions of the Protestant Bible, each incorporating Tyndale's work, but each also representing different versions of the faith. One hailed from Canterbury and articulated an erastian vision of Protestant religion that was dependent upon and perhaps even subservient to the state. The other was non-erastian, determined to spread its gospel by means of the divine word with or without the cooperation of the monarch.

Therefore, by the time King James authorized a new translation of the Bible at the outset of his reign in 1604, the history of the English Scriptures was already quite complicated. The King James translators had a variety of options before them, including a New Testament prepared by Catholic exiles in Rheims, France, during Elizabeth's reign. Naturally enough, however, they decided upon the official Bible, the Bishops' version, as their base—"to be followed, and as little altered as the truth of the original will permit." However, they also followed the Great Bible in eschewing all marginal notes of a doctrinal sort. Also like the Great Bible, the translators' preface is clearly Protestant in its attitude toward the Bible but does not spell out the content of the faith. Unlike both Rheims and Geneva, this version would not provide theological glosses upon the text.¹⁸

Still, the Authorized Version has a pivotal place in developing the Great Tradition, not only because of its popularity over so many centuries but also because of its attitude toward its predecessors. With the notable exception of the Catholic version, the translators for King James affirmed all of their sixteenth century predecessors as direct ancestors of their own work. In effect, they created the Great Tradition by specifying that "these translations to be used when they agree better with the text than the Bishops' Bible: viz., Tyndale's, Matthew's, Coverdale's, Whitchurch's [that is, the Great Bible], Geneva."¹⁹ Sensitive to

¹⁸Brooke F. Westcott, *A General View of the History of the English Bible*, third revised edition, (New York: Macmillan, 1927), 115.

¹⁹Westcott, *General View*, 116.

the charge of their opponents that Protestants were continually changing their Bibles, the translators responded, "Wee never thought from the beginning, that we should neede to make a new Translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one, . . . but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principal good one, not justly to be excepted against; that hath bene our indeavour, that our marke."²⁰

In this way, the translators embraced a tradition that included both Geneva and Canterbury, a tradition that stretched back eighty years to William Tyndale whose work continued to be the foundation of their own. Indeed, in their preface, the King James translators identified the work of their predecessors with the word of God. "Wee doe not deny, nay wee affirme and avow, that the very meanest translation of the Bible in English, set forth by men of our profession [that is, Protestantism] . . . containeth the word of God, nay, is the word of God."²¹ Ironically, then, Tyndale's work, designed to overthrow one tradition, had become the source of another tradition.

With the publication of the Authorized Version, for all practical purposes, the "age of confessional Bibles" in English came to an end and the next great period in the story of the Great Tradition of English Bibles would not emerge until the second half of the nineteenth century. By that time the intellectual climate was far different from that of the Reformation, so that the primary motive behind a new generation of English versions was the perceived need for an English version that was more accurate than the Authorized Version, especially in its underlying Greek text of the New Testament. Theology would continue to be a factor in translating the Bible but other issues would arise as well that would become even more important than the differences between Catholics and Protestants in accounting for differences in translations.

²⁰Alfred W. Pollard, editor, *Records of the English Bible* (London: Oxford University Press, 1911), 368-369.

²¹Pollard, *Records*, 362.

For want of a better term, we may call the period beginning with the Revised Version of 1881 "the age of scientific Bibles," since the principal motive behind the translations of this period often seemed to be contemporary and ostensibly objective scholarship in textual criticism, philology, and linguistics, rather than theology per se. Moreover, the fact that the translation teams that prepared the versions in this period were ordinarily cross-denominational is also an important indication of the declining significance of confessional commitments in the preparation of English Bibles.

The process resulting in the Revised Version began with a motion by the Bishop of Winchester in the 1870 Convocation of the Church of England to revise the Authorized Version "in all those passages where plain and clear errors, whether in the Hebrew or Greek text originally adopted by the translators, or in the translation made from the same, shall, on due investigation, be found to exist."

Convocation agreed and resolved "to invite the cooperation of any eminent for scholarship, to whatever nation or religious body they may belong." Thus, the revisors included members not only of the Church of England but also of other Protestant churches and even a Unitarian. A Roman Catholic was also invited, but he declined to participate. Scholarly credentials and not theological commitment were the criterion.²²

What motivated this revision was in large part a growing consensus in the academic and theological community that the underlying Greek text of the Authorized Version was not the original text of the New Testament. In the introduction to their work the translators indicated that "a revision of the Greek text was the necessary foundation of our work"; and among those who took part in the work were the eminent textual critics of their time, B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort.²³ For them, textual revision was not a question of theology either Catholic or

²²Westcott, *General View*, 320, 322, and F. F. Bruce, *History of the Bible in English*, third edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 134.

²³*The Revised New Testament* (Philadelphia: Hubbard Bros., 1881), "Preface," xii.

Protestant, but a matter of science, of human ingenuity applied to ancient texts in order to determine the authentic New Testament text from the many manuscripts available:

Since the testimony [to the NT text] is full of complex variations, the original text cannot be elicited from it without the use of criticism, that is, of a process of distinguishing and setting aside those readings which have originated at some link in the chain of transmission.²⁴

The decision to revise the text accounts for some of the more noteworthy innovations in the translation when the New Testament appeared in 1881, especially the absence of many familiar passages, such as John 5:3b,4 (the angel at the pool of Bethesda), Acts 8:37 (Philip's interrogation of the Ethiopian eunuch before baptism), and 1 John 5:7 (the Johannine comma). The revisers placed these passages and others in the margins of their work, because they had concluded that they were not a part of the original Greek text.

However, so great was their respect for the language of the Great Tradition—although not its textual scholarship—that the translators agreed not only “to introduce as few alterations as possible into the Text of the Authorized Version consistently with faithfulness” but also to “limit . . . the expression of such alterations to the language of the Authorized and earlier English versions.”²⁵ Instead of trying to modernize the vocabulary and grammatical constructions, these nineteenth century revisers produced a deliberately archaic version of the Bible, designed to sound like the Authorized Version, although departing dramatically from it in the underlying Greek of the New Testament.

Of course, not everyone was willing to accept a critical text or the ideological commitments from which they proceeded. Preeminent among those who opposed the Revised Version was

²⁴B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, *Introduction to the New Testament in the Original Greek*, reprint edition (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988), 1.

²⁵“Preface,” *Revised Version*, x.

John Burgon, Dean of Chichester, who offered an explicitly theological rationale for retaining the Greek text represented in the vast majority of extant manuscripts and undergirding the versions of the Reformation period. Since God was at work in His church preserving His word according to His promise, Burgon argued, we can be confident that the text used and found in the church is the right one. He wrote:

Profane literature has never known anything approaching it, and can show nothing at all like it. Satan's arts were defeated indeed through the church's faithfulness because, (the good providence of God had so willed it) the perpetual multiplication, in every quarter, of copies required for ecclesiastical use, not to say the solicitude of faithful men in diverse regions of ancient Christendom to retain for themselves unadulterated specimens of the inspired text, proved a sufficient safeguard against the grosser forms of corruption.

As for Westcott and Hort's heavy reliance on two fourth-century manuscripts, Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, the one neglected for centuries and the other only recently rescued from a monastery waste basket, Burgon responded, "We incline to believe that the Author of Scripture has not by any means shown himself so unmindful of the safety of the Deposit."²⁶

Burgon's argument for the truth ensconced in sanctified tradition did not prevail. Subsequent translations, done in our own times and by conservative scholars such as the New American Standard Bible and the New International Version, have been based upon texts established using the canons of contemporary textual criticism. The notable exception is the New King James Version. But even with respect to this last version, its New Testament editor, Arthur L. Farstad, has not proceeded along the lines urged by Burgon. Farstad wrote:

²⁶John Burgon, "Revision Revised" in David O. Fuller, editor, *True or False? The Wescott-Hort Textual Theory Examined* (Grand Rapids: Grand Rapids International Publications, 1973), 209, 213.

First the NKJV is an update of an historic version translated from a specific type of text. We felt it unwise to change the base from which it was made. . . . Secondly, in recent years the extreme reliance on a handful of our oldest manuscripts . . . has decreased. There is a greater openness to giving the so-called Byzantine manuscripts a fair hearing.

Farstad also pointed out that the vast majority of extant manuscripts support the readings of the *textus receptus*; but Burgon's argument from the providence of God at work in the church to guarantee the majority reading no longer appears.²⁷

In our own times, besides the New King James Version, other Bibles have also broken with the linguistic conventions of the sixteenth century while also attempting to retain something of the vocabulary and style of the Authorized Version. These include the Revised Standard Version, the New American Standard Bible, the New Revised Standard Version, and the New American Standard Bible, Updated edition. Besides accuracy in text and translation, these versions also valued familiarity—words and phrases, diction and style that had become traditional for the English Bible.

However, a major impetus behind several other translations appearing over the past thirty years or so has been the conviction that using “Bible English” of this sort fails to communicate meaning adequately to the contemporary reader. Such language fails the test of accuracy because it does not create the same linguistic effect on its audience as did the original upon the first audience to hear it. In other words, those who desire the most accurate translation—which is the principal characteristic of the age of scientific Bibles—must pay attention not only to the accuracy of the original text and to the peculiarities of Greek and Hebrew grammar but also to how one communicates in contemporary English.

Eugene Nida, one of the great proponents of such sensitivity to the intended audience of the translation, has written:

²⁷Arthur L. Farstad, *The New King James Version in the Great Tradition* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989), 110-111.

The competent translator actually goes through a seeming round about process of analysis, transfer, and restructuring. . . . The translator first analyzes the message of the *source* [sic] language into its simplest and structurally clearest forms, transfers it at this level, and then restructures it to the level in the *receptor* [sic] language *which is most appropriate for the audience which he intends to reach*.²⁸

This special attention to the language of the English reader of the translation has resulted in numerous versions that are independent of the Great Tradition of English Bibles. Versions ranging from the New English Bible to Today's English Version to the New International Version all aim at putting the Bible into the "current speech of our own time," or "in words and forms accepted as standard by people everywhere who employ English as a means of communication," or "clear and natural English . . . idiomatic but not idiosyncratic, contemporary but not dated."²⁹

Although the concern of such versions remains accuracy—just like the Revised Version—this new emphasis on the effect of the version upon its intended audience has perhaps sown the seeds for yet another generation of translations, so concerned with the contemporary reader that fidelity to the original has become secondary. I am suggesting that with the publication of the New Revised Standard Version in 1989 and the Revised English Bible in 1990, we have entered into yet another period in the story of the English Bible, "the postmodern age of English Bibles," in which translators freely reshape the biblical text to account for contemporary concerns not really present in the original.

Routinely, these versions employ feminist English rather than traditional forms and in so doing, they often change the grammar and the meaning of words in the original to

²⁸Quoted in Eugene H. Glassman, *The Translation Debate* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1981), 52; emphasis added.

²⁹New English Bible, New Testament, "Introduction," vii; Today's English Version, New Testament, "Preface," iv; New International Version, "Preface," viii.

accommodate certain cultural trends today. A fascinating example of this sort of Bible is the New Revised Standard Version, still another rendition of the Great Tradition. Like the Revised Standard Version of 1946-1952, the New Revised Standard Version is committed both to the latest findings of textual scholarship and to retaining as much of the old language as possible. According to its preface, "As for the style of English adopted for the present revision, . . . the directive [was] to continue in the tradition of the King James Bible, but to introduce such changes as are warranted on the basis of accuracy, clarity, euphony, and current English usage." Its efforts to accommodate the contemporary idiom, however, are strictly limited. And so Bruce Metzger, the chairman of its translation committee has written, "The New Revised Standard remains essentially a literal translation."

However, Metzger then added a significant exception, "Paraphrastic renderings have been adopted only sparingly, and then chiefly to compensate for a deficiency in the English language—the lack of a common gender third person singular pronoun."³⁰ Although this sounds like a grammatical point, it is actually an ideological one, since traditional English has been able to accommodate the meaning of the original for many centuries using the generic "man," "him," "his," "he," and so forth. And according to surveys and studies by Wayne Grudem, it still can.³¹

Moreover, it quickly becomes evident that the concern of the translators regarding gender applies to the original language as much as to the English. Consider, for example, the terms "son" and "brother," which are usually gender-specific in Greek as well as in English. Routinely, however, when these terms refer to fellow-believers in the New Testament, the New Revised Standard Version avoids translating them literally. Usually, "brothers" becomes "brothers and sisters" (one may compare

³⁰Bruce M. Metzger, "To the Reader," *The Holy Bible . . . New Revised Standard Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989), 8-9.

³¹Wayne Grudem, "Do Inclusive-Language Bibles Distort Scripture? Yes," *Christianity Today* (October 27, 1997): 27-32.

Romans 1:13; 7:1; 8:12; 10:1; James 2:1, 5, 14); but in James 2:9, "brother" becomes "believer"; and in Matthew 18, an erring "brother" becomes "another member of the church."

Similarly, "sons" usually becomes "children." This is even the case when a theological point is being made as in Galatians 4, where Paul argues that after God sent His Son, He sent the Spirit of His Son so that we—male and female alike—might be adopted as "sons." In the New Revised Standard Version believers have become only "children" by adoption, although Christ does remain a "Son."

Additional changes abound. "Fathers" become "parents" (Exodus 20:5) or "ancestors" (John 4:20); singulars become plurals (Psalm 1:1; 10:4; 14:1; Psalm 37:13); third person becomes first person (Psalm 37:23, 24); and in the Old Testament, "son of man" becomes "mortals" in Psalm 8:4, "O mortal" in Ezekiel 3:1, 4, 10, 17, and just plain "human being" in the critical "son of man" passage (Daniel 7:13).³²

Clearly, the New Revised Standard translators have sought to accommodate the Great Tradition to our current cultural climate, although not necessarily to promulgate some new theology. However, just as Thomas More noticed that Tyndale's version promoted Protestantism, it is evident that the accommodations of the New Revised Standard Version may have profound implications for theology, even if unintended. For if man is free to adapt the text of the Bible to the concerns of today, perhaps he is also free to adapt the doctrine of God that he finds in that text to those same contemporary trends. And indeed, that is precisely what is happening in one of the most recent editions of the English Bible, actually a special and even more culturally accommodating edition of the New Revised Standard Version, entitled: *The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version*.

³²For these and other examples, one may see reviews of the New Revised Standard Version by Paul G. Bretscher in *Logia* 3 (1994): 55-58, and John H. Stek in *Reformed Review* 43 (1990): 171-188.

Besides deciding to “replace or rephrase all gender-specific language not referring to particular historical individuals, all pejorative references to race, color, or religion, and all identifications of persons by their physical disability alone,” this version has also chosen to identify God as our “Father-Mother,” to call Jesus the “Child of God” not the Son and the “Human One” not the Son of man, and to minimize such expressions as “king,” “kingdom,” and “Lord.” Not the text itself, but the translators’ convictions about what the text should say account for such decisions. Openly, the translators refer to the “interpretive” character of their version, but that is hardly the same thing as faithfulness to the original text, which was the principal motivation of the revisers of 1881 and 1611.³³

Clearly, the concern of those who prepared the *Inclusive Version* was as much ideological as the Geneva translators or William Tyndale’s even if it does seem that the sixteenth century scholars were more respectful of the text. Nevertheless, both then and now, people’s convictions regarding the Bible and its place in the church have affected the form of that Bible in the English language. Even within the confines of the Great Tradition, a variety of attitudes toward the sacred text has produced a variety of Bibles. Protestantism, erastianism, textual criticism, antiquarianism, and feminism have all left their mark on the English Bible. Or should we say, “English Bibles”? For in leaving their mark on the tradition, ideology, culture, and theology, these have created distinct and differing versions of the sacred Scriptures in the passage of time.

For that reason, those of us who value what we have received from our fathers, not only on account of its familiarity but especially because of what it is, in this case, the word of God, will have a marked interest and concern for what in fact has been done with that heritage. Therefore, as a professor of historical theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, I pray that God will continue to bless my work not only in telling the story of the church’s past but also in participating in the

³³“General Introduction,” *The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), vii-xxii.

church's ongoing task of appropriating her heritage in a way that is faithful to the One who originally gave it. For, after all, when we use the Bible in English, we want to hear God's voice and not garbled echoes of our own.

Theological Observer

L'osservatore Romano

A complimentary copy of the weekly edition of the Vatican newspaper arrived on September 27, the day before the Public Broadcasting System offered a documentary on Pope John Paul II. Public television may be free, but the asking price for *L'osservatore Romano* is \$109 a year. This comes to slightly more than \$2.00 a copy, a price that may have forever prevented this newspaper from finding its way into the seminary library. With the Lutheran World Federation, including the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), making an accommodation with Rome on the doctrine of justification, curiosity about any real changes in the theology of either signatory to the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* is piqued. The word on the street is that Rome took the *Declaration* a little less seriously than their newly adopted Lutheran half-brothers have. In the thoroughly Roman Catholic countries like Italy, Spain and Ireland, the odds are that the resident population have little idea who Lutherans are and have not added the word "justification" either by works or faith to their vocabularies.

Many Christians, regardless of their denominational or confessional allegiance, would be hard pressed on their own to articulate a coherent doctrine of justification. Proof of this are the surveys sponsored by the fraternal insurance companies. Somehow a large number of Lutherans answer that they will be saved by leading good lives, which, considering the moral morass of the world at the turn of the millennium, is not without merit. Add to the mix the second last line of the Athanasian Creed, "And they that have done good shall go to life everlasting," and you have the recipe for confusion. Luther ejected James from the canon before he had time to consider that James, like the Athanasian Creed, was speaking in terms of the final judgment (one may compare Matthew 25) and not how we know ourselves now to be accepted by Christ, which can only be by faith. Anyone who trusts in Christ alone is justified, even if he does not use the word "justification" or misspeaks in defining it. Surveys on whether Lutherans really understand justification have value because they can evoke righteous indignation over these predictably wrong answers. These wrong answers sometimes find their way into sermons to show why Lutherans are not really Lutherans any more. But they prove little more than showing some of us are simply not at home with theological terminology. The fraternal insurance companies can release their pollsters with thanks. Those Lutherans who reached an accord with Rome on justification need not be concerned with

definitions, since they have already given their *imprimatur* to Rome's position, regardless of its current articulation.

Some ELCA theologians objected to the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* because, apart from the inadequacy of its wording, Rome did not come clean on the role the saints, and especially Mary, play in salvation. This was hardly nitpicking, since a year or two ago the pope backed away from conferring on her the honorific title of co-redemptrix, which would have brought disaster to Rome's ecumenical plans. But it was on his mind. Rome has not hesitated to assign Mary redemptive-like acts that the New Testament assigns to Jesus and the Holy Spirit. She serves as co-redemptrix *de facto* in every way except name. Official Rome cannot be held responsible for each act of that common Marian devotion which seems structured on native goddess worship of primitive cultures, but the problem is also current in modern countries. Upon returning from a sabbatical leave in Spain, the late Professor Otto Stahlke reported that an invocation was pronounced for a televised Mass "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Virgin Mary." More recently it came to light at a festive reception following a consecration for a Nebraskan that he received an emergency baptism in the name of "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph." Rome is not alone in misuse of the baptismal formula. *Forum Letter* reports that in the ELCA, occasional baptisms are administered "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Spirit—the Mother of us all." Choose your poison. Stressful situations may create forgivable aberrations, but the newly consecrated bishop was found not to be consecrated at all and had to receive all the appropriate sacraments again, beginning with a properly worded baptism. Anecdotal evidence can hardly be used to evaluate another church. We all live in glass houses. While Marian pollution of the trinitarian name may pop up here and there, we can be absolutely certain that such substitution formulas are never used in any of the baptistries within the walls of the Vatican. No aberrant formulae would ever find its way on to pages of official Vatican missals and printed liturgies. Would that the matter were closed, but it is not.

A letter from John Paul II printed in the September 1, 1999 edition of *L'osservatore Romano* attributes to the Virgin Mary qualities reserved in the Bible for the Holy Spirit. Under the title "Mary is Mother to all, Mother forever," the Roman Pontiff's open letter to the bishop of Sussa (Italy), says that "the goal of [Mary's] mission is to produce in believers the features of her first-born Son, . . . bringing them at the

same time to recover ever more clearly that image and likeness of God in which they were created (cf. Genesis 1:26).” We further learn that “the faithful know they can count on the heavenly Mother’s concern: Mary will never abandon them.” Just how are we to react? While her concern is appreciated, it would be better to hold with the New Testament that the Holy Spirit is God’s renewing agent and power to renew God’s image in us by bringing it in conformity with Christ. Christ promises that He, with the Father and the Holy Spirit dwells in believers and they will never desert us. We believe that we are surrounded by saints who experienced the same trials we do and they pray to God for us, but what counts are merits of Christ, who, with the Holy Spirit, is living in us.

The same issue of the Vatican newspaper contains prayers to the Virgin Mary, asking her help in facing life’s tribulations. She also is held responsible for the success of the evangelism mission in Sussa, Italy. Interested parties can locate the English edition of *L’osservatore Romano* in the library of the local Roman parish or diocesan office for additional references to Mary’s other accomplishments. Disturbing is that this Marian devotion is not simply of an ill-formed species of common piety, but comes from the pope’s pen. Lutheran signatories to the *Joint Declaration* must come to terms with the reality that Rome has not in any sense accommodated herself to Lutheran teaching on justification. Life goes on in Rome as if the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* had never been signed. It can be assumed that Rome signed simply to avoid tarnishing her ecumenical image in her attempt to bring Christian churches together.

Vatican II was ecumenically sanative by providing biblical arguments (whether we agree with them is another matter) and subordinating her role to that of her Son. Statues of her in newly constructed churches occupied a less prominent place. Enter John Paul II. Emblazoned on the Papal coat of arms in the lower right quadrant of the cross is a prominent “M,” symbolizing the theme of his papacy “*ad Jesum per Mariam*,” to Jesus through Mary. Granted, that God did come to the world through Mary, *incarnatus de spirito sancto ex Maria virgine*, but the pope has conversion and regeneration and not incarnation in mind. The role assigned by the New Testament to the Spirit is given to Mary. It hardly squares with “the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel . . . and keeps all Christians in the one true faith.” Now comes the PBS documentary on John Paul II, which is appropriately complimentary, as well it should be, and critical in an analytical sense. We hope that we do no less and recognize him as an

ally in insisting on an all male clergy and admire his courage in going to his native Soviet-dominated Poland. This led to the demise of its Communist regime and the dissolution of the Soviet Union and its hegemony over eastern Europe. We owe him something. Of concern is his devotion to Mary, especially when it appeared that Catholicism, especially in its American form, was backing away from it.

Psychological studies, especially the Freudian types, including what Erik Erikson did to Luther, are suspect and now outmoded. The whole matter, however, was opened up again by the PBS documentary on the present pontiff who is Polish, a country of profound devotion to Mary. Here was a link between the pope's devotion to his mother, who died when he was four months, and the woman he would later call "the mother of us all." Though he did not know his mother in any real sense, he kept a photograph of her holding him and one of him reading his poems at her grave when he was a teenager. Mary may have become the heavenly surrogate for the earthly mother he never knew. Psychological conclusions may never be completely convincing, but this one explains why the leader of an increasingly ecumenically sensitive church is willing to sacrifice that image for his devotion to Mary. Similarities between revering Mary as "Mother" and the "Mother" goddess imagery of the feminist movement are obvious even to some Roman Catholic scholars, who are willing to take advantage of a shared terminology. Traditional trinitarian worship of the Father and the Son may make any real accommodation impossible for Rome; however, the verbal equipment is in place.

Confessional Lutherans with a deep sense of incarnation have revived honoring Mary, at least through the three days set aside for this purpose in the church calendar. They see the real danger in church worship life not in an excessive awareness of the presence of the saints, including Mary, but in the transcendence of Reformed theology (*finitum non capax infiniti*). Still, the pope's devotion to Mary is minimally an embarrassment to us, not unlike Luther's own dilemma. His early devotion to her was tempered by her being revered as if she were a goddess, but what he experienced must have been mild in comparison to the excesses which the current pontiff has allowed for himself and encouraged among his flock. When he was wounded in Saint Peter's Square, he cried out "*Totus Maria ego sum*"—"Mary, I am all yours." As a model of faith who committed herself fully to God in becoming the mother of His Son, she occupies the place of honor among the saints. We Lutherans have no other choice but to join her in singing the *Magnificat* in making her faith our

own. To say anything less than she is *Theotokos* and *Mater Dei* is to fall into the error of ancient Nestorianism and its modern form in Reformed theology. To give her such deserved honor is even more necessary in the face of that destructive biblical criticism that challenges any idea that Jesus thought of Himself as anything special, including the Son of God. Ascribing her a role in our justification is an entirely different matter and something which the Lutheran signatories to the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* should have thought about before they put their John Hancock to the paper. Perhaps the next occupant in Peter's chair may be more circumspect in Marian language and devotion.

David P. Scaer

Regensburg Redivivus?

The *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* has been hailed by prominent Lutheran leaders as a "theological breakthrough." The maker of this statement goes on to claim that the *Joint Declaration* has "bridged a theological divide that has separated us for nearly 500 years."¹ A press release from the Lutheran World Federation asserts that the "document ends [the] 400-year dispute on doctrine of justification."² Other Lutherans have described the *Joint Declaration* as a "betrayal of the Gospel" and have said that it "represents a clear, stunning departure from the Reformation and thus is contrary to what it means to be a Lutheran Christian."³ The Roman Catholic Church has been able to add another feather in its ecumenical cap without backing away one inch from the Canons of the Council of Trent, which are as normative as ever for the Roman Catholic Church.

It serves the purpose of those who are advocates of this document to neglect history in their effort to "interpret" this event to their church. But history, as usual, cuts through the "spin" used by various church press agencies. It reveals the truth of what the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* is. The *Joint Declaration* is really not as

¹Bishop H. George Anderson as quoted in "Lutherans, Roman Catholics Prepare to Sign Historic Agreement," ELCA News Service Press Release, October 6, 1999.

²"LWF Council Unanimously Approves Joint Declaration with Roman Catholics: Document Ends 400-Year Dispute on Doctrine of Justification," Lutheran World Federation Press Release, June 16, 1998.

³President A. L. Barry as quoted in "A Betrayal of the Gospel," LC-MS News Service Press Release, October 18, 1999.

new as some would claim. Long ago, certain Lutherans and Roman Catholics came together to work out their differences. They produced and discussed a document. But at this time Lutherans were not quite so eager to settle for the ambiguity and sophistry that one finds in the *Joint Declaration*. This is a brief summary of the story of the Regensburg Colloquy.

In the late 1530s, at the height of the Reformation, Emperor Charles V attempted to bring the feuding religious parties together. From January 14-18, 1541, Philip Melanchthon met with Luther's old nemesis, Johann Eck, and discussed the Augsburg Confession. Following this meeting, unknown to the Lutherans, an agreement was developed at secret meetings held in the city of Worms. A draft of the agreement was drawn up and became known as the Regensburg Book. Martin Bucer sent the draft to Elector Joachim II and asked that he share it with Martin Luther, soliciting his opinion. Luther did not approve. Even Melanchthon referred to it as: "A Platonic republic."⁴

At the beginning of April, 1541, Luther heard the rumor that he supported the Regensburg Book. He responded with an angry denial, insisting that the Smalcald Articles must be the basis for any theological agreement. He asserted that unity in justification must precede any discussion of other issues. Luther said that if this was not how agreement was achieved, anything else would be patchwork. He further observed that there was really no large dispute anyway over matters of adiaphora, such as worship, since "a visitor from the Romance lands did not even notice that he was not in a Catholic church" when visiting the congregation in Wittenberg.⁵ It was therefore not of concern that such matters be discussed. What really mattered was the doctrine of justification.

The Diet of Regensburg began on April 27, 1541 and was based on the Regensburg Book. Melanchthon attended. Luther did not, for he had not been invited to participate. After much discussion, a provisional agreement was reached on May 2. The agreement stated that faith depends entirely on the imputed righteousness of Christ. The agreement went on to state that faith was active in love. The compromise put imputed righteousness first, but it did not clarify the relationship between faith and works in the process of justification. It used the essential Reformation phrase "through faith alone" only with

⁴Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther: The Preservation of the Church, 1532-1546*, translated by James Schaaf (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 219.

⁵Brecht, *Luther*, 223.

careful qualification by the Roman side. Contarini sent the compromise document to Rome, where it was rejected.

Elector John Frederick immediately forwarded the formula of compromise to Luther and Bugenhagen for their opinions. He expressed his concerns that the compromise seemed to admit of error by the Evangelicals. The elector wisely noted that the qualification of the phrase "justification through faith alone" was a negative development. Luther's response to the Regensburg compromise formula was not surprising. He viewed it as a collection of different points of view. He also observed that with the compromise both sides could claim that their concerns had been met. He asserted that the agreement would come apart over the doctrine of justification. For Luther the best way to express the doctrine of justification was by using Romans 3:24, 28: "They are justified by his grace as a gift. . . . For we hold that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law. . . . Let the devil, Eck, Mainz, Heinz, and anyone else rage against this. We shall see what they win." Luther maintained that clear distinctions had to be made "between the cause of justification and its evidence in life, that is, good works. Before God only Christ's righteousness was valid, not the righteousness within a person. God regards works as holy only for Christ's sake."⁶

The discussions continued. Melancthon refused to compromise. On May 22, the discussions fell apart. The news of the collapse greatly relieved Luther, as did the good news that armed force was not going to be used against the Evangelicals. In a final effort to achieve agreement, the emperor ordered a delegation to go to visit Luther in Wittenberg to seek his support for the four articles on original sin, justification, free will, and faith and good works that had been discussed at Regensburg. They were told to obtain assurance from Luther that he would tolerate the Roman position in regard to the other articles not yet discussed. It is clear that the emperor and others had a mistaken opinion about Luther's willingness to compromise. When Luther learned of the delegation that had been appointed to visit him, he said that it reminded him of his experience at the Diet of Worms in 1521 where he had been commanded to recant his position on the gospel.

The discussions between Luther and the Imperial delegation took place on June 10, 1541 in Wittenberg. Luther prepared a written response. Though he was highly skeptical, he was not opposed to

⁶Brecht, *Luther*, 225.

trying to work toward an agreement. He insisted, however, that the article of justification demanded careful scrutiny and genuine agreement prior to any other discussions. Finally, at the end of June, 1541, Elector John Frederick of Saxony asked both Luther and Bugenhagen for a specific statement on the Regensburg Book. Their response left no doubt in anyone's mind where they stood.

Luther insisted that before there could be agreement with Rome, the pope would have to admit that he had deceived many and led them astray. He said that the elector had to insist on the Augsburg Confession and the Apology. Luther said that making clear and careful distinctions is part of confessing the truth. He went on to assert that a true agreement between the two parties would require the Roman Catholics to "retract, condemn, and curse all their theology, their sentences, decretals, all the summists, bulls, letters, all foundations' and monasteries' doctrine and life, all popes', cardinals', and bishops' offices and character, along with everything that they have gained with this error, idolatry, blasphemy, and lies." Without this, said Luther, the agreement would only be a deception.⁷ Luther said that condemning the devil went along with faith and confessing one's sins. On July 12, the Lutheran representatives at the Diet of Regensburg submitted their formal response to the Regensburg Book. It was written by Melancthon (and was more mild than what Luther had written in his response). The Lutherans indicated that clarifications were still needed. They held to their position and did not yield, and forced the Roman representatives to speak with absolute clarity in regard to the issue of the relationship of faith and good works in the doctrine of justification.

What we have with the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* is a revival of the proposed compromise of Regensburg. The *Joint Declaration* is not an agreement, but a carefully worded document that permits both sides to maintain their respective positions. The key issue remains: is salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, totally on account of Christ alone, or is it a combination of faith and works. Rome has not changed. It insists that "eternal life is at the same time both a gift and a reward for merit and works."⁸ The difference

⁷Brecht, *Luther*, 227.

⁸Response of the Catholic Church to the Joint Declaration of the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation on the Doctrine of Justification, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents.

between Regensburg and the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* is that then the Lutherans rejected Roman error and ambiguity. This time they have permitted, welcomed, encouraged, and now have celebrated and hailed it as a breakthrough.

Writing to the Elector John Frederick, Luther noted how serious a matter the proposed compromise agreement was with Rome and why it was such an evil. "Whether those who issued it meant well in their conceited ignorance in doing so or not . . . nothing more injurious has been undertaken against us since our gospel began to spread."⁹

Luther is still right.

Paul McCain
Saint Louis, Missouri

On Being "Catholic" – Nothing New

Recent seminary graduates will often put into practice in their first congregations the things they learned at the seminary. At least we hope so. When these things have to do with liturgics, the all too frequent response is that these adjustments are "too Catholic." Standard seminary chapel services—what flew in Fort Wayne—won't play in Peoria, so it is said. For the record, seminary instructors often and severely admonish the students to respect the liturgical practices and standard operating procedures of the congregations that they are called to serve. These congregations will long outlast their pastors. Patience is perhaps the most difficult virtue for new pastors to learn. Avoiding confrontation will make it easier for the shepherd to care for his sheep. Problems will inevitably arise, however, if the sheep think that they are the shepherd in the form of a board or a committee, but that's another issue. It is the charge that this or that pastor is "too Catholic" that needs to be investigated, even though the absence of hard statistics suggests that these kinds of cases are isolated. We have never heard of a congregation raising a complaint because their pastor is "too Baptist" or "too Methodist." Generally American Protestants, including Lutherans, prefer that their pastors err on the anti-Catholic side of things. All this is a matter for another day.

Much of what is dismissed today as "too Catholic" is, in fact, good, historic Missouri practice. For example in the mid-1860s being

⁹Martin Luther, "Letter to the Elector John Frederick, August 4, 1541," *The Letters of Martin Luther*, selected and translated by Margaret A. Currie (London: Macmillan, 1908), 403.

"somewhat allied to popery" was a burning issue in American Lutheranism. The General Synod, founded in 1820 and generally given over to a lax form of Lutheranism in doctrine and practice, accused the "Old Lutherans," namely, the Missouri Synod, of being "too Catholic." The June 8, 1866 edition of the *Lutheran Observer* took note of the activities of the Rev. Dr. Wilhelm Sihler, a former president of the Fort Wayne Seminary (previous to its removal to Saint Louis in 1861) and still at that time pastor of Saint Paul Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne. He was described as "one of the most bigoted and exclusive of the 'Alte Lutheraner' Missouri Synod faction. He carries his narrow-minded, extreme symbolism to the farthest point." Pastor Sihler was found guilty of two sins. First, he had bound himself unconditionally to the Book of Concord (1580) in its entirety *because* it is a faithful exposition of God's word. (Horrors!) Secondly, he had placed a crucifix and statues of the evangelists in Saint Paul's sanctuary and used candles during the services. (More horrors!) The *Observer* took note of these tendencies and proudly proclaimed that "the churches of the General Synod do not burn wax candles, and erect crucifixes in their altars, and introduce other ceremonies somewhat allied to popery."

Sihler was not the only Missouri pastor "somewhat allied to popery," because candles, crucifixes, and statuary were commonly found in the Synod's churches at that time. The empty cross syndrome that was said to signify the resurrection had not caught on in the mid-1800s. Perhaps in one sense such items as crucifixes and statues are adiaphora where there are neither the artists nor the funds to produce them. But in the face of the Protestantism that had infected the American home-grown type of Lutheranism of the General Synod, they had become matters of confession. Sihler, Saint Paul congregation, and the other pastors and congregations of the Missouri Synod did not take the ax to what the *Observer* fondly called "popery" — they steadfastly retained such items and practices.

The Synod's first constitution spoke at some length on the issue of worship practice, seeing it as a significant element in the church's life together. In order to qualify for membership in the Synod, a congregation had to affirm "The exclusive use of doctrinally pure church books and schoolbooks (Agenda, hymnals, readers, etc.)."¹ Thus, the business of Synod was, in part, "to strive after the greatest

¹"Our First Synodical Constitution," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* 16 (April 1943): 3. References in the text in parentheses are to this article.

possible uniformity in ceremonies" (5). Noting, however, that differing practices did exist, the constitution went on to state: "If it is impossible in some congregations to replace immediately the unorthodox hymnals and the like with orthodox ones, then the pastor of such a congregation can become a member of Synod only if he promises to use the unorthodox hymnal only under open protest and to strive in all seriousness for the introduction of an orthodox hymnal" (3). The Synod literally required its pastors formally and openly to protest the erroneous practices of their congregations as a condition of membership! *Adiaphora* was not a good enough reason for not conforming.

Today the likes of *Forward!* and *Jesus First Leadership* (www.jesusfirst.net) frequently cite the Synod's affirmation that liturgical practice does not have to be uniform across the Synod. "Synod holds in accordance with the 7th article of the Augsburg Confession that uniformity in ceremonies is not essential; . . ." Selective quoting, however, misses the Synod's ultimate point; the constitution goes on to detail the nature and usefulness of uniformity in practice. "Yet on the other hand Synod deems such a uniformity wholesome and useful for the following reasons: because a total difference in outward ceremonies would cause those who are weak in the unity of doctrine to stumble; because in dropping heretofore preserved usages the Church is to avoid the appearance of and desire for innovations" (11-12).

We should recall the context of Lutheranism at the time of Missouri's founding. Much of American Lutheranism's practice mirrored that of Methodism, rather than historic Lutheranism. Thus, the constitution noted that

Synod deems it necessary for the purification of the Lutheran Church in America, that the emptiness and the poverty in the externals of the service be opposed, which, having been introduced here by the false spirit of the Reformed, is now rampant. All pastors and congregations that wish to be recognized as orthodox by the Synod are prohibited from adopting or retaining any ceremony which might weaken the confession of the truth or condone or strengthen a heresy, especially if heretics insist upon the continuation or the abolishment of such ceremonies.

Further, it takes up what was seen by many Americans as the symbol of popery, private confession and absolution. Its conclusions

might surprise some today: "Where private confession is in use, it is to be kept according to Article 11 of the Augsburg Confession. Where it is not in use, the pastor is to strive through teaching and instruction to introduce it" (12).

That Synod's congregations should be unified in their form of worship is assumed in the first constitution. Lutheran practice, historic and distinctive, is to characterize that worship—not the innovations of American religious culture. Further, it places the responsibility for correcting aberrant practice with the pastor. Yet it notes that proper practice can only be achieved through patient catechesis. "The desired uniformity in the ceremonies is to be brought about especially by the adoption of sound Lutheran agendas (church books)" (12).

When one couples our time's advocacy of a distinction between substance and style and telling the "other story of Lutherans at worship" with an inborn American distrust of Roman Catholicism, the consistent Lutheran pastor may find himself between a rock and a hard place. One temptation is to "pope" as one critic of the General Synod recently did.² That is no solution. A better approach is to affirm the "common consent of the pure Lutheran liturgies of the sixteenth century," and to link that with the patient catechization of our people in a distinctively Lutheran cultus. True Lutheranism will always be accused of being "somewhat allied to popery," but only in so far as popery affirms the catholic heritage of the church.

For the record, above the altar at Pastor Sihler's church today stands a statue of Saint Paul with a sword and another one of Saint Peter holding the keys. In the middle is a statue of Jesus with hands extended inviting believers to Him. On the front of the altar is a carving of Christ instituting the Lord's Supper and on the altar proper is a crucifix. Where are the four Evangelists? Their statues are on the sides of the pulpit.

Lawrence R. Rast Jr.

²David Gustavson, *Lutherans in Crisis: The Question of Identity in the American Republic* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993).

Book Reviews

Jesus and the Angels: Angelology and the Christology of the Apocalypse of John. By Peter R. Carrell. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 95. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. 270 Pages. Cloth.

One of the fruitful fields for the study of early Christology that has begun to be rediscovered and harvested by scholars is the use of angel traditions by early Christians in understanding and expressing the identity of Jesus. This is especially true in the study of the book of Revelation (for example, Robert Gundry, "Angelomorphic Christology in the Book of Revelation," *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* 33 [1994]: 662-678). Apart from the prominent Paschal Lamb Christology of chapters 4-7, Revelation contains several exalted depictions of Christ that evince a relationship to some of the varied theophanies and angelophanies of the Old Testament and other Jewish literature. Peter Carrell, in this revision of his dissertation work under James Dunn at the University of Durham, tackles the central questions of which angel traditions influenced John's recording of these visions of Christ in Revelation and why he used these traditions.

Before exploring the visions of Christ in Revelation that draw on angel traditions, Carrell devotes considerable space—almost half the book—to sampling from the vast array of Second Temple angel traditions. He examines the angelic figures in Zechariah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, as well as principal angels and angelomorphic figures found in later Second Temple Jewish literature. This essential survey of important texts reveals some weaknesses in Carrell's research. First, he marginalizes the foundational Angel of YHWH traditions in the Pentateuch, Joshua, and Judges by briefly noting them on only one page. Although there are not significant verbal correspondences between these texts and the visions of Christ in Revelation, the basic ideology that YHWH can and does appear in the form of an "angel" who bears the Divine Name is very significant for later texts, including the angelomorphic depictions of Christ in Revelation. Second, in his effort to contrast his own research with that of Christopher Rowland (one may see especially *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity*), Carrell fails to give ample attention to the significance of Ezekiel 1:26-28 for the Christophanies of Revelation. For example, he argues for the problematic position that the "man" of Ezekiel 8:2 is an angelic being distinct from the "man" on the throne in Ezekiel 1:26 who is the visible Glory of YHWH, and then asserts that Ezekiel 8:2 influenced John's recording of the visions of Christ more than the Ezekiel 1:26.

Furthermore, in spite of the relationship between Ezekiel 1:26 and Daniel 7:9, Carrell argues that the "one like a son of man" in Daniel 7:13 is angelic and not divine. Third, he perpetuates the understanding that first century Jews held to a "strict monotheism" that did not acknowledge that an angelomorphic figure could share YHWH's status, authority, or nature. These perspectives lead him to draw this flawed conclusion: "the angelology which influenced the Christology of the Apocalypse was, in all likelihood, an angelology in which an angel was an angel and not a divine being" (76).

Carrell's focus in the second half of the book is on three texts in Revelation: 1:13-16; 14:14; and 19:11-16. His discussion of the angel traditions John drew upon in recording his visions poses several interesting and enlightening possibilities (for example, the use of 1 Enoch 69 to understand the secret name in Revelation 19:12). He has the tendency, however, to emphasize angelophanic aspects of these visions of Christ without noting the substantial overlap of angelophanic and theophanic categories due to the many angelomorphic theophanies in the Old Testament. He goes much too far in this direction when he asserts that John may have been drawing on traditions about angelic humans with white hair, such as the one concerning Noah in 1 Enoch 106, when he depicted Christ with white hair in Revelation 1:14. His conclusion that John and his readers may not have specifically, nor primarily, matrixed the white hair of Christ with that of the Ancient of Days in Daniel 7 is very tenuous.

Carrell's emphasis on the angelic aspects of Christ in these visions does not mean that he thinks that John is presenting Christ as less than divine. He clearly recognizes the divinity of Christ in Revelation, but bases this conclusion primarily on the Lamb Christology and the worship of the Lamb alongside God. The only true theophany in Revelation, according to Carrell, is God on the throne in Revelation 4. Therefore, he stresses that the temporary aspect of the angelomorphic visions of Christ limits the ontological assertions that can be made about the Christology these visions depict. These temporary visions, however, were recorded in order to continue to depict Christ for the church, including something about his ontology. A preferable approach is to see the angelomorphic Christ of Revelation as the visible manifestation of YHWH in continuity with Old Testament theophanies. John's use of some non-theophanic angel traditions to record these visions does not marginalize this basic understanding.

In spite of his sensitivity to angelomorphic Christology, Carrell takes a cautious approach in his identification of other "angels." For

example, he is hesitant to identify any other angelic figure in Revelation as Christ, including the mighty angel of chapter 10. He, instead, identifies this mighty angel with the revealing angel of Revelation 1:1. Although he discusses the revealing angel in some detail, he does not see that the revealing angel can be identified as the angelomorphic Spirit because "the seven spirits before the throne" (Revelation 1:4) are also "the seven angels who stand before God" (Revelation 8:2).

Even with these criticisms, the basic approach of Carrell in understanding the Christophanies of Revelation in light of earlier angel traditions is commendable and significant. This monograph is an important piece that deserves to be read by those who want to further their understanding of these visions of Christ by examining the literary traditions John may have drawn upon as he recorded them.

Charles A. Gieschen

***Martin Luther: Exploring His Life and Times, 1483-1546.* By Helmar Junghans. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998. CD-Rom. \$39.00.**

In 1997 Concordia Theological Seminary was invited by the Lilly Foundation, along with twenty-nine other theological schools from around the United States, to participate in a program called "Information Technology for Theological Teaching." With the Wabash Center for Teaching Theology and Religion providing key leadership in the program, Lilly hoped to encourage seminaries of all traditions and situations to explore the ways that computer technology could favorably impact classroom teaching and learning at the Master of Divinity level. Lilly has since solicited grant proposals from forty other theological schools, the awards due to be made in the autumn of 1999. Once these awards are made, seventy of the approximately 210 theological schools in North America will be participating in this experiment. Now from Fortress comes a tool that will impact teaching and learning not only in the seminary classrooms, but in the parishes as well.

Martin Luther: Exploring His Life and Times, 1483-1546 is a CD-ROM designed for both the Intel and MacIntosh platforms. Its content has been supplied by noted Luther scholar Helmar Junghans of the Theological Faculty at the University of Leipzig. Junghans organizes Luther's life under eight headings: Childhood and Education; Monk, Journey to Rome, Professor of Theology; Indulgences, Papal Bull, and

Imperial Ban; Spread of the Gospel; Rise of a Protestant Church; Luther's Everyday Life; Battle between God and the Devil; and Luther's Last Journey. These eight sections consist of a traditional text presentation of Luther's life and thought. Beyond the text, however, screens contain icons that, when clicked on, will bring up pictures, music, a chronology, and other specialized information. Unfortunately, though, the apparatus might be a bit confusing and intimidating for those unfamiliar with computers. A bit of experimentation, however, should quickly dispel any discomfort getting around the CD.

The text is adequate in its presentation of Luther, sketching a general portrait of Luther and his times, as well as introducing his thought. It is certainly no replacement for the recognized biographies, though one might argue that it does not intend to be. That point does raise some questions, however. First, what is the target audience? The traditional character of the text section seems to lean toward an older audience, while the links, particularly the "films," seem to have a younger audience in mind. The "films," however, present the greatest problem. Depending on one's generation, one might describe them as "Luther meets Monty Python" or "Luther visits South Park." These are the least satisfying aspect of the CD, and at times they degenerate into plain silliness. For example, the film on the Anabaptists features a naked woman running across the screen and Jan of Leyden turning into a man/goat/devil. "Luther's Kidney Stones" has to be seen to be believed! The remaining films, though less offensive, do not add appreciably to the materials on the CD. On the other hand, the ease with which one may call up pictures of the places where Luther worked, hear Luther's hymn texts being performed, and view appropriate art help make the goal of the title realizable—one can explore Luther's life and times.

Second, there is the whole issue of Information Technology in teaching and learning. Everyone engaged in theological education in the late 1990s is aware of the different learning styles that students bring to the educational enterprise. The appearance of tools such as this push the envelope of theological educators to come to grips with some fundamental issues. For example, is the formal lecture as a teaching tool a thing of the past? Do we need to move away from the "sage on the stage" to a more democratic "guide on the side"? While a "disc review" is not the place to engage such issues fully, it is likely that other Information Technology resources will soon present

themselves. The world of graduate theological education will have to grapple with these issues in a meaningful way very soon.

Overall, then, *Martin Luther: Exploring His Life and Times, 1483-1546*, used judiciously and in tandem with other resources, could provide a helpful introduction to the life and thought of the Great Reformer. The excellent graphics and accessible music complement a passable text, though the films are not especially helpful.

Lawrence R. Rast Jr.

***Where in the World Is God?* By Harold L. Senkbeil. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1999.**

Preaching is unique to the church. In the preacher, the gospel becomes eminently practical as it enters into combat with sin, death, and hell. The living voice of the gospel is not finally prized for its logic or its reasoned explanations, but for its victory. For twenty-seven years, Pastor Senkbeil has engaged the enemy. *Where in the World is God?* is a crop of his sermons. The word of God has produced a bountiful harvest in the pulpit of Elm Grove Lutheran Church. This collection is the first fruits. Pastor Senkbeil's winsome words comfort the hurting heart and challenge the self-righteous soul. In a world where man can find no firm footing, these sermons proclaim the God who is once and for all located in the flesh of Jesus Christ. For those seeking devotional reading that breathes the comfort of the gospel, this collection will be a true treasure.

James G. Bushur
Trinity Lutheran Church
Goodland, Indiana

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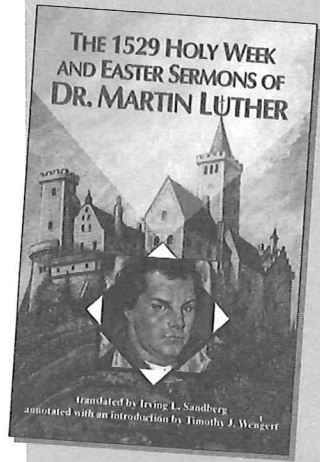
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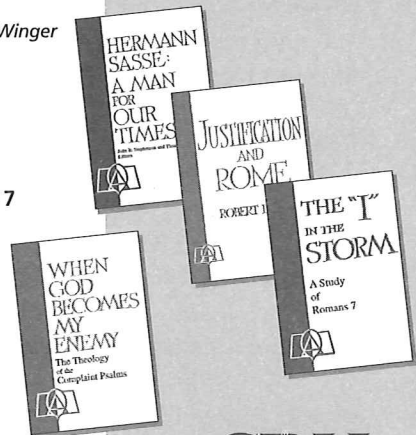
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