CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY

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EDITORIAL

A Few Words of Appreciation

This issue of *Christianity & Society* marks a number of changes for the journal. Colin Wright has stepped down after many years as Associate Editor. I should like to take this opportunity to thank him for his contributions to these pages and wish him well in his business as a computer software engineer. We hope that his increasing work load will not make it impossible for him to continue contributing essays to future issues.

We have a new Editorial Advisory Board (see the inside front cover), whom we welcome to our work with anticipation. Readers will recognise some of the names on this board as long-standing contributors to *C&S*.

This is the first issue of our new publishing schedule. The journal will be published from now on at twice the previous size (64 pages instead of 32) twice yearly (instead of quarterly) in April (Summer) and October (Winter). The journal will be renumbered as issues 1 (Summer) and 2 (Winter). If your subscription would have fallen due in July under the old publishing schedule (no. 3) you will receive a renewal notice for this issue, which incorporates all the material that would have been published in the July issue under the old schedule.

Following the October 2004 double issue a number of people have commented that they prefer the new publishing schedule and the larger size journal. This is encouraging and also helpful, since going to a biannual distribution has enabled us to save money on costs, mainly postage, which have risen steeply in recent years.

Funding the Kuyper Foundation

Nevertheless, the Kuyper Foundation continues to suffer from insufficient funding at present to enable us to be confident about the long-term future of our publishing work. We need to increase our paying subscriptions significantly in order to enable the journal to break even, and we need a substantial increase in donated funding if we are to progress the work of the Foundation beyond its present ministry.

The Kuyper Foundation's ministry is an international one. We send our literature around to the world to First and Third World destinations, including Eastern Europe, Russia, Ukraine, Latin America, many African nations, India, Indonesia, Korea, Burma, the Philippines, as well as to Western nations such as the UK, Western Europe, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Some of the most appreciative feedback we get comes from people in the Third World who are eager to receive Christian literature but who cannot afford Western prices for such literature. The result is that the proportion of subscriptions that are sent out free to these places has grown over recent years while our income has remained stable and production costs have risen. Unless we are able to raise more funds on an ongoing basis we shall be unable to sustain the distribution of our literature free of charge to those who cannot afford to pay in the Third World.

The vast majority of our funding comes from a small but generous group of people who form our association of friends (the Kuyper Association). It is the giving of this small group that makes it possible for *C&S* to be published. *C&S* does not break even and without the support of this group of people it would not be possible to keep it going. But this is a small support group. The association of friends consists of those who give £10 or more each month or £120 or more each year to the Foundation. Virtually the whole work of the Foundation from a financial point of view, rests on the giving of this group of people.

Over the years we have tried to encourage people to join this group, but on the whole it has remained at about its present number. We have found it difficult to get funding from major donating organisations and also from most individuals who come into contact with our work. Why does the Foundation find it so difficult to get funding for its work?

The Foundation does not merely offer a critique of secular humanist and non-believing culture. Nor does it promote lobbying politicians to enforce others to do for Christians what they should be doing for themselves (a pertinent example is the provision of a Christian education for the children of Christians. There are many Christian lobbying groups that think the State should provide this and seek funding to enable them to lobby government to provide Christian education). Of course a thorough critique of secular humanist culture is absolutely necessary in the present circumstances. But on its own it is not enough. We have always tried to show that a Christian nation requires a Christian people who take their personal Christian responsibilities seriously. This means that we encourage Christians not to assume that all they need to do to make their contribution to society as Christians is to pester their politicians into making someone else take action on their behalf, but rather take action themselves. But this requires sacrifice and hard work. (For example, it is not the responsibility of politicians to provide education, Christian or otherwise, for people's children but rather to ensure that justice is administer properly according to God's word. It is the duty of Christians to provide a Christian education for their children, and lobbying government to provide this by means of taxes does not fulfil the Christian's responsibility at all.)

Such a message is unpopular. While there are issues that politicians can and should address, very many of the problems and evils confronting the Church and society today are the result of people not shouldering their responsibilities and expecting others to fulfil their duties for them, usually the State in some form, which must be funded by taxation in various ways. The result of such an irresponsible attitude—i.e. the result of people's unwillingness to shoulder the responsibilities of *freedom*—is the increasing control of a secular humanist and fundamentally anti-Christian State over the whole of life and a corresponding loss of power and influence for the other institutions in society, including the Church and the family. That is to say, the result of people's unwillingness to bear the responsibilities of freedom is *slavery* to the State.

There are many Christian organisations in the UK that are able to achieve much higher levels of funding than the Kuyper Foundation has. But most of those known to me provide a critique of what is wrong with our godless secular society and encourage Christians to support them financially so that they can lobby central government to force

others to take action on their behalf. This approach requires nothing of Christians themselves, no sacrifice, except the writing of a cheque, and is therefore very popular among Christians and Churches. People's consciences may be eased by such giving but it does not produce growth in the work of the Kingdom. (Anyone who doubts this can see for themselves. After all the campaigns to reform State education along Christian lines and the vast amount of money spent on lobbying for such reform what is the result? Nothing. The same is true of lobbying for Christian principles to be enshrined in the NHS. Instead of Christians providing for themselves they have thrown away their funds on trying to get non-believers, i.e. the godless State, to take on their Christian responsibilities for them—a futile strategy that was bound to fail.) Such lobbying groups will always achieve higher levels of financial support because of the passive nature of their message, which requires no sacrifice or hard work from Christians themselves.

This is, I believe, one of the main reasons such groups are able to generate much more income than groups that take the kind of approach that the Kuyper Foundation takes to these issues. Our message is not merely one of critique but also of promoting a positive alternative to secular humanism that requires action and sacrifice on the part of Christians. As a result our message is perceived as radical and funding is harder to generate. If we were to restrict our message to criticising the current situation and asking for Christians to support us financially so that we can lobby central government to make others take action on their behalf I think we should be able to generate much more support, financial and otherwise.

There is a legitimate place for lobbying central government on certain issues and I am not saying that this should not be done in its proper place. But it seems to me that the legitimate role of lobbying for Christian causes has been overemphasised for the reason stated above, which is especially relevant in a socialist State such as Britain, where many people have imbibed a socialist mentality—i.e. that the State should do everything for them—from their youth. It is difficult to get people who have imbibed this mentality to give money to an organisation that is dedicated to promoting the Christian alternative to this kind of society—and this mentality is extremely strong among Christians and Churches in the UK.

The Kuyper Foundation does not engage in a great deal of fund raising (indeed we have no fund raising activities beyond an appeal for funding such as this from time to time), and we do not frequently send out appeals such as this for funding. Our primary concern is to articulate the implications of the faith for the whole of life and the alternative culture that this implies as clearly as possible. But funding has to be found if we are to continue and we have reached a point at which it is necessary to appeal in this way for funding.

Over the course of 2005 we need to generate extra funding if we are to continue our present work into 2006. In the following years this will need to be sustained. If our work is to grow we need more funding than this. We need a much larger group of people who support the work of the Foundation regularly. Part of the answer to this problem is for those who know and believe in the work we are doing to introduce our ministry to others who will be able and willing to support it financially.

If you value and believe in the cause for which we are working please consider giving to the Kuyper Foundation. Please also consider introducing our work to others who can help so that we can maintain and develop our ministry. The limits of our work as set by the giving of those who support the Foundation financially. For more information on how to donate money to the Kuyper Foundation please see the notice on the inside back cover.—SCP

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

New Sole Distributor for Kuyper Foundation books and books by Stephen C. Perks

The Kuyper Foundation has changed its books distributor. All books by Stephen C. Perks and all books published by the Kuyper Foundation are now distributed by:

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Early Eastern Christianity and its Contribution to Science

by Frances Luttikhuizen

The first general council in the history of the Christian Church, convened by the Emperor Constantine at Nicaea (now Isnik, Turkey) in 325, was attended by some three hundred representatives, mainly from the eastern provinces. This is so long ago that the very names of the places connected with its history have quite disappeared from common knowledge. However, as we have again become familiar over the past year with some of these names, I would like to consider their place in history, in pre-Islamic times, when cities such as Kufa, Najaf, Karbala, Basra, Mosul, Tikrit and others had flourishing Christian communities. In doing so, I wish to highlight the merits of the Nestorian Christians, so often overlooked by Western historians. Despite the assertion of some modern critics[1] that there was no science in the mediaeval period and that the little there was was suppressed by Christianity, these early Christians were thoroughly immersed in scientific pursuit and made significant contributions to the corpus of scientific theory.

Our story begins with the Assyrians, one of the great ancient Mesopotamian civilisations. Assyria was a mountainous region lying to the north of Baghdad, extending along the Tigris over the plains of Mossul as far as the high mountain range of Armenia. After the Assyrians lost their empire to the Babylonians during the time of the biblical Nebuchadrezzar (605–562 B.C.), centuries went by before we hear about them again. The area, which corresponded basically to modern-day Iraq, changed hands often. It was ruled in turn by the Babylonians, the Hittites, the Greeks, the Romans, the Parthians, the Nabataeans, the Sassanian Persians, and the Muslims.

1. *Expansion of Christianity in the East*

Between 132 B.C. and 244 A.D. the area was part of the semi-independent Nabataean kingdom,[2] with Edessa (present-day Ufra, southern Turkey) as the capital. A favourable geographical location enabled the region to achieve early prominence. A north-south road from Armenia bisected Edessa, continuing through Harran down to the Persian Gulf; an east-west road linked Edessa to Nisibis and to places beyond along the northern branch of the Silk Road to India and China.

The exact date of the introduction of Christianity in Edessa is not known. According to legend, Christianity was brought by Thaddeus (Mar Addai), one of the apostles and a native of the area, who cured king Abgar V of leprosy. The early Christian community seems to have been made up mainly from the Jewish population of the city. According to the 1906 Jewish Encyclopaedia, when Mar Addai came to Edessa he stayed at the house of a Jew named Tobias and converted many of his host's co-religionists. The influence of the Jews is seen in the Peshitta—the Assyrian translation of the Bible. The earliest parts, in Old Syriac, are thought to have been translated from Hebrew or Aramaic texts by Jewish Christians at Edessa. Of vernacular versions, the Old Testament Peshitta is second only to the Greek Septuagint in antiquity.

When king Abgar IX embraced the Christian faith (c. 206), he decreed Christianity as the official religion of the kingdom. His decree was short lived for, in 224, the area was conquered by the Romans.[3] Despite early persecution under the Romans, missionaries were sent out from Edessa to evangelise Eastern Mesopotamia, Persia, Arabia, India and even China.[4] Their zeal and their strategic position on the main trade routes facilitated their missionary endeavours. With merchants passing through or remaining in Mesopotamia, the population became more diverse than it had previously been. With the Greeks to the north, the Romans to the west, the Egyptians to the south, and the Persians to the east, they were at the crossroads of the leading cultural influences of the day.

With the spread of Christianity the lot of the Assyrians changed radically, moulding the Assyrian, Nabataeans, Aramaeans, Chaldeans and Babylonians into "one nation." Christianity at its outset was the melting pot for all the Aramaic-speaking peoples of the area, regardless of their

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1. See Colin Wright's series of articles on "Karl Popper's Scientific Enterprise" (*C&S*, Vol. XI, No. 1, Jan 2001; Vol. XI, No. 2, April 2001; Vol. XI, No. 3, July 2001) as well as his article, "Mediaeval Science and its relation to the Christian Faith" (*C&S*, Vol. XII, No. 3, July 2002).

2. These were Northern Bedouin Arabians. The Assyrians called them "Arubu" ("nomads"), from which we get "Arab." Though the general name was "Arabs," there were two distinct groups: the Sarrasins/Sarracens and the Nabataeans. Around the time of Alexander the Great, the Nabataean kingdom stretched from the Red Sea to Syria. They spoke Aramaic and created a new writing form which later evolved into the "Arabic" writing that is still in use.

3. Between 54 B.C. and 224 A.D. wars between the Romans and the Parthians dominated the political history of Mesopotamia: the Romans desirous to re-establish the inheritance of Alexander the Great; the Parthians zealous to retain the rich trade routes between Asia and the Greco-Roman world.

4. For a full account of these missions see John M. L. Young, *By Foot to China: Mission of The Church of the East, to 1400* (Assyrian International News Agency Books Online), 1984 (http://www.aina.org/books/bftc/bftc.htm; accessed 27.07.04.).

ethnic origin. No nation seems to have embraced Christianity with the devotion of the Assyrians,[5] yet no nation experienced deeper and more long-lasting fissures due to doctrinal differences.[6]

At first, the Church of Edessa was subject to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Jerusalem, but by the year 200 it had come under the jurisdiction of Antioch. Relations with Antioch produced an important literary movement at Edessa. A group of Assyrian scholars, whose language was Syriac,[7] began applying themselves to the study of Greek so that they could read the Septuagint version of the Old Testament and the Gospels first hand. The interest of the early Assyrian Church fathers in the Greek version of the Scriptures and the resulting contacts with Greek scholarship created an atmosphere of learning. As a result, these Assyrian scholars also became familiar with Greek science.

Although Edessa had come under Roman rule in 224, the more eastern province of Nisibis had remained the subject of constant disputes between Romans and Parthians. Nisibis had also become an important Christian centre with a flourishing theological school established by Jacob of Nisibis after the Council of Nicaea in 325.[8] In 363, the province was finally ceded to the Sassanian Persians. Alarmed, many Christians fled.[9] Among them was Ephraem the Syrian, a presbyter to the academy of Nisibis.[10] To safeguard Christian learning in Persia, the school at Nisibis was immediately closed and re-established on Roman soil, at Edessa. Although theology was the major subject, the study of medicine grew rapidly. Following a plague epidemic, Ephraem had built a large hospital modelled after the one built by Basil some years earlier in Cappadocia. With an affiliated hospital,[11] the Edessan school became a remarkable institution. The doctors, who received their academic training at Alexandria and were thoroughly familiar with Greek medical manuscripts, practised an experimental Hippocratic and Galenic-type medicine, quite different from the folk medicine practised around them.[12] This attracted students from all around, especially from Persia.

Meanwhile, despite decades of persecution under Shapur

II (309–379), the Persian Church, though totally dispersed, managed to remain alive. To avoid more massacres, the Christians of Persia decided to severe their relations with their brethren in the Roman ruled territories. Under the auspices of king Yazdgerd I (399–420), Isaac of Seleucia convened the First General Synod of the Persian Church in 410 in which the bishops officially proclaimed their independence from the "West," though maintaining their commitment to Antiochene theology. Established as the "Church of the East," the bishops proceeded to name metropolitans for the sees of Jundi-Shapur, Nisibis, Mosul, Basra, Arbela, Merv, Hira and Kirkuk. Under ban from Rome and out of communion with the Byzantine (Orthodox) Church, in 498 the Nestorian archbishop moved his seat to the royal capital at Seleucia-Ctesiphon (near present-day Baghdad) and assumed the title "Patriarch of the East." By 650—the time of the Islamic invasions—the Nestorians had nine metropolitan sees and 96 bishoprics scattered throughout eastern Syria and Persia.

2. *The Nestorian controversy*

The Nestorian controversy had far reaching consequences for the Assyrian Christians of Persia. Nestorius was not an Assyrian, nor did he speak Syriac. He was a native of Antioch and his Christology was essentially that of Diodorus of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia, both great opponents of Arianism. On the death of the Patriarch of Constantinople in 427, Emperor Theodosius II, perplexed by the various claims of the local clergy, appointed Nestorius, "the distinguished preacher of Antioch," to the vacant see. Nestorius used his new position to preach against the title *Theotokos* ("Mother of God") given to the Virgin Mary. The position of Nestorius can be summed up as follows: Mary did not bring forth the Godhead, but the temple of the Godhead. The man Jesus Christ is this temple. The Incarnate God did not suffer and die, but raised up from the dead him in whom He was incarnate. Thus, if Mary is called the Mother of God, she is made a goddess. This doctrine was challenged by Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria,[13] who denounced him to the pope. The Council of Ephesus (431) condemned the extreme Antiochene Christology taught by Nestorius and excommunicated him. He was banished from Constantinople and died somewhere in Egypt around 450.

The Assyrians were not directly involved in the controversy as it was a theological dispute within the Roman Empire. In fact, it was several years after the death of Nestorius that the Christians in the Persian Empire heard

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5. Indeed, the very word Christian became synonymous with the word Assyrian (H. Ghassan, "The Assyrian-Chaldean Dilemma: One Nation, Two Names," *Al Muntada Magazine*, July-August 2000).

6. After the fifth century, one no longer speaks of "one Aramaic nation," but three: the Jacobites (Syrian Orthodox), the Melchites (Greek Orthodox) and the Nestorians.

7. An evolved form of Aramaic written in a new cursive alphabet.

8. Although the Christians had enjoyed a relative degree of freedom under the Parthians, no theological schools are reported in Persia prior to the one at Nisibis. This suggests that their activity may have been confined to the large Jewish community there. Nisibis had been the treasure-house where gifts for the Temple were deposited by wealthy Jews living outside Palestine.

9. As a result of the Roman Empire embracing Christianity in 312, the Sassanian Persians—who had overthrown the Parthians in 224— unleashed severe persecution against their Christian subjects suspected of sympathy with their Roman adversaries.

10. Ephraem the Syrian was a prolific poet, hymn-writer and author of several commentaries on both the Old and New Testaments. He was widely read and admired. In fact, he was one of John Wesley's favourite authors and was one of his links with the Cappadocian Fathers, which influenced his idea of perfection.

11. The idea of a hospital as an institution for the caring of the sick seems to have emerged first at Cappadocia and Edessa. The Greeks had *sanatoria*, lodgings attached to temples, where the sick, attended by priests, received special diets, rest, massages, etc.

12. For details see: Siam Bhayro, "Syriac Botanical and Pharmacological Literature." Paper presented at the ninth International Con-

gress of the Society of Ethnobiology, University of Kent, Canterbury, UK, June 2004.

13. The central issue revolved around the nature(s) of Christ. The Antiochian theologians tended to stress Christ's human nature; the Alexandrians his divinity. The controversy stemmed from the principles of exegesis: the school of Antioch insisted on the literal, historical sense of the text while the school of Alexandria advocated an allegorical interpretation. The tensions between Alexandria and Antioch continued until, in an effort of reconciliation, the Council of Chalcedon (451) declared that Christ had two natures, not one, but that Mary was the mother of God, not merely the mother of the man Jesus. This formula was unacceptable to the Monophysites. As a result, the Alexandrian Monophysites separated from the Imperial (Orthodox) or "Melchite" Church to become the Egyptian Coptic, or Anti-Chalcedonian, Church. The Jacobites were a later development (see note 14).

about the controversy.[14] However, on hearing the arguments, they decreed that the stand taken by Nestorius was in agreement with the view always maintained by the Church of the East. Many followers of Nestorius in the Roman Empire found refuge in the Church of the East. As a result, and from that time on, the Syrian-speaking Christians of Persia came to be known as Nestorians.

Despite an initial hostile attitude towards all Christians, when the Roman Emperor Zeno suppressed the school of Edessa in 489 and expelled its members on charges of heresy,[15] the Persian government welcomed the exiled faculty as political allies. The Persian authorities were persuaded that it would be a good thing for the kingdom if the Christians in it were all of a different complexion from those of the Roman Empire, and had no tendency to gravitate towards Antioch or Constantinople.[16]

When the school at Edessa was closed by Zeno, some of the expelled faculty went to Nisibis,[17] others to Nishapur (along the old Silk Road in north-eastern Iran) where they built a medical school similar to the one at Edessa, and others accepted the asylum status offered by the Sassanian King Kavad I (488–531) and migrated to Jundi-Shapur (near present-day Shahabad, south-western Iran). Shapur I (239–272) had founded a school there in imitation of the Alexandrian Academy.[18] Upon his marriage to a Roman governor's daughter who arrived at the court with a number of Greek physicians in her train, Shapur had become interested in Greek medicine. During the reign of Shapur II (309–379), the city was enlarged, a university was established and large collections of Greek works were translated into Pahlavi (middle Persian).

The greatest impetus to the school was given by king Khusro I Anoshirvan (531–579), who also welcomed the exiled Neo-Platonist philosophers from Harran.[19] During his reign, Jundi-Shapur became the greatest intellectual centre of the East. Within its walls Greek, Christian, Persian, Hindu and Neo-Platonic thought were freely exchanged. To the Sassanian academy at Jundi-Shapur the Hindus brought their knowledge of mathematics, astronomy and surgery;[20] the Sabians from Harran brought their knowledge of Greek mathematics, astrology and alchemy, and their copies of Euclid, Ptolemy, Bolos and Zosimos;[21] and the Nestorians brought their pedagogical skills, their Syriac translations and their practical knowledge of Hippocrates, Galen, Aristotle and others. Soon Jundi-Shapur had a *marsad* (astronomical observatory) like the one at Kusumapura in northern India, a *bimaristan* (teaching hospital) like the one at Edessa, and stills and kilns like the ones in Alexandria for the study of new dyes, glazes, balms and infusions.

When the Church of the East severed its ties with the West, it also cut off its main source of bilingual input. By the sixth century the need for Syriac translations of the Greek masters had become imperative. From the Syrian Orthodox school at Ra's-al-'Ayn (near present-day Damascus) came the first translations. Sergius of Ra's-al-'Ayn (d. 536) translated Aristotle's *Categories*, Porphyry's *Isagoge*, twenty-six works by Galen, twelve by Hippocrates, and part of the *Geoponica*, an encyclopaedia on agriculture compiled by Cassianus Bassus. As more translations became available for the benefit of those who no longer knew Greek, Syriac became the language of scholarship in the East.

The fact that all academic instruction at Jundi-Shapur was eventually administered in Syriac is indicative of the status of the Nestorian pedagogues. They cultivated science after the manner of the Alexandrian Greeks, not after the manner of the European Greeks. They perceived that progress could not advance by mere speculation but only by the practical interrogation of nature. They introduced a new concept of learning: the essential characteristics of their method were experiment and observation, in other words empiricism. The teaching hospital was organised and functioned at a time when there were no others like it. It had out-patient and in-patient departments, separate wards for men

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14. The Church of the East had severed its relation with the West already in 410. They may have heard about the controversy from students returning to Persia when Cyril temporarily closed the school at Edessa in 457 because of its Nestorian teachings.

15. Among those who stayed at Edessa were Jacob Baradaeus, who in 541 created a rival Monophysite episcopate. His followers became known as "Jacobites" (Syrian Orthodox).

16. The Persians also welcomed the Monophysites, but not the Melchites.

17. The school of Nisibis was above all a school of theology. Edessa served as its model, as did the Antiochene tradition of biblical exegesis based on the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia, whose theological teachings were illustrated and explained through Aristotle's principles of deductive logic (http://www.nestorian.org/the_school_of_nisibis.html; accessed 18.08.04).

18. Though the School of Medicine at Alexandria seems to have been active well into the sixth century, not much is heard of the Academy after Theophilus destroyed the "pagan temples" in 391—which may have included the "Temple of the Muses" (the Museum, or Academy)—and the power struggles in the days of Cyril, which culminated in the violent death of the neo-Platonic philosopher and mathematician Hypatia in 415 and the dispersion of her followers (http://www.campusprogram.com/reference/en/wikipedia/h/hy/hypatia_of_alexandria.html; accessed 04.08.04).

19. Harran, famous for its moon-worship, was also the home of the Sabians, a group of neo-Platonist scholars who dabbled in alchemy, astrology and Pythagorean mysticism. When the Byzantine emperor Justinian closed the Platonic Academy at Athens in 529, some of its members went to Harran, and from there to Jundi-Shapur.

20. Both our numerals and our decimal place-value system of numeration were introduced by Hindu mathematicians. One of the great Indian mathematicians was Aryabhatta (475–550 A.D.) who wrote his famous treatise on mathematics—*Aryabhatiya*—at Kusumapura (northern India). Proximity to the Silk Road allowed the advances made by Aryabhata and his school to rapidly reach Persia. Hindu contributions to surgery go back to 600 B.C. when Shushruta performed plastic surgery, extraction of cataracts etc. and described over 120 surgical instruments and over 40 surgical procedures. Charka Samhita (500 B.C.) described methods of diagnosis and treatment, with lists of plant, mineral and animal substances required for the preparation of medicines. Hindu medicine seems to have been introduced in Jundi-Shapur by a (Nestorian?) physician from Nishapur called Burzuyah, who on his return from a journey to India brought back several Indian physicians and medical texts.

21. During the fourth century A.D. commentaries and teaching notes were added to the Greek classics. At Alexandria, Pappus, Theon and his daughter Hypatia commented and edited the works of Ptolemy, Euclid and others. It may well have been these "commented" editions that the Harran scholars carried to Jundi-Shapur. Pappus's commentary on irrational quantities found in Eulid's *Elements*, in which he explains their historical development, has survived in an Arab translation made about 915 in Baghdad. Alchemy was also cultivated at Alexandria. By 300 A.D. the Egyptian alchemists had turned increasingly to mystical approaches. For them, the god Thoth was the source of all chemical knowledge. The Greeks working in Alexandria identified Thoth with their own Hermes and accepted much of that form of mysticism. Once the Roman Empire became Christianised the pursuit of alchemy was suppressed for its pagan associations. Neo-Platonists fleeing Alexandria in 415 may have brought with them their copies of Bolos of Mendes (c. 200 B.C.) who worked in Greek-Egyptian *khemeia*, and Zosimos of Panopolis, an Alexandrian alchemist, who authored an encyclopaedic treatise on alchemy (c. 300 A.D.).

and women, wards for medical specialities such as general medicine, surgery, orthopaedics, and ophthalmology.[22] This hands-on method of training physicians had to wait centuries before it was applied in Western Europe, where scholastic medicine became the norm.

The second great accomplishment of the Nestorian scholars was that they put learning into the public square or, as Charles Kingsley puts it, they allowed "vulgar eyes to enter into the very holy of holies."[23] At that time, most disciplines—alchemy, mathematics, and even philosophy—were cultivated by the initiated[24] and knowledge came to be regarded as something mysterious by the common people. This attitude was often encouraged as it increased the practitioners' power. The fact that alchemists, for example, shrouded their writings in obscure symbolism added to this sense of secret knowledge. The intellectual generosity of the faculty at Jundi-Shapur is seen both in the number of translations and copies produced there and in the rapid spread of the knowledge resulting from it. For example, as early as 662, Severus Sebokht, a Jacobite bishop living near Aleppo, wrote this regarding the discovery of the Hindu numeral system:

I will omit all discussion of the science of the Hindus . . . of their subtle discoveries in astronomy, discoveries that are more ingenious than those of the Greeks and the Babylonians, and of their valuable methods of calculation which surpass description. I wish only to say that this computation is done by means of nine signs. If those who believe, because they speak Greek, that they have arrived at the limits of science, would read the Indian texts, they would be convinced, even if a little late in the day, that there are others who know something of value.[25]

3. *Under Islam*

The Islamic conquest of Jundi-Shapur in 636 did not, on the whole, interfere with the academic pursuits of the Syriac scholars. Unlike the Persians, the Islamic conquerors were inferior to their conquered subjects in culture. Consequently, it was both politically and economically desirable to treat their "intellectual hostages" well. The Nestorians were treated with special respect because many of the physicians who cared for the early Caliphs were Nestorians, and because they denied Mary being the mother of God.[26]

Under the first Caliphs—the Ummayads (661–750)—both the Christian and Jewish communities enjoyed relative freedom, though treatment varied.[27] After the Umayyad dynasty collapsed, the caliphate was assumed by the Abbasids.

The second Abbasid caliph, al-Mansur, moved the capital from Damascus to Baghdad. Toward the end of the eighth century, the Nestorian patriarchate was also moved to Baghdad. Under the millet system, whereby a non-Muslim community was ruled through the intermediacy of its religious hierarchy, the Nestorian Patriarch came to represent also the Jacobites (Syrian Orthodox) and the Melchites (Greek Orthodox) in the Muslim lands.

When al-Mansur moved the capital to Baghdad he decided that his new capital would be a centre of scholarship for all Islam. In 765, afflicted with a stomach disorder which had baffled his physicians, he summoned for Jirjis ibn Bukht-yishu, the head of the Jundi-Shapur academy. Before long, court appointments began to draw more Nestorian physicians and teachers from the academy. The famous historian of Arabian medicine, Ibn Abi Usaibia (1203–1270), devotes a whole chapter of his book *The Classes of Physicians* to the biographies of Syriac-speaking Nestorian physicians who flourished during the Abbasid dynasty. Most distinguished among these physicians were the members of the Bukht-yishu and the Masawayh[28] families.

From this Assyrian-Nestorian community, the Arabs eagerly sought their early training in Galenic medicine. The crucial period of adoption was during the rules of al-Mansur (712–775), Harun al-Rashid (786–808), and al-Mamun (819–833). The success of Greek science did not come about simply because it could be proved more accurate than folk medicine. The doctrine of fatalism, inculcated by the Qu'ran, had powerfully contributed to submissive resignation to the will of Allah. The Christian physicians became a living protest against the fatalism of the Qu'ran. They showed that medicines can soothe pain, that skill can close wounds, that those who are dying may be snatched from the grave. The role taken by the early caliphs in the translation movement[29] was of crucial importance for the acceptability of the newly-discovered learning. Over half a century passed, however, as the Islamic scientific community adjusted itself from passive to active acceptance of the Greek learning. During this time, Jundi-Shapur continued to be the main centre of learning and the main source of medical manuscripts.

Under Harun al-Rashid, agents were sent to purchase Greek manuscripts from the Byzantine Empire. After the death of Harun, his son al-Ma'mun greatly enlarged the library and the translation of medical and other scientific works into Arabic gained considerable momentum. Al-Mamun, strongly influenced by the Mutazilite movement,[30] was the greatest patron of philosophy and science in the history of Islam. In 830, he founded the *Bayt al-Hikmah* (House of Wisdom) and a *bimaristan*[31] in imitation of the one at Jundi-Shapur. He spent great sums in the acquisition of Greek manuscripts and employed the best translators, copyists and bookbinders. One factor often ignored is the intro-

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22. For details regarding the organisation of the medical faculty see Samir Johna, "The Mesopotamian Schools of Edessa and Jundi-Shapur: The Roots of Modern Medical Schools," *The American Surgeon* July 2003, Vol. 69.

23. "Charles Kingsley lectures: The Cross and the Crescent" (http://www.ancienthistory.about.com/cs/greekhellenistic/a/alexandriaschl.htm; accessed 30.08.04).

24. The Pythagoreans, for example.

25. http://www.fact-index.com/i/in/indian_numerals.html; accessed 09.08.04.

26. This was in accordance with the Qu'ran, as depicted in the Sura of "Unity" which states: "He (Allah) begets not, nor is he begotten." This Sura, in the eyes of Moslems, separated Nestorians from other Christians.

27. For an overall description of the treatment of non-Muslims under Islam see Bat Ye'or, *The Dhimmi: Jews and Christians under Islam* (London: Associated University Presses), 1985.

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28. The most famous was Yuhanna ibn Masawayh (Mesuë the Elder) who became a famous ophthalmologist with 42 works attributed to him.

29. The first known scientific work in Arabic was a treatise on medicine written in Greek by Ahrun, a Christian from Alexandria, and translated from Syriac into Arabic in 683 by Masarjawayh, a Jewish doctor from Basra.

30. A religious philosophy, based on logic and reason, that sought to combine Greek philosophy and Islamic doctrine.

31. A Persian name—as is Bayt al-Hikmah—used subsequently by the Arabs for all their great teaching hospitals in Baghdad, Damascus, and Cairo.

duction of a new writing material at this time, namely paper. The introduction of paper was as revolutionary as the printing press would be later. By the ninth century, paper had completely displaced expensive papyrus and parchment in the Arab world. As paper became cheaper, more copies were made, libraries grew and literacy rose.

At the Bayt al-Hikmah, a new wave of translators worked directly from the Greek. The leading personality of the "new wave" was Hunayn ibn Ishaq (809–877), a Nestorian Christian from Hira, a region to the south east of present-day Najaf. The son of a druggist, Hunayn followed in the footsteps of his father and, at the age of sixteen, his skills gained him a position as a drug dispenser to Yahya ibn-Massawaih, a prominent Nestorian physician and teacher at Jundi-Shapur. Disagreements with his master, however, soon cost him his position. Though some authors suggest incompatibility of character, I am inclined to believe that their disagreements arose over textual differences between Yahya ibn-Massawaih's copy of Galen's *Pharmacopoeia* and Hunayn's. Three hundred years had gone by since Sergius of Ra's-al-'Ayn first translated Galen's work and during this time numerous variant readings could easily have crept into the text as it was copied and recopied. Prior to the printing press it was natural for hand-copied texts to contain variant readings of all sorts. Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*, one of the first scientific works to profit from the invention of the printing press, is a good example. Soon after it appeared in printed form, a debate sprang up among scholars as to the accuracy of Pliny's statements. The matter was finally settled when an Italian editor who carefully collated several existing early manuscripts was able to point out some 500 errors that had crept in over the centuries due to careless translators and copyists.[32]

Yahya ibn-Massawaih's copy may have varied considerable from Hunayn's considering the context of its provenance: a medical setting in which the copyist—most likely a medical student—may have written commentaries of his own in the margins which the next generation of copyists may have found interesting and incorporated into the text. Hunayn's copy, on the other hand, may have undergone a similar process but with variant readings of another nature.[33] Hunayn's inability to verify which version was the correct one—for lack of an authoritative Greek original and for lack of the necessary linguistic skills—may have motivated his quitting Jundi-Shapur to spend several years in "the land of the Greeks" learning Greek. He did not return to Jundi-Shapur, but went to Baghdad. There he was welcomed by a fellow Nestorian and court physician who introduced him to Musa bin Shakir and his sons, wealthy patrons of learning. Before long Hunayn was appointed supervisor of all of the translations from Greek and Syriac into Arabic at the Caliph's library. His professional life is well documented thanks to his autobiography, written in the form of letters to the great book-collector, Ali ibn Yahya Ibn al-Munaggim (d. 888).[34] Hunayn not only translated medical literature; he also compiled an Arabic version of the Old Testament from the Greek Septuagint and made notable contributions of his own.[35]

Hunayn and his school translated the entire Alexandrian medical curriculum—the one followed at Jundi-Shapur—into Arabic.[36] In many cases, Hunayn did the initial translation from Greek into Syriac and his colleagues rendered the Syriac into Arabic. Hunayn placed translation on a sound scientific footing. He abandoned the literal tradition of translation and concentrated on making the Greek writers comprehensible to the Syriac and Arabic reader. In doing so, countless linguistic difficulties had to be overcome as it was not always possible to reproduce the exact Greek term.[37]

Hunayn's paramount concern was for textual purity.[38] He described his method of revision thus: ". . . Sergius [of Ra's-al-'Ayn] translated [a certain manuscript] into Syriac and I was asked to correct the second half. [A collaborator] collated with me a part, he holding in his hand the Syriac version while I held the Greek text, he reading the Syriac and I telling him of any variations from the Greek text and suggesting corrections. Then I found another Greek manuscript and collated it and corrected all I could; but I should like to collate a second time and even a third time. The manuscripts of this book in Greek are not numerous because it was not one of those which were read at the Alexandrian School. Once I sought for [a certain manuscript] earnestly and travelled in search of it in Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine and Egypt, until I reached Alexandria, but I was not able to find anything except about half of it at Damascus."[39]

The political disorders following al-Mamun's death in 833 affected scholarship and the "House of Wisdom" fell into decay. Caliph al-Mutawakkil (847–861) was bigoted and fanatical, but he was a generous patron of scientific research and is generally reckoned as having reopened the "House of Wisdom." It was during this Caliph's reign when Hunayn—now in his early 40s—reached the summit of his glory both

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32. Charles Burnett, *La transmission des textes philosophiques et scientifiques au Moyen Age* (London: Variorum [Ashgate Publishing], 1994).

33. Considering that Sergius of Ra's-al-'Ayn was a Monophysite and that the Monophysite Ghassanids and the Nestorian Lakhmids were next-door neighbours in Hira—Hunayn's native country—Hunayn's copy may have come through the "Monophysite" line. A comparative study of the variant readings that appear in these two lines of transmission would be needed to establish this hypothesis. Unfortunately, as Siam Bhayro, professor of Near Eastern Languages and Civilisations at Yale University informs me, no copies of Sergius's translation exist.

34. The interest taken by the Caliph in collecting books was imitated by several wealthy citizens who established large—even specialised—libraries. According to Ziauddin Sardar in "The Civilisation of the Book," by the close of the eleventh century, before the Mongol invasion, it is estimated that Baghdad alone had 36 large libraries (http://www.terasmelayu.org/civilization_of_the_book.htm; accessed 02.09.04).

35. In 1971, the German historian Rainer Degen discovered that the book "Syntagma medicum" was not a translation from a Greek original, but was actually an Arabic manuscript of the *Book of Medical Questions for the Beginners* originally written by Hunayn bin Ishaq. The Arabic manuscript includes the famous treatise "On Nourishment" by Hunayn (Rainer Degen, paper presented at Ephraim Hunayn Festival, Baghdad 4–7/2/1974, published by Al-Ma'arif Press, 1974). Also see Max Meyerhof (ed.), *Hunayn ibn Ishaq: The Book of the Ten Treatises on the Eye Ascribed to Hunain ibn Ishaq (809–977 A.D.); The Earliest Existing Systematic Textbook on Ophthalmology* (Cairo, 1928).

36. For a general survey of his contributions see Samir Johna, "Hunayn ibn-Ishaq: A Forgotten Legend," *The American Surgeon*. May 2002. Vol. 68, No. 5.

37. For example, in the Arabic versions the Greek plural "gods" was substituted by the singular "Allah," or "angels."

38. The need for textual purity as the basis for sound scholarship was also one of the great contributions of the Protestant Reformation.

39. Samir Khalil (ed.), "Une correspondance islamo-chrétienne entre Ibn al Munaggim, Hunayn ibn Ishaq et Qusta ibn Luqa," *Patrologia Orientalis* 40/4, 1981.

as a translator and court physician. Despite this honoured position, al-Mutawakkil once confiscated all his paper and committed him to prison for refusing to concoct a poison. In his autobiography, Hunayn also mentions fires and other misfortunes that destroyed manuscripts before they could reach the copyist.

The recuperation of Greek learning was not exclusive to the Nestorians, nor of Baghdad. The Monophysites ("Jacobites") also contributed their part, supplying many of the early Syriac versions of Greek medical science. From their school at Ra's-al-'Ayn (near present-day Damascus) and from their monastery at Kinnesrin[40] (near present-day Aleppo) issued numerous introductory treatises on Aristotelian logic. Two of their most celebrated scholars were the aforementioned Sergius of Ra's-al-'Ayn and Severus Sebokht. A contemporary of Hunayn at Baghdad was Qusta ibn Luqa, a Melchite Christian from Baalbeck (near Beirut) who besides being an eminent translator was also a mathematician, physician, philosopher and musician in his own right.

These, and many others, were the men who prepared the way for the great Islamic scientists of the Middle Ages whose names and works would later become well-known in the West. But we may ask ourselves, what happened to the Christian scholars? And what happened to their scholarship? Apart from persecutions and forced conversion to Islam, three major factors led to the decline of Eastern Christianity: (1) the Crusades,[41] (2) the Mongol invasion of Baghdad in 1258, and (3) the massacres of Timorlink, which changed the religious map of the East forever after 1400. As for their scholarship, Bat Ye'or puts it this way:

Jews,[42] Christians, and Zoroastrians [Persians] taught their oppressors, with the patience of centuries, the rudiments and foundations of civilization. As scholars, they studied the knowledge handed down over the centuries; as translators and copyists, they transcribed this sum of knowledge. Decimated by razzias in the countryside, they sought refuge in the towns. Once again they were driven out, pillaged and ransomed. The elite [scholars] who fled to Europe took their cultural baggage with them, their scholarship and their knowledge of the classics of antiquity. Thenceforth, in the Christian lands of refuge—Spain, Provence, Sicily, Italy—[new] cultural centres developed where Christians and Jews from Islamized lands taught to the young Europe the knowledge of the old pre-

Islamic Orient, formerly translated into Arabic by their ancestors. [Stated briefly,] the classical heritage that was presumably preserved *by* Islam was in fact rescued *from* Islam by those who fled its oppression.[43]

In closing, I should like to briefly evaluate Nestorian scholarship from its Christian perspective. The attitude of the Nestorian scholars responds to Paul's exhortation: "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."[44] Their rapid assimilation and dissemination of "new knowledge," as is seen in Severus Sebokht's comment on the Hindu numbers, shows the open and inquisitive mind the apostle advocates. The Islamic historian Ibn-al-Qifti (1172–1248), in his description of the medical school at Jundi-Shapur, wrote:

They made rapid progress in the science, developed new methods in the treatment of the disease along pharmacological lines, to the point that their therapy was judged superior to that of the Greeks and Hindus. Furthermore these physicians adopted the scientific methods of other people and modified them by their own discoveries. They elaborated medical laws and recorded the work that had been developed.[45]

What is also remarkable is their worldview. Immersed in Greek science as they were, their attitude towards science was not that of the Greek masters. Despite the experimental nature of Galen and the Alexandrian school,[46] the classical Greek attitude towards science was structured according to Plato's hierarchical world. In Plato's worldview, the sphere of *banausia*—any sort of manual task from making swords to dabbling in alchemy to surgical interventions—was below the dignity of a free citizen. For Aristotle, it was the servant's business to know how to *make* things but the master's to know how to *use* them. This hierarchical division of labour, which to a large extent was prevalent in Europe until the time of the Renaissance, and which was a great impediment to the advance of science,[47] seems to have been totally absent in the attitude of the medieval Nestorians. Their "hands-on" attitude can be compared to the Calvinist attitude towards work as a "calling," which dignified even the lowest manual tasks[48] and gave way to observation and experiment. Unfortunately, the scientific contributions and overall advances made by the Nestorians are impossible to quantify for lack of direct data; nevertheless, a contrastive analysis of the original Greek texts with their Syriac and early Arabic versions—a task yet to be carried out—would shed considerable light on the subject and enable us to appreciate more fully their unique role in scholarly inquiry in pre-Islamic times. *C&S*

40. Jacob of Edessa (633–708), an eminent theologian, historian and grammarian who had studied at Kinnesrin, wrote one of the earliest Syriac grammars.

41. The Eastern Christians were caught between two equally hostile forces: the Muslims who turned against all Christians and the Latin Christians who considered them heretics

42. The subject was well surveyed by Max Meyerhof who lived in Egypt for 30 years practising ophthalmology in Cairo. According to Meyerhof, hundreds of Jewish physicians distinguished themselves under the Muslims. Gaon Saadiah (882–942), for example, a Jewish philosopher and linguist who translated classic Hebrew literature into Arabic, spent his most active years studying the Talmud in Baghdad (Max Meyerhof, *Studies in Medieval Arabic Medicine, Theory and Practice* [London: Variorum, 1984]).

43. Bat Ye'or, *The Decline of Eastern Christianity, From Jihad to Dhimmitude* (London: Associated University Presses, 1996), p. 264f. [abridged; brackets and italics mine]. Also see: Bassam M. Madany, "The Plight of Eastern Christianity Under Islam" (http://www.safeplace.net/members/mer/MER_p006.htm; accessed 14.09.04).

44. 1 Thess. 5:21 (Authorised King James Version).

45. Allen Whipple, "The Role of The Nestorians as the Connecting Link Between Greek and Arabic Medicine," *Annals of Medical History-New Series*: 2. 1936.

46. Despite Galen's constant appeal to experience, in the irony of history, just as Aristotle's writings became the basis of scholastic philosophy so Galen's became the basis of scholastic medicine.

47. David Estrada, *Las traducciones vernáculas de la Biblia y la cultura*. Paper read for the "Semana Bíblica" at the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 03.03.71, Barcelona, 1971.

48. Surgery, for example, was included among these manual tasks and as such had been relegated to the barber-surgeons until well into the sixteenth century.

A World Propagandised

by Michael W. Kelley

It can be fairly argued that among the more important books to be published in the last century is Jacques Ellul's *Propaganda*. Nothing quite explains the predicament of contemporary man as relentlessly and psychologically conditioned by ideological forces as Ellul's book does with such poignant, and disturbing, insight. Although Ellul first wrote of the impact of the methods and consequences of modern propaganda in the wake of the two great totalitarian movements of the last century, Nazism and Communism, in which propaganda was used to exploit the masses and persuade them that their well-being was better served under regimes that would assert total control and authority over their lives, nevertheless, *Propaganda* has much to say that is far from having lost its relevance. The uses and methods of propaganda still play a very powerful role in the social and political milieu of our day. This is true the world over, but, as it will be our main concern, especially in Western societies.

For many of us *propaganda* is a word that, perhaps, conjures up images of Nuremberg rallies or film documentaries like *Triumph of the Will*. On the other hand, we might think of May Day parades or speeches by comrade so-and-so proclaiming the great success of this or that great socialist endeavour. Unquestionably, the appearance in the last century of militant socialist States with aggressive and warlike intent was rightly regarded by many other nations as a mortal threat to the peace of the world, as well as to centuries of accumulated civilisation and culture. And the pretence of their ministries of propaganda to disguise the cruelty and oppression such regimes would impose on the other nations of the world was, for the most part, seen through and resisted by them. But if in the West we successfully overcame the danger or withstood the lure of totalitarian societies, it is far from the case that we have escaped the attraction of totalitarian ideals and values; and this is to say that the achievements of propaganda have been more widespread, and more successful, than we might wish to admit. Indeed, Western man is a profoundly propagandised creature, and it is this supreme and inevitable fact that Ellul has, with a rather clinically detached clarity, made so startlingly convincing in his book.

The word *propaganda* sometimes makes us think of sinister conspiracies hatched by people in high places of governmental power who seek to *brainwash* other, unsuspecting, people in order to get them to do certain things or to act in certain ways that, under ordinary circumstances, they would not do or even think of doing. No doubt some of us are familiar with popular fictional entertainment like the TV series *The Prisoner* or the original movie *The Manchurian Candidate*, in which the plot revolves around some dark conspiracy by devious agents of some government power to force or condition their victims to perform certain acts or to accept certain states of reality different from what one tends to think of as the natural freedom of the individual. In other words, the purpose is to turn men into pawns who will then serve the interests, whatever they may be, of the conspirators. Like these examples in the realm of fiction, propaganda, many would say, is something foisted upon people against their will. At the very least, it is an easily recognised assault on some people's ordinary conscious processes. Some might even suppose that propaganda is something that could be used only on people who are either too stupid or too gullible to know that they are being mentally manipulated or easily tricked into believing something all real intelligent people would readily comprehend as ridiculous or absurd.

But propaganda is not so obvious as we might suppose. In fact, propaganda in the modern world is far more subtle and insidious than we would at first admit. And while there may be an element of truth in what is fabricated in the fictional imagination, we need to recognise that propaganda is a real fact of modern life and millions of people are daily affected by its impact and its diabolical intent to draw them into its grip and shape their perception of reality according to its influence and intentions. This fact is inescapable. What is more, it is indisputable. Propaganda is the greatest force for the control of man, of his thinking, his feeling, of his whole system of beliefs, in the modern world. What we need to do is to attempt to understand this phenomenon, to explain why it exists and what its impact is on the modern individual. However, our interest is not simply sociological or psychological; ours is a deeply *religious* interest, for the problem of propaganda is, in the last analysis, a profoundly religious problem of modern man. This means that propaganda is not something that man can recognise or get free from unless he can come to terms with its religious roots.

Propaganda, as Ellul points out, has much to do with the nature and circumstances of modern social life. Here many factors play a role that draw individuals, more or less subconsciously, into the grip of ideology, and hold them in its system of beliefs and values. Ellul calls these the sociological *pre-conditions* that provide a favorable environment for propaganda to succeed in. The first of these pre-conditions is the rise in the last century and a half of modern *mass* society. The metamorphosis of human living conditions from a primarily rural to a primarily urban environment has pro-

foundly altered the nature of man and made him susceptible to the subtle currents of opinions and mores that can be found accumulating in the setting of large cities. The individual who felt at home as one who worked the land and generally comported well with the slower rhythms of nature has suddenly, with his transference to the city, been cut loose from his roots and any sense of belonging. Instead, he feels alienated and disconnected. Man the individual has become *mass* man. The sociological pre-condition of man also presupposes a psychological pre-condition as well. Although modern man has become crowded into huge cities, many individuals, purely as individuals, feel isolated and alone. For man the individual, modern society has become the lonely crowd.

It is the purpose of propaganda to feed on these circumstances of modern society and, indeed, to seek to foster the absolute isolation of the individual by breaking down all factors and conditions that would enable the individual to resist being absorbed into the masses. We often think that propaganda is something aimed at crowd manipulation. Here we have before us the image of hundreds, even thousands, of people gathered in the city square to listen to the rantings of a Mussolini or a Hitler. However, the modern individual does not necessarily gather with the crowd as such, except, perhaps, at sporting events, musical concerts, and theatres, and, yet, his outlook on the world and its problems is powerfully influenced by the thinking of the masses.

This is due to propaganda. Propaganda addresses itself to the masses, but it especially seeks to address the individual who has been isolated in the masses. In this sense, propaganda always seeks to break down the influence of the small groups that once impacted the lives of most individuals: families, churches, neighborhoods, the village as a familiar and morally stable community. Most especially, propaganda promises to liberate the individual from the shallow and out-dated value systems that are said to stifle the full expression of one's individuality. Man who lives in the masses is easily and heavily influenced by the values-relativism that spreads like a contagion among the masses where individuals lose their inhibitions when they see people do things and express themselves in ways that would have been considered perverse or shocking in the context of the smaller organic settings just mentioned. By *liberating* the individual from these ties that would act as a check on his actions, propaganda then seeks to re-integrate the *mass individual* into new groups, which are shaped by élites who provide the framework for organised political agendas. That is, they promise to re-integrate the individual in the masses by a new community of interest that is entirely oriented towards purely mundane political concerns. Through propaganda, the individual is induced to find a new centre of meaning to his life, which provides him with a new sense of certainty, by being drawn to share in the ideals of those groups that are developed to give force to this or that political conviction.

We may mention merely in passing the new collectives that have come to emerge around such issues as labour, women's concerns, environmental and health worries, industrial and commercial gigantism, cultural relativism, and so forth. The individual is drawn to these influential collectives, and his mind shaped by the ideology connected with their concerns, because they give him or her a sense of belonging, of the assurance of being on the morally right

side, and the feeling of protection against the masses as such. The purpose of propaganda in this situation is to seek to foster a uniformity of opinion and instil the same prejudices with regard to the myths and values associated with these and other issues. All of them are meant to politicise the individual so that he will not just think the right way, but will be ready when needed to act the right way. The individual must cease to have private opinions; he must be conditioned to have only public opinions, or, at least, only the sorts of opinions that will fully correspond to his need to feel at home in mass society.

Another factor that presents itself as a pre-condition for the creation of the forces of modern propaganda has been the technological revolution that modern life has undergone. This is especially true in so far as modern technology has so remarkably transformed man's capability to communicate, or to feel that he communicates, with others. In this sense technology has produced the modern mass media. With the invention of the radio and television, the ability to bombard the masses with seemingly endless forms of stimulation and images, which create in their minds distinct perceptions of reality, has proven to be an enormous benefit to the advance of propaganda. With the microchip revolution, the possibilities have come to seem endless. Modern man is heavily saturated with an outlook on life that he gets almost exclusively from these technological sources. The isolated mass man's contact with the world is limited to the increasingly superfluous hours he spends listening to the radio, watching TV, or searching the Web on his computer. He has a seemingly unending appetite for stimulation, trivia, and information. Mass man feels that through these instruments he is in contact with his world, and that he shares a common social bond with others who are otherwise mere nameless faces in the crowd. And the purveyors of entertainment, by means of these modern media instruments, are eager to feed mass man's emotional hunger and, at the same time, they are able to arouse that hunger and manipulate it for purposes that most people do not immediately recognise. Simply living together in the anthill society of modern megacities is not sufficient to create powerful propaganda forces; there must be, at the same time, a way to influence that mass all at once and be able to unite the outlook of millions of people on the important issues of life and society. The modern instruments of the mass media are needed to complete that agenda.

Besides the radio, television and computer, we should also mention that the creation and perfection of the modern entertainment motion picture has also proven to be a vital tool to the forces of modern propaganda. In fact, it can be said that the humanist ideals of modern man have had a greater impact on the masses by means of the motion picture than all other forms of mass media, if for no other reason than that the movies are less prohibited in what they can convey on screen than is the case with television or radio. This is not merely because in the movies we observe a freer use of blasphemies and profanities, or gratuitous sex and violence. It is also that we are regularly presented with a character type who is devoid of anything having to do with God or religion of any sort, certainly in any approved or positive sense. Man is shown on screen to be the product of pure existential circumstances, without roots or tradition of any sort, a person who faces a life that is barren of any intrinsic meaning beyond the brief moment when the story

calls for some gallant confrontation with those characters who represent *the wrong* as seen from the point of view of the film's producers and creators. The implication, then, is that man's life is what the clever and resourceful can make of it. And in the film version of the world, there is always some individual who has these traits in sufficient quantity to straighten all the contradictions that merely happen to come one's way. Others not so lucky are easily overwhelmed and crushed by events. It is the celluloid equivalent of the Darwinian notion of the survival of the fittest. The purveyors of propaganda know very well the means they have available in the motion picture, not merely for giving people something they want but for shaping perceptions and beliefs about life and its issues. This is especially true from the standpoint of the left-wing humanists who make use of the motion picture format to convey a certain type of anti-Christian moral vision, and thereby provoke movie consumers to adopt this same vision in the real world and embrace it as a political consensus.

Other factors of modern life form the so-called pre-conditions of propaganda. We may mention in passing that propaganda needs a minimally developed level of affluence and culture among the populace as a whole. A certain amount of prosperity is needed to give people the opportunity to free themselves from the more urgent concerns of natural poverty and thereby afford them the time and luxury to take an interest in matters beyond just having to make a living. Propaganda seems to be most effective with people who have come to enjoy higher standards of living. Moreover, people must have acquired a certain level of education. At least, they must have completed enough schooling to make them feel confident enough to hold and express opinions about any and every subject or issue that propaganda alleges to be of concern to society at large. The programme of education must not be too rigorous or critical, however. It is enough if people have acquired an ability to read and follow, at a certain level, written or oral discussions of difficult questions and problems, and to be able to form opinions regarding their solutions.

The type of education that one finds in government-run schools fits this criterion well. Here people are educated in mass form, which requires that the content of what is taught be necessarily diluted and made palatable to the lowest intellectual common denominator. What is more, education in this form is not about acquiring knowledge; it is more about indoctrinating people ideologically so that they will take their proper places in society as well-adjusted members of humanism's ideas of submission and compliance. But, perhaps, the greatest reason that the State schools are of vital importance to the success of propaganda is because there the whole notion of the study of man and his world is done without the slightest reference to the existence of God or to the definition of man in God's revelation. In the viewpoint of this system of education man is purely the product of *evolution*, and the good order, the just order that man enjoys, or hopes to enjoy, is ultimately the product of *revolution*; that is, it is the outcome of the power of man to achieve it against all opposing powers and influences, whether these be found in history or nature.

The purpose of propaganda is not only to shape the thinking and, eventually, the acting of the masses, not only to guide it into certain desired channels, but is to do so with such cunning and subtlety that the masses themselves feel that they have arrived at the goal of right thinking and acting entirely unassisted. Mass man likes to believe that the opinions he has formed on the issues of the day are the result of his having learned the unvarnished facts on his own, by the sole use, in other words, of his innate rational ability. In fact, the so-called *facts* are often merely what he gets from the media of television, radio, or the press, and are, therefore, at the outset *coloured* facts, facts already doctored or pre-interpreted by those who want the so-called facts to appear in a certain guise. Thus, mass man will think he is seeing the facts, unalloyed and undistorted, when in reality he is being carefully fed facts that are tainted by someone else's prejudice about them.

However, we should not suppose that propaganda is simply something nefarious propagandists do to ensnare the innocent citizen, that mass man is merely an unsuspecting victim of some clever geniuses. On the contrary, modern mass man, at bottom, deeply craves propaganda. He has a deep-seated need for a constant, daily dose of information about the world near and far. And the purveyors of propaganda also have a profound need to condition the masses with information and facts about the world that can be used as a tool of control to direct the outlook, and shape the values, of the masses.

This stems from another pre-condition of modern propaganda, namely, the existence in the West of democratic forms of government. The needs of modern democratic politics make the role of propaganda to be all but inevitable. What is more, this need is two-sided. It is, in the first place, a need of government itself, for in the case of modern democracy the exercise of power, including the ends for which it is exercised, depends upon the approval of the people at large. That is precisely what *democracy* means: rule of the people, by the people, and for the people. Those whom the people select to carry out this responsibility on their behalf, their representatives, of necessity need to know what those who elected them think or approve of in the way of government policies. Sometimes those policies can change, or more often, the policy positions that the people's representatives take can be such that it becomes necessary to convince the people that they are the right ones. They do not merely respond to what people want; they seek, from the outset, to influence their wants.

This is where the techniques of propaganda become indispensable, in order to persuade or convince the population that certain intended government policies are in their best interest, or the best interest of the country, or the world, and so forth. Consequently, in a democratic age, such as we have now, governments who subscribe to the ideals of democracy have an urgent need to make sure that they are acting in step with the people. On the other hand, the people have become greatly aware of their role in democratic societies. The older system of government was one of ruler and subjects, but in the age of democracy it has become that of citizens and citizens' representatives. According to democratic ideals, all sovereignty rests with the people, and the people are themselves keenly aware of this fact. And being filled with a strong sense of their role in the scheme of things, the masses have become intensely interested in politics. No longer, as in the past, are the people kept at a distance from the center of affairs, especially since in a democratic age all affairs have a direct, daily bearing on the people. The masses today are affected by political decisions more than ever

before, which means that they demand to know what effects the decisions of government may have on their lives. More than this, they demand to have as much influence as possible on those decisions. And, since some decisions are bound to clash with other decisions, or, rather, the outcomes of some decisions will affect some people differently from the way they will affect other people, it leads inevitably to a struggle by one group among the masses to guarantee that government implements decisions that will benefit them the most, at the cost, if necessary, of all other groups. Politics dominates all aspects of modern life and becomes a battleground for the control of government for the sake of directing, by means of its monopoly of power, material and other benefits one's way. All this becomes exceedingly fruitful ground for propaganda to spring up in.

Propaganda, then, works effectively on the background of these pre-conditions. It should not be thought, however, that propaganda is inevitable given these pre-conditions alone. There is yet one other factor that needs to be taken into consideration for propaganda to become all but inevitable, and that is the *spiritual*, or we might say *religious*, condition of modern man. We can say, with little risk of being contradicted, that modern man, for the most part— and here we have primarily in mind Western man—is profoundly secular and humanist in his spiritual disposition. That is, he has jettisoned all notion of or belief in the idea of God or the existence of God. This is true of the masses in general. Among the élites and the more educated segments of society, the idea of God is an offense, and the God of Christianity especially intensely hated. Where men in the past found consolation in the existence of a God, and respected a moral order thought to be imposed by God, in today's secular mass society, man has come to believe that he is on his own. With God eliminated from consideration, he no longer believes in absolutes: no absolute truth, no absolute moral standards. Everything, instead, has become relative to the needs of man, who may dispense with the idea of truth or ethical absolutes whenever it suits him. Man is alone in the universe. Consequently, the troubling uncertainties of modern life are entirely man's problem. On his own, he is driven by the urgent need to straighten out all that is crooked, to set right all that is wrong, and to create a paradise for man to live in, in which all that causes pain or suffering is removed or ameliorated as much as possible. For some time, modern man believed in the progress of culture and civilisation, in the advancement of science and technology. Through education, human nature would be transformed from its crude and barbaric beginnings into one that has been fully civilised and man thereby changed into a selfless promoter of the social good. Man no longer believes in a transcendent foundation to life, one that gives to man a sense that his work of culture and civilisation is not in vain, of no more than transient importance; his orientation is entirely earth-bound and existential. As modern history has progressed, man has become increasingly humanistic in his outlook on life, with the consequence that more and more his *religious* condition has become one of doubt and uncertainty. Science and progress may no longer be the saviours that man had once expected.

As all the factors that we mentioned as pre-conditions have come to dominate man's world, more and more does mass man, the isolated individual, feel pushed into passivity. He feels more constricted, less independent and less certain of tomorrow. Without God in his life, the world and its problems begin to take on frightening dimensions; the universe seems impersonal and remote. Man alone in the masses feels not only isolated but marginalised and powerless.

In his present isolated and indeterminate religious condition, modern man deeply feels the need to find that which will help him to face his condition. He struggles to find this within himself, but more often than not the issues of life and society simply threaten to engulf him. Consequently, he needs *outside* assistance to help him to ward off or withstand certain assaults or to reduce certain uncomfortable pressures. He needs, in short, propaganda. Propaganda's usefulness is dependent upon its effect in this regard. What man needs is a set of opinions, a belief system, to give substance to certainties in an ultimately empty and impersonal universe. Man cannot live in the world without holding some values or accepting some truths; he stands in need of explanations, and in a complex world such as ours has become in the modern age, man needs explanations that are simple and all-embracing.

Propaganda, therefore, serves to fulfil this need. Propaganda tells man the reasons behind events and developments in society and the world, it shows him why things threaten him by threatening society at large. More importantly, it gives him immediate, ready-made solutions to problems that would otherwise appear to be wholly insoluble. In the modern secular society we live in today the predominant message of propaganda, the solutions it offers to modern tensions and problems, is to direct people into political pathways, to gear their minds to take pre-desired political positions. Furthermore, the sorts of positions that propaganda seeks to inculcate are almost always such as to encourage its recipients to desire a greater presence of government in their lives and in the affairs of life in general. In an empty universe, there is no transcendent power upon which man may depend; all power is purely earthly in nature, and the power of organised government, or the state, is the greatest power conceivable to secular man. It will not take much coaxing to induce him to demand that government take more and more control if he is to feel secure against all that assails him in this world, whether the threats come from the forces of history (that is, from man!) or nature. Through the power of government, man, the individual, feels himself to be personally more powerful. Propaganda's intention is to make him see that this is clearly the answer to his dilemma of personal or individual powerlessness.

However, propaganda's purpose is not merely to make man feel powerful and, therefore, secure, in the face of life's problems, it is also to make him feel right and justified in his system of beliefs, which he cannot live without. Here we are confronted with the need to see man in his most profound religious condition. This is not, however, discoverable by the unaided reason of man; it comes to him by way of revelation and is received with authority. Scripture speaks of man as dead in sin and fully guilty before God. Nevertheless, man, who has a seared conscience on account of sin, vigorously denies that he is a sinner, or that he must give an account of himself to God. Man is neither sinful nor guilty as Scripture asserts. And, yet, man feels a great sense of guilt in himself. At the very least, he senses that something unjust exists in the world, that he is responsible for it, and, therefore, is duty bound to set the world upon its proper ethical axis. The rise

in the modern world of the great cause of rights, or human rights, shows just how extensive this feeling of guilt is in man. Consequently, man is eager to assert his guiltlessness, or, at least, he is eager to justify himself in this regard by showing how much he cares about human rights in society in general. He means to exonerate himself by defending the cause of the poor, the oppressed, the outcast or deprived, all those, in other words, burdened with needs unfairly denied them by, once again, history or nature. He will struggle against all those wicked forces of the unfairness of life that affects so many in the world. He will, in other words, withstand the corporation, the capitalist enterprise, the money-grubbing materialist, the ruiner of the environment, the tyranny of the imperialist powers, etc. All this, and more, he will do primarily to feel justified in his own mind and heart, to claim that he is a good person and one who stands for the good everywhere in the world. By doing so, man feels his own guilt, the guilt he feels on account of sin but which he denies, to be lessened and his conscience salved. This necessity to be guilt-free and to feel justified in his own heart and mind is a need of man's that propaganda is able to manipulate with great skill. Propaganda makes him believe that the problems of right or wrong in the world are not due to him, but to others. He is not the bad person, some other person (or persons, or nations) is the cause of all that is unjust and wrong in the world. On the collective level, Ellul would say, most ideologies and political or economic systems and doctrines are essentially justifications to relieve those who adhere to them of the great burden of the guilt they feel. As long as man is compelled to deal with his guilt problem, propaganda will fill a huge need in his thinking and acting in the world. Propaganda has become the substitute religion of modern man.

It might seem surprising, but propaganda, far from being a merely modern psychological or sociological phenomenon, has a profoundly biblical explanation to it. In other words, the truth of the matter lies in theology, which depends on the light of *revelation* to clarify the issue. With this caveat, then, we shall consider briefly the Book of Revelation, chapter 13. In this chapter, the reader encounters the image of the two beasts, the beast that arises from the sea, and the beast that arises from the land. Now these two beasts do not appear of their own volition; they are called up or summoned forth by a great power, referred to, first in chapter 12, as the great red dragon. This dragon is, of course, none other than "that ancient serpent called the devil or Satan, who leads the whole world astray"(12:9). Satan is the great opponent of God and his purposes for Creation, as was seen in his leading of Adam into temptation in Gen. 3, and of God's purposes for redemption, as can be seen in Rev. 12:4: "The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born."

This child, without doubt, is the Lord Jesus Christ, whom from the moment of his birth Satan had sought, unsuccessfully, to destroy. When, at the cross, Satan believed that he finally had triumphed, we read in Revelation 12 that the male child "was snatched up to God and to his throne." This latter depiction refers to Christ's resurrection from the grave and his ascension into heaven to sit at the right hand of God the Father. Satan could not succeed in destroying him, nor could he hold him in the grave. Quite the contrary, Christ was exalted to a place of great power and authority.

And that is the situation at the present time; Christ now exercises power and authority over the world and the course of history. It is *he* who has triumphed. The effect of this elevation of Christ led, at the same time, to the decrease of the previous power and authority of Satan. The dragon "was hurled to the earth" (12:9). However, this should not be understood to mean that Satan has been eliminated from having any influence in the world. In fact, as v. 13 shows, he is far from inactive in his opposition to God in the earth. If Satan cannot destroy the male child, then he will do all that he can to destroy the woman, who is truly the offspring of the male child. Even though he is born of her, she exists as the fruit of his accomplishment of redemption. She is his achievement; he is not hers. And she will continue to produce offspring into the indefinite future, and it will be Satan's single-minded purpose "to make war" throughout the rest of history against all those who are born of the woman, that is, against those "who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus" (12:17).

This is all that Satan wishes to achieve. Everything later in Revelation to involve the dragon and his seed, all that it says he intends to do or does, must be understood as subservient to that agenda. He has no other. His sole remaining purpose, before he is cast forever into the lake of fire that is prepared for him and his angels, is to destroy the woman and her offspring. He seeks to accomplish this agenda primarily by means of that which comes from his *mouth*, in other words, by means of the Lie. "Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river, to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent" (12:15).

The use of the word *serpent* here is meant to remind us of what Satan was initially in the Garden, when he first appeared to Adam and Eve as a crafty serpent—a deceiver. Satan's war against the woman is to be carried out by a programme of lies and deceptions. But overcoming the woman with lies and deceptions is not easy, and this *enrages* the dragon. He will do all that he can to stop her from increasing and producing more offspring. He will build a world order, with a culture and civilisation to attract the nations to his own purposes and, at the same time, to distract them from having any interest in the message the woman bears, a message that comes from the word (the "little scroll" of chapter 10), which is the woman's instrument, given to her by her Lord, to work against the devil and his influence. This brings us, then, to chapter 13 and the two beasts. Without this background in chapter 12, chapter 13 would hardly make any sense. Chapter 13 is the continuation of the dragon's purpose to make war on the woman, on a worldwide scale. It shows us the form that that warfare takes, and how it very nearly succeeds in its purpose.

Chapter 13 opens, then, with an image filled with tension and anticipation. There we read these words: "And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea." The *sea* here must be seen as a depiction of fallen mankind in his entirety, man who now exists under the curse, whose life and society are one great and continuous disturbance and churning like the waves of a storm-tossed sea (cf. Is. 57:20). Mankind in this condition is prey to the machinations of Satan; for, man in this condition, subject to death, longs for security and protection from the threat of destruction that comes from the world and from man. Fully aware of this, Satan is about to bring forth his answer, his solution to fallen and cursed man's precarious problem. However, it is not for man's good

or benefit that he does so; rather, it is in order to succeed in his warfare against the woman. Satan is about to call up great and mighty powers to assist him. He is about to use the agencies of the world to create the means to carry on warfare against the Church. He intends to bring forth two great beasts to work together to form a kingdom that cannot be opposed or breached by the message of the little scroll of chapter 10. Their nature as beasts means that they will become reflections of the dragon's own nature, savage and ferocious, full of ungodliness, and opposed to all that he opposes, namely, God and his truth.

The first beast, the beast that rises up out of the sea, is the principal beast in the dragon's agenda. It is primarily by means of this beast that Satan intends to fashion man's world. Its fundamental character is that of an earthly principle of power and rule. The symbolism of this beast explains this. The symbolism of "heads" and "horns" is meant to indicate that it is to have power over men and nations. It is an imperial power, as indicated in v. 2 where the beast is said to resemble something that is leopard-like, bear-like, and lion-like.

These animals were mentioned in Dan. 7 as symbols for emerging imperial kingdoms in the ancient world. These earlier imperial regimes were all religious expressions of fallen man's desire to take possession of the earth by means of conquest and the sword, to dominate the earth by means of totalitarian systems of rule. The work of the dragon in the present age is to re-activate this programme and to increase its influence over the masses of mankind. Central to its attraction to fallen man in his masses is that it represents a realm of social order and security against all that threatens man. But in order for it to become effective over man, in order for it to be able to act as a security for man, it must be given great power, power that is total and unchallenged, imperial in nature as the ancient kingdoms were. The great strategy of the dragon is to offer to man a society in which State power is absolute. However, it must not appear to be anything but a friend to man. That is, it must not be seen as a tyranny over man. Man must not think his socialist orders are oppressive and, on the whole, a negative gain for man. Otherwise he might not be so enamoured of the vision of life presented by them. This, however, is where the second beast comes into the picture.

The second beast, which rises up out of the land, is brought forth solely on behalf of the interests and ambitions of the first beast. The second beast is meant to assist the first beast in achieving absolute power. Knowing that earthly powers can be oppressive, the first beast needs an assistant who can disguise what it truly represents; it needs, in other words, a means to fool the masses into thinking that what the first beast offers is entirely for man's good, and intends him no harm or danger. The second beast is called up to act as an instrument of ideology and propaganda, which are employed to lend undeniable appeal to the first beast and its agenda. The second beast, we might say, stands for the communication of all the values and philosophies of the world that can then be used to advance the cause of humanism and statism in all their various forms. This beast is, in other words, the educational apparatus of humanism. It is said to come up from the *land*, for the word is meant to indicate the close association that this second beast has with the institutions of human societies. The ideals for which this beast stands seek to penetrate and completely control man's institutions, and, in turn, to use those institutions as effective organisations of the dragon's purpose, namely, to be instruments in fostering the total society ideal of the first beast. Man's institutions can also be used to silence any viewpoint not in line with the intentions of the dragon and his following among men. By seizing man's institutions for his own purposes, the dragon hopes to prevent those institutions from being in any way influenced by the agenda of him who now sits on the throne, and to silence the woman and stop her influence from spreading in the cultures and societies of man.

We are told that this beast looked like the Lamb, but spoke like a dragon (v. 11). In other words, it sought to disguise itself as a false Messianic ideal for all of life and culture; it made itself to appear as a great good for man, something to which he would be drawn by reason of its righteousness and peace, no doubt of great benefit to man and his societies. But the words of its mouth were a dead give-away; for, to speak "like a dragon" is to utter lies and falsehoods of every conceivable nature. The point, however, is that this second beast speaks. It is an instrument of communication, meant to persuade the masses, to make the agenda of the first beast to seem attractive and desirable, to produce, in other words, strong conviction and faith in humanistic man's goals and ambitions, so as to break down all resistance to it, and, at the same time, to silence the only other voice that might expose the Lie for the deception that it is, namely that of the woman whose only agenda is to speak the truth as contained in the little scroll, the word of God.

Satan, the great red dragon, is presently engaged in an intense propaganda war with the nations of the world. And all those who have the "mark of the beast" on their foreheads listen to it and in various degrees submit to it. They cannot help but do so, for those who have the mark of the beast on their foreheads are all those who do not have the "seal of God" upon theirs.

There are, in other words, two kinds of people in the world, the ones whose conscious (the reference to "forehead" is meant to symbolise the conscious life of man) existence and outlook on life is held in the grip of the Lie and he who is the agency of it, and those whose conscious life and existence has been delivered from the Lie and belong, through a new power of the indwelling Spirit of God, to him who now sits on the throne. It is those who have the mark of the beast who are attracted to the programme of the first beast and who, therefore, are easily and inevitably persuaded by the ideals of that programme as taught and communicated by the second beast.

Fallen man is, therefore, a natural product of a profound spiritual propaganda. He gladly looks at the world through Satanic eyes; he happily adopts the humanist perspective on life and its problems. That perspective is profoundly worldly oriented and ungodly, and it is interested in seizing all aspects of man's life in order to advance a kingdom agenda of a beastly nature. Such men are, therefore, easy victims of humanist thinking and reasoning, and given, as we mentioned, the pre-conditions of modern society, their social and psychological state is such that they are ready to give their assent to the political and social goals involved in that agenda. But unless we understand that a *spiritual* propaganda is at work in the world, we shall never be able truly to recognise or to understand the workings of propaganda on a purely psychological or sociological level. *C&S*

IMMANENT DANGER

by A. B. Dayman

THE Scriptures teach that God, who created all things, and who is infinitely personal, is both transcendent (Ps. 97:9; Is. 55:8–9; Job, chapters 38–41) and immanent (Ps. 139:7–8; Gen. 1:26–27) at the same time. He is not to be identified with his creation, yet all creation declares his glory (Ps. 19.1–6). There is no great chain of being[1] between the devil and God, with God having being and the devil non-being. God is uncreated, self-sufficient and has apartness from his world. When referring to immanence, we speak of God's presence within the creation.

God is simultaneously immanent and transcendent; yet, today immanence has become the preoccupation of all men, Christians included. As a matter of fact, Harold Bloom has made the undeniable assertion that the American religion, regardless of its distinctive, is gnosticism.[2] While we cannot put ancient Gnostics, evangelicals, liberals and mystics into one mould, a contention can be made that Gnosticism is permeating our culture, including Christianity. The ancient gnostics so emphasised God's immanence they came to believe that God was actually part of them. The line between God and self became indistinguishable.

The finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Nag Hammadi Literature in 1947 has caused an increase in academic curiosity with ancient gnostic texts and their relation to the early Christian community. There are many books on the market today claiming to be "lost" biblical texts that are really Gnostic teachings. In fact Christians have known of these texts for years but they were excluded from the original canon of Scripture. The revival of Gnosticism today and the New Age Movement actually is more the result of nineteenth century Romanticism and Revivalism than of the discovery of the Nag Hammadi texts. According to Richard Tarnas:

. . . religion itself was a central and enduring element in the Romantic spirit, whether it took the form of transcendental idealism, Neoplatonism, Gnosticism, pantheism, mystery religion, nature worship, Christian mysticism, Hindu-Buddhist mysticism, Swedenborgianism, theosophy, esotericism, religious existentialism, neopaganism, shamanism, Mother Goddess worship, evolu-

tionary human divinization, or some syncretism of these. Here "sacred" remained a viable category, whereas in science it had long disappeared. God was rediscovered in Romanticism—not the God of orthodoxy or of deism but of mysticism, pantheism, and immanent cosmic process; not the juridical monotheistic patriarch but a divinity more ineffably mysterious, pluralistic, all-embracing, neutral or even feminine in gender; not an absentee creator but a numinous creative force within nature and within the human spirit.[3]

There is a gnostic influence touching all of our culture, from science to politics, from art to religion, from business to education. Its distinctives will sound very familiar:

1. *Immanence Not Transcendence*

Gnostics believed that they were God or that God was actually part of them. Their spirit was the "divine spark" that was of God. Self remains the focus. It is interesting to see how modern psychology and its self-help pantheon follows in the steps of C. J. Jung,[4] a self-confessed gnostic psychologist. The orthodox distinction between Creator and creature is blurred and God's holiness is thrown out the window.

Jungian spirituality has entered the Church via the theory of psychological types. The Myers-Briggs Temperament Indicator (MBTI) was developed specifically to carry Carl Jung's theory of type (Jung, 1921, 1971). Dr. Jeffrey Satinover, whose background as an eminent Jungian scholar, analyst, and past President of the C. G. Jung Foundation, has stated, "One of the most powerful modern forms of Gnosticism is without question Jungian psychology, both within or without the Church."

Key individuals promoting the Jungian gospel to the Church are Morton Kelsey, John Sanford (not John and Paula Sandford), Thomas Moore, Joseph Campbell, and Bishop John Spong and notably Paul Tillich.[5] These men have promoted a deadly synthesis of Jungianism with Christianity. It has been steadily moving forward, beginning with

1. Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being, A Study of the History of an Idea,* (Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1936). New Age authority, W. J. Hanegraaff says that although this book was published in 1936, it reads "as if he had the New Age movement specifically in mind. The similarities are so close and numerous that we can only conclude that Platonism, with its attendant problems, apparently extends its influence into the heart of the New Age movement." See Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture, Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought,* (E. J. Brill, Leiden, The Netherlands, 1996), p. 121f.

2. Harold Bloom, *The American Religion: The Emergence of the Post-Christian Nation* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992).

3. Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the Ideas That Have Shaped Our World View* (Ballantine Books, New York, 1991) pp. 372–373.

4. C. G. Jung, *VII Sermones and Mortuos, The Seven Sermons to the Dead in Alexandre the City Where the East Toucheth the West,* Translated by H. G. Baynes, (John M. Watkins, 1925) Random House 1961, 1962, 1963, (This edition Robinson & Watkins Books Lts. 1967, London). Much more needs to be written about Jung's influence upon pastoral counseling and psychology in the church today.

5. Dourley, John P., *The Psyche as Sacrament: A Comparative Study of C. G. Jung and Paul Tillich* (Inner City Books, Toronto, 1981). Tillich gave a memorial for Jung's death and has been called his "theological twin" in that Tillich is heavily indebted to Jung for his view of God as the

its entrance into Roman Catholic and Episcopal renewal in the mid twentieth century and onward from there into the heart of evangelicalism.

It is no exaggeration to say that the theological positions of most mainstream denominations in their approach to pastoral care, as well as in their doctrines and liturgy, have become more or less identical with Jung's psychological/symbolic theology. In a good number of evangelical theological colleges, the MBTI[6] is being imposed upon the student body and is part of their entrance requirement. According to Martin and Deidre Bobgan, the four temperaments "evolved from a mythological, astrological view of man and the universe."[7] This basic fact seems to go unquestioned by many who would consider themselves orthodox today. Is man a product of his environment (the stars) or is he servant of God?

The Council of Chalcedon has been called the foundation of Western liberty.[8] In it Jesus Christ is proclaimed to be, "at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood . . . recognized in two natures without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ." The incarnation portrays transcendence, God's self-sufficiency and his apartness from his world, and immanence, God's presence within the creation.

This Definition became the touchstone of orthodoxy and effectively condemned syncretism of any kind. By denying the confusion of the human and the divine, even in Christ, it ruled out immanence in any other person or institution. The divinisation of man or State was out of the question. The doctrines of the incarnation and the Trinity bear witness that God is simultaneously immanent and transcendent.

While most evangelicals would agree with orthodoxy, the trend today is to pay lip service to transcendence while practicing immanence in its many manifestations. Power

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"Ground of Being." As a Jungian populariser, Tillich saw life as "made up of the flow of energy between opposing poles or opposites." This is similar to a Yin/Yang dualism that is monistic. Mandalas, which Carl Jung saw as archetypes of the human psyche, represent the soul, the progress of the soul to enlightenment, and the universe.

6. There have been different adaptations of Jung's four personality types each giving emphasis to the particular usage intended. They are used today to help determine everything from one's spiritual gift to what kind of sales person one should be. The two most prominent promoters amongst Christians are Dr. Tim Lahaye and Florence Littauer. H. Norman Wright, leader of the Christian Marriage Enrichment organisation promotes the Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis test (TJTA), which has many similarities to the four temperaments, found in the other tests. While these tests have undoubtedly helped some people, their main weakness is that they promote moral neutrality that does not and cannot exist. Ethical concerns are not emphasised nor rarely mentioned.

7. Martin and Deidre Bobgan, *Four Temperaments, Astrology and Personality Testing*, (Eastgate Publishers, Santa Barbara, CA, 1992) pp. 19–31. They have made the connection between Greek cosmology's four primary elements, fire, air, earth and water as basic to the four temperament personality theory as it was taught by Empedocles (495–425 B.C.).

8. Rousas John Rusdoony, *The Foundations of Social Order, Studies in the Creeds and Councils of the Early Church* (Thoburn Press, Fairfax Virginia, 1978), pp. 63–82

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religion, following the revivalist methods of Charles Finney, has become the focus. Manipulation of external events by speaking "words of power" is called magic. It is an attempt to gain a desired end apart from lawful service. It was the basis of Satan's temptation of Jesus in the wilderness: command stones to turn into bread. He tempted Jesus to become a magician. Christ responded by repeating Dt. 8:3, "man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." A proper covenantal relationship means obeying God's ethical commands. Misusing the spoken word to gain power over creation is an attempt to be as God, who alone has the rightful power to speak a creative word. It is an attempt to immanentise God's power without responsibility.

2.   *Spirit Versus Matter*
Spirit is good and matter is evil. This had a great impact on early Christianity and spawned much of the ascetic movement.

Western *Christian* mysticism was a product of the monastic world and its search for *spiritual* release. As we mentioned, Christianity was early affected by the in-roads of Gnostic dualistic thinking in which a heavy emphasis was place upon the antithesis of matter and spirit, body and soul. The Christian doctrine of salvation from sin by many became quickly transformed into the belief that this meant a deliverance from all materiality and earthly existence . . .[9]

The Fall, according to Gnosticism, was not from innocence into disobedience (ethical) but from pure spirit to physical bodies (metaphysical). Self, being imprisoned in this material world, is in a battle between light and darkness, spirit and matter. The modern counterpart of this is called "mind over matter." Salvation is escape from the body and the physical world. This anti-resurrection, anti-incarnation worldview breeds perfectionism causing pride in those who see themselves as higher up on the ladder of perfection (1 Jn 4:1–3).

Neoplatonism, which was the dominant philosophy from the third century A.D., integrated mystical thought into Plato's scheme as well as incorporating Aristotelian concepts. The created cosmos in all its variety was the result of a divine emanation of the supreme One at the centre. A hierarchical series of gradations moved away from this ontological centre to the outermost limits possible. The universe was a vast scale of being, from pure and divine spirit to brute matter. The world as being the outer limit of creation was characterised negatively as a realm of multiplicity (versus Oneness), restriction and darkness as well as being imperfectly beautiful and organically whole.

Monasticism was applied Neoplatonism. Man can look upward or downward on the chain of being and move in either direction. To move upward was to ascend towards pure spirit and possible divinisation. To move downward was to debase the spark of divinity by embracing the world of sensations and matter.[10] To ascend the scale of being meant forsaking the material world.

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9. Michael W. Kelly, *The Impulse of Power: Formative Ideals of Western Civilization*, (Contra Mundum Books, Minneapolis, 1998) p. 271. See also Kenneth Ronald Davis, *Anabaptism and Asceticism: A Study in Intellectual Origins*, (Herald Press, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, Kitchener, Ontario, 1974)

10. The New Age movement almost unanimously rejects this dualism; however, New Agers are in a state of confusion on how to

Neoplatonism has affected the Church by making it the realm of the spirit, representing a higher order, whereas the State was the highest representative of the lower material realm. At various times in Western history both Church and State saw themselves as continuations of the incarnation. The neoplatonic chain of being viewed Jesus as the leader in the process of ascent. The process took on an institutional emphasis in history and found its locus in either Church or State as it took on religious language and imagery. During the sixteenth century, jurists in England went as far as to use the arguments from the Chalcedonian Creed in applying the *idea* of the incarnation to the king: ". . . it is of great interest to notice how in sixteenth-century England, by the efforts of the jurists to define effectively and accurately the King's Two Bodies, all the christological problems of the early Church concerning the Two Natures once more were actualised and resuscitated in the early absolute monarchy."[11]

Today, largely due to the Hermeticism, which was popular during the Renaissance and Romantic period, man has the power to evolve into a terrestrial god. Man is described as "possessing both God-like knowledge and the creative capacity to use that knowledge to emulate God's creation."[12]

Man is a magus. The emphasis on man's divinisation is a form of sacralisation. Under this emphasis on the immanent, the secular world undergoes a sacralising process of divinisation. Man's essential nature is divine and his intellectual capacities are equal to God's. The divine has become immanent in man who can bring creation to its full potential and perfect human existence. Salvation is still by knowledge but man is now the master of history. Gnosticism and Hermeticism differ only in that one is otherworldly and one is this worldly. Both have immanent consequences.

When it came to beliefs, it is likely that the Hermeticists and Gnostics were close spiritual relatives. The two schools had a great deal in common, their principal difference being that the Hermeticists looked to the archetypal figure of Hermes as the embodiment of salvific teaching and initiation, while the Gnostics revered the more recent savior figure known as Jesus in a similar manner. Both groups were singularly devoted to gnosis, which they understood to be the experience of liberating interior knowledge; both looked upon embodiment as a limitation that led to unconsciousness, from which only gnosis can liberate the human spirit. Most of the Hermetic teachings closely correspond to fundamental ideas of the Gnostics.[13]

Scripture teaches that man was created in the image of God. Body and soul were wholly good; yet, when man attempted

to be as God, both were depraved by the fall of man. Both body and soul are similarly redeemed in Jesus Christ. Yet man still remains man. God remains God. The Creator-creature distinction is fundamental to Christianity. Historically, an other-worldly Neoplatonism has infected the faith. Today a this-worldly form is insinuating itself into Christian teaching via such avenues as the teachings of Norman Vincent Peale, Robert Schuller, Agnes Sanford, E. W. Kenyon and Faith teachers such as Benny Hinn.[14] Non-Christian behaviour such as focusing on demons, naming them, placing them in hierarchies, aggressively attacking them, listening to them, and forming fanciful mythologies about what people "hear" and "see" them doing, are common today in many Churches. This is presented under the heading of spiritual mapping or warfare.

3. *Anti-institutionalism*

One must be inner-directed and not subject to creeds, doctrines, rituals, sacraments, or any people or structures of authority. Experiential rather than liturgical or doctrinal forms of public worship are promoted. The leaders of the movement were those who claimed to have secret knowledge of divine revelation. They gloried in their rebellion against traditional Church teachings and structures in contrast to New Testament teaching about believers submitting themselves to Church officers (Heb. 13.7).

In a recent conference on Alternative Spiritualities and New Age studies in England, one of the workshops was entitled, "Sacralizing the Self and Demonizing Institutions: (Neo-) Gnosticism and Anti-Institutionalism." The respondents state in their course offering, "Our respondents reject traditional as well as modern functional-rational institutions, because they experience their pressure for conformity as alienating. Yielding to this sort of institutional pressure, they argue, inevitably causes psychological problems and ultimately physical sickness and a wide range of other types of misery."

This plays well to the postmodernist consumer world that lusts for peak experiences. The plethora of "self-improvement" movements that exist today promise the development of experiential potency through bodily exercise, contemplation, and self-concentration. Breaking the psychic blocks of convention-induced restraints, getting free of suppressed instincts or subliminal wounds, developing the self-abandonment and passive flow of sensations, as well as embracing the esoteric and exotic mysteries which guide these activities is readily available to everybody. Mastering the appropriate technique is all it takes.

Many evangelicals regard institutionalism as a sign of weakening personal devotion, except in detached groups living under monastic rule. Faith, to be faith, must be simple trust on a personal level, and doctrinal emphasis, hierarchical structure and liturgical forms necessarily distort and

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substantiate New Age "holism." For some of their difficulties and innovative speculations see pp. 171–176 in Hanegraaff. He also has drawn attention to the close connection between Hermeticism (this worldliness) and Neoplatonism (other worldliness). Hermeticism flourished during the Renaissance period and was tightly enmeshed with Neoplatonism during the Romantic period of the late eithteenth century (p. 419). I mention this to draw attention to the fact that these ideas did not disappear but continued to inform Western culture including many Christian movements.

11. Ernest H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies, A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology,* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1957) p. 16ff. Hence the saying at the death of a monarch, "The King is dead, long live the King."

12. Stephen A. McKnight, *Sacralizing the Secular, The Renaissance Origins of Modernity,* (Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge and London, 1989) p. 44.

13. Stephan A. Hoeller, *On the Trail of the Winged God, Hermes and Hermeticism Throughout the Ages* (www.gnosis.org).

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14. Daniel Ray McConnell, *A Different Gospel* [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988] The confusion of divinity with humanity is notorious amongst Faith teachers such as Kenneth Copeland, Morris Cerillo and Kenneth Hagin, to name a few: "man . . . was created on terms of equality with God, and he could stand in God's presence without any consciousness of inferiority . . . He made us the same class of being that He is Himself . . . He lived on terms equal with God . . . The believer is called Christ, that's who we are; we're Christ." See Kenneth Hagin, *Zoe: The God Kind of Life,* pp. 35–36, 41.

impair the awareness of this personal relation that alone is saving knowledge. Without downplaying the personal side of our faith we must beware that there is just as much danger in overemphasising personal experience. In our day pietism is embraced while institutionalism is branded as backsliding or even heresy. Pietism has become an epidemic creating a spiritual wasteland.[15] It's not an either/or situation. Both the personal and the institutional are important.

Much of this is the fruit of the revivalistic teaching of Charles Finney. He promoted the idea that revival is the result of applied technique. This is the essence of his writings. The average modern evangelical believes that revival comes via techniques. Technique is placed at the forefront of evangelism and revivals. Instead of preaching the word of God and prayer and waiting on God's sovereign timing to dispense his grace, human psychology and the techniques of moving a sinner's will to choose God are common. God doesn't really need the Church to minister the means of grace; he needs salesmen.

Gnostics have always looked to the "light within" which put them in direct confrontation with any institution. This fundamental religious perspective remained antithetical to the claims of the institutional Church. The Church catholic proclaimed, "Outside the Church there is no salvation." What this means is Scripture and the faith proclaimed in the Church. This was considered a hindrance to spiritual growth by gnostics who sought their own interior guidance. They emphasised exploration of individualised human experience in order to discover divine reality.

4.   *Subjective Individualism*
"God told me!" Gnostics believed that whatever happened to them in their own private experience was the final court of appeal. The subject (the knower) had priority over the object (the known). True spirituality was inner, experiential, and mystical. This stands in stark contrast to Christianity, which looks outward to Christ, his word and the cross. The Church, the community of the redeemed, confesses its faith in what God did in history, not what happens in an individual privately. The Holy Spirit is given to the whole Church to unite it with Christ.

Subjectivism is a comprehensive theological error that has emerged from the Pelagian, monastic and Anabaptist movements.[16] The roots of asceticism, which affected the Gnostics and the early Church, are found in the Greek philosophy of Plato. Commenting on the influence of Greek thought on Origen and Clement of Alexandria, Chadwick writes, "The end of life was the vision of God. The training of the body, the conquest of sin, the fight with demons, the practice of virtue were destined to the one great end— contemplation of God by the pure mind."[17] Many of the early church father as well as Augustine were swayed by

asceticism. Asceticism continued on in the writing the Thomas à Kempis (1379–1471) book, *The Imitations of Christ,* which was the best-known book on the belief of the Brethren of a Common Life. They were a lay movement attributed with being the harbingers of the Reformation by whom both Calvin and Luther received their education. While good things came from this movement certain things that carried on into the Anabaptist tradition are certainly questionable.

Suffering spirituality, a major feature of Christendom, was something in which the Anabaptists and their monastic predecessors gloried. Denial of one's self and suffering became marks of true spirituality. The one who suffered most was looked upon as being more holy. Scripture teaches that suffering "for righteousness' sake" is a mark of spirituality (1 Pet. 3:14). Too often "for righteousness' sake" is not mentioned. Ironically, the failure of the Church today is linked to suffering as a sign of righteousness. As a result, the Church in the West is bound by failure.

Subjectivism is often named in opposition to objectivism. This produces Christians who suffer from the paralysis of analysis, constantly "contemplating their navel" to see if they are "spiritual." Because the law of God as an objective standard of righteousness is disregarded, suffering becomes the mark of spirituality. Such suffering includes everything from depression to complete failure. It is not surprising that psycho-spirituality is in such vogue today.

5.   *Anti-patriarchal Feminism*
"Ancient gnosticism loathed the patriarchal and authoritarian qualities of official Christianity. From the Gnostic point of view, the structure and discipline of the Church stifled the spirit."[18] Michael Horton in his provocative book *In The Face of God*[19] draws attention to the Gnostic celebration of the androgynous self, stating the belief that while the body may be male or female, the spirit is free. Gnostics, whether old or new, take offense at the idea that God not only became human flesh, but that he became a man.

Androgyny, on the other hand sees the unity of male and female as a symbol of complete identity. This unity is found in the dissolution of male and female as one-sided realities. Instead there is a mutual completion of male and female that can be distinguished at the material, spiritual and divine level. Interestingly, the psychology of C. G. Jung, a self-confessed Gnostic, has also taught that the soul is bi-sexual. Modern feminists are using religion and ritual as psychological tools.

Jacob Boehme (1575–1624) and Johann Georg Gichtel (1638–1710) in Germany, and John Pordage (1607–1681) and Jane Leade (1623–1704) in England, were all false mystics that revived Gnostic speculations about the "feminine side of God" and had a strong influence on Vladimir Soloviev (1853–1900), a Russian Orthodox layman. While Boehme is called "the father of Western Sophiology", Soloviev was a harbinger to many Russian theologians and the theosophy movement that is in vogue today.[20]

15. David F. Wells, *No Place for Truth, Or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology,* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1993)

16. Kenneth Ronald Davis, *Anabaptism and Asceticism,* (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1974). It should be added here that eighteenth century Puritan thought did not escape the impact of Anabaptism. The individualisation of the covenant, which stands in contrast to the corporate Old Testament image, became what in essence is a private psychological event.

17. Chadwick, Owen, *Western Asceticism,* vol. XII (London: SCM Press, 1958) p. 22.

18. Philip J. Lee, *Against the Protestant Gnostics,* (Oxford University Press, New York Oxford, 1987) p. 158.

19. Michael Horton, *In The Face Of God,* (Word Publishing, Dallas-London-Vancouver-Melbourne, 1996). I am indebted to Horton for drawing attention to the outline of this essay.

20. Arthur Versluis, *Wisdom's Book: The Sophia Anthology* (Paragon House, 2000).

A close cousin to androgyny is alchemy. A favourite hermetic teaching is the unity of opposites into one. Theosophy, the harbinger of the New Age movement, inherited the esoterics of alchemy and Hermeticism. Madame Blavatsky, the founder of the Theosophical Society in the late nineteenth century, was known to have a dominatrix lesbian relationship with her successor, Annie Besant. Those who have followed in their wake such as Aleister Crowley, noted advocate of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, and others have been homosexual pederasts. The predominance of homosexuality has caused scholars to conclude that it was not personal weakness but part of their belief system.

Modern feminist theologians such as Rosemary Reuther[21] and Mary Daly[22] recognise the importance of introducing feminist ideas into the institutional Church.[23] Though most of their ideas have been proven false and are myths and fables, they remain impervious to criticism. In so doing, they believe they have found a Trojan Horse that might be acceptable to Christians in Sophia, an imaginary goddess of Wisdom, who can supposedly be found in the Book of Wisdom of the Old Testament. Sophia is considered the perfect solution for women sympathetic to the divine feminine, yet wish to remain in Christianity without compromising their beliefs. The myth of Sophia is central to Gnosticism too. In contrast, Christianity has considered Wisdom to be personified in Proverbs 8 in particular, yet identified with Christ, mediator between God and man. In fact Christ identified himself, not Sophia, as this Wisdom (Lk. 7:35; Mt. 11:19; see also Jn. 1:13, 18; 8:58; 1 Cor. 1:24, 30; Col. 2:3).

Evangelical feminists do not like to associate themselves with secular feminists. They stress that their support for women pastors and mutually submissive marriages comes from a high view of Scripture and not the feminist movement. Yet even secular feminists recognise that the Bible does not advocate women priests. In the March 2003 *Atlantic Monthly* letters-to-the-editor exchange the writer challenged evangelical feminists to honestly question whether the Bible teaches gender egalitarianism. Evangelical feminists have bought into the same postmodern language games as secular feminists. They want to revise language to support their main, pervasive theme, that is, the full humanity and equality of women. While secular feminist go to extreme myth making, evangelical feminists use hermeneutics. Both use deconstructionist logic that says the cultural limitations that the authors struggled with prevented them from understanding the full meaning of God's word. In so doing, the authorial intent of the text is relativised. By appealing to a hermeneutical authority not found in the text itself the vantage point of the reader becomes the locus of authority. Exegesis turns into eisegesis. Immanence once again pushes transcendence out the door. This process can be used to throw out any and all teachings of Scripture. What often happens with a hermeneutics of suspicion is that it sees every text as a political creation designed to further the propaganda of the status quo. Truth is no longer the issue. The issue is power. Patriarchal religions such as Judaism and Christianity are challenged and replaced with matriarchal religions. Goddess worship becomes a substitute for the influence of the Bible.[24]

The loss of transcendence brings with it the loss of a constitutive ground of meaning. This was as central to the early Valentinian Gnostics as it is for modern postmodernist deconstructionists.[25] In both cases *gnosis* achieves displacement through radical relativity that eradicates the possibility of objective truth. It is why language is always the first victim of heresy.

6. *Anti-sacramental*

Baptism and communion are the sacraments of the Christian Church. The early Church maintained that all those who had received baptism, confessed the creed, participated in communion and agreed to obey the Church were Christians. This was considered too boring and offensive to the spirituality of gnostics who cried out for mystery, arcane knowledge and myth.

Gnostics claimed an unmediated access to God's Spirit and that they got their knowledge (*gnosis*) through secret revelation and mystical experience. The Christian sacraments use material elements such as bread and wine (eucharist), water (baptism), speech (preaching) and printed word (Scripture) as the means of grace. They are therefore too unspiritual to give us anything of a spiritual (anti-matter) nature. Yet these are the very things early Christians used in worship (Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7). These common elements were available to all and therefore challenged the private, elite nature of Gnosticism.

The early Church rejected any form of elitism and made every effort to include as many as possible within its fold. An ignorant man of God was considered superior to an arrogant, learned heretic. Ordinary farmers and their families who regularly attended the sacrament of communion and sought to live in obedience to the gospel made up the bulwark of the Church.

Acts chapter two indicates that "breaking of bread" was a common occurrence. There are also very clear and early (second century) allusions to the practice in the Didache and Justin Martyr's *The First Apology*. Yet most of Protestantism celebrates at best monthly or quarterly in a calendar year. One of the arguments used against frequent communion is that it would detract from proper reverence for the event. So American Protestantism has to a great degree become desacramentalised. Add to this the prohibitionist mindset against indulging in alcoholic beverages. Though Christ himself blessed the fruit of the vine in his first miracle and commanded wine to be used as a memorial to him seems to be of small import. Gnostic circles also pressured the early Church to reject all wine drinking and replace it with water.[26]

Gnostics rejected the Christian sacraments as material. Some saw Christian sacraments as pale imitations of the true spiritual sacraments. Christianity teaches that salvation comes

21. Rosemary R. Reuther, *Womanguides: Readings Toward a Feminist Theology* (Beacon Press, 1985).

22. Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father*, (Beacon Press, 1973) and *Pure Lust: Elemental Feminist Philosophy*, (Beacon Press, 1984).

23. See Donna Steichen, *Ungodly Rage: The Hidden Face of Catholic Feminism* (Ignatius Press, 1991).

24. Gene Edward Veith, Jr., *Postmodern Times, A Christian Guide to Contemporary Thought and Culture*, (Crossway Books, 1994), p. 57.

25. Michael H. Keefer, "Deconstruction and the Gnostics," in the *University of Toronto Quarterly*, Vol. 55, No. 1, (Fall, 1985), pp. 83–84.

26. Jungmann, J. A., *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, Vol. II. (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1958), p. 38, cited in Lee, Philip J. , *Against the Protestant Gnostics*, p. 183.

through a relationship between God and man; Gnostics taught that salvation comes through special knowledge granted only to a few, through knowledge that must be kept from the wider community. Christian preaching and teaching, in contrast, is public. The Protestant aversion to bread and wine may likely be founded on the spirit/matter dichotomy where such things are considered too unspiritual. Since God doesn't require particular objects to save, we don't need them to receive his salvation. As a result we have a mere formality gutted of its power leaving us with a lingering identification and a form of surviving memories of historic Christianity.

A de-gnosticised Christianity will exhibit concreteness. Home-bake bread and earthy red wine contained in pottery plates and chalices received with thanksgiving by mouths that chew and swallow bear witness to the mystery of the word made flesh. The individual bits of crackers and individual thimble cups of juice of which we now partake are foreign to how meals are eaten in any culture. It has become an unearthly meal that shouts that the bread and wine of spiritual communion have no connection with earthly communion. It is undeniably gnostic in its estrangement from ordinary meals where common bread, wine and the table fellowship of laughter and tears are played out.

7. *Anti-creedal*

Gnostics claim to believe in the Bible yet also claim they alone have the correct interpretation. To stave off the false teaching of the Gnostics the Church formulated creeds. These provide a plumbline by which the words of Scripture can be understood. The creeds were created by councils within the Church and not by individuals. The early ecumenical councils of the Christian Church provided an effective creedal blow against heresy. The Church's use of creeds is a clear statement that the present generation doesn't possess the whole truth but is determined to pass on the apostolic faith it has received. It also provides an effective guard against the pot-pourri spirituality of Gnosticism as seen in the New Age Movement.

This aversion to creeds is not surprising. They expose the errors, false belief and hostility to Christian faith. Even so, early Gnostics found it effective to affirm the Apostle's Creed yet re-interpret it through a Gnostic lens. That lens was progressive revelation. The interpreters were the elite, esoteric leaders of Gnosticism, the *pneumatikos*. This was full-blown humanism, a glorification of man. But by affirming the creed they gained entrance into the lives of Christians and introduced their heresy. By making the elite the arbiters of the truth man was made ultimate and the ultimacy of God was dissolved.

A movement in contemporary theology known as nonfoundationalism,[27] states that its purpose is to disassociate theology from objective foundations such as Scripture, creeds and confessions, and ecclesiastical tradition. Instead, theology is seen to arise out of the needs of the community as it progresses through the ever-changing milieu of culture

and history. Doctrine has become the product of man-made ethics rather than the traditional way of getting ethics from doctrine.

Gnostics of ancient times and the present refuse to accept God's law. They consider it to be the product of a vengeful demiurge known as Jehovah. They, of course, are "of the spirit" and consider written law to be at best secondary. It is no surprise that creeds too are treated with disdain. Hans Jonas,[28] a leading scholar on Gnosticism, has drawn attention to its nihilistic tendencies. While there are differences, it shares many themes with postmodern teachings as well as chaos theory. Such themes as alienation, forlornness, and the captivity, anxiety and existential terror of the soul all say that life in this world is bereft of meaning.[29]

Creeds alert us to the danger of such false thinking and false belief. Corporate confession of the catholic faith strengthens the bonds of fellow believers of all generations, past, present and future. Creeds are representative of orthodoxy. The Church has relied upon the formulation of creeds to provide a framework within which the words of Holy Scripture can be understood. They are corporate achievements by various conciliar movements in history to destroy heresy. While they are no panacea against false teaching they do pass on doctrinal phrases and explanations of theology that can help. In so doing, they tell us that no generation has a monopoly on the truth. No one has complete gnosis. Requiring the Church to examine herself in the light of biblical witness and the ancient creeds will help us to avoid being "tossed about by the waves and whirled around by every fresh gust of teaching, dupes of cunning rogues and their deceitful schemes."[30]

8. *Antagonistic to the Old Testament*

Like most heresies Gnosticism saw the Old Testament negatively. Both Marcionism (160 a.d.) and Manichaenism (third century a.d.) rejected the Old Testament, which represented God as a wrathful Judge who created matter and imprisoned souls in history. This logically implied antinomianism, a hatred of God's law. They contrasted the New Testament God (Jesus) as the God of love and grace with the Old Testament God (Jehovah) as the God of wrath, i.e. grace versus law.

The Gnostic teaching was that matter is evil and a creation of a lesser god (called the demiurge, after Plato). But human bodies, although their matter is evil, contained within them a divine spark that fell from the good, true God. Knowledge (*gnosis*) enables the divine spark to return to the true God from whence it came, which is what Gnostics consider to be salvation.

Many Gnostics (especially the followers of Valentinius) taught that there was the One, the original, unknowable God; and then from the One emanated Aeons, pairs of lesser beings in sequence. The Aeons together made up the Pleroma, or fullness, of God. The lowest of these pairs were Sophia ("Wisdom," in Greek) and Christ. Sophia sinned by seeking

27. Stanley J. Grenz and John R. Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism*, (Westminster John Knox Press, 2001). Nonfoundationalism is arguably the most important philosophical motif behind various forms of postmodernism. See also John E. Thiel, *Nonfoundationalism*, (Minneapolis Press, 1994) who applies postmodern philosopher Richard Rorty's approach to theology.

28. Hans Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion: the Message of the Alien God and the Beginnings of Christianity*, (Beacon Press, Boston, 1963).

29. Stephan A. Hoeller, *Gnosticism, New Light on the Ancient Tradition of Inner Knowing*, (Quest Books, Wheaton, IL). See especially chapter 14, "Gnosticism and Postmodern Thought" pp. 205–216.

30. Eph. 4:14, *The Revised English Bible* (Oxford University Press, 2000 [1989]).

to know the unknowable One, and as a consequence of her sin the Demiurge came into being, which created the physical world. Christ was then sent to earth to give men the gnosis needed to rescue them from the physical world and return to the spiritual world.

Gnostics identified the Demiurge with the God of the Old Testament; thus they rejected the Old Testament and Judaism, and often celebrated those who were rejected by the Old Testament God, such as the serpent, Cain, Esau, et al. Some Gnostics were believed to identify the Demiurge with Satan, a belief that contributed to the suspicion with which many Christians regarded them. The early Church identified with the Old Covenant in its Hebraic sense of salvation knowledge. This kind of "knowing" in Hebrew (*yada*) is the same word used for sexual intercourse, e.g. when "Adam knew Eve his wife . . ." (Gen. 4:1). This implies an earthy relationship with and not a cognitive apprehension of the divine. It is not knowledge of God's eternal essence but knowledge of his covenant claim and above all his mighty acts of grace and providence in history. It is the Church's unrelenting adherence to Old Testament thought patterns that has been vital in drawing the line between herself and heretical Gnosticism.

9. *Anti-historical*

Since the spirit is opposed to matter, salvation means redemption from the body. Eternity is opposed to time. Therefore history is of no concern to the Gnostic. Direct, present, personal encounter with the Spirit is paramount in order to escape the reality of time. The fact that God created the world and time and pronounced it "very good" (Gen. 1), then unfolded his plan of salvation through matter and history has no place in Gnosticism.

Gnosticism attempts to impose its abstract mythology on history. It is essentially the product of a humanistic imagination and therefore looks at God's ordained providence with disdain. Its dualism (good and evil) equates opposites that effectively negate each other. By default man emerges as god alone. Christ is seen as deity only in the sense that he shares it with all men who, in turn, gain divinity. Concern about the Old and New Covenant acts of God in history were considered lower stages of development. To know Christ was not at all considered knowledge of the historical man of flesh and blood, but a personal relationship to a mystical heavenly being who liberates humanity from historical concerns. Salvation is knowledge of self and not of God's revelation in Scripture. It is an inner knowledge of self that is highly delusional and imaginary. "Man's true knowledge and salvation is thus to assent to his imagination and declare himself divine."[31]

Humanism, the glorification of man, is the essence of immanence. It undercuts the transcendence of God's sovereignty in history and makes man's order the ultimate order. When man thinks that he transcends the material world either because he is God or he can become God he begins to implement his own fiat social order and law. The determination of history becomes a struggle for control. Power is then vested in whatever dominant institution exists whether it is the State, the Church, the party, etc. God becomes a genie's

lamp to be used as man sees fit. History is treated lightly or as a nuisance because man is above it and even rules it. Man ascends on the great chain of being and then descends with sovereign power. This kind of mysticism is the source of tyranny. The elite magi incarnate the will and decree of history in person.

Mysticism and humanism deny the doctrine of Chalcedon, unwittingly making history the primary area of determination. While paying lip service to eternity and the supernatural the temporal realm alone becomes the source of history. Only a human Christ is recognised who is the product of history. This Kantian philosophical dualism doesn't give the real history of man as a creature of God in his creation. Jesus Christ, as set forth in Scripture and defined by Chalcedon is the Second Person of the Trinity, reigns in heaven as the Creator and determiner of all things even when He walked on planet earth. John 1:1–3 states: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (KJV).

10. *Anti-intellectual*

Gnosticism, claiming to have knowledge, yet being anti-historical and subjective was shallow intellectually because it based its knowledge on immediate experience. It was what Paul the apostle called "knowledge falsely called" (1 Tim. 6.20). It preferred "heart knowledge" over "head knowledge." Christianity affirms both by weighing everything in the light of Scripture.

Philip J. Lee, in talking about anti-intellectualism in American Protestantism, says there is a convergence amongst evangelicals and liberals espousing a special religious knowledge as opposed to knowledge of discernable data.

It is wrong to suppose that an American *gnosis* has flourished only among the revivalists, the more vocal advocates of "know nothing." From the development of transcendentalism and, later, modernism, to the present liberal ascendancy in the Protestant Church, anti-intellectualism has been a powerful negative force. The reason is simple: if God is immanent, present within our psyche, if we already *have* the truth within, then why go through all the hassle of studying theology? If every well-meaning, right-living person has God at hand, apart from reports about holy events or miraculous happenings, then why burden children with details about the kings of Israel and Judah and the journeys of the Apostle Paul?[32]

Transcendentalism, as a nineteenth century movement, has functioned as a mediating link between Romanticism and metaphysical and occult themes being introduced into America. It is Neoplatonism and Hermeticism as an interwoven world-view that forms the traditional foundation of Romanticism. Transcendentalists such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller and others made a huge impact on liberal thought in a Church context.

These streams have impacted both liberals and evangelicals. Both were children of the Great Awakenings,

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31. *Op. cit.*, *The Foundations of Social Order, Studies in the Creeds and Councils of the Early Church*

32. *Ibid.*, *Against the Protestant Gnostics*, p. 113. Lee is using historical research form one of America's premier religious historians, Sidney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 1090.

movements that individualised the covenant understanding of what constituted Christianity.[33] This individualism is what drives American religions today. Harold Bloom has gone so far as to class all Christian movements birthed in America as "the American Religion." "I have suggested throughout that the American version of religious 'Enthusiasm' has been prevalent for two centuries now, that it is identical with the American Religion itself, whether that manifests itself as the Mormons or the Methodists, Assemblies of God or the Baptists, conservative Protestants or liberal Protestants."[34]

"The scandal of the evangelical mind is that there is not much of an evangelical mind."[35] This is the opening line in a book by Mark Noll, a sympathetic scholar, considering the effects of evangelical intellectual atrophy on American politics, science, and the arts in an attempt to find solutions. In particular it is the other-worldliness of various evangelical groups that has fostered anti-intellectualism. It is a by-product of American evangelicals whose only focus has been individual conversion experience. The teachings of holiness, Pentecostalism, and especially dispensationalism have thus had a "dumming-down" effect.

What has been lost is the idea of the covenant relationship of the individual, his family, his Church and his community in relation to God and Christ. The Reformed emphasis on organic relations, which had always been weak in American theology, was discarded in favour of revivals. Anabaptist individual piety and Church polity began to dominate. Revivalism had become the accepted way of gaining new Church members. Ultimately, whether in the southern states as evangelicals or in the north as liberals, the intellectual challenge of the many issues other than personal religious experience became secondary and diminished.

Gnosticism Revived

Gnosticism has always remained just below the surface throughout Church history, yet its impact has been strongly felt at certain times. The humanistic Renaissance and Romanticism were revivals of Greek and gnostic influences. Romanticism remains a potent force in Western culture today and is shaping modern American Christianity, both liberal and evangelical. We can see it in the tendency toward subjectivity rather than relying on God's objective word.

The driving force of revivalism in the nineteenth century was a personal experience of being born again and second blessing theology, which preached escape from this world in a flight into God by surrendering all. "Doctrine was considered an encumbrance, as were creeds, liturgies and sacraments, and the anti-intellectual strain reared its ugly head."[36] Charles Finney is the premier example of a Christian leader who promoted these teachings, yet he remains widely read and considered a hero of the faith.

Under revivalism, preaching shifted from the objective saving work of Christ to the believer's subjective experience of God's saving work in Christ resulting in self-improvement techniques and psychological emphasis. The gospel became a secret formula (*gnosis*) for rebirth, self-realisation, and direct unmediated experiences with God.

The shared gnostic components of Romanticism and Pietism produced the father of modern Liberalism, Friederich Schleiermacher, who insisted that the essence of Christianity is "the feeling of absolute dependence." Schleiermacher had great influence on Walter Rauschenbusch the leader of the Social Gospel movement and also on Adolf von Harnack, another leading liberal theologian.

Protestant liberalism also gave us Norman Vincent Peale's positive thinking school, which in turn gave us the human potential movement. Like the Christian Science of Mary Baker Eddy, these involve an attempt to escape the power of nature through psychological (self-help) techniques. Mind over matter is an attempt to control one's response to the uncontrollable aspects of existence. Some would call it magic. Positive thinking puts faith in the place of God. It is interesting to note that Peale has supported Billy Graham campaigns and Graham considered Peale to be a born again Christian.

The Church Growth movement is another consequence of positive thinking doctrine. It is faith that makes Churches grow. Possibility thinking and goal setting are prerequisites for Church growth according to C. Peter Wagner and the font of the movement, Donald A. McGavran.[37] The focus is finding people's needs and giving it to them rather than serving Christ and his Kingdom. The antithesis between the redeemed and the unredeemed has become blurred. Today we can see that there is really very little difference between evangelicals and liberal Protestants in their approach to ministry. As Lee says, ". . . evangelicals seem to have metamorphosed themselves into the most harmless of liberal Protestants."[38]

In line with the Gnostic exaltation of faith is the "Word of Faith" movement. The founder of this movement was E. W. Kenyon who was plagiarised by Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland and others. Kenyon was very interested in the teachings of Mary Baker Eddy and Christian Science.[39] It was Kenyon who introduced Gnostic concepts of knowledge into faith theology. He distinguished between sense knowledge and revelation knowledge, which in his followers became a distinction between mere written revelation and the word that truly saves, the latter being the "Rhema" word.

The point of this essay is not to argue that respected evangelical Bible teachers are cult leaders. No doubt many of these leaders would be the first to condemn Gnosticism as heretical. It is not intentional error that is in view here. The problem is that American Christianity is not even conscious of what is happening. Instead, it continues on as though everything is all right. Yet, the American religion, in spite of denominational distinctives, is Gnosticism. Experience over doctrine, the personal over the institutional, feminine over masculine,[40] immanence over transcendence, it doesn't

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33. See my forthcoming essay, *Jonathan Edwards versus the Covenant*.

34. *Ibid.*, *The American Religion: The Emergence of the Post-Christian Nation*, p. 218. The "enthusiasm" Bloom mentions is from Ronald A. Knox, *Enthusiasm, A Chapter in the History of Religion with Special Reference to the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, (Oxford University Press, New York, 1961). In it Knox presents personalities and movements that believed in direct reception of special divine inspiration.

35. Mark Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, (W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Corp. Grand Rapids, MI, 1994).   36. Horton, p. 65.

37. C. Peter Wagner, *Your Church Can Grow* (Glendale, Calif.: Regal Books, 1976) and Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), both cited in Lee, p. 210.

38. *Ibid.*, *Against the Protestant Gnostics*, p. 210.

39. D.R. McConnell, *A Different Gospel*.

40. Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* (Alfred A.

matter whether you are New Age or Liberal, evangelical or Pentecostal, Gnosticism is the American Religion.

Gnosticism, along with other erroneous teachings, creates a false antithesis. It do this by misunderstanding something good as evil, such as God's creation, and pitting it against spirit, which is also God's creation. A false antithesis will portray an inherent conflict between unity and diversity, or between time and eternity, or between law and liberty, or between the individual and community, or between reason and experience, etc. Christianity has a long litany of being drawn into these pseudo-conflicts between false antitheses.[41]

It is apparent that Christianity needs to return to a realisation that it is a complete system of knowledge or world-view that has nothing to do with Gnosticism. They are antithetical to each other. Gnosticism is not some variant species of Christianity. Gnosticism is a false religion and must be repudiated as such. Christians must stand with Irenaeus of old, "against the Gnostics." To do this means reconsidering basic Christian teaching concerning the Trinity, the incarnation and the divine prepositional self-revelation of the Creator.

Knopf, New York, 1977) Douglas says the defeat of Calvinism by anti-intellectual sentimentalism led to a feminised church.

41. Herman Dooyeeweerd, *In The Twilight of Western Thought*, (Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1960), pp. 38–51.

In the Trinity, both the one and the many are equally ultimate and necessary to a cogent world-view.[42] Only Christian theism provides the necessary coming together of the transcendent and the immanent without reducing the one side to the other. In Gnostic chain of being dualism the transcendent is trivialised and made immanent by exalting experience. The fact that Jesus is fully God and fully man tells us that God has chosen to reveal himself as both transcendent and immanent. Unity and diversity as well as immanence and transcendence compliment each other rather than conflict.

Gnosticism, old and new, continually returns to some form of dialectical thinking, whether form-matter, nature-grace or in modern times nature-freedom. In each dualistic heresy the world is inherently divided. It is these dualisms that have infected Christianity in the form of spirit vs. matter, or law vs. grace, or mind vs. matter, etc. The Bible teaches us that the world is divided ethically and personally: Satan vs. God, right vs. wrong, freedom vs. tyranny, etc. This conflict will end in history on the Day of Judgment. Whenever Christians substitute metaphysical dualism for ethical dualism they fall into heresy and all it entails. This is where we are today: Gnosticism revived. *C&S*

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42. Cornelius Van Til, *A Christian Theory of Knowledge*, (Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., Phillipsburg, N.J., 1969).

LAW AND APOSTASY IN ISLAM

by Christine Schirrmacher

Fundamentals of Islamic Law and Jurisprudence

MUSLIM theology considers Islamic law to be God-given, not of human origin. Muhammad received these laws and rules by revelation. They are summarised in the Koran and tradition. The *sharia*[1] (the body of regulations which must be followed by a Muslim if he wishes to fulfil the requirements of his faith) is considered to be a perfect system of law for the best of mankind at all times and all over the world. Muslim theologians hold that if all peoples were to follow the regulations of the *sharia*, all people would live in perfect peace, harmony and justice.

But since the Koran only deals with a very limited number of legal issues these few cases are insufficient to form the basis of a complete system of regulations that would solve all legal questions that arise in human society. They were insufficient to form the basis of a complete system of regulations even in the seventh century, let alone in modern times. In cases which the Koran does not deal with, Muslim theologians and jurists tried to find guidelines with the help of the *hadith* (Muslim tradition) and the cases described

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1. *Shari'ah* means "path to the water well."

therein. At no time in history has the *sharia* as such been applied completely. Even though Islamic fundamentalists today demand a "return" to the *sharia* in its entirety (as in the Sudan or Saudi Arabia), the question remains whether this is possible at all. Until modern times the *sharia* has only been applied to single areas like family law. It has never been applied in its entirety anywhere.

Thus, the term *sharia* means an *ideal* corpus of law (the God-given laws and rules), which was never put into practice. Today, the law codes of the different Muslim countries are mostly a mixture of Koran regulations, local customary law, elements of law codes dating back to the Persians or the Romans and some elements from European law codifications. In the twentieth century European law compendiums influenced several codifications of Muslim law, so that some countries (especially those which came under colonial rule) adopted parts of the European legal regulations.

The *sharia* in itself comprises legal norms concerning inheritance law, family law, criminal law and property law, but also cultic and ritual regulations (Arab. *ibadat*) such as keeping the religious holidays, prayer (Arab. *salat*), almsgiving (Arab. *zakat*), fasting (Arab. *sawm*), the pilgrimage to Mecca

(Arab. *hadjdj*) and the "Holy war" (Arab. *jihad*). The *sharia* regulates the relationship of the individual towards God, his family and society. This means that whether a Muslim gets married according to the regulations of the *sharia* or whether he will perform prayer in the prescribed way is by no means his personal decision or a question of how much he personally would like to abide by the prescriptions of his faith. Rather, it is a legal issue. This is why there is no "private sphere" in Islam in the literal sense of the word. The *sharia* gives rules not only for practising Islam as a religion, but also for the conduct of daily affairs in one's family and in society: e.g. how to greet each other, how to get married, how to raise children, how to behave towards one's parents, how to keep contracts or how to dress properly is equally prescribed by *sharia* law. This is one of the reasons why apostasy is not considered a "private matter" as would be the case in a Western context.

The Koran itself contains relatively few legislative regulations. It does contain some regulations against unfair business practices and against violating contracts. Moreover, it contains some regulations concerning criminal law such as punishment for theft, murder or adultery. However, the described cases are mostly individual regulations, not part of a systematic law code.

Following Muhammad's death in 632 A.D. there was no comprehensive Islamic law code that could have been used to establish a functioning administration and jurisdiction in the quickly expanding Muslim empire. A solutions had to be found to solve this problem.

One starting point was the texts of traditions that were collected in the eighth century. Muhammad's decisions, his likes and dislikes (and also the conduct of his companions) were considered to be of normative value because Muhammad was considered to be the perfect example for his followers. During the rule of the Umayyads, the first Islamic dynasty after Muhammad (661–750), the *sunna* (i.e. the exemplary decisions and habits) of the prophet and the first four caliphs were considered to be of growing importance for the Muslim community (Arab. *umma*). Since the habits and behaviour of Muhammad were considered to be of divine character also each *hadith* was traced back to Muhammad himself, thus establishing a "chain" of transmitters. Therefore the *sunna* has the same authority as the text of the Koran itself.

Early developments of Islamic law

The famous scholar Muhammad ibn Idris ash Shafii (767–820) was the founder and "father" of Islamic jurisprudence (Arab. *fiqh*). He combining the regulations of the Koran and *sunna* of Muhammad as recorded in the *hadith* texts with the early legal practices of the Muslim community. Thus he developed the discipline of Islamic jurisprudence or the "principles of jurisprudence" (Arab. *usul al-fiqh*). According to ash-Shafii, Islamic jurisprudence is based on four elements:

1. The "book" (Arab. *al-kitab*), i.e. the Koran.
2. The *sunna* of the prophet (as it is reported in the texts of tradition).
3. Analogies or reasoning (Arab. *qiyas*), i.e. decision-making in analogy with cases described in the Koran or *hadith*.
4. Consensus of opinion (Arab. *idjma*), i.e. the consensus of all Muslim believers concerning a specific legal question, as they are represented by Muslim theologians.

In principle, these four sources of Muslim law were accepted by all orthodox schools of law, even if these schools of law interpreted them differently or gave one or another element preference over others.

Five Categories of Good and Bad

Even when we look at those legal questions the Koran deals with, still relatively few things are forbidden or allowed in plain words. Many things seem to be disapproved of, but not forbidden. Therefore Islamic jurisprudence has developed a system which categorises everything a Muslim may do:

(1) *Prescribed or obligatory*. Something may be prescribed (Arab. *fard*) or obligatory (Arab. *wadjib*), mandatory or required (Arab. *lazim*). It may be an obligation for the individual Muslim (Arab. *fard al-'ayn*), such as the daily prayer, or for the whole Muslim community (Arab. *fard al-kifaya*) such as fighting the *jihad*. Failure to perform something that is obligatory is considered to be sin and should be punished.

(2) *Recommended*. Something may be recommended (Arab. *mandub*) or preferred (Arab. *mustahabb*), meritorious or desirable. A Muslim who does not perform extra prayer which is recommended on certain religious holidays will not be punished, but one who performs extra prayer will be rewarded by Allah.

(3) *Permissible or allowed*. Something which is permissible or allowed (Arab. *mubah*), such as travelling in an aeroplane, is "neutral" because there is no law that forbids it, and those who do such things will not be punished nor reprimanded.

(4) *Reprehensible or not recommended*. Something which is reprehensible or not recommended (Arab. *makruh*), such as eating specific types of fish, will not be punished because it is not sin, but neither is it neutral or recommended.

(5) *Forbidden or prohibited*. Something that is forbidden or prohibited (Arab. *haram*) is not left to the decision of the individual believer and is not accepted or tolerated by society or the State; e.g. drinking alcohol or getting married to two sisters at the same time.

Sunni and Shiite schools of law

Sunni Islam today knows four schools of law (Arab. *madhahib*), which were developed during the course of the eighth century A.D. in the centres of Islamic learning. Each of them is named after its founder or his students. They differ in dogmatics and the interpretation of Koranic regulations. In addition there is mainly one Shiite school of legal thought.

Hanifite School

The Hanifite school of law was founded by Abu Hanifa (ca. 700–767 A.D.) and became the school of law of the Caliph dynasty of the Abbasids (750–1258 A.D.). It spread from Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasids, eastwards towards India. The Hanifite school became the official school of law of the Ottoman empire. Today it is predominant on the Balkans, in the Caucasus, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Central Asia, India, China, Bangladesh and Turkey. In Austria the Muslim community of the Hanifite school has gained official recognition by the State. The Hanifite school accepts ash-

Shafii's four sources of law, but also adds personal reasoning (Arab. *ra'I*) to it as well the consideration of what is the best solution to a problem in regard to the well-being of society (Arab. *istihsaan*). The Hanifite school is the most liberal school.

Maliki School

The Maliki school was founded by Abd Allah Malik ibn Anas (c. 715–795 A.D.), a leading jurist of Medina. The Maliki school, which emerged as a counterpart to the Hanifite school, spread mainly to North Africa (Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco), Spain, West Africa and Central Africa. Today the Maliki school may also be found in Upper Egypt, Mauretania, Nigeria, West Africa, Kuwait and Bahrain. Apart from the four sources of jurisprudence of ash-Shafii, the Maliki school of law additionally recognises the "public interest" (Arab. *istislah*) to be of importance for a decision.

Shafi'ite School

The Shafi'ite school of law was founded by Muhammad ibn Idris ash-Shafii (767–820 A.D.). Ash-Shafii was a student of Malik ibn Anas and tried to reconcile the Maliki and the Hanifite school of law. However by attempting so, his own school of law emerged. Ash-Shafii tried to limit the amount of *hadith* texts to those that truly report Muhammad's conduct. One of the characteristics of the Shafi'ite school is the fact that ash-Shafii accepted only the four sources of law mentioned above.

The Shafi'ite school of law was established in Bagdad and Cairo and spread to Syria, Horasan and Buchara. Today, it can be found mostly in Indonesia, East Africa, Southern Arabia, South East Asia, Yemen, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Somalia, Djibouti, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda.

Hanbali School

The Hanbali school of law was founded by Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Hanbal (780–855 A.D.). He is the author of an extensive *hadith* collection called *al-Musnad*, which contains approximately 80,000 *hadith* texts. Ahmad ibn Hanbal was a student of ash-Shafii and became famous when he argued that the Koran was the non-created word of God. For this belief he was imprisoned and persecuted by the Abbasid Caliph al-Mamun, who held that the Koran was "created."

The Hanbali school is more a mixture of various groups of *hadith* scholars rather than Ahmad ibn Hanbal's own school. In principle this school advocated accepting only the Koran and the *hadith* as the basis of Islamic jurisprudence. It opposed any form of humanly influenced decisions. Until the eighteenth century the Hanbali school did not have any significance. But then Hanbalit Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1792) revived the Hanbali school with the so-called Wahhabi movement, which has strongly influenced not only the whole of the Arabian Peninsula, but also Africa, Egypt and India up until the present day.

Shiite Schools of law

The most important Shiite school of law is the school of the "Jafarites" or "Imamites." According to Shiite belief it goes back to the sixth Imam Hazrat Ja'far as-Sadiq (700–765 A.D.).

The closing of the door of ijtihad

After the beginning of the tenth century no further school of law came into existence. Legal problems were solved in accordance to the Koran and *hadith* texts, but new sources of law were not accepted. Muslim theologians called this phenomenon later "the closing of the door of *idjtihad*." *Idjtihad* means independent reasoning or analytical thought, i.e. the interpretation of the available sources in order to come to a decision in cases that are not specifically dealt with in the Koran or the *hadith*.

It is unclear how the closing of the gate of *idjtihad* came about. From the nineteenth century onwards Islamic theologians have demanded the "re-opening of the door of *ijtihad*" in order to be able to address the issues of modern life in an adequate way. Muslim reform theologians of the nineteenth century saw the reason for the decline of the Islamic world in modern times in the fact that the door of *idjtihad* had been closed already in the tenth century and that there was no further possibility of development regarding how to deal with modern legal issues.

Summary/Application

1.   *Not practicable.* Sharia is not an easy subject to deal with. There are many different opinions among Muslims about what the *sharia* really teaches and how *sharia* should be applied in modern society. In theory, the Muslim world is of the unanimous opinion that the *sharia* is the ideal law and would bring about peace and justice for everyone. But how that can be achieved in a practicable way remains an open question, since the *sharia* has never been fully applied in any Muslim country, and those countries that have tried to apply it (such as Iran) have realised that it has caused a lot of suffering to the people and in fact did not automatically lead to greater wealth or more justice within society.

2.   *No process of development.* Since the "door of *idjtihad*" was closed in the tenth century A.D. here is very little manoeuvring space for adjusting the *sharia* to modern times. Any discussion about the validity of the *sharia* must be dealt with under the heading of *how* to apply the *sharia* and not *whether* it can be applied to contemporary society.

3.   *Variety of application.* Some people in the West would like to have a handbook of *sharia*, so that, for example, if there is a case of adultery reported in the press in a country like Nigeria or Sudan, one could turn to one's handbook and ascertain what should happen to the couple involved according to *sharia* law. But there is no such handbook, and moreover, one could never be written.

Although *sharia* deals with the case of adultery and gives some guidelines for dealing with it there remain several possibilities regarding whether the woman or the man involved in the case should be punished and if so how they should be punished. In some cases the woman may be publicly accused of adultery (less likely the man) and she would be sued at court. But if the woman belongs to a more wealthy, respected family and has some protectors in high positions in the government she would probably not be accused. Perhaps nothing at all will happen as long as the

adultery does not come to public notice. Alternatively the family of the woman involved may decides to solve the problem by themselves and either keep the woman in the house and forbid her to leave it any more, or send her away—or even kill her to restore their honour. In this case there will be no "case of adultery" followed up in court— although the *sharia* prescribes a public trial and the proof of four male witnesses or a confession from the woman.

4.   *Ways to bypass sharia.* In the case of a divorce the *sharia* prescribes that the children may remain with her mother as long as they are toddlers (in case of boys) or until puberty (in case of girls), at which point they then "belong" to their father and his family. But if the former husband is not able to care for the children or his second wife will not accept them, he might leave the children with his former wife if she refrains from claiming her "mahr" (i.e. the second part of her dowry, which she should get on the day of her divorce). This is clearly against the *sharia*, but happens every day in the Muslim world.

5.   *Can God tolerate man's failures?* When taking a closer look at the *sharia* and especially the *hadith* texts, one realises that the *hadith* texts very often and very harshly threaten those who do not follow the many detailed regulation of the *sunna* with hell-fire. At the same time, there are many exceptions and ways to bypass individual regulations in order to make the burden of the believer lighter, as the Koran states in several verses. It seems to me that the reason for this harsh damnation on the one hand and on the other hand the availability of many ways to avoid following all the regulations is in the image of God and the concept of sin in Islam. If there is no reason for a Muslim to fail in his duty because he is able to perform what is right at any time if he is only prepared to try, there is no reason for God to have mercy on him, and he will be punished with hell-fire. *C&S*
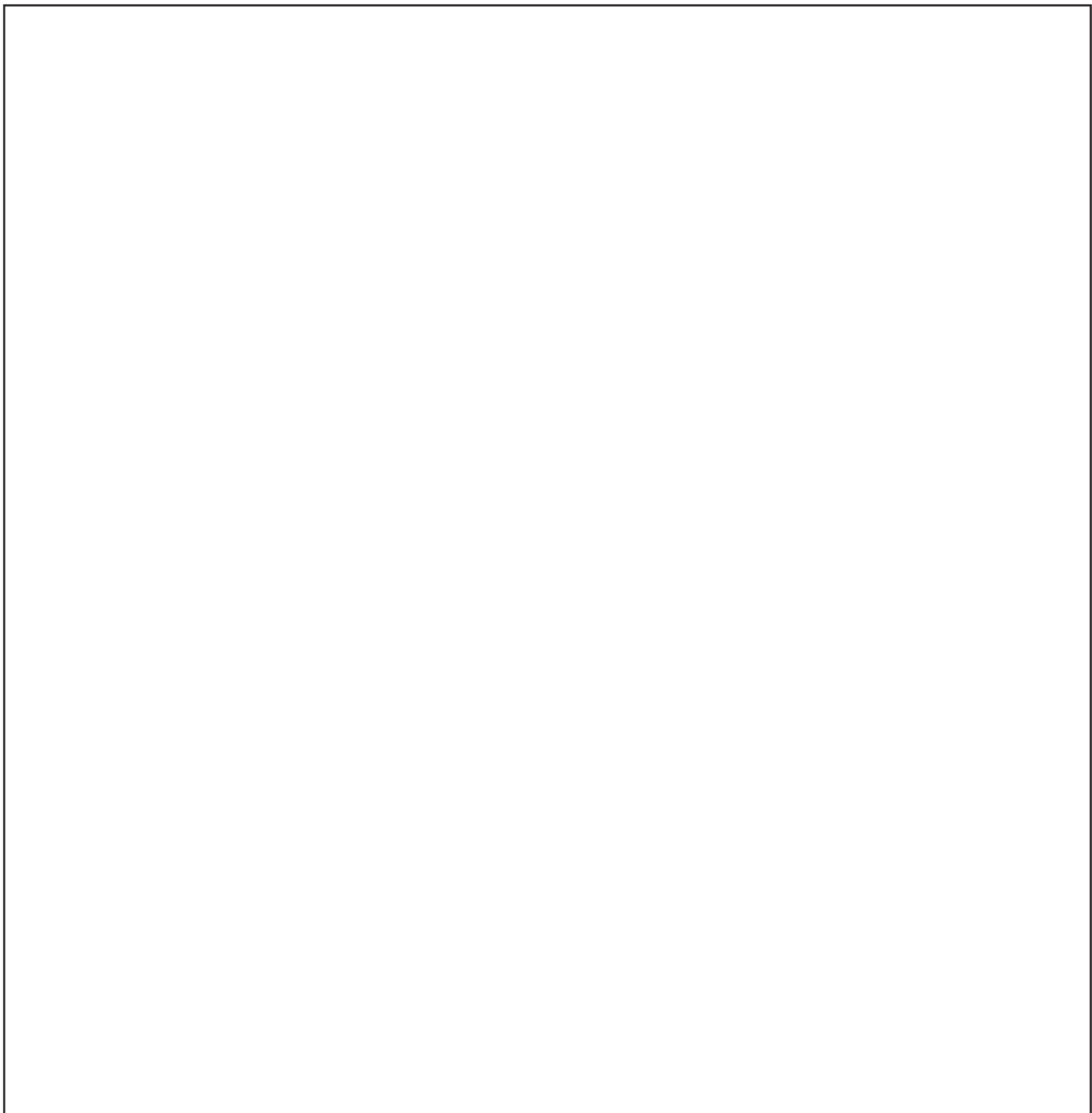
THE DEW ON THE GRASS . . .

How God's Creation can be of help to Christians, particularly those who are diagnosed as suffering from "psychiatric" illnesses

by Nick Holloway

THERE are two important points I must mention by way of an introduction. Firstly, you need to understand and accept that the two foundational principles discussed below are based upon biblical teaching. Secondly, you need to be aware that almost all of the current treatments of psychiatric illness are unbiblical. There are, therefore, many "no-go" areas for Christians. Christians are asking for trouble if they try to build their lives on a non-biblical foundation. A Christian lifestyle must have a biblical foundation. What I may see of a building above ground level gives me no clue as to whether there are proper foundations hidden below ground level. For the moment, faulty foundations may be hidden from sight, but they will eventually make themselves known when cracks appear in the structure built upon them.

The two foundational principles

The first foundational principle is clearly expressed thus: "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the council of the wicked . . ." (Ps. 1:1). An example is set for us in this matter by the Old Testament character named Job, who boldly says "I stand aloof from the counsel of the wicked" (Job 21:16). There are counsellors and therapists of all kinds, both amateur and professional, who offer their help to those with psychiatric illnesses, but whose offer of help the Christian must turn away from. The reason for rejecting this help is that it is usually contrary to biblical teaching.

The second foundational principle is also outlined in the Psalms: "Where can I go from your spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?" (Ps. 139:7). Psalm 139 reinforces the truth that we all live in a God-centred environment (and whether the individual acknowledges this or not makes no difference to the validity of the truth). God is all around us, before and behind us. There is no escaping God's presence (and the non-Christian is constantly seeking to do this). So, if any of us has a problem with some aspect of living, we have a spiritual problem.

Both of the above foundational principles must be understood as biblical principles and accepted as foundations for life building. So, having presented each as a foundation stone for building upon, let us undertake some building.

Laying the first bricks

"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what he has made, so that men are without excuse" (Rom. 1:20). We need to understand what the apostle Paul is saying in this extract from his Roman epistle. What truth is he presenting to us in these words? Then we need to explore the implications of what Paul is saying in relation to those who are diagnosed as suffering from mental/psychiatric illnesses.

Paul's main theme is that God's eternal power and divine nature can be known from his Creation. Many things about God cannot be known in this way. Some aspects of God's character can only be known by what is revealed in the Bible, but his eternal power and divine nature can be universally known and understood by looking at what he has made. As William Barclay says in his commentary on Romans: "In the world we can see God." You will notice that the Bible always refers to God's Creation as just that—his Creation. Mankind has substituted the word "environment" for the word "Creation," because our culture is basically secular, with very little genuine respect for God. To speak of a Creation implies a Creator. Many of us prefer to speak of "man's environment" rather than of "God's Creation" and in this way we rid ourselves of the concept of God. God's Creation (in all of its forms) displays his wisdom, power and glory.

Sufficient can be known of him from his Creation to render all mankind without excuse when it comes to knowing right from wrong, good from evil, moral rectitude from moral depravity—sufficient to offset any claim of ignorance, sufficient to offset any claim that I could not know of God's existence because he never made himself known to me.

It is often possible to know something of a person from their handiwork. A table lamp, a piece of tapestry, a painting or a poem all reveal something about their creator, whether it be the attention to detail, the choice of colours, the shape of the carving or the rhyme of the poem. So God's Creation reveals something of him to mankind. Something of his eternal power and divine nature is revealed.

But fallen mankind is very stubborn. The more he understands of God's Creation, the world of the atomic particle, the unravelling of life's DNA building blocks, the exploration of earth's deepest oceans or neighbouring planets—the more vehemently he ignores the truth that it is God's Creation. The understanding of God's Creation in the days of the apostle Paul was significantly less sophisticated than is our twenty-first century comprehension of it. Yet even then it was a sufficient revelation of God's eternal power and divine nature. The more prolific our understanding of God's Creation and the greater our denial of his craftsmanship, the more prolific is the increase in mental/

psychiatric illness. Is this just a coincidence? It could be. But it may not be. The one fact might be contributing to the other.

So what are the implications of what Paul is saying in this epistle?

The building takes shape

The alarming increase in the number of mental/psychiatric illnesses being diagnosed amongst Christians (and who is doing this diagnosing?) is almost certainly being made worse by a corresponding decrease in their meditating upon God's eternal power and divine nature. Of the person whose "delight is in the law of the Lord" and who "meditates on his law day and night" the comforting assurance is—"He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does, prospers." (Ps. 1:3).

All Christians need to meditate regularly upon the multi-faceted character of God. There are no exceptions and the person with a so called mental/psychiatric illness is no exception. Indeed, such a person has a greater need for regular and extended meditation. "Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee," (Is. 26:3). Some wholesome thinking is needed. The elderly apostle Peter says—"This is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking . . ." (2 Pet. 3:1).

So, amongst other things, some biblical meditation needs to be scheduled, maintained and enjoyed. God's eternal power and divine nature are worthy subjects for meditation and for active, participatory worship of him.

Windows

How are we going to occupy our minds with these wholesome thoughts, then?

By making time to read the Bible, the living word of God. It may be helpful to read it out loud, read it alone, or read it with others.

By reading items from other sources such as daily Bible readings books.

By experiencing God's creation at first hand, perhaps for the first time in a long time. We will be returning to this matter in more detail.

Incidentally, it is important to know that God's intervention in any situation will have positive results. For instance, a recognition of his presence limits what might appear to be a hopeless situation. It is not out of control. The situation is redeemable, even if it is not reversible. Indeed, redeemed it must be. Further, the situation is seen to have some purpose, some point to it. God will prove that he can bring good from a sad situation. If you learn not to repeat the mistake, the situation will have had some purpose. If others, learning of your situation, are warned about your mistakes, so much the better. If you find yourself able to help those in

a similar situation to your former predicament, your passed experiences will not have been in vain—traumatic and costly, but not in vain.

Make time for true worship and praise—audible praise, in the singing of hymns or choruses or the reciting of biblical passages. Take responsibility for the rest of your life. Complete tasks, go to work, do the shopping, get on with the ironing, play your role as a parent . . . The biblical principle here is: do differently and you will feel different. This is the exact opposite of most current psychiatric theory. But the Scriptures are the better guide.

And so, out into the fields . . .

The main thrust of this article (though it may be difficult to discern!) is to remind the Christian of the benefits of experiencing God's Creation at first hand. Of course, there is benefit to be gained from reading books about aspects of Creation, plants, animals, space and so on. There is also some merit in watching television programmes or viewing video films on the subject. But there is nothing better than a walk in the garden or local park. To wander and to look, to really see; to hear, to really listen; to touch, to really feel, to smell, to really appreciate . . .

Plan an evening walk, alone or with a friend. It was God's habit, apparently, to meet with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden "in the cool of the day . . . "

You may find it of benefit to get up early and go out for a dawn walk. This involves some planning and some discipline. It may mean going to bed earlier than usual. You may need to plan your route. Then, having done your planning, get up at the appointed time, dress, eat a snack and go out! If it is still a little dark, then you will be in time for the dawn chorus of bird song that is just so magnificent! Make a serious effort to use all of your senses to enjoy the manifold aspects of God's bountiful Creation. Whether summer or winter, each has its seasonal beauty and the same divine fingerprint. Many other people will be about, even at that time of day. Joggers, dog walkers, milkmen, paperboys and girls, postmen and night workers going home. All of them have many things to do. You will have many things to do to, but later in the day. At this particular time you are appreciating God's eternal power and divine nature as it is revealed in his Creation: his steadfastness, his faithfulness, his care of the sparrows, the birds singing, the rain falling, the dripping or rain upon leaves, the cobwebs in the hedges, the droplets of dew on the grass, the colours in the sky, the stars in the sky, other people, and so on. And if you find that you are out of earshot of other people, why not speak out your praises to God. Much of God's Creation is making a noise at that time of day, so why not join them? They won't mind, and neither will your Creator. If you've gone out as the darkness is being replaced by light, see this dawn as an accurate picture of what is actually happening in your life. Gloom and hopelessness are being replaced by light and hope . . . there is a new dawn . . . *C&S*

What has Jerusalem (or Ramallah) got to do with Geneva?

by Esmond Birnie

At the time of writing this article the Arab-Israeli conflict is as intractable as ever. Palestinian suicide bombers attack the streets of Jerusalem whilst occupation by Israeli forces seems designed to strangle the fledging Palestinian Authority at birth. What have been some of the Christian and/or Western reactions to this situation? *The Economist* newspaper reported in its coverage of US opinion, and one can almost hear the incredulity, "Many evangelical Christians are also passionately pro-Israel . . . A group of Pentecostal Christians in Mississippi breed red heifers for sacrifice in Israel when the Second Coming reclaims Jerusalem's Temple Mount from the Muslims."[1] Within a few hundred yards of this author's home an Israeli flag is flying from a lamp-post. Whilst part of reason for the appearance of such flags, and opposing Palestinian ones, on the streets of Belfast is political (there has been some linkage between the PLO and the IRA) there is also a theological aspect: it is perceived that Protestants should show solidarity with the Old Testament people of God.[2]

This article does not claim to be able to explain the Middle Eastern conflict or to propose a solution to that 53 year old Arab-Israeli dispute. Instead, it considers how some (possibly not well thought out) interpretations of the Bible have led Christians to take particular views on the State of Israel and its rivals. In regards to the Middle East, as elsewhere biblical interpretation shapes political outlook though the reverse also happens.

In particular, I want to summarise and evaluate four contrasting views held in the Church regarding Israel.

(1) *Anti-Semitism*

Sadly, it is probably necessary to start with anti-Semitism. It may have been the first view to become common. Later views may have reacted against it. Anti-Semitism is the hatred of the Jews as a people which is clearly wrong, and in fact a sin. The consequences of anti-Semitism in the twenti-

eth century have been horrible (particularly Germany 1933–45).[3] Matthew 27:24–25 has been used and abused to justify anti-Semitism (especially the claim that the Jews carry a continuing, collective guilt as "killers of God"; so-called "deicide"). "While Islam, and more recently anti-Zionism, Marxism and the formerly Communist-bloc countries of Eastern Europe, have also exhibited anti-Semitism, the Christian Church has particularly contributed to this ugly phenomenon."[4]

Anti-Semites tend to oppose the modern (i.e. post 1948) State of Israel. This should, however, not be taken to imply that *any* opposition to the policies of that State must equal anti-Semitism. It should be possible to oppose anti-Semitism without having to become a "Christian Zionist." The links between anti-Semitism and Zionism are complicated. There have been some cases of notorious anti-Semites, e.g. Kaiser Whilhelm II or the Nazis in their early period, who favoured the creation of a Jewish State precisely because this would remove the Jewish people from Europe. Some of the "Christian Zionists" (see below), such as Pat Robertson, have been accused of pulling off, ". . . the extraordinary feat of being both anti-Semitic and passionately pro-Israel."[5] Conversely, there has always been a strand of religious Judaism which has opposed Zionism on theological grounds.[6]

(2) *"Christian Zionism"*

Sadly, over the last twenty centuries the Church has contained many anti-Semites. Has there been a tendency for

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1. *The Economist* (2002, April 6), "No schmooze with the Jews," p. 53. Strictly speaking, the red heifers are required for their ashes (for the waters of purification as in Numbers 19). See N. Ateek, "Zionism and the land: A Palestinian Christian perspective," in P. S. Johnson and P. W. L. Walker (eds.), *The Land of Promise Biblical Theology and Contemporary Perspectives* (IVP/Apollos, Leicester, 2000), p. 206.

2. The irony of the perceived parallel between unionism in Northern Ireland and Zionism in Israel is that historically there was mutual sympathy between militant Zionism and militant republicanism: both fought guerilla wars against the British Army; C. Herzog, *Living History* (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicholson, 1997), and C.C. O'Brien, *The*

Siege (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicholson, 1986). As to the current position of some Ulster Protestants there may even be a touch of "British-Israel" thinking and certainly the Orange Order places a heavy emphasis on Old Testament Israel in its symbolism and ritual. One other strange and striking piece of Western Zionist affiliation is provided by the skinhead fans of the Amstersdam Ajax football club who chant, "Jews, Jews, we are super-Jews!", tatoo themselves with the Star of David and wear the blue and white of the Israeli flag. This seems to be a throwback to the pre-1940 period when that city had one of the biggest and most integrated Jewish populations in the world (C Bunting, "One game, a thousand meanings," *Times Higher Education Supplement* [14 June 2002, p. 19)].

3. See D. J. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners* (New York: Little Brown, 1996), for a striking if sometimes disputed interpretation of the Holocaust as the product of an "eliminationist mind-set" which was widespread amongst the German people.

4. "Anti-Semitism," in D. J. Atkinson and D. H. Field, *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology* (Leicester: IVP, 1995).

5. *The Economist, op. cit.*

6. See P. Johnson, *A History of the Jews* (London: Weidenfeld Paperbacks, 1988).

some Christians to lurch to another extreme? Arguably, yes. The dispensational theology which has developed since the late nineteenth century has become in practice a "Christian Zionism."

According to this view the Old Testament promises, e.g. to Abraham and Joshua, regarding the nature and extent of the political unit and land of Israel are for all time (a problem with this viewpoint is that surely the divine promise was conditional on obedience and subsequently disobedience did occur).[7] Christian Zionists would also argue that the "unfulfilled" Old Testament promises have been or will be fulfilled by the political Israel and/or the Jewish people since 1948. However, there are a number of problems with this approach.

First of all, it encourages a possibly inappropriate literalism regarding God's promises and how he fulfils them. Imagine that in the 1880s Herr Gottlieb Daimler (one of the inventors of the modern motor car) has a young son. He promises his son that when he grows up (after 1900) he will give him a horse. When 1900 eventually comes Daimler has already invented the motor car and so he gives his son one of these. (He had in fact anticipated all along that he would do this but he decided not to explain the still uninvented motor car to his son in the 1880s.) How should his son react? Is he delighted that his gift has arrived in an unexpected and superior form or is he displeased because he reckons that until the horse comes along the original promise remains unfulfilled?[8] The parallel could be that the gift of salvation in Jesus Christ and the world-wide growth of the Church is a much greater fulfilment of the restoration of David's kingdom than any territorial unit in the Middle East would have been.

A further point is that passages like Zechariah 14 are difficult to envisage as having a literal fulfilment (we should bear in mind the style of Jewish apocalyptic literature which is reflected in various Old Testament prophecies and, indeed, in Revelation). Literally speaking, Zechariah 14:16 seems to require that after all the nations of the world have failed in their attack on Jerusalem they will have to go up annually to that city to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. Moreover, the dispensationalists may be inconsistent in that they expect a literal fulfilment of all the Old Testament references to Israel without similarly seeing a restoration of *all* of Israel's Old Testament neighbours such as Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Moab, Ammon, Edom and Philistia (Is. 11:14, Amos 9:12, Joel 3:19, Micah 5:5–6 and Rev. 18).[9] How, indeed, would the literalist-dispensationalists interpret and apply Isaiah 19 with its altar to God in Egypt along with a highway all the way to Assyria? In their attempt to give the Old Testament prophecies a concrete fulfilment in one particular State the modern dispensationalists may be repeating the error of the mediaeval Christians who focused on the Crusader kingdoms in the Holy Land.[10]

An additional problem with Christian Zionism is that it may give the State of Israel a moral blank cheque. There is little doubt that the Israeli Government has sometimes oppressed Palestinians (some of whom, in decreasing numbers, are members of various Christian denominations). Since September 2000 for every Jew who has died there have been about three Palestinian fatalities. I partially accept that a crude comparison of casualties is not the morally critical consideration. After all, probably most of the Israeli deaths have been of civilians whereas most of the Palestinian deaths are of terrorists (notably including the more than 200 suicide bombers who have killed themselves). That all said, have the Israeli authorities done enough to ensure than their response to Palestinian terrorism is sufficiently discriminating and proportionate?

It is true that "The Christian Right in America has had a scriptural reading of modern history ever since 1948 when Jews forged a homeland they could return to."[11] Christian Zionists have tended to argue that the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 was a miracle and this proves the validity of their approach. But does it?[12]

If one believes in God's sovereignty in history (and surely this is biblical) then *all* historical events conform to his plan. One should be beware of the danger of subscribing to a "might is right" view of international politics. In fact, history suggests that God may permit regimes to develop in remarkable circumstances and survive for some time (notable examples were Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia) but this need not imply moral approval. Note that I am *not* implying that the State of Israel is in the same category as the above mentioned States but I am making the general point that it could be under the moral judgement of God.

In the dispensational approach the width of Old Testament and New Testament ethics is contracted to a very narrow span. In fact, as M. Noll argued, for the American evangelicals and fundamentalists of the 1930s onwards, ". . . the stance towards the Jews arose from prophetic interpretation much more than from contemporary analysis or more general theological reflection on nations, international justice, or the recent history of the Middle East."[13]

"Historicist dispensationalism . . . has a track record that simply cannot inspire confidence as a basis for policy."[14] "The current crisis was always identified as a sign of the end, whether it was the Russo-Japanese War, the First World War, the Second World War, the Palestine War, the Suez Crisis, the June War, or the Yom Kippur War."[15] Sizer has cross-compared H. Lindsey's early, i.e. 1970, *The Late Great Planet Earth* with his more recent *Planet Earth 2000* (1994).[16] In

7. See, for example, Augustine, *City of God* (Harmondworth: Penguin, 1984), Book IV, Chapter 34, p. 178. Sometimes the promise is stated in unconditional form and sometimes conditionally. P. R. Williamson, "Promise and fulfilment: The territorial inheritance," in Johnson and Walker (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 22, proposes a means of resolving the apparent contradiction. That God will deliver his promised blessing is beyond doubt but individual faith will determine whether any given individual is a recipient of that blessing.

8. I have borrowed and adapted this "parable" from P. Walker, "Jerusalem: At the centre of God's plans?", in M. Schluter (ed.), *Christianity in a Changing World* (London: Marshall Pickering, 2000), pp. 295–311.

9. L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1984), p. 713.

10. This point has been made by K. Armstrong, *Holy War: Crusades and Their Impact on Today's World* (London: Macmillan, 1988).

11. G. Wills, *Under God* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990).

12. In his "secular" history P. Johnson, *op. cit.*, suggests that a remarkable coming together of events made 1948 possible.

13. M. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Leicester: IVP, 1995), p. 167.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 173.

15. D. Wilson, *Armaggedon Now: The Premillenarian Response to Russia and Israel since 1917* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1977), quoted in Noll, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

16. See S. R. Sizer, "Dispensational approaches to the land," in Johnson and Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 157, and H. Lindsey, *The Late Great Planet*

the later book he quotes his predictions from the 1970 book in a self congratulatory manner: "Remember folks, these words were written in 1969, not the 1990s!" In fact, Lindsey somewhat doctored his earlier prophecy. As Sizer points out, in the first book it was foreseen that the USA was about to fall prey to an internal communist subversion. Reference to this was removed in the 1994 quotation. Furthermore, I note that whereas his 1970 book referred to the USA being overhauled in economic and military terms by Europe, this reference has disappeared in 1994. If anything, the economic and military trends during the last three decades went in the opposite direction from those predicted by Lindsey.

(3) *Liberal evangelicalism/pro-Palestinian*
      Over the last four centuries or so many (most?)[17] evangelical or Reformed Christians have tended to the view that God had exhausted his special purpose for Israel and the Jews in enfolding his plans for the salvation of the world to the extent that the Church is now the "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16). This is not to deny that Israel, no more or no less than any other State, comes under the providential plans of God. At various points some Dutch, Scots, English or Americans thought of *their* nation as the new chosen people.[18] As noted already, from the mid-twentieth century American fundamentalism tended to favour Christian Zionism.[19] However, in the last few decades a sort of liberal evangelicalism grew within Anglo-American Protestantism and this has sometimes been explicitly pro-Palestinian. At least three things may have occasioned this development:
      (*a*) An emphasis on justice (a strong theme in the Old Testament; Micah 6:8). The Palestinians, whether on the West Bank or Lebanon, were seen as the weaker party and so demanding Christian support.[20]
      (*b*) To the extent that American fundamentalism has become "pro-Israel," and to the extent that liberal evangelicalism has often reacted against fundamentalism, then the liberal evangelicals have been "pro-Arab."
      (*c*) In the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s opposition to Israel, like anti-colonialism or anti-Apartheid, came to be perceived as a great radical or left wing cause.[21] Neo-evangeli-

calism tends to favour such causes (perhaps, again, in reaction against the perceived conservatism or complacency of traditional, conservative or fundamentalist evangelicalism).
      There are, however, some problems with pro-Palestinian/liberal evangelicalism. (Whereas my criticism of Christian Zionism was largely at the hermeneutical level, i.e. how one should "read" the Bible, the criticism of the pro-Palestinian view is more at the level of application of biblical principles, i.e. how one should "read" the situation in the world.)
      First of all, pro-Palestinian liberal evangelicalism may not have shown enough understanding of the predicament of the State of Israel. Israeli security and defence policy may sometimes have been harsh but this is as much a product of weakness as strength. Israel is a very small country (the same size as Wales) surrounded by much larger potential enemies.
      Second, whilst in theory, since 1993 (as part of the "peace process" initiated in Oslo) the PLO have recognised the right of the State of Israel to exist, have they really done so in practice?
      Third, there is a danger of sanctioning pro-Palestinian terrorism as if it were analogous to the sort of anti-tyranny insurrection which some of the Reformers *may* have regarded as a just war.[22] In the Middle East violence is not likely to lead to a state of peace. It is more likely to prolong the intractable nature of the situation.[23]

(4) *Standard Reformed or Calvinist*
      This is a view often found in Reformed Churches whereby God is seen as having a covenant relationship with the faithful throughout history. In the Old Testament period that covenant was directed to the people of Israel but in the New Testament (and since) the relationship has been with the Church. Those who adopt this view tend to read the Old Testament by substituting the word "Church" whenever "Israel" is mentioned.[24]
      Certainly, the New Testament gives much credence to this approach. It implies that the Temple has been replaced by something better (Heb. 9:9, John 2:21 and Rev. 21:22). The city of Jerusalem has also been surpassed (Gal. 4:25–6). Now the people of God are from all nations (Gal. 3:28 and Acts 15:15–18). Some of the Old Testament prophecies suggest the divine blessing of Israel will eventually open out to all the nations (Ps. 2:8–12 and 72:8–11).[25] Paul's neglect of the theme of land/territory is surely significant.[26] It is also

Earth (New York: Bantam, 1970), p. 184, and H. Lindsey, *The Planet Earth 2000 AD* (Palos Verdes: Western Front, 1994), pp. 15–16.

17. An exception may be J. C. Ryle who was probably not a dispensationalist but in his commentary on Mt. 24 Ryle argued that some of those verses referred to a siege of Jerusalem subsequent to AD 70 (and he claimed Irenaeus and Hilary in his support). See J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on Matthew* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1986,), p. 318. The great Lord Shaftesbury was probably not a dispensationalist either but he coined the phrase, "a country without a nation for a nation without a country," as quoted in N. Ateek, "Zionism and the land: A Palestinian Christian perspective," in Johnson and Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

18. It may well be true that Cromwell and some of the Puritans favoured toleration for Jews in England in the 1650s as a stepping stone towards the Second Coming but it is much less clear that they saw a gathering of Jews in Britain as a means towards restoring a Jewish State.

19. Wills, *op. cit.*, sees J. N. Darby, as mediated through the Scofield Bible after 1909 and subsequently institutions such as the Dallas Theological Seminary, as crucial to this outcome.

20. See N. Woltersdorff, *Until Justice and Peace Embrace* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1983).

21. At one point the United Nations General Assembly bracketed together imperialism, racism and Zionism as unacceptable ideologies (P. Johnson *Modern Times* (London: Weidenfeld Paperbacks, 1992).

22. The Christian Aid publication *Righting wrongs in the Holy Land* was condemned by Rabbi Tony Bayfield (Sternberg Centre) as, "not grounded in a real attempt to understand the concerns of both sides" (*The Independent*, 1991, October 18).

23. See "Terrorism," in Atkinson and Field, *op. cit.*

24. Some might criticise this view as a so-called "replacement theology." Admittedly, some Reformed people probably do think of the Church as having in rather crude terms "replaced" ethnic Israel. The Reformed approach is, however, also consistent with taking the line, as Paul's writing in Rom. 11 would seem to imply, that the Gentiles have, as an unnatural branch, been grafted on to the body of Israel whilst that main body has proven for the time being (though not forever) to be unfruitful for God's purposes. See C. Chapman, "Ten questions for a theology of the land," in Johnson and Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

25. J. Desmond Alexander, "Beyond borders," in Johnson and Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

26. See P. W. L. Walker, "The Land in the Apostles' writings," in Johnson and Walker (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 84f.

worth noting how he could move from "land" (as in the Fourth Commandment recorded in the Old Testament) to use of the term "earth" (Eph. 6:3). Similarly, that Jesus said so little about "the land" must have been deliberate.[27]

Moreover, it does seem possible to interpret most (all?) Old Testament prophecies regarding a revived and expanded kingdom/State of Israel as pictures pointing to the spread of the Church.[28] As Williamson argues, the Abraham narratives in Genesis (22:1–18) seem to climax in the establishment of a blessing to *all* nations rather than the greatness of a single nation.[29] None of this need rule out the possibility that the State of Israel (reborn in 1948) has some role in God's purposes though not necessarily with a divine sanction for the restoration of the broad frontiers of the Old Testament period: Gen. 15:18–19, Dt. 34:1–4, Josh. 1:4.[30] Israel no more or no less than all the other 180 or so countries in the world takes its place within God's providential plan for the world (Acts 17:26). Also, Romans 11:25–26 may well refer to a future mass conversion of the Jews to Christianity (though how this is connected to the State of Israel may remain unclear).[31]

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27. C. Chapman, "Ten questions for a theology of the land," in Johnson and Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

28. See W. Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Leicester: IVP, 1994), p. 861 and, in particular, Rom. 2:28–29, 9: 6–8 and 11:24.

29. P. R. Williamson, "Promise and fulfilment: The territorial inheritance," in Johnson and Walker (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 18.

30. As Williamson, *ibid.*, p. 20, notes the variableness in the stated boundaries in the texts might suggest more flexibility in fulfilment than the literalist-dispensationalists would allow for.

31. Dispensational premillennialists have tended to place the removal of the Church from earth (rapture) *before* the widespread conversion of Jews.

32. We could ourselves gain from this process. This is illustrated by the penetrating critique of American evangelicalism provided by the Lebanese Orthodox Christian Charles Malik at the opening of the

Conclusions

Anti-Semitism is clearly wrong. Christian Zionism fails through failing to apply to the post-1948 State of Israel the sorts of standards of justice which should be expected of all states (e.g. respect for innocent life). Conversely, the liberal evangelical/pro-Palestinian perspective fails through failing to allow to Israel the sorts of rights which all States should have (e.g. to exist and adopt reasonable means in self-defence).

God has his purposes in the Middle East (as elsewhere). They will prevail.

Salvation, by faith alone in Christ, is open to both Jews and Arabs. The Western Churches should perhaps show more concern for the fate of Christians in the "Holy Land."[32] The Churches may have downplayed too much the Jewishness of the Son of God.

The Old Testament prophecies are difficult to read but there is an undoubted Old Testament emphasis on righteousness and fairness in government. We should therefore be concerned about the fate of *both* Jews and Arabs. I suspect that a "final settlement" will require the existence of two states (i.e. Israel and Palestine).[33] The three very difficult negotiating items remain: boundaries, the status of the city of Jerusalem and any right of return for Palestianian refugees from Israel. In the end God will judge the righteousness of the government of Sharon *and* that of Abbas too. *C&S*

Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College, in 1980 (C. Malik, *The Two Tasks* [Westcheater Il.: Cornerstone, 1980]. See also, A. McEwen, "The state of the Gospel in the land of the Bible," in *Vox Reformata*, no. 65, [2000], pp. 6–36).

33. R. Cohen, review of E. W. Said, *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After* (Granta, 2001), in T*he Times Higher Education Supplement* (11 Jan. 2002).

The Scottish School of Common Sense Philosophy

by David Estrada

Part 1: Introduction

Scottish Philosophy Matters

Alexander Broadie can be properly considered as the leading authority in Scottish Philosophy in our time. His numerous books and articles on the subject are a clear exponent of his knowledge and proficiency in this specialised realm of thought. For almost two decades Dr. Broadie has been lecturing as Professor of Logic and Rhetoric at the University of Glasgow—the old chair of the same name which Thomas Reid, the foremost representative of the so called "Scottish School of Common Sense" had occupied—and his thought will be central in our series of articles on Scottish Philosophy. Professor Broadie has summarised the importance and significance of Scottish thought in Western culture in a brilliant little book entitled *Why Scottish Philosophy Matters*.[1] This is, indeed, an excellent introduction to the basic contribution of Scotland in the realm of philosophy. In answering the question why Scottish philosophy matters Dr. Broadie focuses his attention on three decisive Scottish thinkers: John Duns Scotus (1266–1308), John Mair, or Major (1467–1550), and Thomas Reid (1710–96). In Broadie's estimation Scotus, who taught at Oxford and Paris, has been Scotland's greatest philosopher and the man who set down markers which have been present ever since in the philosophical life of Scotland. John Mair, who taught philosophy and theology at Paris, Glasgow and at St Andrews, was heard by John Calvin, Ignatius Loyola, George Buchanan, François Rabelais and many Scotsmen that went abroad to study. John Knox studied under Mair at St Andrews in the early 1530s. Among the famous Scots that studied abroad special mention must be made of Hector Boece (1465–1536), who taught at Paris before returning to Scotland to become the first principal of the University of Aberdeen.[2] The third

decisive thinker of Scotland, maintains Broadie, is Thomas Reid, the main exponent of the Scottish school of common sense realism.

In this brief list to leading Scottish thinkers the name of David Hume is not mentioned. This seems to be a flagrant and unpardonable omission, contrary to the unanimous testimony of the great books of history of philosophy, where Hume is regarded as the most famous and influential representative of Scottish thought. We plainly concede that in the history of philosophy the name of David Hume is of paramount importance. It is a well known fact that Hume awakened Immanuel Kant from his "dogmatic slumbers," and through him the representatives of German Idealism (Fichte, Schelling and Hegel). It was from Hume that Kant derived his doctrine that the senses give us, not things, but phenomena, that is, appearances. Hume's influence is also evident in the moral philosophy and economic writings of his close friend Adam Smith, and that of Victor Cousin, and his numerous followers in France, and he also "caused the scales to fall" from Jeremy Bentham's eyes. By way of reaction, Hume was also the stimulating cause of the philosophy of Thomas Reid and his school. Indeed, it was the aim of the Scottish School to throw back the scepticism of Hume. Reid opposed it by showing that sensation leads us intuitively to believe in the existence of the external world, and of a *self* as a thinking substance; and that accompanying the senses as inlets of knowledge there is always an intuitive perception of an external reality—a primitive reason or common sense which decides at once that things are so and so; that every effect, for instance, must have a cause. By not including David Hume among the decisive Scottish thinkers Professor Brodie does not by any means intend to underestimate the importance of Hume in the history of Western philosophy. In fact, in the very first paragraph of his book Broadie acknowledges the universal significance of Hume's thought.

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1. Alexander Broadie, *Why Scottish Philosophy Matters* (The Saltire Society, Edinburgh, 2000).

2. It should be noted, adds Broadie, that John Mair taught a number of Spanish students while at the University of Paris. They returned to Spain and taught his philosophy there; Mair's books were compulsory reading in several Spanish universities during the sixteenth century. Among his Spanish students was Francisco de Vitoria, a great jurisprudentialist and innovative writer on law and morality, who quotes Mair frequently. Francisco Suarez, a successor of Victoria and a towering figure in the field of jurisprudence and the philosophy

of law, also quotes Mair frequently and always with respect. Suarez was taken up and developed by the great German jurist Samuel Pufendorf, whose work was the subject of a commentary by Gershom Carmichael, first professor of moral philosophy at the University of Glasgow, who was succeeded in his chair by the extraordinary trio, Frances Hutcheson, Adam Smith and Thomas Reid. Broadie, *op. cit.,* 17–18.

For many people, he writes, the phrase "philosophy of the Scottish Enlightenment" means first and foremost, or even solely, David Hume. "But there is far more to the philosophical dimension of the Scottish enlightenment than Hume: some of the best Scottish philosophy was written in response to and as a refutation of Hume." What Broadie wishes to emphasise is the fact that Hume, after all, wrote against the grain of the tradition rather than with it: "The thesis of his book is that the Scottish philosophical tradition is overwhelmingly against the sceptics, and Hume propounded a philosophy that he himself described as sceptical."[3]

In approaching the subject of Scottish philosophy no one can ignore the writings of James McCosh (1811–94), the learned Scottish-American philosopher and eleventh president of the College of New Jersey (later Princeton University). He studied at the University of Edinburgh and became an authority on the Scottish School of Common Sense Realism, and the main expounder of its views in the United States. Chief among his works is the one entitled *The Scottish Philosophy from Hutchinson to Hamilton* (1875).[4] For McCosh, Scottish common sense philosophy matters because *it is true:* "The great merit of Scottish philosophy lies in the large body of truth which it has—if not discovered—at least settled on a foundation which can never be moved."[5] We also, in agreement with McCosh, share the conviction that in some fundamental points of their philosophy the Scottish School has succeeded in developing a correct view of reality, very much in accordance with biblical truth. And it is under this conviction that we have prepared this series of studies on Scottish thought.

Names and main postulates of the Scottish School of Common Sense

In many ways Scottish philosophy can be identified with the thought of the school of common sense realism. The brief list of names and views that we advance in this connection is intended to familiarise the reader with the authors and essentials points associated with this philosophy. Further on, as we develop the subject in successive essays, the list of names and principles here sketched will receive a larger consideration. All who are truly of the Scottish school agree in maintaining that there are laws, principles, or powers in the mind prior to any reflex observation of them, and acting independently of the philosophers' classification or explanation of them. Thomas Reid designates these basic presuppositions *principles of common sense*, and represents them as being natural, original and necessary; Dugald Stewart characterises them as *fundamental laws of human thought and belief*.

There has been quite a debate as to the propriety of using the phrase "common sense" in order to designate the principles of this intuitive knowledge. James Beattie, for instance, questioned the appropriateness of the expression on the basis of its ambiguity, but ended up using it for lack of a better substitute. "Notwithstanding the able and learned defence of the phrase by Sir William Hamilton [writes McCosh] I look upon it as an unfortunate one. The fundamental objection to the phrase *common sense* is that it is ambiguous. The word *sense* seems to associate the faculty with the bodily organism, with which certainly it has no connection. The expression designates original principles planted in the minds of all, such as the moral sense and the sense of beauty."[6] The expression "common sense" (*sensus communis*) is already found in the writings of Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third earl of Shaftesbury (1671–1713), whose early, but influential education had been directed by John Locke (1632–1704), the initiator of the Enlightenment in England and France, and inspirer of the U.S. Constitution. Although neither Locke nor Shaftesbury were Scottish, their ideas greatly stimulated the development of Scottish thought. According to Shaftesbury, the expression "common sense" points to a type of natural knowledge and fundamental reason which is self evident and inherent to human nature. The denial of such a knowledge would evince a sure sign of madness. Among the natural senses that are included in this original type of knowledge Shaftesbury concedes an important place to the moral sense and to the sense of beauty. He is fond of connecting or identifying the beautiful and the good; in fact, virtue is represented by him as a higher type of beauty. All these ideas found a deep echo in the representatives of the Scottish school of common sense.

Francis Hutcheson (1694–1746), renowned leader of the Scottish Enlightenment, was professor of moral philosophy at Glasgow and a decisive precursor of the school of common sense.[7] He was one of the first academics to lecture in English rather than Latin. Adam Smith and Thomas Reid were among his students. He made Glasgow a bastion of anti-Hume thinking, and it was under his instigation that Hume's attempts to obtain an academic appointment in Scotland always met with failure. Even today, Hutcheson's *Inquiry into the Origins of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725) stands out as an important referential treatise on matters of ethics and aesthetics. Against the scepticism of Hume, he stressed the validity of common sense as a means to achieve undoubted truth. By God's Creation, affirms Hutcheson, man has been endowed with certain cognitive powers, or *senses* that, independently of any notice we may take of them, lay down the foundation of unquestioned knowledge.

George Turnbull (1698–1748), who founded the Aberdeen branch of the common sense school, drew out the implications of Shaftesbury's thought at the same time as Hutcheson was doing the same in Glasgow. He exercised a considerable influence on Thomas Reid—one of his most brilliant students. According to Turnbull, by God's Creation man's nature has been endowed with trustworthy faculties of knowledge. The so called *common sense* faculty, writes Turnbull, "is an original source of knowledge by which we are assured of a number of truths that cannot be evinced by reason, and it is equally impossible, without a full conviction of them, to advance a single step in the acquisition of knowledge, and being as we are in the hands of Providence, we are by nature directed towards truth."[8]

3. Broadie , *op. cit.*, 15, 35.

4. Our quotations are from the British edition of this book, published under the title *The Scottish Philosophy, Biographical. Expository, Critical. From Hutcheson to Hamilton* (London, Mcmillan and Co. 1875). Other works by Professor McCosh include *Method of Divine Government* (1850), *The Intuitions of the Mind Inductively Investigated* (1860), *Christianity and Positivism* (1871), and *Psychology* (1886–87).

5. McCosh, o*p. cit.*, 13.

6. *Ibid.*, 204.

7. In Sir William Hamilton's estimation, Gershom Carmichael "may be regarded, on good grounds, as the real founder of the Scottish school of philosophy" (in the "Introduction" of *Reid's Works*, 30). In his famous *Breviuscula Introductio ad Logicam* (1722), Carmichael defines logic as the science that shows the method of discovering truth.

8. *Observations upon Liberal Education* (1742), vol. I, p. 114. In his

James Beattie (1735–1802), poet and essayist, became professor of moral philosophy at Marischal College, Aberdeen. In his famous treatise *Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth, in Opposition to Sophistry and Scepticism,* he attacked the scepticism of David Hume by vindicating the principles of common sense philosophy. According to Beattie, *common sense* is "that power of the mind which perceives self evident truth, and commands belief, not by progressive argumentation, but by an instantaneous, instinctive, and irresistible impulse—derived neither from education nor from habit, but from nature."[9]

Thomas Reid (1710–1796), the most important representative of the philosophy of common sense realism, studied philosophy at Marischal College, Aberdeen, before serving as Presbyterian minister at New Machar. In 1752 he was appointed professor of philosophy at King's College, Aberdeen. The reading of David Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature* marked the beginning of his career against scepticism. In 1763 he received a call to the chair of moral philosophy at the University of Glasgow, and a year later his famous treatise *An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense* appeared, which contains the very essentials of his thought. Reid's *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (1785) further extended his criticism of Hume's epistemology, and his *Essays on the Active Power of Man* (1788) contained a vigorous criticism of the subjective currents of the time on ethics.[10]

According to Reid, there are certain principles of knowledge that are inherent in the very constitution of the mind, and have there the sanction of the Author of our nature. Reid designates them principles of common sense, and represents them as being natural, original and necessary. These common principles are the foundation of all reasoning and science. By God's Creation our nature is what it is and knows reality and itself according to the principles implanted in our being by the divine Author. In his manuscript papers he writes: "As soon as this truth is understood, that two and two make four, I immediately assent to it; because God has given me the faculty of immediately discerning its truth, and if I had not this faculty, I would not perceive its truth."[11] From Plato to Hume, affirms Reid, all philosophers agree that we do not perceive directly the objects of external reality; they maintain that the immediate object of perception are the images present to the mind. Reid denies this basic assumption of all forms of subjectivism, and shows that no solid proof can be given of the existence of these images, or *ideas*. Against Hume's scepticism, Reid judged groundless the assumption that *ideas* are the direct object of the mind's awareness: "The way in which philosophers speak of ideas seems to imply that they are only objects of perception." He denies that we perceive by means of ideas in the mind coming between the mind and the material object perceived. Sensations serve to make us directly aware of real objects without the aid of any intervening medium. By removing these confusing intermediaries which were called *ideas,* Reid does a special service to philosophy. In opposition to this representative theory of perception, Reid holds fast to the *presentative theory,* according to which *our knowledge of external things is immediate.* In the perception of an external object, says Reid, we discover these three things: "First, some conception or notion of the object perceived; secondly, a strong and irresistible conviction and belief of its present existence; thirdly, that this conviction and belief are immediate, and not the effect of reasoning."[12]

Dugald Stewart (1753–1828), professor of moral philosophy at Edinburgh, reinforced the great principles of common sense philosophy laid down by Reid. He identified himself with the thought of Reid while he was his student at Glasgow. But if Steward owed much to Reid, Reid owed nearly as much to his grateful pupil, who finished and adorned the work of his master with a clearer exposition of his thought. In order to avoid the false supposition that questions of philosophy could be decided by an appeal to popular judgement he avoided the use of the term "common sense," and spoke instead of "the fundamental laws of human belief, or the primary elements of human reason." Without this faculty reasoning is inconceivable and impossible. His classes at the University of Edinburgh, and his meetings at his house with the distinguished intellectuals of the city became the influential platform of common sense philosophy.

The list of important representatives of the Scottish school of common sense is usually enlarged with the addition of the names of Thomas Brown and of Sir William Hamilton. Thomas Brown (1778–1820) retained the fundamental doctrine of the Scottish school, namely, the existence of indemonstrable first principles, but attempted to mingle with it Kantian elements and ideas from the empirical French sensationalism of the Condillac type. William Hamilton (1788–1856) is regarded as one of the most learned man of Scotland. He was an authority in the history of Western thought, standing alone in his knowledge of the more philosophic Fathers, such as Tertullian and Augustine, and of the more illustrious Schoolmen, such as Thomas Aquinas and Scotus. "He experiences a delight [writes McCosh] in stripping modern authors of their borrowed feathers, and of pursuing stolen goods from one literary thief to another, and giving them back to their original owner."[13] In 1836 he was appointed professor of logic and metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh. He translated the writings of Kant into English and made known the thought of the German philosopher to the British public. His admiration for Kant was indeed great, to the point that he was irresistibly caught in his logical network and was never able thoroughly to extricate himself. Hamilton attempted a symbiosis of Reid and Kant—something that in our estimation is an impossibility. From Kant he took the principle that the mind begins with phenomena instead of things, and builds thereon by forms or laws of thought. To Reid he owed his disposition to appeal, even in the midst of his most abstract disquisitions, to consciousness and to facts. How could a mind so logical as that of Hamilton's be so inconsistent as to appeal to phenomena in the origin of knowledge, and, at the same time, be a follower of Reid, the staunch defender of factual reality? The

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Observations upon Liberal Education he applied the ideas of common sense philosophy to the education of youth. Benjamin Franklin, in drafting his *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania,* drew generously from Turnbull's *Observations.*

9. *An Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth* (Edinburgh: 1770), p. 40.

10. These essays are contained in *The Works of Thomas Reid,* 2 vols, edited by Wm. Hamilton, 1846.   11. *Ibid.,* vol. 1, 230 A–B.

12. *Ibid.,* 258, 263.

13. McCosh, *op. cit.,* 385. He became, adds McCosh, "an insatiable devourer and also an eager collector of books—in the end his library amounted to nearly ten thousand volumes" p. 389.

principles of common sense realism looking at objective truth will not join on to the empty Kantian forms which imply that we do not know the thing in itself (*Ding an sich*). Yet Hamilton insisted in agreeing with Reid's immediate intuition of factual reality. His admiration of the great expounder of the philosophy of common sense led him to the edition of *Reid's Collected Works, with Notes and Dissertations* (1846).

Thomas Chalmers (1780–1847) must also be included in the traditional line of Scottish common sense philosophers. He was a Presbyterian minister and the first moderator of the Free Church of Scotland. He was a multifaceted scholar, theologian, ecclesiastical organiser, social reformer and political statesman. As professor of philosophy at St. Andrews and of theology at the University of Edinburgh, Chalmers integrated common sense philosophy into an overall Christian world-view and rejected any attempt to construct a system of philosophy or ethics apart from biblical inspired principles. In his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, for instance, he powerfully defends the grand doctrines of the Bible by showing that they elicit profound philosophical thought. According to McCosh "the reconciliation between philosophy and religion was effected by Thomas Chalmers, who has had greater influence in moulding the religious belief and character of his countrymen than any one since the greatest Scotchman, John Knox." "I never met any man who had so large a veneration for all that is great and good."[14] In his references to German philosophy we perceive also a certain tendency to harmonise Kantian thought with Reidian common sense philosophy. Although in this he did not go so far as Hamilton, he evidently showed a regrettable inconsistency, incompatible with his constant defence of Reid's principles of objective reality.

Though not included in the list of common sense philosophers, Henry Home, known also as Lord Kames (1696–1782), shared with them the principle that man can acquire intuitive knowledge of certain truths from a single act of perception. In his *Introduction to the Art of Thinking* and in *Sketches of the History of Man* he defends the existence of an original *sense* by which we perceive the truth of many propositions—such as that everything which begins to exist must have a cause; that every effect adapted to some end or purpose proceeds from a designing cause; and that every effect adapted to a good end or purpose proceeds from a designing and benevolent cause. On the same grounds, thanks to an intuitive capacity, a multitude of axioms in every science, particularly in mathematics, are equally perceived to be true. He appeals also to a "peculiar sense" as a medium of knowledge of the divine existence.

The method of the common sense philosophers

Common sense philosophy is inseparably joined with the method of research it proposes and applies. To the Scottish school belongs the merit of being the first to follow the *inductive* method, firmly based on observation, and to employ it systematically in psychological investigation and in other fields of study. In this respect it is different from nearly all the philosophies that preceded it which based their inferences on the *deductive* method. While Regent at Marischal College of Aberdeen, George Turnbull became the first

thinker to call for the experimental method in the investigation of morals, and in a similar vein he developed the analogy between moral inquiry and the natural sciences. Along the same line Reid held that settled truth can be attained by observation, in the spheres both of mind and physical reality. His *Inquiry* is occupied almost exclusively with the senses as original inlets of knowledge. From his *Letters* and other writings we know of his interest in every sort of scientific pursuit. All his life Reid maintained a vivid interest in mathematics, making some valuable contributions in the field. It was while he was active as a minister that he published, in the *Transactions of the Royal Society* of London, "An Essay on Quantity, occasioned by reading a Treatise in which Simple and Compound Ratios are applied to Virtue and Merit." Reid thought it important to show what it is that renders a subject susceptible of mathematical demonstration. It is interesting to note that the first publications both of Reid and Kant had a relation to mathematical subjects. According to Norman Daniels, Reid discovered non-Euclidean geometry half a century before the mathematicians.[15]

Reid was related to the Gregories, one of the most illustrious families of Scotland. Thomas Chalmers, in his *Biographical Dictionary*, reckons no fewer than sixteen Gregories who have held British professorships and distinguished themselves as brilliant researchers in different realms of science. Several of its members—mathematicians, physicians, geologists, and astronomers—acknowledged their indebtedness to the teachings of Reid on the significance of the method of observation in the pursuance of the sciences. James Gregory, professor of medicine at Edinburgh dedicated one of his books to Reid in appreciation for the insights he received from the great philosopher.

John Abercrombie, one of the most eminent Scottish physicians in the field of neuropathology, also dedicated one of his treatises to Reid. According to Abercrombie, who was also an accomplished philosopher, the method and tenets of Reid's thought are also operative in the field of science, as he himself had proved by applying them in his medical studies and psychological research. Abercrombie was a remarkable example of scientific eminence and Christian virtues. A most refined vein of evangelical piety runs throughout his works. Dugald Stewart, who like Reid was also an accomplished mathematician and for some time held the chair of mathematics in Edinburgh, was also a defender of the empirical method in philosophical and scientific research. Stewart often made analogies between the axioms of mathematics and the laws that govern human thinking. His ideas of mathematics and methodology remained influential for a long time. The diffusion of political economy owed much to Stewart's lectures, and his contributions to linguistic theory were a turning point in the development of the subject. William Hamilton, who became well known in the field of logic for his contribution to the doctrine of the "quantification of the predicate," was also an accomplished mathematician. Although Thomas Chalmers held an ample and varied scope of humanistic and scientific interests, his favourite study was also mathematics.

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14. McCosh, *op. cit.*, 262, 368. McCosh regarded Chalmers "as the greatest preacher that Scotland has produced" p. 366.

15. Norman Daniels, *Thomas Reid's "Inquiry": the Geometry of Visibles and the Case for Realism* (Stanford, 1989).

Ethics and the common sense philosophers

The application of the experimental method in the investigation of morals was central in the pursuits of common sense philosophers, where they also developed a marked analogy between moral inquiry and the natural sciences. Nearly all the leading exponents of the common sense school occupied a chair of moral philosophy in the Scottish universities, and the amount of writings they devoted to the subject is indeed remarkable. In this respect we could almost say that common sense philosophy is indissolubly related to the system of ethics they proposed. In accordance with their theory of inherent intuitive principles of knowledge common sense philosophers also defend the existence of a moral *sense* in human nature. According to Reid, moral notions and moral determinations are the product of a faculty akin to a sense. In Dugald Stewart's estimation moral science, like physical science, is inductive and descriptive and both contribute to the ever clearer revelation of an orderly world that clearly points to an underlying divine Providence.

This view, and other similar ones held by common sense philosophers—we advance—is not correct: moral conduct and physical science cannot be equated. Moral acts are the expression of free personal agents, while the objects of Creation not endowed with intellectual and active powers follow a course externally imposed by divine providence. The assumption of a free will in man plays an important role in the framing of common sense ethics, and the issue acquired even greater relevance after the introduction in Scotland of Jonathan Edwards' *Treatise on the Will*. Another element that does not pass unnoticed in common sense ethics is the tendency to invoke utilitarian motives in evaluating human conduct. For Francis Hutcheson virtue yields pleasure *because* it conforms to our natural and innate "moral sense," while vice yields pain *because* it is unnatural. Along these lines Hutcheson came up with the utilitarian ethical precepts that the height of virtue was achieving the "greatest good for the greatest number."[16]

As we shall see in our article centred on Thomas Reid, in the ethics propounded by common sense philosophers there are valuable contributions on morals, but also notorious weak points. Being sound in their arguments in favour of *objective reality*, in the field of ethics, however, they propose a system seriously detached from factual reality. What they propose could only be implemented in a sphere of "sinless perfection." Much of what they advocate is totally incompatible with man's fallen condition. They speak everywhere with deep admiration of the morality of the Scriptures, but the precepts which they upheld are more stoic than biblical. How could men so well versed in the biblical message of moral depravity deal with ethics on grounds independent of the word of God? At the very time when the Scottish philosophers were discoursing so beautifully on moral virtue there was a population springing up around their very colleges in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen sunk in vice and degradation. How could they ignore the reality of sin and the need of restoring grace in framing a system of ethics? Even the sermons of such a sweet preacher and scholar as Hugh Blair (1718–1800), minister of the High Kirk of St Giles in Edinburgh and first professor of rhetoric and belles lettres at Edinburgh University, are sadly tinged with a pagan note of stoicism. No teachers ever inculcated a more pure moral system than Reid, Stewart, or Brown, but they seem unwilling to acknowledge the fact that man falls infinitely beneath the purity of the moral law. They give us lofty views of the moral power in man, but forget to say that this power condemns him. Taking up the demonstrations of the Scottish thinkers in regard to the conscience, an inquiry should be made about how are they affected by the circumstance that man is a sinner? This was the grand topic begun by Thomas Chalmers, and by which he effected a reconciliation between the philosophy and the theology of Scotland.

Aesthetics and the common sense philosophers

Almost without exception, all common sense philosophers have shown an unparalleled fondness for the subject of aesthetics, and have made important contributions to the notions of taste and beauty. The starting point of their interest in the subject is closely linked with the principles of common sense intuitive knowledge and the notions of morality and virtue. As a matter of fact certain features that define the moral faculty appear also as constituents of the aesthetic faculty. The two fields are so inextricably related that Hutcheson, for instance, speaks of the "moral sense of beauty."

Alexander Gerard (1728–1795), professor of moral philosophy in Marischal College, and afterwards of divinity in King's College, was also minister of the Kirk in Aberdeen. He gained great reputation for two essays, one on *Taste* and the other on *Genius*. It is interesting to note the complete title of his first treatise, *Dissertations on Subjects relating to the Genius and Evidences of Christianity* (1774), which evidences his concern for discussing aesthetics and all subjects in a Christian context. Although we will refer to Gerard at some length in our essay on common sense aesthetics, at this point we will mention that his treatise on taste passed through several editions in English and in French, and ever since it has been considered essential in the study of this subject. It influenced the views of Archibald Alison, who afterwards based a treatise on the same subject. Before the Romantics came to emphasise the role of imagination in the artistic creation Gerard had already stressed the importance of this faculty in the formation of the genius and in his artistic productions. In his philosophy and in his aesthetic ideas Gerard admitted an unreserved indebtedness to Hutcheson and to the guiding principles of common sense thought.

Archibald Alison (1757–1839) was born in Edinburgh and studied at Glasgow and at Balliol College, Oxford. After taking orders in the Church of England he came to Edinburgh as incumbent of St. Paul's Episcopal Chapel. His *Essay on the Nature and Principles of Taste* is also a classical work of aesthetics very much in agreement with the spirit and principles of common sense philosophy. In it he offers a splendid study of the qualities that produce the complex emotion of taste. The state of mind most favourable to the emotions of taste is one in which the imagination is free and unembarrassed, and the feeling is not interfered with by anything which interrupts the flow. In the study of the pleasures of beauty and of the sublime, and in full agreement with Reid, he proceeds on the philosophical principle that we should consider the effects before we proceed to determine the cause. A subsequent step implies a detailed study of

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16. See Charles Camic, *Experience and Enlightenment—Socialization for Cultural Change in Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (The University of Chicago Press, 1983).

the faculty by which the emotions are received and the association of ideas and sentiments that the aesthetic experience entails. The reading of his treatise is indeed enthralling, not only for its contents, but also for the superb quality of the style: every word is appropriate and the sentences glide along like a silver stream.[17] For both Gerard and Alison the pleasures of poetry are one of the great gifts God has bestowed on man, and an acquaintance with poetry at an early age has a powerful influence in increasing our sensibilities to the beauties of nature.

With a few exceptions the writers linked with common sense thought cultivated a high style of literary expression and became consummate masters of language and rhetoric. Walter Scott did not owe much more than Burns to the Scottish philosophy, but he was a pupil of Dugald Stewart, and as such may have owed to him and his college training that power of clear exposition and order that distinguish his prose works. The list of authors that wrote and lectured on language and rhetoric in Scotland is indeed considerable. One of the most influential authorities on the subject was George Campbell. His *Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1776) contains an excellent and elaborate study of the laws of elegant composition. His position stands in interesting relation to Reid's frequent appeals to the universals of language in support of the claim that given beliefs are held by all humankind. Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles-lettres*, given at the University of Edinburgh, has been considered one of the most useful works ever published on the art of composition, and helped to make rhetoric a leading branch of study in England and in America. George Beattie's poem *The Minstrel,* for its content and form, is also of great aesthetic value. It describes the formation of a poet's mind and beautifully describes the effect of nature on the emotions. This autobiographical poem—written in Spenserian stanzas—was the aesthetic delight of a wide public, and greatly influenced the nineteenth century Romantics, particularly Lord Byron.

Theology in the common sense philosophers

As we engage in the study of common sense philosophy we notice that a goodly number of its representatives had been ordained ministers, exercised pastoral activities, and even became professors of divinity in the Scottish universities. Francis Hutcheson was a licensed preacher, and for a long time on Sabbath evenings lectured on "the truth and excellence of Christianity." George Turnbull—one of Reid's professors at Aberdeen, was a deeply committed Christian, and late in life was ordained into the Anglican Church. Thomas Reid was an ordained minister, and in the midst of his academic labours he still found time to render pastoral assistance within the Kirk. Thomas Reid, writes Professor Broadie, "refers to God on practically every page of the *Inquiry* and the two sets of *Essays.*"[18] Hugh Blair was minister of the High Kirk of St Giles in Edinburgh and combined his pastoral duties with academic activities at Edinburgh University. Alexander Gerard was also an ordained minister and professor of divinity in King's College, Aberdeen. George

Campbell was also a minister, and so was Archibald Alison who took orders in the Church of England.

Almost all of them were members of the Kirk and professors of its Calvinistic creed. Generally they rejected extreme doctrinal positions and wished to be known as *moderates* in religion. They looked with suspicion on the "experiential" and doctrinal overtones of the *evangelicals* and were very much disturbed with the religious commotion caused by George Whitefield's preaching and the revivalists of the time.[19] Among the young moderates there was an increasing tendency to substitute the doctrinal articles of the Christian faith with the precepts of an "advanced" code of morality. Even the sceptic Hume sympathised with these moral tendencies, and sporadically attended some of the churches where this "moral gospel" was preached. He was on familiar terms with several of the moderate clergy, and at times mingled in their ecclesiastical counsels. These moralistic trends were strongly counteracted by the evangelicals, who rightly argued that apart from the renewing effects of saving grace it was not possible to attain the goals of a high ethical code.

In view of the important ecclesiastic representation found among the exponents of common sense philosophy can we infer that in the framing of their thought theology became a determining factor? Strange as it may seem the question admits a double answer: on the one hand the influence of theology became decisive in the development of some fundamental aspects of their thought; but on some other aspects, especially in the realm of moral philosophy, it was hardly felt. It must be added, also, that in the course of its development common sense philosophy reached a clear point of cleavage with theology and placed its inquiry on a totally separate and independent basis.

That theology had a positive influence on common sense philosophy is quite evident. In many respects this influence was unavoidable: not only because of the theological education of its exponents, but also because of the fact that they imbibed a religious culture that for generations had moulded the minds and hearts of the people of Scotland. Common sense philosophy sprang up in a Christian soil deeply irrigated with biblical teaching and sound Reformed theology. And it is for this reason that Professor Broadie points out that "the particular form of spirituality which informs Reid's works is one with which Reformed philosophers can feel at home, but also in the philosophically significant sense that the system can readily be interpreted as providing substantial philosophical underpinning to Reformed theologies."[20] Although common sense philosophy sprang up in a Christian soil deeply irrigated with biblical teaching and sound Reformed theology, its representatives were not always consistent in developing the system, or in applying correctly its presuppositions. They even went further in their inconsistency; that is, by abandoning the original religious principles that sustained their system they sought other sources of inspiration and resorted to "intellectual bricks" from stoic, French, and German sources in order to complete the construction of the building of the common

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17. According to the *Edinburgh Review* the published sermons of Alison could be compared to the "Oraisons Funèbres" of Bossuet.

18. A. Broadie, "The Scottish Thomas Reid" in *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. LXXIV, No. 3, p. 385. The offprint of this lecture, as well as other valuable studies on Reid, were kindly sent to this writer by Dr. Brodie.

19. In this criticism of Whitefield' ministry in Scotland the moderates were not alone: in the ranks of the seceders voices as authoritative as that of Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine were not less critical of the Calvinist Methodist. Ebenezer Erskine spoke contemptuously of the "noisy wind which that prelatic preacher had brought into the land."

20. Broadie, "The Scottish Thomas Reid," *op. cit.,* p. 385.

sense philosophy. An eloquent example of this is found in the eclectic position of Sir William Hamilton already referred to.

The influence of common sense philosophy

The influence of common sense philosophy has been considerable. Through their lectures and writings Reid and Stewart exercised great influence in England, Europe and America among the clergy, among men of letters, philosophers, men of science, and the bar. France was one of the countries where the Scottish philosophy exercised a wider and deeper influence. Common sense thought was introduced there by some philosophers who wished to counteract the negative impact caused by the writings of John Locke. The English empiricist was introduced into France by Voltaire, but he did not receive a balanced interpretation there. By leaving out reflection and observation from Locke's thought the attention was almost exclusively centred on the experiential side of his philosophy, with the erroneous result that all *ideas* were derived from sensation. Étienne Bonnot de Condillac (1715–1786), for instance, made all ideas, even the highest—such as cause and moral good—transformed sensations.

Pierre-Paul Royer Collard (1763–1845), professor of philosophy at the University of Paris, can be considered as the first exponent of common sense philosophy in France. In the thought of both Reid and Stewart he saw an antidote to the materialistic, sensualist, and sceptical ideas of the radical tendencies of the day. This conviction was enthusiastically shared by Victor Cousin and Theodore Jouffroy, two of his brilliant followers who did the most to make known Scottish thought in France. Through his numerous writings Victor Cousin (1792–1867), a champion of eclectic thought, exercised a wide influence in France and in other countries. Even in New England and among the "transcendentalists" authors—such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Amos Bronson Alcott—the ideas of Cousin found great acceptation. In 1862 he published his *Philosophie écossais* (Scottish Philosophy), which according to McCosh is the first and the best history of the Scottish philosophy, "containing upon the whole the most faultless of all historical disquisitions."[21] In appreciation for his interest in Scottish thought and for spreading it in his own country William Hamilton dedicated to him his edition of Reid's works. For his part, Th. S. Joufroy (1796–1842) translated into French the works of Reid and the *Moral Philosophy* of Stewart. In the preface of this translation he wrote an excellent introduction to common sense philosophy, which found wide echo in intellectual circles. Through his lectures and writings some Catalan students became exposed to Scottish philosophy, and in a somewhat "diluted version" introduced common sense thought at the University of Barcelona. (It was there that this writer first received preliminary information on common sense philosophy.)

In Germany common sense philosophy has been little known. Reid is occasionally spoken of, only to be disparaged for his system and its results. Stewart is scarcely ever named. The only Scottish thinker thoroughly known in Germany is David Hume. Kant knew the geography of Scotland fairly well, but very little of its philosophy apart from Hume. As he himself repeated several times, Kant was roused from his dogmatic slumbers by the scepticism of David Hume. The

ignorance of Scottish thought on the part of Kant and the leading German philosophers must be regretted. Such a body of carefully inducted fundamental truth as we have in the philosophy of Reid and Stewart is precisely what was needed to preserve thought from the extravagances of transcendentalism. The Scottish thinkers make our primitive perceptions or intuitions look at *objective reality*; whereas Kant stands up for *a priori* principles, which regulate experience and have only a subjective validity. Having allowed idealism to enter, there was no means of arresting its career. As Kant had made time and space, substance and cause, mere forms of the mind, Fichte was only advancing a few steps further on the same road when he made the whole universe a projection of the mind; and, in the succeeding age, Schelling made it an intellectual intuition, and Hegel a logical process.

The introduction of the Scottish philosophy in America is closely related with the arrival of immigrants from Scotland and Ireland. Among the list of intellectuals that came from Scotland the name of John Witherspoon (1722–1794) stands out with special relevance. As president of the College of New Jersey he introduced to Princeton, and through it to other institutions, the basic principles of the Scottish school of common sense and its bearing on Christian apologetics. Through him the names of Hutcheson, Beattie, and Reid became familiar within the learned circles of the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches of America. Under the presidency of James McCosh (1811–94), the College of New Jersey increased its influence as a centre of common sense philosophy. Under McCosh, the Scottish school of common sense became the unchallenged philosophy of the leading centres of education in the United States. His books and treatises became popular manuals of philosophy in many seminaries and universities. As a result, Reid and Stewart dominated the philosophical curriculum for much of the nineteenth century.

In his treatise *Outlines of the Evidences of Christianity* (1823) and in many of his articles in the *Princeton Review*, Archibald Alexander (1772–1851), an influential professor at Princeton Seminary, set forth with great clarity and convicting force the principles of common sense philosophy. Being familiar with the writings of Reid and Stewart, he believed also that the doctrines of self-evident truths, the reliability of physical and moral senses, and the direct apprehension of the cause-and-effect relationship were determining presuppositions for both theology and philosophy. Charles Hodge (1797–1878), the famous Princeton Seminary professor and author, who was renowned for his important Bible commentaries,—above all for his voluminous *Systematic Theology,* his *magnum opus*—was also an enthusiastic defender of the postulates of common sense philosophy and of its empirical method of observation. The theologian, he held, "gathers facts from the Bible just as a scientist gathers facts from nature." Against Humean and Kantian doubts about objective reality he affirms that "the external world is not a phantasm, an empty show. It is not delusive, but is what it reveals itself to be, and never disappoints those who rely upon its teachings . . . So the truth concerning the internal world of mind is what corresponds to the phenomena and laws of that world, and which we can always safely assume and rely upon."[22] Having studied in Germany and with a deep and rich philosophical

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21. McCosh, *op. cit.,* p. 6.

22. C. H. Hodge, "Thy Word is Truth," in *Princeton Sermons* (Outline of Discourses, Doctrinal and Practical), The Banner of Truth

and theological background, Hodge was able to corroborate the soundness of Scottish realism in comparison with the prevalent currents of thought of his day. In numerous articles written for the *Princeton Review*—which he founded in 1825 and of which he was the editor and the main contributor for forty years—Hodge gave evident proof of his vast knowledge and deep judgement in discussing decisive theological and philosophical issues of pressing actuality.[23]

Benjamin Breckenridge Warfield (1851–1921), professor of Polemical and Didactic theology at Princeton Theological Seminary and the main representative of the so called "Old Princeton" tradition initiated by A. Alexander, also stood for the basic principles of Scottish realism, which he successfully applied in his apologetics.[24] He came to Princeton the same year that James McCosh arrived from Scotland to become one of the most famous of its presidents. Following the interest of the original Scottish common sense thinkers for the experimental sciences, Warfield also took a special interest in mathematics, physics, geology, and biology. In view of the fact that under the presidency of McCosh Princeton became directly involved in the issue of evolution it has been argued that a strict application of the realistic and empirical principles of common sense thought lead to compromise with Darwinism. According to McCosh much of the evolutionary theory could be substantiated with solid arguments which did not in the least undermine the biblical doctrine of Creation. According to his theory of "development" McCosh believed in an act of creation out of nothing, but he held that God's creative activity expanded to include an ongoing process in accordance with the evolutionary theory. He believed that his form of theistic evolution in no way robbed God of his glory. In open disagreement with the evolutionary tendencies of Princeton, Charles Hodge wrote his treatise *What is Darwinism?* and concluded that the "Darwinian denial of design in nature is virtually the denial of God. Darwin's theory does deny all design in nature; therefore, his theory is virtually atheistical."[25] More arguments

along these lines are developed in his *Systematic Theology*. It is quite apparent that on biblical grounds and following also the Scottish empirical realism, Hodge did not reach the evolutionary thesis advanced by McCosh. On the same basis the view that Warfield shared McCoshe's evolutionary theory of "development" can be regarded as unfounded.

Among the evangelicals of nineteenth century Scotland we find an influential current of thought that embraced common sense philosophy and integrated their principles into an over all Christian view of reality. According to them, the very fundamentals of common sense philosophy are in agreement with the Bible; there are no valid reasons, therefore, for a separation between philosophy and theology. As already mentioned, Thomas Chalmers became the staunch defender of a reconciliation between philosophy and theology. Another defender of this approximation was David Welsh, a contemporary of Chalmers, and famous preacher of St. David's, Glasgow, and later professor of Church History in the University of Edinburgh.

Concluding remarks

The importance of common sense philosophy is to be found in the large body of permanent truth it contains. The principles of common sense, being natural, original and necessary, establish a sure path of direct knowledge of objective reality which guarantee an irrefutable antidote to the solipsistic and idealistic tendencies that have caused so much havoc to the philosophy and theology of the last two centuries.

Common sense philosophy has added very considerably to our knowledge of primary truths related to the human mind and its powers; and it has afforded an elaborate analysis of the complex phenomena of human conscience, and the whole process of perception through the senses and the subsequent association of ideas derived from it.

Common sense philosophy has also made valuable contributions in the spheres of ethics and aesthetics, furnishing very useful analysis of the different sentiments associated with the experience of the good and the beautiful. Even in the fields of economics, sociology and history, common sense thinkers enlarged the scope of their research in the practical application of their principles.

Scottish common sense philosophy was successful in developing sound arguments against the radical assaults of scepticism. By appealing to the principles derived from an inherent God-given *sense* of knowledge, common sense philosophy left the solipsistic tendencies of classical idealism groundless.

Thomas Chalmers and other evangelicals in Scotland and in America acknowledged the great contributions made by common sense philosophy and accepted the validity of their principles in the pursuance of religious truth and theoretical knowledge. In their estimation, besides offering a solid foundation for a consistent system of thought, common sense philosophy provides also the basic elements for the use and development of an efficient method of Christian apologetics. Was their appraisal correct? *C&S*

Trust, pp. 9, 8. In a future chapter we will refer at length to Hodge and other Princeton representatives of common sense philosophy. The following publications reveal the interest which the subject elicits on the part of contemporary scholars: Peter Hicks, *The Philosophy of Charles Hodge; A Nineteenth Century Evangelical Approach to Reason, Knowledge, and Truth* (Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1997); *Charles Hodge Revisited: A Critical Appraisal of His Life and Work*, edited by John W. Stewart and James H. Morehead (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002). And the standard work is *The Princeton Theology, 1812–1921*, edited and compiled by Mark A. Noll (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Book House, 1983).

23. In Hodges's *Systematic Theology* we find six direct quotations from Reid (I, 285, 286, 290, 300, 306; III, 113). The basic thrust of Hodge's theological and philosophical argumentation reflects a clear Reidian line of thought. In several of his writings he refers to Reid and Stewart as "most respectable writers."

24. Others include Archibald Alexander, Charles Hodge, Alexander Hodge (1823–1886), B.B. Warfield, and later J. Gresham Machen (1881–1937), the founder of Westminster Theological Seminary.

25. C. Hodge, *What is Darwinism?* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, and Company, 1874, p. 173). This was Hodge's last work. See also *Outlines of Theology* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 1957, 40–41).

CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW AND CHANGING CULTURES

by Patrick Poole [†]

PART 1

1.   WHAT IS A WORLDVIEW?

FOR thousands of years sailors traversing the seas looked to the stars to navigate through perilous waters and the darkest night. Captains would peer through their astrolabes towards Polaris, the North Star, to get their bearings and to determine the course for the following day with the goal of getting them to their destination. Polaris was the most important reference point for sailors sailing the seas in the Northern Hemisphere because it is fixed at one place in the sky. It never moves, even with the heavens constantly turning above the ship and the stars constantly changing their positions. Learning to find the North Star meant the difference between life and death for any sailor. Any adventurer taking to the seas without a solid working knowledge of the stars would be doomed.

As a young boy I grew up in the age of the Apollo moon missions. I remember looking up into the night sky and gazing at the moon, realising that men had briefly made that place their home. My interest in space exploration has continued throughout my life, and I've learned that the ancient art of star charting played a vital role for astronauts navigating their way to the moon and returning safely to earth. Even in an age of advanced technology, looking to the fixed reference points in the vast expanse of Creation allowed them to determine where they were in their journey and where they were going. Man and his methods haven't changed.

I've begun this brief examination of Christian worldview and its importance in our lives with these two examples for a reason. They show us the importance of knowing where you are and where you are trying to go in life. We all have dreams and visions for what we want to accomplish in life, but the critical element to seeing them come to fruition must depend on how we chart our lives, what we use as reference points, and how closely our understanding of the world is in accord with reality. We all have ambitious dreams for our lives, but if we use the wrong chart, or look to a shifting reference point, we will never see our hopes and dreams realised. And if we make false assumptions about how the world operates, much like sailors not knowing how the stars move, we are doomed to drift.

Worldview matters. Our assumptions and our reference points command a significant role in determining how we understand the progress and outcome of our existence. Worldviews are also inescapable. Everyone uses an inner logic to evaluate what they do and what is going on around them. Worldview is the star chart we use to navigate our way through life.

For our present purpose, let's establish an exact meaning of what a worldview is:

A worldview is a set of presuppositions (or assumptions) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously) about the basic make-up of our world.[1]

A worldview is, first of all, *an explanation and interpretation of the world* and second, *an application of this view to life*. In simpler terms, our worldview is a view *of the world* and a view *for the world*.[2]

[A worldview is] a set of beliefs about the most important issues of life . . . a conceptual scheme by which we consciously or unconsciously place or fit everything we believe and by which we interpret and judge reality.[3]

What man thinks about the world when he is driven back to his deepest reflections and most secret promptings will finally determine all that he does.[4]

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1. James Sire, *The Universe Next Door* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), p. 17.
2. W. Gary Phillips and William E. Brown, *Making Sense of Your World* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), p. 29.
3. Ronald Nash, *Worldviews in Conflict* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), p. 16.
4. Richard Weaver, *The Southern Tradition at Bay* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1989), p. 375.

This explanation highlights the element of faith for worldviews. They are constructed of assumptions, presuppositions, explanations and interpretations—unproven elements of our thought that we grant even before rationality. For Christians, this isn't a troublesome proposition. But this fact is true for even the most ardent atheist. We all maintain foundational assumptions about God, man, the world and ourselves that we take for granted on the basis of faith. We then take these assumptions and use them to interpret everything around us and about us. Worldview is the grid of beliefs that we view everything through. We plan our lives, attribute value to people and things, and make all our decisions based on this network of assumptions. Much like a pair of rose-coloured glasses, regardless of what colour something is, our view of reality will be tinted by the lenses through which we see the world through and evaluate our life. Our worldview is the map of reality that we follow in this life.

The Bible tells us that our first parents, Adam and Eve, were created in the likeness of God; and as such, the ultimate reference point in their lives was God himself and what he has revealed about his unchanging nature and his activity in the world. Relying on the direct revelation given by God and the unhindered and growing understanding about themselves and the world in which they had been placed, their pristine worldview allowed them to chart a course for their lives in full accord with reality, based on the fixed reference point of God and his revelation.

But their fall into sin changed all of that. The promise of the serpent was that man could become his own reference point apart from God: "For God knows that when you eat of it [the forbidden fruit] your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5).[5]

What the serpent offered was a competing worldview. It challenged Adam and Eve's understanding of God (they could attain "knowledge" apart from what God had revealed); what they knew God had said about the world and ethics (the fruit could be safely eaten); and their understanding of their abilities and potential (they could become like God). The decision they faced was to believe God, or to believe that they could in fact *be* God. Using the free choice that God had endowed them with and forsaking the worldview God had prescribed for them to follow, Adam and Eve accepted this alternate view of reality and sinned, condemning humanity to an understanding of the world that is incomplete, shifting, and ultimately, false.

Like a mirror that had been shattered, sinful man's worldview is fragmented and insufficient to interpret the world around him, because rather than look to the fixed reference point that stands unmoved in heaven, God, man looks to himself through his finiteness. All man-generated worldviews suffer from this inadequacy, with the result that all worldviews that reject God's message are destined to drive their adherents to constant futility and despair if they are consistent in their rejection and aware of its application.

Looking solely at Creation and within himself for his reference points, man was cast out of the Garden into Eden on a journey that he will never be able to complete as long as he looks inward and outward instead of heavenward. The gifts, talents and mission to transform the world given to man at Creation can never be accomplished apart from the plan, purpose, order and end given by God at that time; those tools can only be put to use for base, profane and selfish uses as men live by their alternative worldviews. Any proper use of our created abilities is merely accidental and unintentional. In the Fall of man, Adam and Eve set mankind adrift in the vast expanse of Creation without a chart, a reference point, or a destination, leaving their descendents with nothing more than shattered chards through which to view reality.

Fortunately, seeing Adam and Eve in their nakedness and shame, God restored to them a proper worldview, but expanded their understanding of reality to include the consequences of their sin. As for the serpent that tried to set itself above God and God's word by acting as the pretended interpreter of reality to man, God reduced it forever to the dust and to be subject to the hostility of man (inter-species conflict). As for the woman who was to be the mother of all, but had first eaten of the fruit and had given it to her husband to eat as an endorsement of the serpent's alternative worldview, she would experience painful childbirth and would be a constant challenge to her husband's authority (human/relational conflict). As for the man, the task given to him before the Fall to fashion all of Creation according to the model given to him by God would now be difficult, with Creation acting against his mission (creational conflict). These were the results of Adam's and Eve's failure to take God at his word and to embrace the divinely-revealed worldview (spiritual conflict).

Furthermore, mankind was now subject to death and enslaved to sin. This was the worldview that God revealed to them after the Fall. But hope was not lost, for God had also promised that a Saviour would defeat the alternative worldview advocated by the serpent (Gen. 3:15), and provide God's covering of sin and atonement (Gen. 3:21) as a testament to the complete atonement and vindication of the original worldview and purpose given at Creation. This would be accomplished in Christ.

Many Christians reading beyond the Creation story in the book of Genesis fail to see how this clash of worldviews at the beginning of human history interprets the stories that immediately follow: the conflict of Abel, who brought offerings to God in accordance with the prescribed manner, which were accepted by God, and Cain, who brought offerings on his own terms and standards; the murder of righteous Abel by Cain; the expulsion of Cain from Eden as a picture of the futility of his worldview, but his persistence in attempting to craft his own reality and culture in his new city, Enoch; the faithfulness to the God-given worldview by the line of Seth; Noah's longsuffering message of repentance to a culture that had adopted a worldview of man-centred sensuality intent on abusing God's creation for man's own sinful pleasures and the consequent catastrophic judgement that followed; and the attempt by the people at Babel to erect a monument testifying to their ability to reach the heavens and order Creation apart from God, bringing God's swift judgement and the fracturing of humanity.

The importance of worldview in the founding narratives of our faith seems to get lost in the extensive lists of genealogies found in Genesis and throughout the Pentateuch (which are also present in the New Testament Gospels), but these same lists of "begats" chronicle the progress of two antithetical worldviews throughout ancient history and the

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5. Scripture references in this essay are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV).

repeated cultural clashes that inevitably resulted and that extend into our time.

This theme of conflicting worldviews is not confined to the first books of the Bible, but finds itself time and again repeated through the preaching of the Law and the Prophets in the Old Testament, and through the ministry of Christ and the teaching and government of the Apostles in the New Testament. In the person and work of Christ, and in the history of God's people from the time of the patriarchs, the triumphs and travails of Israel under kings and prophets, the restoration of Israel from exile, the advancement of and suffering for the gospel by the Church, God continually shows us the way to recover the original worldview offered to our first parents.

The biblical message concerning worldview and culture is that worldview matters. Understanding worldview is not just a matter for speculative philosophy—it is a matter of life and death, heaven and hell. Those Christians that do not understand the Christian worldview and all of the competing alternatives are in danger of assimilating elements of the various non-Christian worldviews and compromising their Christian witness. Christians are called to live their lives in accordance with the Christian worldview, and not the pagan alternatives, even though Jesus and the New Testament writers witness that, much like Abel, living according to the divinely-revealed worldview can be a lethal matter.

The story of Cain also illustrates a further point made in relation to developing and implementing worldviews: a worldview is not something that just applies to individuals; it extends from the individual to the culture. From the worldview of one man—Cain—an entire civilisation developed that mirrored and competed with the biblical worldview. Much like governments built on the parliamentary system, Cain developed a shadow government.

This doesn't mean, however, that every individual in a given civilisation or group shares a particular worldview, but that a predominant worldview is necessary in every society to build social institutions and to legislate social norms that will last. As will be discussed later, civilisations totter and cultures crash when there is active competition between an emerging worldview and an existing worldview that is the source of social order. In history, Christians have been on both sides of this cultural equation, and in our own time, the cultural erosion we are seeing in the West is not the result of shifting political power, but of changing worldviews.

Throughout this essay I am calling on Christians to take seriously the charge that it is our responsibility to apply the Christian worldview personally and to understand it culturally; anything short of that is a dereliction of our gospel mission as Christians. The Bible continually reveals to us the elements of the Christian worldview and demonstrates the necessity of advancing the consequence of those truths in our lives and in our culture.

Thus far, I have offered a standard definition of worldview and identified several truths relevant for our understanding of worldview in our life and time:

1.   Worldview is inescapable. One of the common features we share as humans is that we all maintain assumptions about God, man, Creation and ourselves; and these ideas, taken solely on the basis of faith, guide and shape our daily lives.

2.   The Christian faith offers a comprehensive worldview that is articulated in the Scriptures. This Christian worldview extends from Creation and the beginning of human history, and has been expounded on and extended by Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Church.

3.   The Christian worldview has God and his revealed word as its ultimate reference point. Any attempt to identify other reference points internally in man or outwardly in Creation is condemned by God as idolatry.

4.   The previous point emphasises that our understanding of reality (worldview) is religiously dictated. You either believe God, or you will believe that you are a god. How each individual answers this question in their lives determines whether their worldview corresponds to reality, resulting in human progress, or rejects reality, with an attendant condemnation to futility and failure.

5.   The conflict of worldviews is not confined to the theoretical realm; it is a concrete reality played out in history in the lives of individuals and civilisations. As will be discussed in the following section, the ideas that result from worldview have profound consequences.

2.   IDEAS HAVE CONSEQUENCES
The importance of worldview doesn't stop at just what we know, because it drives what we do. Regardless of the worldview, this truth is universally acknowledged as witnessed in virtually anything that mankind does. Whether it is building an oil platform in the North Sea, inviting your neighbours over for dinner, advancing particular views through the political process, sending your children off to a government school, or flying hijacked planes into buildings to kill and terrorise your enemies, these are all choices made purely on the basis of the worldview that anyone making these choices holds.

The Bible pointedly makes this connection between the inner logic of a man and the resultant actions and character that are manifest outwardly: "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he" (Pr. 23:7, KJV).

For those that recognise the importance of discerning worldviews, both our own and those held by others around us, the determining factor for really understanding a man or a movement is not so much wondering what an individual or an organisation does, but identifying the beliefs that drive their actions. Richard Weaver highlights this necessity in his book, *Ideas Have Consequences*:

Worldview is the most important thing that we can know about a man. Ideas have consequences. And those consequences affect everything in the practical realm as well as in the theoretical realm. Discernment of worldview is therefore the most necessary of all the tasks of wisdom.[6]

The fundamental assumptions about God and the world that all men hold are the fount of all human action. Worldview dictates your most basic commitments: religiously, relationally, philosophically, organisationally, politically, and culturally. It is on the basis of these commitments that we form our allegiances in all varieties of relationships: with our spouse, our friends, our businesses, our Church, our community, our political affiliation, and our culture. It plays

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6. Richard Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Phoenix Books, 1948), p. 3.

a significant role in how we raise our children. These allegiances take shape both formally and informally, by committing us to the mission and vision of institution or organisations and to the personal relationships we maintain.

It is because of this connection between worldview and our allegiances and commitments that the Bible cautions Christians repeatedly to be about the continual business of conforming themselves to the Christian worldview. The apostle Paul states it this way: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom. 12:2).

In this verse we see an indication of the battle of the heart and mind that is exhibited in the difference between the way the world thinks and how God wants us to think. Paul identifies the threat to Christians: being in the world, there is a temptation to accept the world's view of reality. Being born into Adam's sin meant that we were born into an alternative way of thinking that runs contrary to what God has revealed. In Christ, however, our thinking and actions must be different because we experience a change in our allegiances.

It is for this reason that the Apostle Paul repeatedly challenged the Christians in his letters to the Churches to consider and implement these new changes in thought and action. The language he used emphasised the decisive opposition of the new life in Christ to the old life of sin. Rather than being conformed to the image of the world, we are called to be conformed to the image of Christ. Our old ways of thinking and doing are something to be shed, and the transformation that we experience is a direct consequence of conforming ourselves to Christ, as we see in the following two verses:

But that is not the way you learned Christ!—assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph. 4:20–24)

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. (Col. 3:9–10)

The old life and worldview of sin must give way to the new life and worldview of Christ. The charge to put off the old and put on the new doesn't concern just our behaviour; Paul in both verses also identifies a renewal of the mind ("renewed in the spirit of your minds") and knowledge ("renewed in knowledge") with God as our reference point ("created after the likeness of God," "the image of its creator"). The idea of Christ in our lives has consequences in both how we view ourselves and the world around us, as well as how we conduct ourselves as Christians. The reality of Christ has necessary effects throughout the whole of our daily lives.

This dramatic change wrought by our encounter with Christ commits us to a certain way of thinking and doing. Because the world is governed by fixed laws established by an unchanging Creator, we do not have the ability or the prerogative to determine how we bring our lives into conformity with Christ. A major problem in the Christian community today is that we all have incorporated aspects of an unbelieving worldview into our thinking based on the mistaken pluralistic idea that we can simultaneously hold to the truths of the Christian faith and contradictory propositions from our old way of viewing the world and God.

Because of the opposing nature of these ideas, we must either allow our thoughts to give way to Christ, give way to the world, or live in a state of intellectual schizophrenia. The state of constant antithesis between the two worldviews established by God at the time of the Fall prohibits us from trying to reconcile what Christ will never allow to be joined. Ideas have consequences. The Christian faith cannot be broken up into a series of independent propositions that can be cast aside indiscriminatingly without doing serious damage to the whole of our faith. As Christians, what we believe about Christ, what we believe about ourselves and others, and what we believe about the world commits us to a worldview that is the outgrowth of our faith and addresses all areas of life. James Orr, a Scottish philosopher, identified this more than one hundred years ago:

He who with his whole heart believes in Jesus as the Son of God is thereby committed to much else besides. He is committed to a view of God, to a view of man, to a view of sin, to a view of Redemption, to a view of the purpose of God in creation and history, to a view of human destiny, found only in Christianity. This forms a "Weltanschauung," or "Christian view of the world," which stands in marked contrast with theories wrought out from a purely philosophical or scientific standpoint.[7]

As Christians we should not maintain the paradoxes brought on from believing what an unbelieving worldview tells us with what Scripture reveals to us, because the ideas of each system, the unbelieving worldview and the Christian worldview, are mutually exclusive at their respective roots. Ideas have consequences, and those consequences are not something that we can easily avoid.

Thus far we have focused on the consequences of ideas on the individual level. The worldview of an individual will play a significant role in how a person will live their lives. As Christians, the transformation of our lives doesn't occur in the absence of our ideas: our thinking must be conformed to Christ just as our behavior must be. As we see in the story of the Fall, the Christian worldview is set in opposition to the unbelieving worldview, and Christians are called to be conformed to the consequences of their beliefs.

In observing the effects of ideas in life, we also see that that the consequences that follow are not just lived out in the lives of individuals, but extend to cultures as well. As ideas circulate and gain more adherents, the consequences of those ideas begin to accumulate and extend further into a culture. What begins as a novel idea soon becomes a movement that works itself out in culture, as one Christian theologian has noted: "What is today a matter of academic speculation begins tomorrow to move armies and pull down empires."[8]

Ideas can never be isolated from their consequences, nor can ideas be isolated from the cultures that give birth to them. The twentieth century saw this in horrific detail: in

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7. James Orr, *The Christian View of God and the World* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1989), p. 4.
8. J. Gresham Machen, "Christianity and Civilization," in *Education, Christianity and the State*, John Robbins, ed. (Unicoi, TN: Trinity Foundation, 1994), p. 52.

the ideas of Lenin and Stalin expressed in the crossed sickle and hammer of the Soviet Union; in the rancid racial ideology of Hitler's Nazism; in the murderous regime of Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge, imposing its agrarian socialist worldview on the entire population of Cambodia; in the intertribal warfare that was unleashed in Rwanda; and even in America on a smaller scale in the suicidal apocalyptic idealism of David Koresh and Jim Jones. From murdering dozens and hundreds, some ideas spawned in the last century have eventually murdered thousands and millions.

Every Auschwitz and Cambodian killing field was rooted in a worldview that mirrored the promise of the serpent in the Garden—"You shall be as God." As C. S. Lewis recognises in both his fiction works (*That Hideous Strength*) and his non-fiction works (*The Abolition of Man*), when man begins to interpret reality through his own system of beliefs apart from what God has revealed, he must begin to remake the world—and man—according to that worldview. The inevitable clash between the created order of God and the false idealism of fallen man results in tragedy, because mankind and the whole of Creation cannot be ordered on any other basis than that given by the Creator. Man's ideas extend the hostility between the Creator and the creature to the Creation and the Creator's likeness—man. Modern philosophy has even developed an ideological justification for this process, termed "creative destruction." Apart from God and the biblical worldview, man's creativity can only be directed towards destroying himself and the world around him.

Now some may pause here and object that if what has been said above is true we would see nothing but slaughter, destruction and decay all around us. Even though the evening news gives us a daily glimpse of such all over the world, it is true that for those of us particularly in the West we do not experience suffering and tragedy on such a grand scale as seen in other parts of the world. Excepting the violence seen in most inner-cities, the Western way of life seems casual and comfortable, not filled with the hatred and destruction that I have already said is the inevitable consequence of unbelieving ideas. If what I've said above is true, why do we not see the results?

I think there are two answers to the question: first, we have grown adept in the West at concealing and explaining away the despair and destruction around us; and second, over the last thousand years we have attempted to forge a delicate, yet strained, alliance between the Christian worldview and the unbelieving worldview. Respecting the first point, we only need to look at the social trends in our culture to see the ever-growing despair worked out in the lives of individuals. We have become a culture of diagnosis and medication; we explain away the personal pain that results from our attempt to live our lives apart from God as diseases that can be treated by medicine or psychiatry. But the effect is still seen in the staggering levels of violent crime and other indicators of social strife, such as divorce rates. We live in a culture of broken lives and hostility, and we ignore it in the name of psychology, we drown it with drugs and dependency, or we move away from it with suburbanisation. Nonetheless, the personal and cultural effects of an unbelieving worldview are all around us to see if we have eyes and the courage to look.

The second response to the question above recognises that fallen man, created in the image of God, cannot help but discern God's created order and therefore he works to harmonise it with his fallen worldview. It is precisely because ideas have consequences that unbelieving worldviews must live with the inconsistency of adapting the created world to their fallen ideology—the created order is inescapable, and fallen man must account for it. Man detects the basic structure of the world, but attempts to move it in a contrary direction. Fallen humanity lives in a state of inconsistency when it comes to worldview; men use Christian truth or imitate it in order to get their systems to work. When that inevitably fails, they become bent on the destruction of Creation. They use the structure of Creation, but reject its end—God.

This is the explanation offered by the Apostle Paul when he wrote to the church at Rome:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honour him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonouring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. (Rom. 1:18–25)

Here Paul identifies the active unreality that naturally follows when people reject God's worldview and adopt their own. As he points out, unbelievers recognise the truth and are able to use it, but only for improper ends. We can never forget the fact that men express hostility to the truth, no matter how much they may try to use it. They take the structure of Creation, but pervert the direction. Using the sailing analogy mentioned at the beginning of this essay, unbelievers can learn how to sail, but they have no perspective or reference point. There are many destinations that they can sail to, but they will never arrive at the port where the boat was intended to take them. This explains how we can see cultural progress, like developments in science, but we shouldn't be surprised when they are turned towards horrible ends (e.g. weapons of mass destruction, cloning, abortion). Unbelievers can seize upon truth, but they must then suppress, deform and corrupt it. Their use of truth can only be perverted, because they "worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator."

It is precisely because ideas have consequences that mankind is bent towards death and destruction. Realising the structure of Creation and marrying it to their worldview, men merely delay the outworking of their beliefs, because they will be driven one way or another to consistency by further rejecting the truth, or accepting it. It may take years; it may take centuries; but the consequences of non-believers' ideas are an inevitability that can only be circumvented through redemption in Christ.

Thus far in this section we have only looked at the negative side to the consequences of ideas. We saw that both personally and culturally, ideas are translated into practice.

But ideas equally have consequences for the Christian world-view as well. We must admit that we all, even as Christians, live with inconsistency as we pursue the lifelong quest of putting off the old man and putting on the new. We make accommodations with our former way of life all of the time, becoming hypocrites; the unbelieving world sees our inconsistency and uses it to excuse their way of life. But the truth is that their condemnations apply only when we follow their example; when we follow Christ and conform our worldview to his image, they are left without excuse.

The impact of the lives of transformed and transforming Christians can have enormous cultural consequences as they live out a worldview that is in conformity with the truth about Creation and it's Creator. From the days of the first Christians, the consequences of their ideas were recognised as they began transforming the world around them, as we see in the Book of Acts when the Christians first arrived at the Greek city of Thessalonica: "And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities, shouting, 'These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also'" (Acts 17:6).

Contrary to this testimony, the Christian life and worldview is not about turning the world upside down, but right-side up. From the first followers of "The Way" turning the Roman world upside down to St. Patrick taking the gospel to the Irish, St. Boniface confronting the false worldviews of the tribes of Germania, King Clovis agreeing to and encouraging the conversion of the Franks and Gauls, even into the modern era with the Great Awakening in America and the Methodist revivals in Britain, the Christian worldview has been changing cultures. We may ask why that is. The simple answer is that the gospel carries a cultural message. As individuals are transformed by redemption in Christ they are empowered to live in a new way and in accordance with a new worldview. Those ideas have consequences and are worked out in the context of culture.

This explains why Christians have been so successful at cultural transformation over the past two millennia. We alone are able to operate in the world recognising the structure that the Creator has given and the end he has proscribed. But where do we get this worldview? From what God has revealed to us in his word.

In the Old Testament we see that God gives us prescriptions for living, beginning with the Ten Commandments and the giving of the Mosaic Law. As Israel was preparing to enter into the Promised Land after forty years of wandering, Jehovah spoke to them and pronounced the promises of the blessings and curses found in the book of Deuteronomy: if the Jews followed the structure and direction of the world given to them by God, conforming the world around them to biblical worldview, all manner of blessings would be poured out on them; but if they accommodated their lives and thoughts to the worldviews they would encounter in the land of Canaan, trying to use the structure of God's Creation, but using it in a different direction, curses would result, as God clearly indicated:

And if you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the Lord your God . . . But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you. (Dt. 28:1 2, 15)

The ideas and worldview given to us by God carry prescriptions that will bring us health and prosperity; rejecting those ideas carries consequences as well, which are not just seen on the individual level, but in a cultural context as well. Through the years, as Israel followed the ways of the nations around them, the prophets rose up and reminded them of the consequences of their ideas. If you want to live outside of God's structure and direction, judgement, pestilence and death will result; if you repent and conform your ways to his plans and purposes, God will restore and renew you and the land.

The Old Testament gives witness to the consequences of ideas, as we also see in the New Testament. The outworking of our worldviews is inescapable, even when we live inconsistently. We also see in the Bible that mankind's natural hostility to truth is driven by the spiritual alienation brought about by believing the false worldview offered to Adam in the Garden—"You shall be like God." Holding to that false worldview, in whatever form it might take, prohibits fallen men from fully capitalising on the order and structure they discern in Creation, because their worldview forces them to use it in a direction different from that intended by the Creator. As the tension from the inconsistency builds, man is forced into further rejecting the truth or embracing it in Christ. The frustration that results from rejecting the truth, while at the same time having to rely on it to keep their system working, initiates a tendency for men to destroy the world and the people around them.

For Christians as well, living inconsistently results in tensions in their lives. We either conform ourselves to the truth or suffer the consequences. This is the story we see of Israel in the Old Testament. This necessitates developing and living out the Christian worldview in all of our lives, leaving no stone unturned or area hidden from the scope of Christ's redemption. *C&S*

The Traditionalist

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Stretching our Words for Worship

by Doug Baker

Words are Crippled Mules

Words are crippled mules on which to pack our ideas. The best of words is able to carry a concept only as far as the place of loading; once a word and a meaning are united for a particular usage, the mule sits in place and cannot budge. Most common words have multiple meanings and shades of nuance within those meanings, and the intended and perceived meanings are suggested by context and usage as much as by the dictionary. These are good and living words, able to hold though not to carry an idea. Something more is needed to enable them to move. Being crippled mules, these good and living words by themselves merely serve to bind our thoughts to the small plot of earth on which they sit.

If my subject for a word is comfortable on that small plot of earth, then the word itself will be sufficient for communication. Consider if I were to say, "My shirt is red." Very good; I have ascribed the colour red to my shirt. These words, once context has helped us to determine which meanings to bind on the words "my," "shirt," and "red," sufficiently convey the prosaic meaning concerning the colour of my shirt.

But suppose that I wished then to stress the vibrancy and exuberance of this red as well as the emotional impact which it has on one who sees it. More than simple words would be needed to carry such a complex thought from one mind to another. The problem can be thought of as the difference between showing and telling: words alone can only tell, while we desire to let the hearer see or experience the red and its emotional impact.

To simply say "My shirt is very red" does little to take us nearer the thought which I wish to convey. Maybe I could say that my shirt is vibrantly and exuberantly red, and in this we begin to approach the truth, but still fall short. Vibrancy speaks of a living quality in the red, and exuberance imbues it with an emotional energy and joy, wonderfully descriptive, but the thought still lies flat in the spot on which it was bound to the mules. So far the hearer is able to understand and believe about the colour of my shirt, and even realise that the vibrancy of the shirt tends to produce exuberant feelings, but the experience of the feeling of the red and the emotional impact of this red are missing. The hearer may invent feelings, but they are not being conveyed by the words.

But while prose pretends that full and clear meaning can be carried by words, poetry recognises that words alone cannot fully convey any intended meaning: not to the mind, and especially not to the heart. Poetry recognises that words alone can never quite fulfil their role of communication and seeks ways to go beyond the mere meaning of the words. Consider the metaphor, "My shirt is a red coal flaring as the wind passes." Here, in a poetic line, all of the life and energy which were in the prosaic description of this red shirt are intensified; while the emotional conflict of desirable warmth and fearful burning play in our minds as the wind plays with the red of the shirt like a coal.

Now the words are no longer mere words, but have been combined to form a new force to accomplish something which words alone could never do: they are a line of poetry. Each word by itself is still a crippled mule, but the poetic line frees the individual meanings from the constraints of the words (considered as items found in a dictionary) and sets them flying like swallows in the wind. The words have not been deprived of their meanings; each word still has meaning according to its definition and context, but the thought contained (or rather set free) in the line as a whole is derived not so much from the individual words as from their interplay.

Beyond Prose Barriers

In his book *Nineteen Eighty-four* George Orwell argued that the government of the future would be able to control people's thoughts by controlling the words with which they think. He argued that if the repertoire of words at a person's disposal were limited, then so would be the thoughts which could be formed in that person's mind. He would have been right if people generally thought in purely prose thoughts, but this is not the case. Such thought control would be severely complicated by people's God-given (and therefore natural) tendency to speak and think in poetical forms.

I once spent a couple of months in Central America, and when I arrived I spoke not a word of Spanish. Within weeks I had gained a vocabulary of maybe two hundred words, which by themselves would not allow for very much conversation at all. But I found, as have all others in similar situations, that a very few words could be put to great use with a little imagination and a few hand gestures. I was soon able to hold interesting conversations about a wide variety of topics, from my work back home, to my travelling experi-

ences, to discussions of the civil war in Guatemala and the various attitudes of the locals to tourists. These conversations were possible only because the few words in my repertoire were able to be freed from the simple dictionary definitions and used in colourful and often laughable ways, but ways in which they were more meaningful and useful to my purpose.

Poetry	Prose
This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. (Gen. 2:23)	This is my relative.
As far as the east is from the west, So far has he removed our transgressions from us. (Ps. 103:12)	God forgives us.
Chasing after wind (Eccl. 1:14)	Futility.
How often I have desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings. (Mt. 23:37)	I wanted you.

We can easily see that while the prose version *means* the same as the poetic, it by no means carries the same emotional weight. The biblical and poetic versions stretch the words to encompass the emotional as well as the factual side of the truth. Truly, when God tells me that he has forgiven me, I am grateful; but when he says that he has removed my sins as far as the east is from the west and cast them into the depths of the sea, then my heart is made to feel the lightness of release from such a burden and I am made free to worship in spirit as well as in truth. If God had spoken only in prose, the Bible might have been shorter; but would it engender the joy of a relationship with Christ or only a knowledge of facts, laws, and principles?

And consider one of Jesus' most beloved names for himself: the good shepherd. This title cannot be expressed without some recourse to the poetic expression of metaphor. There simply is no purely prosaic way that Jesus could have described himself which would have approximated the description contained it that phrase.

In our worship this fundamental difference between poetry and prose is vital. If we lose sight of the fact that nothing we say in worship comes close to the reality of the only God, then we risk worshiping a god who is only as big as our words. He truly is, "the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God" (1 Tim. 1:17); but even this description does not do justice to his nature. If it did, then God could not have said,

> As the heavens are higher than the earth,
> so are my ways higher than your ways
> and my thoughts than your thoughts (Is. 55:9).

It may be difficult for us to understand, but it is essential both to poetry and to worship to note that although we speak accurately, we speak incompletely. Our knowledge is true but partial. If I tell you that my wife has a lovely contrast between her pale skin and dark eyes and hair, then what I have told you is accurate concerning my wife, but it is by no

And God made us all with not only the ability but also the inclination to share thoughts which go beyond our simple prose linguistic barriers, whether we are speaking our native tongues or foreign ones.

Consider the following examples from Scripture of poetic language, and their prose translations:

means sufficient to understand who she is or what my relationship is with her. This is just a tiny caricature of the enormous chasm which separates our grandest words from the truth concerning God; and poetry is the language which recognises and seeks to bridge that chasm.

Uniting Emotion to Words

Poetry stretches words both in order to unite emotional content with the factual and in order to embrace concepts which are beyond our ability to describe in words. In the next issue we will look at how poetry stretches our minds to embrace large ideas. For now we are limiting ourselves to the stretching of words, that is, the liberating of ideas from the crippled mules to which they are bound. In regard to uniting emotion to the words, consider the following lines from John Dryden's "A Song for Saint Cecilia's Day":

> The trumpet's loud clangor
>   Excites us to arms
> With shrill notes of anger
>   And mortal alarms.
> The double, double, double beat
>   Of the thundering drum
>   Cries, "Hark! the foes come;
> Charge, charge, 'tis to late to retreat!"

One only has to read this aloud a couple of times to feel how Dryden has used the rhythms in his lines to create the sense of "mortal alarms" in us of which the words by themselves would only speak.

This is a good place to underscore the importance of reading the poetic portions of this article aloud. Indeed, all poetry is enhanced by being read aloud, and some is not even poetic until it is. Reread the above quote from Dryden again, but this time silently. If you can hush the voice inside your head and not hear the words as you read, but simply read as if it were a textbook, you will clearly see how differently the passage reads. Many of us cannot read without hearing that

internal voice reading along, but by silencing your outward voice you will still see some of the difference. Now read it aloud again and you will find that the silent version may speak of excitement, anger and mortal alarms, but the spoken version embodies and delivers those emotions to us directly. In these two readings the poetic nature becomes clear. A prose reading of the passage fails to deliver the emotional portion of the meaning of the lines. The excitement does not reside in the words themselves but comes to life in their interactions with each other in what becomes the poetic line.

Adding Meaning to Words

Francis Thompson, a homeless, starving, freezing drug addict sleeping on a bench by the Thames river in London during the late 1800s, gives us a glimpse of the heavenly realm which is always at hand. Only the dimness of our eyes makes it distant. In reading his poem "In No Strange Land," consider whether a prose explanation of the nearness of God could ever match the immediacy of God in these lines:

> O world invisible, we view thee,
> O world intangible, we touch thee,
> O world unknowable, we know thee,
> Inapprehensible, we clutch thee!
>
> Does the fish soar to find the ocean,
> The eagle plunge to find the air—
> That we ask of the stars in motion
> If they have rumor of thee there?
>
> Not where the wheeling systems darken,
> And our benumbed conceiving soars!—
> The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
> Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.
>
> The angels keep their ancient places;—
> Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
> 'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,
> That miss the many-splendored thing.
>
> But (when so sad thou canst not sadder)
> Cry—and upon thy so sore loss
> Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
> Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross.
>
> Yea, in the night, my Soul, my daughter,
> Cry—clinging Heaven by the hems;
> And lo, Christ walking on the water
> Not of Gennesareth, but Thames!

Try to write in prose, without recourse to all of the poetic devices, an account of the nearness of the ever present angelic host and of their king, Christ, and see whether it can be done. The longer you try, the more you will see that you cannot express the immediacy of Christ with simple words; you can declare it or define it but never express it.

But see with what clarity Christ, the same Christ who walked to Peter and his friends on the waves of Gennesareth, is walking across the Thames to the wave-tossed and drowning Thompson. If even in a small degree we can see Christ coming through Thompson's eyes then his poem has succeeded.

The concepts above, written in prose, would have explained to us Thompson's experience and the underlying theological understanding accompanying it. But in the poem we are not left looking on as bystanders. The words of the poem do not lose their meanings, but rather gain enhanced meaning in an almost magical way. While ordinary words hold out a meaning, as if to be seen, the words in this poem carry their meaning to us, or maybe carry us along with them. They create an involvement of ourselves with the sense of the poem which is made possible only by its being poetic. In a strange way one could say that the words are stretched so as to be able to carry their own meanings.

Jesus' assurance to us that "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Mt. 28:20), is made real to us through our experience of becoming involved in Thompson's experience.

Implicit Value Judgements

Poetry is also able to make value judgments without saying so. Consider the following lines from the end of T. S. Eliot's "Journey of the Magi"; but first let me set the scene. One of the magi has been telling of their trip to Bethlehem, and now having returned to his home his soul is uneasy and he questions what they had traveled to find:

> All this was a long time ago, I remember,
> And I would do it again, but set down
> This set down
> This: were we led all that way for
> Birth or Death? there was a Birth, certainly,
> We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
> But had thought they were different; this Birth was
> Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
> We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
> But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
> With an alien people clutching their gods.
> I should be glad of another death.

This is one of my favorite passages in all of poetry and I couldn't bring myself to shorten it any more than I did. But I want to focus on the two words which tell much more than the words could possibly mean in prose. Read the passage aloud a couple of times to get the feel of it and the tone of the speaker. Then, only after a couple of readings, concentrate on the words "these Kingdoms." Listen to their music as you read. You will find that your voice automatically follows the pattern of descending tones, with "these" being the highest pitch and the next two falling rapidly to a low pitch on the end of the word "Kingdoms." That rapid descent combined with the short choppy feel of the three syllables in the midst of the soft flowing lines before and after them gives the distinct sense of a curse, as if he spit the words out with contempt. We are made to feel with him the worthlessness of the kingdom which once had been the source of his pride and joy but the very name of which now feels like a curse in his mouth. And that sense of the old life being a curse and of the impossibility of returning to it as a citizen will resonate in the hearts of all who have been guests at the manger and found that birth to be our own death. No amount of telling about the inexpressible worthlessness of our old kingdoms could carry the weight of the curse hidden under those two words: these Kingdoms.

Let me pause to make a point that is not stressed often enough: I doubt that Eliot thought about the *words* "these Kingdoms" in quite the way that I have described them, and

I hope that you will not read poetry trying to find and dissect every little implement in the hands of the poet. For ordinary purposes, the reader of the preceding poem will not be helped by thinking, "What could be the significance of these two words with their descending tones and choppy sounds?" In the present article we are looking at some of the inner workings of poetry for the sake of understanding why poetry is valuable in relation to Christian life and experience. When one is reading poetry, one should read for enjoyment and let the little details have their effect without accosting and interrogating them. The phrase "these Kingdoms" would still have had its effect (maybe more strongly) if we had never ripped it out of the poem, so long as the poem were read aloud. Bear in mind that our present task requires looking at poems in unusual ways and does not represent the way that a poem should normally be enjoyed.

Stretching Words in Worship

Confessional creeds, while essential to faithful Christian worship, still can lead us to err terribly if we believe that they depict fully or clearly the God who really is God. God is more and greater and wiser than our words can express. He is more everlasting than the word "everlasting" can convey. He is more jealous than the word "jealous" even hints at. God is no genie who will fit into the little bottle of our creeds and words.

We cannot say that by using poetry we will suddenly be able to sum up all that God is and all that he does. Rather, poetry respects the impossibility of expressing all that God is.

This awareness is essential to our worship in two main ways. First, poetry seeks out ways to express all that we experience in God, to express things which will not fit into prose. This we have looked at above.

Secondly, when one encounters poetry one is intuitively aware that this or that poem is not the final word on the subject. The reader senses without thinking about it that the poem is striving to take in a subject too large for words, that devices are at work to overcome this obstacle, and that success will be only partial. Therefore, the reader or hearer of poetry is protected from the twin errors of presumption and complacency into which those who study strictly prose manifestos are prone.

This awareness that the stretching of words can be only partially successful begins the *exciting process of poetry's stretching of our minds, which is the theme of the article in the next issue.* C&S

Paul and His Associates:

How "New Testament Missionaries" Worked Together[1]

by Thomas Schirrmacher

Learning from Paul

Wolf-Hennig Ollrog once aptly remarked that numerous studies have been done on Paul's opponents, but few on his friends and colleagues.[2] A strange situation, since not only Acts, but also the Pauline epistles provide us with many details of the apostle's closest circle of friends and associates; the pastoral epistles concentrate on this subject.

In our present Bible study, we cannot discuss systematically all the details on Paul's relationships with his friends and the Churches, as worthwhile as that effort would be. Nor can we set up an infallible catalogue of rules for mission boards and missionaries to carry in their pockets. Instead, we can only investigate a few selected New Testament situations which portray the triangle of apostle/associates/Church, in order to ascertain what they tell us about Paul and his relationships with his colleagues. Our question will be, "What wisdom can we gain for our own dealings with each other?"

Because human relationships are much too varied, changeable and complicated to be simplified to one common denominator, Scripture does not regulate them with absolute laws, but recommends a wise[3] response gained through experience, examples and careful analysis of the situation. Ecclesiastes 10:8 ("He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him") is wise advise on relationships between people, but neither a law nor automatic. The Old Testament book of Proverbs is the book to read on personal relationships, although it dispenses with laws and regulation. In fact, some proverbs even seem to contradict each other.

A classical example for this is Pr. 26:4: "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit." Should we give the fool an answer or not? There are two sides to the question, and our response depends on the situation—the Bible gives us no absolute law in this case. The wise man must decide in the concrete situation, what sort of response will bring the best result.

We find a further example of a wisdom rule that is to be applied only in a concrete situation in two texts that use the fact that people get tired of even honey to illustrate a point. Proverbs 25:16–17 tells us: "Hast thou found honey? Eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it. Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be weary of thee, and *so* hate thee." Proverbs 25:27, however, reminds us that, "*It is* not good to eat much honey: so *for men* to search their own glory *is not* glory." The reference to honey gives us a general principle that can help us to avoid annoyance on both sides. The teacher of wisdom simply has no absolute rule for the amount of contact or praise we owe our friends. Such decisions require experience, as well as knowledge of the individual friend; to visit or to praise a good friend too often is not a sin, but it is unwise.

Since the book of Proverbs is the epitome of wise teaching, I should like to apply an appropriate proverb to the various aspects of Paul's missionary activity.

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1. The essay is the text of a lecture for the 1997 annual meeting of the Arbeitskreis für evangelikale Missiologie e.V. (Association of German Evangelical Missiologists—German Evangelical Alliance).

2. Wolf-Hennig Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter: Untersuchungen zu Theorie und Praxis der paulinischen Mission*, Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten Testament 50 (Neukirchen, Germany: Neukirchener Verlag, 1979), p. 3. Beginning with the historical data in the New Testament on Paul's associates, and a word study on the term *synergos*, Ollrog divides Paul's colleagues into three groups: the apostle's closest colleagues, who accompany him at all times; the independent associates, who aid him in particular "chance" situations; and representatives of the Churches, sent by their Churches in order to participate in the missionary effort. This last group made a close relationship between Church, missionaries and mission field. Ollrog's book is unfortunately incomplete, for he assumes that 2 Thess., Eph., Col., and the pastoral epistles are non-Pauline (p. 1) and thus ignores a large amount of material. Many questions that he leaves unresolved could be answered if such rigorous criticism would give up restricting the amount of authentic material. Acts is also treated in this fashion: the book is considered Lucan, but is not taken seriously—the author is convinced that Luke has falsified his data.

3. Thomas Schirrmacher, *Ethik* (Neuhausen, Germany: Hänssler

Verlag, 1994) Vol. 1, pp. 492–503. "Besides the absolutely valid, directly applicable laws, we find 'wisdom,' whose decisions depend on the situation and the knowledge of the persons involved. Wisdom can only be expressed in proverbs, parables, examples and illustrations, and includes experiences that are only true under certain conditions" (see Pr. 15:2; 22:6), p. 492f.

Scene 1: Paul gives Titus precedence
(Paul, Titus, the Church in Corinth)

"Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counselors they are established." (Pr. 15:22 [4])

Paul's relationship with the Church he had founded in Corinth was deteriorating[5] because part of the Church took a completely new line which was leading to catastrophic results. Some Church members were participating in idol worship, visiting prostitutes, neglecting their marriages and ignoring starving members at Communion: and this all in God's name.[6] Yet the Church leadership refused to discipline such behavior, which is a mockery of the very idea of the Christian life. In response Paul wrote sharper words than in any other of his letters, except Galatians. When neither his very explicit letters (one which has been lost: 1 Cor. 5:9–11 and 1 Corinthians) nor his visits brought any improvement, the apostle was in despair, full of fear and tears (2 Cor. 2:4) and saw no purpose in a further visit (2 Cor. 2:1). What did Paul do, as the apostle and the watchman of the gospel? Excommunicate the Church? Assume that the Corinthians had sealed their own fate by rejecting him? Give up?

No, in the midst of his despair and pain, he showed his true greatness: completely incapable of continuing without assistance, instead of insisting on solving the problem himself, he called on Titus, probably from Crete.[7] "For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without *were* fightings, within *were* fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus" (2 Cor. 7:5–6). This colleague, whose arrival so comforted Paul, was now sent to Corinth with a new letter, the so-called "Letter of tears" (after 2 Cor. 2:4), written between 1 and 2 Corinthians. Paul was ecstatic when Titus was able to succeed where Paul had failed (2 Cor. 2:5–13; 7:5–16).

The apostle had apparently counted on the possibility that another person with a different personality, different gifts and a different relationship with the Church might be better able to achieve the necessary goals. Leaving the precedence and the success to his pupil, he expected that the disturbed relationship between himself and the Corinthians was hindering reconciliation and that a neutral mediator could transform the situation. The possible loss of face was not so important to him, for he himself relates his own despair, tears and incapability. Rectifying the situation was more important to him than salvaging his own reputation. He was concerned about the others, not about himself. Paul himself describes how weak and depressed, unable to work in spite of open doors, he remained until Titus returned from Corinth, "Furthermore, when I came to Troas to *preach* Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia" (2 Cor. 2:12–13).

What can we learn from this episode?

(1) Paul could work in a team. He didn't work well alone; the presence of his colleagues comforted and encouraged him. Luke tells us that he arrived in Corinth alone, but begged his associates to come as soon as possible (Acts 17:15). Not until they had arrived did he begin his true missionary activity. "And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews *that* Jesus *was* Christ" (Acts 18:5).

Even after Paul's vision of the call to Macedonia (Acts 16:9: "And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us"), he consulted with the others before making a decision. Not until the group confirmed the idea did he leave (Acts 16:10). And that after a vision!

(2) Paul did not see himself as the unapproachable, superior missionary who solved all problems objectively. Instead of creating his own monument to himself, he spoke openly of his own feelings, such as fear or grief, or of his own personal obstacles to his work, and of his lack of candour in preaching the gospel, which leads him to beg the Churches to pray for him, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak" (Eph. 6:18; see also Col. 4:3; 2 Thess. 3:1; Acts 28:31).

Instead of boasting of his abilities, his endurance or his successes, he confessed to the Corinthians, "If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities" (2 Cor. 11:30; see also 12:5–9).

(3) For Paul, problems were not only deep spiritual or theological issues, but equally important issues of personal relationships, which concerned the whole person, including his feelings. No wonder that he so often speaks of his tears (2 Cor. 2:4, Phil. 3:18; Acts 20:19, 31; 2 Tim. 1:4–5). It is also remarkable that the most significant decisions were made directly on the missionary field, not by a far-distant missionary board. Missionaries were directing missionaries. Both principles were adhered to in the first centuries, but then forgotten. Not until the early faith missions such as the China-Inland Mission (OMF) and the WEC of the last century were these principles rediscovered. Paul did interview new associates' home Churches about the candidate's record (Acts 16:1–3), and expected them to support their missionaries through prayer, money and ordination, but the essential decisions were made where the problems arose. The Churches were then informed, but did not interfere.

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4. See also Pr. 11:4; 20:18; 24:6.
5. Heinz Warnecke, Thomas Schirrmacher, "Plädoyer für die historische Glaubwürdigkeit der Apstelgeschichte und der Pastoralbriefe," in *War Paulus wirklich auf Malta?* (Neuhausen, Germany: Hänssler Verlag, 1992), pp. 181–235.
6. Thomas Schirrmacher, *Paulus im Kampf gegen den Schleier: Eine alternative Sichte von 1 Kor 11:2–16*, Biblia et symbiotica 4 (Bonn, Germany: Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft, 1993), pp. 111–152.
7. Heinz Warnecke, Thomas Schirrmacher, *War Paulus wirklich auf Malta?*

Scene 2: Admonition for an apostle
(Paul and the Church in Rome)

"He that hateth reproof is brutish . . . but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise." (Pr. 12:1, 15)

After completing the collection of offerings for the Church in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:26–28), Paul intended to travel from

Corinth[8] by way of Jerusalem and Rome to Spain (Rom. 15:27–31), using Rome as his base—or home Church, we might say—instead of Antioch. In order to account for his missionary activity and to share his aims with the Roman Christians, around 57 A.D.[9] he wrote his great Epistle to the Romans, the Bible's most systematic exposition of the gospel and its most detailed justification of world missions.[10]

Even though he did not know the Roman Church personally, he prayed for them continually (Rom. 1:9–10) and longed to meet them (Rom 1:10, 13; 15:22–23). His personal greetings to several associates and acquaintances living in Rome (Rom. 16:3–15) show the extent of his personal relationships. He also greets the house Church of his associates, Aquila and Priscilla (Rom. 16:4, possibly other cell groups in 16:10–11).

Paul's descriptions of some of these friends is remarkable. Let us examine a few examples. Phoebe, the deaconess of the Cenchrean congregation,[11] is to be supported in every way: "for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also." (Rom. 16:1). Referring to Priscilla and Aquila, he writes, "Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the Churches of the Gentiles" (Rom. 16:3–4). He greets three men as "beloved" (Rom. 16:5, 8, 9), Maria, "who bestowed much labour on us" (Rom. 16:6), Andronicus and Junia,[12] who had been imprisoned with Paul and "are of note among the apostles" (Rom. 16:7), Urbanus, "our fellow-worker" (Rom. 16:9) and "the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord" (Rom. 16:12) and "Apelles, approved in Christ" (Rom. 16:10).

What does Paul want to achieve through this letter? What is he intending to do in Rome? At the beginning of the letter he writes: "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that

is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me" (Rom. 1:11f.). Paul wants to have fellowship with the believers in Rome, so that both he and they could share spiritual gifts. The word "comforted" in v. 12 could also mean "admonished," and is sometimes translated in this way. Some interpreters couldn't imagine that Paul not only had something to say to the Romans but also expected some comfort and admonition from them. Paul was convinced that the Christians in Rome were "Full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another" (Rom. 15:14). Why should he exclude himself from their exhortations?

In spite of his apostolic authority, Paul always shows himself to be dependent on the aid and prayers of other Christians. We can learn the following principles—principles already familiar to us from the situation in Corinth—from him: (1) Admonition and comfort were not one way streets in his ministry. He created and looked forward to conditions in which he could receive these spiritual ministries from others. (2) He did not consider himself alone to be the personal counsellor, leader, advisor and exhorter of his associates. He always mentioned their labour very explicitly. Praising God and praising others were no contradiction for him; rather he considered them two sides of one coin. Gratitude for God's help and gratitude for others' assistance go together, and should both be expressed openly, not just in "the inner room."

Even when Paul had to admonish others—as a matter of fact, particularly then—he emphasised all they had done for him, for the Church and for God. An explicit example is in Phil. 4:2–3, "I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel." He even "boasted" of the Corinthian Church (1 Cor. 15:31; 2 Cor. 1:14; 7:4; 9:2–3), even to Titus, before sending him to remedy the chaos in the Church (2 Cor. 7:13.16). Paul admonished and criticised with uncompromising sharpness, but never without expressing commendation and gratitude, or without recognising the positive elements.

Scene 3: Paul refuses to mount a spiritual pedestal (Paul, Apollos and the Corinthian Church)

"Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom" (Pr. 13:10).

Let us return to the tense relationship between Paul and the Corinthians. One problem was the spiritual cliques, which each appealed to different spiritual leaders. Paul describes the situation as following: "Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ" (1 Cor. 1:12).

C. S. Lewis writes appropriately: "The devil . . . always sends errors into the world in pairs—pairs of opposites. And he always encourages us to spend a lot of time thinking which is the worse."[13] The Corinthians were divided on almost everything, but Paul almost never sided with any one position.[14] He generally criticised both opinions, for neither

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8. Paul is living in the home of Gaius (Rom. 16:23), a Corinthian (1 Cor. 1:14), and recommends Phoebe of Cenchrea, Corinth's port (Rom 16:1). She may have delivered the letter to Rome, since she is the first person mentioned in Paul's list of greetings in Rom. 16, and since Paul recommends that the Church receive her warmly. It thus seems reasonable to assume that Paul dictated the epistle to Tertius, his secretary (Rom. 16:22) in Corinth or Cenchrea, and then gave it to Phoebe to deliver. Adolf Schlatter points out the numerous parallels between Romans and the Epistles to the Corinthians, and deduces that the Epistle to the Romans must have been written against the background of the conflict with the Corinthian Church. See Adolf Schlatter, *Gottes Gerechtigkeit: Ein Kommentar zum Römerbrief* (Stuttgart: Germany: Calwer Verlag, 1975) pp. 9–16.

9. Paul does not decide to visit Macedonia and Achaia, or to go from Jerusalem to Rome until Acts 19:21. In Acts 20:2, he travels through Macedonia and Achaia, probably collecting offerings for the believers in Jerusalem, which agrees with Rom. 15:26. He probably wrote the letter prior to his journey to Jerusalem in the three months in Greece which he mentions in Acts 20:3. In this case, the letter would have been composed around 57 A.D.

10. See Thomas Schirrmacher, "Romans as a Charter of World Missions: A Lesson in the Relation of Systematic Theology and Missiology," *An International Journal of Frontier Missions*, 10:4 (Oct. 1993), pp. 159–162, or in *Reflection: An International Reformed Review of Missiology*, 4 (1993/94) 1/2 (Sept.–Nov), pp. 34–39: in *Chalcedon Report* No. 342 (Jan. 1994), pp. 43–47. For a more detailed discussion see Thomas Schirrmacher, *Der Römerbrief* (Nehuhausen, Germany: Hänssler Verlag, 1994), 2 Vols, a commentary on Romans from the viewpoint of missiology and dogmatics.

11. Thomas Schirrmacher, *Der Römerbrief*, pp. 311–312.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 312, on the question of whether Junia was a man or a woman.

13. C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1952), p. 160.

14. Thomas Schirrmacher,14 *Paulus im Kampf gegen den Schleier*, pp.

agreed with God's word. The issue of spiritual leadership was no exception. Some honoured Paul so much that he asked, "Was Paul crucified for you?" (1 Cor. 1:13). To those who denied him any authority whatever, he insisted on his apostolic calling. The fact that the Lord had entrusted him, a mere servant of God, with great truths, was endangered by those who made him the center of attention, as well as by those who—perhaps in reaction to the first—scorned both the apostle and the revelation he preached.

Paul had to teach the Corinthians that not he, but his divine commission and the revelation in divine Scripture, had priority. "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and *to* Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think *of men* above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another." (1 Cor. 4:6). To reject an unbiblical viewpoint does not guarantee that one is without error. And one may still be just as arrogant as one's opponents. In Paul's opinion, the Corinthian problem was that everyone based their opinions on special revelations and doctrines that went beyond scriptural revelation, and then cited some apostle, teacher or even Christ, to prove their position, playing God's ministers off against each other, although all taught the same truths, even though with differing gifts and assignments.

The most painful part of these party politics was that they pitted Apollos, an associate introduced to the Corinthian Church by Paul himself, against Paul. As we have seen, Paul pin-pointed the problem not as differences in personalities or gifts, but in exaggerations and misinterpretation of Scripture. Paul refused to participate in this sort of rivalry: he declined any discussion of importance, significance or achievement. "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3:5–11; see chapters 3 and 4).

In a situation in which Church members attempted to alienate Paul and Apollos, construing differing theologies on the basis of their differing personalities and gifts (a tactic copied much too often), Paul sought reconciliation, not by pointing to himself or insisting on unity, but by pointing to the one foundation, Jesus Christ, as the basis on which varieties of styles, personalities, gifts and commissions could develop.

And Apollos? Although we know nothing of his reaction, we can imagine that he was relieved and encouraged by Paul's refusal to sanction the divisions and the apostle's endeavor to find common ground. Rather than destroying his colleague, Paul strengthened his friend's position in the complicated situation in Corinth.

Scene 4: Training by example

"Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning" (Pr. 9:9).

Let us return to the tense and complicated situation in Corinth again. In 1 Cor. 4:4–16, Paul compares his relationship to the Church with the relationship of a father to his children. He calls them "his beloved children," and himself their father. Because he is their father, he must reprimand them sharply. "I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you" (v. 14). Note that Paul reserves the term "father" for himself; other believers who provide for the Corinthian Church are only "instructors." In fact, Paul sees a great difference between himself and the other "instructors." The tutor or instructor (Gr. *paidagogos*; the source of our word "pedagogy") was only a slave responsible for academic training. Paul is saying, "Even if you had ten thousand excellent tutors teaching you all sorts of good and right things, that would not make me any less your father!" Since a father teaches his child not only ideas but also life, Paul exhorts the Corinthians to imitate him (v. 16). Parents not only examine their children's ideas but also their actions; they are not only available in routine affairs, but also in danger and crises.

Lawrence Richards, defining the difference between modern education methods and biblical education, suggested that modern methods aim at teaching a student what his teacher knows; Christian education aims at teaching the pupil to live as his teacher lives.[15]

Paul's associates were mostly his own converts or pupils trained from the very beginning (except for Timothy: Acts 16:1–3; Aquila and Priscilla: Acts 18:1, 18, 26, Rom. 16:3; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim 4:19). Others were "apostles of the churches" (2 Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25), missionaries with responsibility for several Churches, sent to assist Paul by the congregations. Besides these associates, Paul also concentrated on discipling the elders of the new Churches, generally the first converts in the area. He ordained them surprisingly early (Acts 14:6-7, 22–23) and left soon after they had taken over the responsibility. His longest stay in one area was three and a half years (with frequent interruptions) in Ephesus (Acts 18:23–19:40).

Paul was merely imitating Jesus' training methods. Mark tells us, "And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils." (3:14–15). Three aspects in Jesus' selection are significant.

(a) *Jesus concentrated on a small group of disciples,* "that they should be with him . . ." Just as a father can only care for a small number of children properly, so Jesus chose to share his life and teaching with a small group of disciples. No one can really live so intensively with more than a few people. We can see Jesus' deliberate limitation in the concentric circles of his friends; the smaller groups enjoyed closer fellowship with him. He even had one favourite disciple, John (John 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20; see also 19:27).

Paul also had concentric circles of friends, with Timothy

114–122. See also Karl Wieseler, *Zur Gesichte der Neutestamentlichen Schriften und des Christentum* (Leipzig, Germany: J. C. Hinrich'sche Buchhandlung, 1880) pp. 1–53 on the Corinthian parties.

15. Lawrence O. Richards, *A Theology of Christian Education* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), p. 30. See also Lawrence Richards, *A Theology of Church Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979); Lawrence Richards, *A Theology of Personal Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981).

at the centre. "For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel" (Phil. 2:20). As the apostle's closest associate, Timothy collaborated on five of the epistles (Phil., Col., 1 and 2 Thess. and Philemon[16]) and was the recipient of two more. Paul addressed him as " Timothy, *my* own son in the faith" (1 Tim. 1:2; 1:18) and "*my* dearly beloved son" (2 Tim. 1:2).

(*b*) *Jesus chose the disciples* "that he might send them forth to preach." The goal of such intensive fellowship with the Lord and their dependence on him was future ministry. Jesus never intended that the Twelve remain "tied to his apron strings." They were to go into the world and continue his work after he had returned to heaven. His goal was the Great Commission: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world" (Mt. 28:19–20).[17] The long training programme in missions, in which the disciples lived with the proto-type of the missionary—Jesus himself— was not erratic, but carefully planned, according to the following strategy: (1) Jesus first preached by himself, then (2) preached while his disciples observed. Finally, (3) he let the disciples preach while he observed, and then (4) He sent them out on their own (but remained by them in spirit as the risen Lord. See Mt. 28:20).

Paul trained his associates in the same way. As father and example, he worked towards the future independent ministry of his Churches and his colleagues.

(*c*) *Jesus' comprehensive training programme included life and doctrine, theory and practice, individual and group counseling, inner and outer growth, activity and rest, profession and private life. Doctrine corresponded to counselling and practice.*

Paul imitated Jesus in this aspect as well, as we see in 1 Thess., "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy," (not just Paul) not only preached the gospel "in word only," but were also willing to share their lives with the believers (1 Thess. 1:1, 5; 2:8). Of course they preached with words and doctrine; no one could otherwise have understood what their example meant. The epistles to the Thessalonians demonstrate that Paul had taught both Silas and Timothy by his example, and that the Thessalonians themselves became examples for others.

Paul includes Silas and Timothy in 1 Thess. 1:6: "and ye became followers of us, and of the Lord." Many object to this statement. How can Paul compare himself and his associates with Jesus? The Bible, however, often uses human role models to point to God's example. Isn't that realistic? A child derives his image of God from the example of his parents, and spiritual children derive their image of God from the example of their spiritual parents. Every father is a role model, whether he wants to be or not; he only has the choice between being a good example or a bad one. All who carry responsibility in the Church, every politician, is a role model, whether good or bad.

But did only Jesus and Paul restrict their training programs to such small groups? 2 Tim. 2:2 contradicts this idea:

"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." Paul gives a rule for discipling. The Lord's Church grows by the personal supervision of small groups by spiritually mature believers, not by the efforts of one leader to take care of dozens, hundreds, or nowadays, thousands. True spiritual growth and fruitful training occurs when spiritually mature Christians concentrate on small groups of spiritual children, sharing both life and doctrine until the young believers have become mature enough to become independent. This is the best way to fulfill the Great Commandment to make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things that Christ had commanded (Mt. 28:18–20).

What principles can we learn from Paul?

1. Paul loved his associates and was available to them, comprehensively. His love did not lead him to treat them like eternal children, but to direct them to spiritual maturity and independence.

2. Paul invested more in the relationships of the missionaries to each other and in their spiritual maturity than in technical details or strategic issues (although he was quite aware of this sort of problem as well).

3. Paul prayed constantly and intensively for his colleagues and his Churches, and expected them to do the same.

4. Paul encouraged the development of his associates' gifts. He knew that God had created different sorts of personalities and expected him to use them accordingly. *C&S*

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16. See the first verse of the book.
17. Robert E. Coleman, *Des Meisters Plan der Evangelisation* (Neuhasuen, Germany: Hänssler, 1983).

Book Reviews

NEW AGE AND WESTERN CULTURE:
ESOTERICISM IN THE MIRROR OF
SECULAR THOUGHT
by Wouter J. Hanegraaff

Leiden, The Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 580 pages
including indexes, $51.75 US, ISBN 90-04-10696-0

Reviewed by Bruce Dayman

". . . there is nothing new under the sun." (Ecc. 1:8b)

Wouter J. Hanegraaff is a Research Fellow at the Department for the Study of Religions at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. He is co-editor of *Gnosis and Hermeticism: From Antiquity to Modern Times* and has edited or co-edited three other books in the field as well as many articles. In this book he presents the first systematic analysis of the structure and beliefs of the New Age movement, and the historical emergence of the "New Age" as a secularised version of Western esoteric traditions. The writer has a very readable style that helps to orient readers to the bewildering smorgasbord of the New Age Movement.

This book is a critical study of New Age thinking. Its only concern is with the *ideas* that make up the movement as a whole. The book is neither a definitive or complete view of the New Age movement. The author states that it is his purpose to characterise and delineate the movement on the basis of an analysis and interpretation of its implicit structure of beliefs (p. 1). The term "New Age movement" refers to that self-conscious cultic milieu which emerged in the second half of the 1970s and came to full development in the 1980s and is with us still.

The book is considered to be groundbreaking because of its integrative role in combining the basic ideas of the movement into a focused and comprehensive overview. The work the author has done by revealing the Renaissance sources of previous esoteric traditions is telling. The secularisation of these sources during the nineteenth century became the seedbed of the New Age movement. This book, as a result, is considered to be the standard work in the field.

The methodology employed is historical/contextual. This means that the history of (religious) ideas is the vantagepoint used to evaluate New Age Movement ideologies. The author uses written sources only, though he admits being involved in many New Age Movement activities and discussions for the purpose of leaving no stone overturned.

This study also claims to be empirical, holding "that it is impossible to answer the question of ultimate religious or metaphysical truth on scientific grounds, and that it cannot therefore be the business of the researcher to adjudicate on the validity of the believer's truth." One has to wonder if this is naïve given that all researchers have presuppositions that affect their study. Nevertheless, the author states that it is his wish to do full justice to the integrity of the believer's world-view.

In order to be as objective as possible, Hanegraaff distinguishes between *emic* and *etic*. The linguistic anthropologist Kenneth Pike (1954) coined the new words "emic" and "etic," which were derived from an analogy with the terms "phonemic" and "phonetic." He suggests that there are two perspectives that can be employed in the study of a society's cultural system, just as there are two perspectives that can be used in the study of a language's sound system. In both cases, it is possible to take the point of view of either the insider or the outsider. Hanegraaff's concern is the emic, or simply the believer's point of view. The etic is the scholarly investigation of language, distinctions, theories, and interpretive models considered valid on their own terms. The final results of scholarly research are to be portrayed in etic language so that emic material may recognise its coherence and consistency. So an exhaustive theological discussion of New Age beliefs is not to be found.

The book is divided into three parts. Descriptive analysis makes up Parts One and Two from a historical perspective while a concluding synthesis is given in Part Three. The author restricted his area of research to the period of the second half of the 1970s, the 1980s until the present. The cultural and geographical context focuses on the English-American body of New Age ideas since that is where the New Age Movement foundations lie. This does not rule out the awareness of other cultures and the importance of various aspects of Buddhism, Hinduism, Sufism, Jewish mysticism, Gnosticism, as well as comparative mythology and traditional folklore.

The central themes of the New Age movement covered in Part Two falls into five broad generalisations. I particularly appreciated the author's reliance on Arthur O. Lovejoy's classic study *The Great Chain of Being: A study of the History of an Idea*. Its discussions are completely relevant to New Age thinking. The themes are: (1) a weak this-worldliness, as opposed to other-worldliness; (2) holism; (3) evolutionism; (4) the psychologisation of religion and the secularisation of psychology; and, (5) expectations of the coming New Age. These themes are presented as a bare skeleton on which the specific ideas of various New Age authors with their many idiosyncrasies become flesh. Hanegraaff does an admirable job of analysis using this format which makes the book worth its price alone. His purpose is to examine "the historical processes by which the conditions were created that made possible for the New Age movement to appear in the later

twentieth century" (p. 366). Describing how various traditions have come into existence and how their convergence created conditions which made the New Age possible leads eventually to the examination of esotericism in the mirror of secular thought.

Esotericism is roughly defined as covering the traditional occult sciences as well as the various religious phenomenon loosely associated with it. It is not merely secret knowledge or special disciplines, nor is it a transcendent unity common to all particular religious traditions. The author also takes issue with current New Age motto: "You have it all inside yourself, check it out!"

Instead, he takes his lead from French research and in particular Antoine Faivre, chair for "History of Esoteric and Mystical Currents in Modern and Contemporary Europe" (Sorbonne, Paris). While esotericist roots are acknowledged as arising from antiquity, the mechanised image of the world that arose in the twelfth century began a process of secularisation. The discovery of nature as an organic and lawful domain to be studied in its own right produced a secularisation of the cosmos while the sacred was given "lip-service." Participation in the philosophy of nature became a revival of *magia* that became foundational to Renaissance esotericism. It all came to a head in the fourteenth century under the dual impact of Averroism and nominalism. Aristotelian cosmology destroyed the angelic realms of neoplatonic cosmology. Nominalism destroyed the idea that the world stands in an analogical and homological relationship to higher celestial worlds. This left an enormous autonomous domain that was taken over by humanists with esoteric leanings. The neoplatonic and hermetic resurgence and revival of the later fifteenth century marked the beginning of Western esotericism.

Frances A. Yates and the London Warburg Institute have brought the neoplatonic hermeticism of the Renaissance to light. It is from this milieu, inherited from esoteric sources, that the New Age religion bases much of its view of "ultimate source holism" of the "generative" variety. In particular, the *Corpus Hermeticum* translated by Ficino in 1462, mythically authored by Hermes Trismegistus, who was fabled to have taught both Moses and Plato primordial wisdom tradition known as *prisca theologia,* made a huge impact among Platonising intellectuals in Renaissance culture. Modern scholarship, following the research of Isaac Casaubon, generally assumes the *Corpus Hermeticism* to have been written around the first to third century A.D. Still, the emphasis on intuitive gnosis along with a positive attitude toward the cosmos whereby man is considered a magus has been unconsciously imbibed by the New Age and stimulates its cosmic religiosity (p. 392). This makes it distinct from the world-rejecting dualism found in Gnosticism.

The occult sciences of magic, astrology and alchemy were taught by Hermes Trismegistus and revived by Renaissance hermeticists. *Magia* and esotericism can be used interchangeably. There is an interconnectedness between esotericism, *Naturphilosophie* and natural science that manifests in Renaissance alchemy, which even had its impact on Isaac Newton as well as Carl Gustav Jung. There is an unbroken line between Renaissance esotericism and Romantic *Natruphilosophie.* The concern with synthesising religion and science has remained characteristic of esotericism throughout.

The author astutely observes the connection between pietism and the Anabaptists of the Reformation period saying, "the relevance of hermeticism to Reformation 'spiritualism' seems to have been underestimated." What he is aiming at is the "spiritualist" criticism of the Christianity of the established Churches. Anabaptism perceived them as narrowly dogmatic, preoccupied with sin, intolerant and encroaching on individual autonomy.

Hanegraaff's central thesis is that the impact of Western processes of rationalisation and secularisation represent the decisive watershed in the history of Western esotericism. He argues that both Romanticism and Occultism are products of a clash of world-views. Romanticism resulted from a reinterpretation of esoteric cosmology under the impact of the new evolutionism. Occultism, on the other hand, emerged when esoteric cosmology gradually came to be understood in terms of the new scientific cosmologies (based on instrumental causality—p. 407). This has produced a secularisation of esotericism that must be considered when researching the esotericism of the New Age Movements. This has rarely been done. Instead, the terms "the occult," "the irrational" and, "mysticism" have become clichés

Western esotericism as reflected in four mirrors of secular thought is examined. The first mirror is "causality." Though New Agers reject "Cartesian/Newtonian" thought as detrimental, they have not escaped its clutches. The evolution of consciousness that they trumpet requires them to dance to the very same innovative tunes that undermined their claim to represent "ancient wisdom." The theory of evolution based on causality and interacting with esotericism produced hybrid forms unacceptable to both scientific rationalism and Renaissance esotericism. The esoteric tradition has entered the modern era via evolutionist theory. Hypnosis is given as an example of "scientific" proof of the supernatural due to its "experimental" means. Spiritualism adapted to the modern world easily because of individual investigation and experience, thus negating the need to rely on religious or scientific authorities.

Secondly, the modern study of comparative religion is a product of secularisation. Along with the "oriental renaissance" and the emergence of "historical consciousness," they are interwoven as part of the Enlightenment criticism of Christianity.

Secular progress and evolution affected profoundly by causality and the study of comparative religions is the third mirror. Lovejoy calls evolution the "temporalisation of the chain of being." Occultists sided with science against dogmatic Christianity seeing evolution as a scientific proof of philosophical or religious theories. Eventually this presented a dilemma. Did the mind evolve from matter or was matter a mere appearance of the mind? The latter choice was the easy one. An Absolute Mind as the sum total of all individual minds was seen as the individual soul universalised. This immanentist view saw man as one with nature and both man and nature as one with God. Mixed with the cosmic optimism of the American experience one hears the ring of the positive thinking and mind over matter ideologies of Norman Vincent Peale and Mary Baker Eddy. The author says that although New Agers like to present their theories of evolution as scientific they are in fact indebted to the platonic "great chain" and evolutionist conceptions pioneered by German Idealism (p. 469). He concludes that New Age evolutionism is not rooted so much in Darwin as in romanticism. Darwin is used for scientific respectability. Emersonian

Transcendentalism is cited because of its place in American cultural tradition and because it was congenial to both romantic evolution and to eclectic and pragmatic attitudes toward scientific theories of evolution. Reincarnation is vital to the process of spiritual evolution.

The fourth mirror is the popular impact of psychology. Once again, cause and effect come into play to produce a "scientific religion." The ultimate cause being the mind could effect health and harmony or illness and misery. Right belief along with positive verbal formulas or affirmations produce prosperity. This converged with the functionalist psychology of William James to finally produce today's Human Potential movement, a distinctly American phenomenon. Secular assumptions became assimilated to the degree that religion came to be described in psychological terms (the psychologisation of religion) and psychology explained in religious terms (sacralisation of psychology). The science of psychology developed a spiritual dimension. However it was on the foundation of secular assumptions that a spiritual world-view was developed.

The crucial link between the traditional (pre-occultist) esoteric world-view and the New Age movement was none other than Carl Gustaf Jung. His *Naturphilosophie* was baptised in the evolutionist mirror of secular thought. Yet his personal religious synthesis uses scientific, psychological language, combined with esoteric traditions, Romantic *Naturphilosophie,* evolutionist vitalism, neopagan solar worship, *völkish* mythology and large amounts of occultism. For Jung, psychology made it possible to present esotericism as a scientific religion. Alchemy represented the perfect example of the psychological process of individuation. By presenting an esoteric world-view in psychological terms, Jung provided a scientific alternative to occultism.

Not surprisingly, Hanegraaff confirms the New Age movement to be the heir of the counterculture of the 1960s. He concludes by characterising New Age religion as follows: "All New Age religion is characterised by a criticism of dualistic and reductionistic tendencies in (modern) western culture, as exemplified by (what is emically perceived as) dogmatic Christianity, on the one hand, and rationalistic/scientistic ideologies, on the other. It believes that there is a 'third option' which rejects neither religion and spirituality nor science and rationality, but combines them in a higher synthesis. It claims that the two trends which have hitherto dominated western culture (dogmatic Christianity and an equally dogmatic rationalistic/scientistic ideology) have been responsible for the current world crisis, and that the latter will only be resolved if and when this third option becomes dominant in society" (p. 517f.).

In order to be considered New Age a group must fall under this characterisation. Still the movement can be circumscribed even further. Looking at its specific traditions for formulating such criticisms of Western culture can do this. "All New Age religion is characterised by the fact that it expresses its criticism of modern western culture by presenting alternatives derived from a secularised esotericism. It adopts from traditional esotericism an emphasis on the primacy of personal religious experience and on this-worldly types of holism (as alternatives to dualism and reductionism), but generally reinterprets esoteric tenets from secularised perspectives. Since the new elements of 'causality,' the study of religions, evolutionism, and psychology are fundamental components, New Age religion cannot be characterised as a

return to pre-Enlightenment world-view but is to be seen as a qualitatively new syncretism of esoteric and secular elements. Paradoxically, New Age criticism of modern Western culture is expressed to a considerable extent on the premises of that same culture" (pp. 520f.)

The New Age movement is a popular Western cultural criticism expressed by secularised esoteric terminology. Thus it is possible to speak of one New Age movement based on commonality, not of positive contents, but of opposition to the same thing. Interestingly, the author states that New Age religion was born in the nineteenth century but had reached maturity no later that the beginning of the twentieth. It was only in the second half of the 1970s that as a movement it became conscious of itself. He chooses therefore to distinguish between New Age Religion and the New Age movement. From this he makes a further definition: "The New Age movement is the cultic milieu having become conscious of itself, in the later 1970s, as constituting a more or less unified 'movement.' All manifestations of this movement are characterised by a popular western culture criticism expressed in terms of secular esotericism."

I think the information Hanegraaff has provided in this book is extremely valuable as a starting place. He himself admits that a definitive and complete view needs a lot of work including a combination of several methodologies focusing on different dimensions of the New Age. His concern has been only the level of New Age ideas. Yet his research does give us some valuable tools to work with. For instance, he concludes that the extent to which Western esotericism has been secularised, from the nineteenth century to the present, will determine its resilience against contemporary forces such as commerce and the marketplace. He sees the trend negatively and concludes that the movement will not likely continue to provide a viable alternative to a culture of liberal utilitarianism. This may be why the movement has not become a successful political movement but remained only an alternate social voice.

The ageing of baby-boomers into the "grey wave" also presents questions about the future of the movement. If Hanegraaff is right, that the movement is a cultic milieu that became aware of itself in the 70s, will it have an effective voice thirty or fifty years from now? What about the influence of the two other major world-views, i.e. Christian and Liberal? All three groups seem to agree that we are at the end of the age of Modernism. Will Western civilisation disintegrate and something completely new rise from its remains? Will each world-view adapt cross culturally based on a common morality? Or will we just continue to muddle on? Arnold Toynbee coined the phrase "challenge and response" to describe a society when it gets into trouble. A creative minority develops very different views and beliefs for its way of life in response. This creative minority ultimately becomes the head and not the tail. That minority must be willing to die for its faith in order to become the harbinger of the new culture.

Occultism has arisen in response to dying cultures of the past, such as the Renaissance, etc. What Hanegraaff misses are that both "Christian" and scientific culture are highly infected with secular rationalism, the very thing he says has produced the New Age movement. He has rightly observed that the New Age movement is part of the problem and not part of the solution. As an example, all three groups share the theory of evolution like an infected syringe. Self-professed,

autonomous Western rationalism is coursing through the veins of a dying modern culture.

Hanegraaff closes his book by explaining the New Age tendency of privatising symbolism that ultimately dissipates mystery. When the individual becomes the centre of his or her symbolic world he tends to seek salvation in universal explanatory systems that leave no question unanswered. It is the attempt to replace mystery by the certainty of perfect knowledge. What he doesn't say is that this is what Satan offered to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. *C&S*

THE DEATH OF THE CHURCH VICTORIOUS
BY OVID E. NEED JR
FOREWORDS BY R. J. RUSHDOONY AND
DAVE MACPHERSON

Lafayette: Sovereign Grace Publishers Inc., 2002 & 2004, 506 pages including indices and appendices, ISBN: 1-58960-301-x

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REVIEWED BY STEPHEN J. HAYHOW

THERE are many books that now chronicle the rise, growth and effects of dispensationalist eschatology. This book stands apart from the rest, for it endeavours to show the purpose and intentions of the early dispensationalists. As the title suggests the idea of the Church defeated in history became a *tenet* of this new direction in eschatology. Gradually, dispensationalist theologians and preachers came actively to promote non-involvement in the world, a heavenly and other-worldliness, and a disconnected piety that despised interaction with the world and believed that a mark of faithfulness was that the Church did not attempt to change or influence the culture.

The story begins with Edward Irving, the Presbyterian pastor and teacher in London and former assistant to Thomas Chalmers, and his migration into Pentecostalism and the new Pre-millennialism. Need traces the influence on Irving back to Lacunza, a Jesuit, whose teaching Irving found to be similar to his own. Under the pseudonym of *Ben Ezra,* Lacunza had written *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty.* Irving was so taken with this work that he translated it from the Spanish and then republished it in 1827. In his preface to this new work, Irving declared,

Now, forasmuch as the church, labouring under her present dimness concerning the future advent of Christ and his glorious kingdom, hath been much taken up with the former advent, and led greatly to exaggerate the importance of the out-pouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, that first act of the priestly office of Christ, under which we now live; it is hardly to be expected that much should be found needing to be reformed by the views which we now offer. But as no important error in the system can long exist without being elsewhere felt, I shall be able to show, in respect to the giving of the Holy Spirit, some very important changes which the scriptures view of the subject hath undergone, through hiding of the light of the glory of his second advent and kingdom.

In other words, Irving was distressed by the post-millennial position in the Churches. It distracted, he felt, from the Second Coming.

With all of this, all the features of modern-day dispensationalism developed and has permeated the Churches: non-involvement in the world; antinomianism; the development of the pre-tribulation rapture (this was never a feature of older pre-millennial theology); the any moment return of Christ; the doctrine of the defeat of the Church in history; and the reduction evangelism to *soul saving.*

Need points to the French Revolution as the "pessimistic" background to early dispensational developments. The Revolution was seen (rightly!) as an example of the depravity and wickedness of man. How could the optimistic vision of the older post-millennial theology stand? But instead of positing the triumph of the gospel even over this, the environment was set for the development of a new, more pessimistic eschatology.

Next Need introduces the reader to the early fathers of the Brethren movement; John Nelson Darby, H. A. Ironside, D. L. Moody and many other teachers and preachers. Need provides a fairly detailed account of Darby's ministry, doctrinal development and eschatology. With Darby and Schofield the new dispensational scheme took on a more mature form. The sharp distinctions between Israel and the Church were established; the pre-tribulational (and therefore "any moment" return of Christ) were fixed, and the Scofield Bible's appearance helped to spread this new reading of the Bible and the future. Darby was a zealous and self-sacrificing servant of his cause. But his cause, we are told, was foremost the promotion of the new eschatology. He travelled the world, and eventually took the teaching to the United States. From there the story picks up D. L. Moody and so on.

It is now common to believe in the defeat of the Church in history, whether from an amillennial, dispensational, or pre-millennial perspective. The imminence of the final return of the Lord is now assumed and we often hear sermons where we are told that we must live at least "as if" Christ's return were imminent. We think there is a better explanation of those passages available—that the imminence in the first century was the imminence of the judgement on the Jews and upon apostate Jerusalem (se Mt. 23–24 and Lk. 21) culminating in the destruction of the Jews and of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

The net result of this perspective has been short-termism in the Church. We no longer plan and strategise for generations—how can we? Why would we, if we really thought that the End was very near? This is non-covenantal. The covenant points us to God's purposes over generations. We are to consider our children's children in what we do, not the immediate effect only. Short-term investments and long-term investments are two different things, in finances, as in culture. The Church has become hooked on the short-term, often at long-term cost. We need to invest in programmes that are going to benefit our children and, God willing, their children too. That will mean Christian education, Christian schools and colleges, for example, as well as missions that are future-oriented.

The older, post-millennial view had a vision of victory, through suffering and persecution, but victory, in history, nonetheless.

One criticism. The book is not very well edited. There are many awkward sentences that the editor should have seized upon. Also the book consists of over 100 chapters, the reason being that the chapters are extremely short. I could

not quite see the purpose of this. It did make some parts disjointed, so that paragraphs and headings would have served the same purpose and preserved the flow of the text.

Nonetheless, this is a detailed telling of the story of the rise of an important theological movement. It will provide a worthwhile addition to one's library on this important subject. *C&S*

HUMAN RIGHTS:
ITS CULTURE AND MORTAL CONFUSION
by Howard Taylor

Edinburgh: Rutherford House (WayMark series), 2004, paperback, 86 pages, ISBN 1-904429-00-9, £4.50

Reviewed by John S. Scott

This little book brings an informed Christian mind to explore the weakness and dangers of the human rights legislation that is presently incorporated in British law. Since the Act of 1998 the impact upon our common law tradition has become ever more evident as for example in current arguments about legislation concerning the smacking of toddlers or the prevention of fathers from visiting their own children.

It all began with the European Convention of Human Rights as nations signed up to outlaw the horrors of Nazi inhumanities revealed at the end of the Second World War. The Convention became a sort of club that every civilised nation sought to join. The book shows how the concept of human rights idealism spread from Europe to the United Nations and then became the basis of law in the European Union. However the book goes on to show that a concept of human rights in itself fails to provide any basis for morality. Indeed when human rights are incorporated into laws, men then seek to achieve their rights, which results in total selfishness.

Dr Taylor makes a clear case for the superiority of "natural or real goodness," the morality of the human conscience, which receives its authority from God. This morality, driven by man's conscience, leads to an emphasis on responsibility, care and concern for others. No one has rights but all have a responsibility to make the most of the talents and gifts they possess and to use them for the benefit of others in the light of conscience.

As Christians our faith informs us of the nature of conscience, our tendency to sin and our need for forgiveness and love—the very essence of our humanity. The morality that God brings to us is summed up perfectly by Jesus "to love the Lord our God with all our heart and to love our neighbours as ourselves."

"A liberty or a civil right which does not explicitly or implicitly recognize responsibility to a morality which transcends the right is a mere arrogant assumption, based on selfishness and nothing else"—Lord Hailsham, a former Lord Chancellor (See *The door wherein I went* [London: Collins, Fount, 1975]).

This book brings out the influence of philosophical thought over the last century. Optimistic humanism, scientism and nihilism are systems of philosophy that rule out theology and result in confusion and uncertainty about a basis for morality. These philosophies and others are shown to have influenced the concept of human rights.

Since the days of King Alfred the common law in Britain has been influenced by the principle of real goodness and an inherited Christian ethic. Families have been held together by the responsibility of parents for children and children for parents. Communities have been based on the respect and responsibility between master and servant, landlord and tenant, teacher and pupil. The book brings many examples of the confusions and seeming injustices that have arisen since the incorporation of human rights legislation into British law.

In writing this short review I believe passionately that Christians as individuals or as members of organisations like CARE, the Evangelical Alliance, the Christian Institute and the various boards and committees that represent the denominations should all be involved in this fundamental debate. Let us be realistic about the undermining of Christian values in our society by the human rights concept and let us make it a political issue.

The politicians are taking over more and more of our lives. We see the traditional duties and responsibilities of parents in child rearing and education being handed over to the servants of the State. For example the State assumes responsibility in taking over parental roles by determining what our children are taught. The assumption that a child's rights are superior to the parent's responsibility is one of the most devastating outcomes of this new legislative confusion. Laws are constantly being created to preserve the rights of individuals at the expense of the tradition of communal responsibility for the common good.

Dr Howard Taylor has produced a most timely and pertinent book that addresses an issue that I believe Britain as a nation must address urgently if we are to preserve the free and open society we have enjoyed for so long in these islands. *C&S*

COSMIC WAR SURVIVAL:
THE TRUE GOSPEL DISTINGUISHED FROM
GLOBAL APOSTASY BY REFERNCE TO THE
EARLY AGES OF MAN
by Roy Mohon

Stockton-on-Tees: Truthzone, 2004, 316 pages, paperback, ISBN 0-9546330-0-8

Reviewed by Tracy Van den Broek

The introduction of Roy Mohon's book reminded me of a phrase my father used to repeat often—"know your enemy." I have often turned it over in my mind since childhood. I was particularly thankful for this book which filled out the picture of the war raging silently and often imperceptibly around us. Not since I read Burroughs' *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices* and Venn's *The Plague of Plagues* have I had my attention focused so sharply on the importance of knowing the enemy.

Mohon shows that in the beginning there was no conflict and points to rebellion in heaven as its origin—the manifes-

tation of it on earth was by means of the literal, historical fall of man in the garden of Eden. This resulted in God declaring his displeasure and sending the global flood saving only eight people who continued to know the truth concerning good and evil and to pass it on to future generations.

Apostasy, notwithstanding, reared its ugly head again resulting in Babel and subsequent dispersion of humanity over the whole world. This resulted in a fascinating catalogue of manifestations of false worship all round the world, resurrection and redemption being common themes. These peoples were marked by a level of sophistication and technological ability that they are often not credited with, details of which are given in this book.

Mohon shows that modern-day science, far from rising above the conflict, is setting itself up in opposition to the truth of God and offering a more "reasonable," although equally pagan, version of the age-old apostasy.

This book is a well-documented call to arms for the soldier of Christ. Although it is an intellectually challenging book (not one to read on the beach in Summer) it is also written to reach the heart. It brought to my mind the Bob Dylan lyrics "You gotta serve somebody, it may be the devil or it may be the Lord, but you gotta serve somebody." There is no neutral position possible. The only question remaining is "what are we to do about it?"

Mohon has some useful and practical suggestions to asnwer this question, such as: (*a*) avoid counterfeit deities, (*b*) be firmly rooted in the God who is a Trinity, (*c*) don't think evolution is an idea you can be ambivalent about, (*d*) keep your eyes focused on the true Daystar, (*e*) promote true community, (*f*) advance authentic knowledge as perceived in the cosmos, men's moral consciousness and the divine word, and (*g*) offer right worship.

Cosmic War Survival should firmly convince its readers that if there is to be a future Church in the West now is the time to take back our children from the enemy, to whom we have subjected them for too long, and let the *Bible* be the shaping influence on the future Church, not secular humanism. We should be teaching our children the truth about the nature and reality of the cosmic war in which we are all involved, and be preparing them to fight on the right side because the victory is the Lord's. *C&S*

BOOK NOTICES

THE following books have been received for review. If you would like to review a book please send an email requesting the book you would like to review along with your address (books will be allotted on a first come first served basis). Reviews should interact with the material in the book, not merely describe the contents, and should ideally be between 3000 and 7000 words (though we will accept shorter reviews and run longer reviews as review articles). Please include all publisher information. Reviews should be completed within a year of receiving the book.

John Byl, *The Divine Challenge: On Matter, Mind, Maths and Meaning* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2004), paperback, 317 pages.

Peter C. Glover, *The Virtual Church and How to Avoid it* (Xulon Press, 2004), paperback, 299 pages.

Tom Holland, *Contours of Pauline Theology: A Radical New Survey of the Influences on Paul's Biblical Writings* (Fearn, Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications, 2004), hardback, 382 pages.

David Jackman, *Let's Study 1 Corinthians* (Edinburgh: The banner of Truth Trust, 2004), paperback, 306 pages.

David Albert Jones, *The Soul of the Embryo: An enquiry into the status of the human embryo in the Christian tradition* (London/New York: Continuum, 2004), paperback, 266 pages.

William Leader, *The Septuagint, Sexuality, and the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2004), paperback, 163 pages.

I. Howard Marshall, *The Testament Theology* (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 2004), hardback, 765 pages.

Michael Mendle (ed.), *The Putney Debates of 1647: the Army, the Levellers, and the English State* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), hardback, 297 pages.

Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church*, Vol. 5: *Moderatism, Pietism and Awakening* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2004), paperback, 620 pages.

Peter G. Riddell, *Christians and Muslims: Pressures and potential in a post 9/11 world* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2004), paperback, 254 pages.

Eckhard Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission* (Leicester: Aoppolos/IVP, 2004), 2 vols, hardback, 1,928 pages.

Matthew Scully, *Dominion: The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals and the Call to Mercy* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2002), paperback, 434 pages.

Vera Shevzov, *Russian Orthodoxy on the Eve of Revolution* (Oxford University Press, 2004), hardback, 358 pages.

Stephen Sizer, Christian Zionism: Road-map to Armageddon? (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2004), paperback, 298 pages.

Michael Slee, *The Church in Antioch in the First Century C.E.* (London: T. & T. Clark International, 2003), paperback, 214 pages.

Michael E. Wittmer, *Heaven is a Place on Earth: Why Everything you do Matter to God* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2004), paperback, 269 pages.

Christopher J. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2004), 520 pages.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

   I would like to express my perplexity regarding Collin Wright's review of Egbert Schuurman's book *Faith and Hope in Technology* (*C&S*, Vol. xiv, No. 4 [Oct. 2004], pp. 52–54). Although Mr Wright has a few good things to say about the book, his review carries a profoundly negative overtone. He begins by attacking reformational philosophy. Next he takes the author to task on some of his statements in Chapter 2, the chapter that includes a brief discussion on evolution and scientific creationism. This takes up well over four full columns. By then the reader has been exposed to insinuations that (1) as a reformational philosopher Schuurman must condone "homosexual behaviour, feminism, socialism and non-Biblical ethics" and (2) that Schuurman's appeal to "creation" days, instead of 24-hour human days, is but a subterfuge to cover up the fact that "Schuurman really does believe modern science is right." How does Wright deal with the remaining chapters of the book? He simply dismisses them as literature that can be found in any run-of-the-mill environmentalist pamphlet. I find this most unfair. Throughout, Schuurman laments the fact that there is so little sensitivity in Christian circles for the actual threats of contemporary technological development. He is right. Mr Wright's critique is an eloquent example.

   It is not my intention to challenge Mr Wright's opinion of reformational philosophers, nor to enter into the creation-evolution debate, but to express my disappointment with his nonchalant attitude towards today's scientific-technical-economic-environmental-political debate. I cannot believe that a person as well trained, well read and as committed as Mr Wright could so readily brush aside Schuurman's analysis of the dangers of unrestrained technology. Moreover, are Wright's continual digressions onto subjects that have nothing to do with Schuurman's text meant to distract the reader or to illuminate the reader? One example: his reference to Frederick W. Taylor's time and motion studies on shovelling at Bethlehem Steel Co. as having nothing scientific about them. I should like to remind Mr Wright of two things, namely, that according to the Concise Oxford Dictionary one of the meanings of "scientific" is "systematic" and that Mr Taylor's "scientific management approach" advocated systematised business practice (mainly factory organisation) to improve production. The elimination of job-fatigue by optimising work tasks and providing regular work breaks—which to Mr Wright may sound like "plain, old-fashion common-sense" but at Bethlehem Steel meant that the average volume of material moved per day soared from 16 to 59 tons and that handling cost plummeted from 7.3 cents
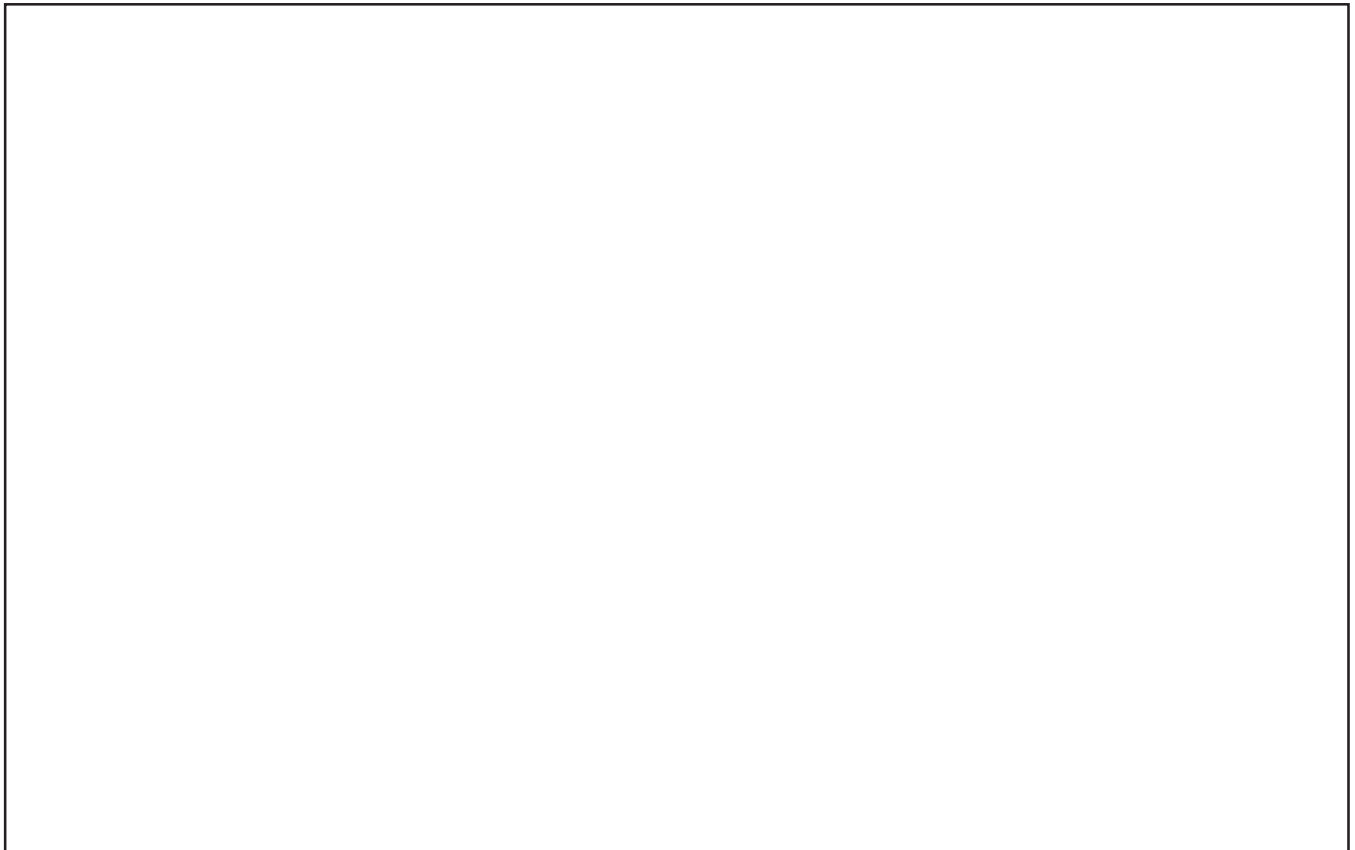
to 3.2 cents per ton—was highly innovative in 1911 and continued to be innovative 40 years later.

To return to Wright, in the second to last paragraph he states: "Schuurman would like to embrace technology itself but is convinced it was as bad a move for mankind as coming down out of the trees." What does Wright mean by this? Schuurman is not anti-technology! He explains very emphatically that he is not advocating a return to pre-industrial days. Neither is he a Don Quixote nor a Ned Lud, though he does have something in common with both. Long before the Industrial Revolution, Cervantes foresaw the power-control factor of technology. He sent his fictional *persona* to fight against the giants, but to no avail. Thirty against one! Sancho, unable to discern the giants, only saw windmills that would grind his grain for him while he could sit back and relax. How do we view modern technology?

Wright complains that Schuurman "rarely sees [technology] outside of the context of its abuse, that is, as a universal control tool." But that is precisely Schuurman's message! I dare say that if this is one of Mr Wright's conclusions, he missed the main point of Schuurman's argument. "His arguments are pretty weak; he concentrates rather on the hand-wringing approach—whine about how bad it all is in practice . . . Much of the narrative would be equally at home in the publications of Greenpeace or some other environmental or anti-technology or anti-capitalist literature." Perhaps if Christians read some of today's environmentalist literature more attentively they would be more aware of the issues Schuurman is trying to put forth and together, with God-given discernment, we could be coming up with and applying charitable solutions in consonance with our Lord's command to love one another, rather than spending our time debating the nuances of 1 Corinthians 13.

"The continual whining, instead of developing a positive Christian alternative, masks everything . . . Schuurman has missed a great opportunity to show what Christianity could offer as an alternative. Even what alternatives he does offer have little Christian foundation and are rarely based on an analysis of the text of Scripture." The Bible, as Schuurman points out, is not a manual of science and technology. It does, however, provide clear guidelines for our everyday conduct. Schuurman uses the creation mandate "to subdue the earth" as his starting point. To subdue does not mean to exploit; instead we should view the earth as a garden to be developed and cultivated. We are the caretakers and stewards of that garden. The day of rest and the year of rest—the jubilee— were not instituted for human rest alone, but also for nature's benefit. God took into account both his creatures and his creation. A sustainable economy, where science and technology have their rightful place as facilitators and not controlling powers, is in accord with God's command to subdue the earth.

Wright regrets that Schuurman does not give clear, convincing answers to some of the issues he raises. Quite honestly, it was not meant to be a "how to" book that provides all the answers. Schuurman himself admits that he does not have all the answers; his intention is to make us *aware* of the conflicting issues that arise when "the spirit of technology pervades the whole of culture." Creating awareness is a much needed task these days. I cannot agree with Wright when he accuses Schuurman of failing to "develop a positive Christian alternative." If being good care-takers and stewards—that is, not being slothful (Rom. 12.11)—of our God-

given personal resources (time, money, talents, knowledge, etc.) as well as our God-given natural resources (water, soil, energy sources, etc.) is not a *positive* Christian alternative, I'm at a loss as to what Mr Wright would consider to be an alternative.

Frances Luttikhuizen

Cover Picture:
British recruitment posters from the First World War.

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