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SCHOLARSHIP and MINISTRY



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Introduction

by Colin Brown

The creation of the Center for Advanced Theological Studies within Fuller's School of Theology in the fall of 1988 constituted a major commitment to the place of scholarship in theological education and to the seminary's vision of the role of scholarship in its mission.

Graduate education at Fuller dates from its earliest years. The first Th.M. student graduated in 1952. The first theology doctoral student graduated in 1970. A 1987 study of the theology graduate program revealed that Fuller graduates have served or are serving on the faculties of more than 40 colleges and seminaries in North and South America, Europe, Asia, India and Australia. In addition, other Th.M. and Ph.D. graduates are serving in strategic church positions. The same study revealed how highly the program is regarded by leading Christian scholars in different parts of the world.

Nevertheless, it was felt that the time was ripe for a major step forward. The past 25 years have witnessed an unparalleled explosion of knowledge — not least in all the main areas of theology. We at Fuller Theological Seminary see this not as a threat but as an opportunity and challenge. It is a challenge to integrate the new knowledge and the new tools of research and learning into our mission. From its foundation Fuller has stood for a commitment to scholarship. The creation of the Center for Advanced Theological Studies reaffirms and renews that commitment.

The transformation of the graduate program into the Center for Advanced Theological Studies is more than simply a name change. The new name

is important — not least because it tells the world that advanced theological study is something that Fuller sees as one of its major goals — but with the Center has also come the creation of a graduate faculty, each of whom is committed to the advance of scholarship in the service of the gospel. In addition to their normal teaching duties in the M.A. and M.Div. programs, the full and associate members of the graduate faculty have assumed a special responsibility for research and teaching at the Th.M. and Ph.D. level as part of their faculty assignments.

Another area where advance has been made is in the teaching assistant program. Thanks to a generous grant from the Lilly Foundation, the program is being extended and enhanced. Currently we are looking into new ways of giving the assistants broader teaching experience and preparing them for their vocation as teachers.

As associate dean for advanced theological studies, I have a number of dreams. Among them is the establishment of awards and scholarships that will enable gifted graduate students at Fuller to pursue their education unburdened by heavy debts. Another dream I have is that of establishing a Ph.D. concentration in ministry that would enable students to study ministry at a deeper level than has been possible before — especially in relation to biblical studies, church history, theology, or ethics.

But these are dreams which belong to the future. In the meantime this issue of *Theology, News and Notes* shares some of the present visions of the Center's graduate faculty. A number of essays examine what is going on in different fields of theological research. Others focus on what is happening at Fuller right now.

Robert Guelich begins with a vision of the critical role that sound biblical

teaching plays in the life of the church. Leslie Allen offers his astute *apologia* to answer the question, "Why Another Old Testament Commentary?" — an answer that largely applies to New Testament commentaries as well. Donald Hagner, back from a year's sabbatical and study leave in Tübingen, offers insightful reflection on the relationship between evangelical faith and biblical criticism. Richard Muller writes about "The Importance of History," while James Bradley offers an update on the impact of modern research methods in the field of history. And Richard Mouw probes the contributions of philosophy and ethics in theological education.

Finally, on the back page Paul Hiebert, professor of anthropology and director of doctoral programs in the School of World Mission, shares his vision of the possibilities of integration at Fuller through the newly instituted inter-school Ph.D.

We have come a long way in the past 40 years. May the next 40 years be no less fruitful. ■

Colin Brown

Colin Brown
Professor of Systematic Theology
Associate Dean for
Advanced Theological Studies



"And Some Teachers..."

by Robert A. Guelich

As the most recent faculty appointment in New Testament, I have had more than one occasion during the past year to reflect on the value and role of the Ph.D. program at Fuller. My reflection began with the initial conversation when asked if I would consider coming to Fuller. A major part of the job description involved working with the Ph.D. program. Dean Robert Meye's inquiry about my interest in coming to Fuller as a full member of the graduate faculty posed anew the question of the nature of my commitment to theological education in general and to Fuller, my alma mater, in particular.

Early reservations

Quite frankly, I had had reservations about the growth of Fuller from those cozy, comfortable, but exciting days in the late '50s and early '60s when faculty-student ratios and a resident student body made theological education unavoidable, as it overflowed from the classroom to the many bull sessions around the campus in dorms or in apartment complexes. I recall my chagrin when I first learned that the School of Theology was going to offer a Ph.D. I certainly respected the academic competence of the faculty. Knowing many of them personally and professionally, that was not the issue.

My concerns were more strategic. Could a faculty that was already being stretched thin by the growth in student enrollment adequately serve both a seminary and a graduate program? Could Fuller, unattached to a university complex, provide the research facilities to measure up to the standard set by the major doctoral programs? Could or should Fuller seek to compete in the field of academics on the graduate level? In a field like New Testament, which was being glutted with Ph.D. graduates looking for jobs, could the Fuller Ph.D. graduate make it in the

competition for academic appointments that was often based on where you did your work and with whom? In short, I had many "negative feelings" about the Fuller Ph.D. program in New Testament.

Lest I be misunderstood, let me specifically say that none of my concerns had arisen because of the competence of the New Testament faculty or the quality of the subsequent graduates. Having served as an external reader for dissertations, and having become acquainted with several graduates, my experience with the graduates had been overwhelmingly positive. The question was more basic: Why a Ph.D. in New Testament at Fuller? The dean's phone call made the question more than academic!

The gift of teaching

After several years in seminary education at two different seminaries, I myself had left the "academy" and was in the pastorate, a change that had placed the issue of Ph.D. studies in a still different light. As the teaching minister of Colonial Church of Edina, Minnesota, I had come to see anew the need and place for one of the spiritual gifts listed by Paul, the gift of teaching, in the life of the church as a whole and specifically in the life of a local church.

As with many of the spiritual gifts, however, popular understanding of the gift of teaching has often unconsciously distorted the deeper meaning and function of the gift. For example, good communication skills in front of a group are frequently misunderstood as the gift of teaching. A setting such as the classroom rather than the sanctuary, the lectern rather than the

pulpit, misleadingly connote teaching. Style of delivery, accessories such as overhead projectors, and good pedagogy do not necessarily mean teaching. In particular, instruction is often misconstrued as teaching. Yet the biblical gift of teaching represents much more than any or all of the above.

Exegetically speaking, the gift of teaching must be understood in its biblical, historical setting. As such, it involved far more than we usually ascribe to the gift today. Teachers are not apostles, prophets, ministers or administrators, though teaching itself may not be the sole prerogative of the teacher. Teachers are above all to be involved with teaching (Rom. 12:6-8, 1 Cor. 12:28-31).

One must assume that Paul's use of "teacher" would be understood by his audience against the background of his day. As a Jew, a student of the Law and a Pharisee, Paul had the model of the scribe or rabbi. As a child of the Diaspora, Paul also had the model of the many popular, peripatetic Stoic and Cynic teachers. In each context, teaching involved preparation, a time of learning, studying, and above all, reflective thinking that integrated concepts and ideas with concern for life. In short, the teacher had inevitably "gone to school" in the company with and alongside of another teacher (Paul with Gamaliel; Timothy with Paul, etc.).

The fact that teaching was listed as a gracious gift of the Spirit did not mean that one might dispense with the necessary preparation. The preparation provided one with the knowledge gained from learning, study and reflective thinking through which and with which the Spirit enabled the teacher to impart knowledge and understanding to

"The laity desperately want reflective teaching. They want substance."

others about issues of the faith. This teaching was foundational for the early community's life of faith as it formulated and transmitted teaching that gave expression to and guidelines for what one believed and how one was to live. We find this not only in the "teachings" of the New Testament writers but also in the traditional creedal formulas and paraenetic or ethical instruction present in their teachings.

The demise of teaching

Despite the renewed interest in the gifts of the Spirit which has captured the attention of the American church in the past generation, the gift of teaching may well be the most disregarded gift of them all. The terms "teacher" and "teaching" have certainly not slipped from our vocabulary. In fact, we may well have more "teachers" and "teaching" today in the life of the church than at any previous time. But what passes for "teachers" and "teaching" is a poor copy of what was meant biblically by those same words. To a real extent the church has reflected our society's denigration of education and reflective thinking, a fact that is causing great concern today about the state of our schools and our approach to education. Instructing others, sharing insights, opinions and ideas, and passing on nicely packaged information represent poor substitutes for what Paul meant by teaching.

This demise in the biblical gift of teaching stems in part from what has happened in seminary education as well as from the supposed needs of the church. On the one side, seminaries for various reasons have become more a place to "train" for the ministry rather than pursue theological education. The focus has fallen much more on the development of some of the more "practical" gifts. Utilitarian

or simply survival concerns have led to curriculum revisions to accommodate the changing needs and desires of students with their hectic, complex lifestyles. The questions addressed frequently belong to the "What" and "How to" categories. Relevance for ministry, generally defined by the criterion of how "usable" will this be in ministry, has become the guiding light. On the other side, the stereotypical laity seem to want a good "experience" at church, along with quick, catchy, certain "answers" neatly phrased in "sound bite" size. Where does the gift of teaching fit into this scene?

The need for teaching

My experience as a teaching minister confirmed what I had previously experienced whenever asked as a seminary professor to teach a Sunday school class, a weekend seminar, or a series of studies in a church setting. The stereotype — and even seminary education — seriously sells the laity short. *The laity desperately want reflective teaching. They want substance.* They struggle with the issues of faith and life. When confronted by such realities they want more than facile answers and "support." They long to have the Bible taught from the standpoint of what it said and says rather than simply from what "it means to me." They are not nearly as afraid of "critical questions" as one might think. In fact, they are often asking the hard questions themselves. The development of and growing

increase in the enrollment in seminary M.A. and extension programs for the laity support this conclusion.

The real foundation for the growth and development of the community of faith has to come from teaching. Preaching is critical and has its own vital role. But preaching (*kerygma*) and teaching (*didache*) have had distinctive roles from the outset in the life of the church. The one proclaims, summons and calls; the other provides grounding, direction and integration from which the life of faith can flourish. If the church has suffered from anemic preaching, as has often been charged, it has been even more undernourished by the attractive junk food that has passed for teaching. The flurry of concern about "adult education" in the church and the attempts to remedy a clear need by calling "ministers of discipleship" reflect the obvious. The church needs to rediscover the gift of teaching — not "training" or "indoctrinating."

Fuller and the gift of teaching

What does all this have to do with the Ph.D. program in New Testament at Fuller? Everything, from my perspective. The doctor of ministry (D.Min.) program offers one a chance to enhance skills and reflect on the significance of one's ministry. In many ways, as a professional degree it continues and sharpens the M.Div. The Ph.D., by contrast, represents an academic as compared to a professional degree that requires one to spend considerably more time in research, study, learning and reflection — the necessary preparation for teachers.

Not all Ph.D. programs, however, are the same. One can distinguish between a seminary Ph.D. and a university Ph.D. The university-related

"I had numerous contacts with churches wanting to follow Colonial's model of calling a 'teacher'..."

Ph.D. has as its primary goal the development of scholars who can make a distinctive contribution to the field of scholarship and the academy. A seminary Ph.D. should be no less rigorous in its scholarly demands. Yet from my own way of thinking, its primary goal is not pure research but the preparation of men and women to serve the church as called and gifted teachers. Such teaching may take place in churches, colleges and divinity schools.

In some cases, this goal will be accomplished by men and women who enter the pastorate to serve either in associate or senior roles as a "teaching minister." As a teaching minister I had numerous contacts with churches wanting to follow Colonial's model of calling a "teacher" whose primary role would be as the congregation's teacher in the faith rather than an "educator," whose responsibility would be more administrative. Unfortunately, very few people were available for such a calling. And the university Ph.D. programs hardly address this need. Fuller, with its commitment to preparing and equipping people for ministry, can.

In other cases, some will exercise their gift in college and seminary teaching. One of the most formative roles in the life of the youth of the evangelical churches has been the Christian college. Here one seeks primarily to integrate learning and the life of faith. Inevitably this struggle involves our understanding of the Scriptures, the background for which must come from one who has been

taught and in turn can teach others. Perhaps seminary education will come to the place where they will see the need to have "teachers" teaching others rather than "scholars" whose qualifications have demonstrated more their ability to dialogue with academics than their knowledge and gift to teach others in the life of faith. What better preparation could one find than a graduate program that required the student not only to "pursue the evidence" wherever it might lead, but also required the student to do so in constant dialogue with the implications for the life of faith? That is the stuff from which biblical teachers are formed.

Still others will come from that part of our global village where they will return as teachers of the church in their educational institutions as well as in positions of leadership. They too need to prepare themselves to be teachers of the faith in an academic setting which encourages that pursuit. Many will eventually provide teaching through leadership and administrative roles where decisions will affect the lives of whole communities of faith. Where can such people go today for doctoral studies?

As I considered the possibility of the appointment here, it became clear to me that there was indeed a place for Ph.D. studies in New Testament at Fuller. We would not so much be competing with the established university-related Ph.D. programs. Instead, we would be offering a program with a different focus. I also realized that Fuller offered a rather rare environment for those whose primary concern was not academics per se or becoming a scholar's scholar. Fuller provided the opportunity for

one to study, learn and reflect about issues of faith and life from which one could become, by God's choosing and equipping, a teacher for the church. ■

ROBERT A. GUELICH is professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary. His D.Theol. is from the University of Hamburg. Among his writings is *The Sermon on the Mount: A Foundation for Understanding*. He has just completed the first volume of a two-volume commentary on Mark for the Word Biblical Commentary.



Why Another Old Testament Commentary?

by Leslie C. Allen

"Of making many books there is no end."

Every student utters a weary "Amen" to this old biblical truth. Under its rubric comes the writing of commentaries. As many times I am urged to recommend a good Old Testament commentary, I am also asked "Why another commentary?"

One answer to the question is the reply that different series of commentaries meet different needs. There are, as they say, "horses for courses." Series of commentaries can run on quite different tracks. Yet the real answer is more fundamental.

Each generation needs a new set of commentaries on the Bible. Every would-be commentator must humbly realize that he or she can never write a commentary to end all commentaries. The most a commentator can do is to produce an interim work that will be superseded, hopefully with its insights echoed (and acknowledged!) and refined in the commentaries of the next generation. This is partly because scholarly work never stops. Old exegetical answers get debunked and new ones receive convincing warrant.

New perspectives

A still more basic reason has to do with ourselves. Although human nature never changes, human self-perceptions and perspectives on life certainly do. Human culture is ever adapting to a variety of external and internal pressures. New spheres of interest arise, only to wane in turn. This means that the same Scripture elicits new questions from the reader,

which the culturally alert exegete feels constrained to answer.

Society also keeps on throwing up new parallels to the things we find in the Bible. The "warmongering" book of Nahum was an embarrassment to a recent generation that idealized the virtues of peace and love and scorned the older concept of a just war. Now, however, socially conscious Christians have become sensitive to the denial of basic human rights and empathize with those who challenge on moral grounds the vested interests of nations and powerful institutions. Nahum fits well into this viewpoint, as a sort of protest marcher carrying a placard, "Down with Assyria and its tyranny."

The prophet Ezekiel is another example. Ezekiel comes over as an odd, off-putting character, with his bizarre symbolic actions. Yet to church congregations exposed to adventurous drama and mime groups he takes on a challenging role. Some people might object that these parallels diminish the divine element of the Scriptures. But revelation tends, in fact, to adopt culturally conformable modes: communication is the name of the biblical game.

Feminism is a live issue that has now made its presence felt throughout society. In biblical studies this has resulted not only in feminist researches that focus on women in the Bible, but in a whole new angle on a God who hitherto was perceived simply as a macho male. A student who sat through my last Old Testament theology course characterized me as a feminist theologian. Even a staid Britisher like me has been affected by the social environment so as to see a

softer, more open side of the God of the Old Testament Scriptures! Some of these aspects have received attention from Terence E. Fretheim in *The Suffering God* (1984).

Such modern perspectives can shed objective light on the biblical text, just as they help in the subjective task of communicating its content to a new generation. But there is another, more academic way in which we are constrained to look at Scripture anew through cultural eyeglasses. Theology is a discipline that falls within the area of the arts and humanities, and it cannot help cultural perspectives rubbing off on it from kindred studies. It naturally picks up vibes from its scholarly field. This is an age in which literary studies have pressed to the fore. What makes literature tick? What is it attempting to communicate? How can we encourage it to yield up its treasures? This approach endeavors to let the text speak for itself, without putting it into what it regards as the straitjacket of the old historical criticism. Such authors as Robert Alter (*The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 1981; *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, 1985) and David M. Gunn (*The Story of King David: Genre and Interpretation*, 1978) have enriched Old Testament study by their literary perceptions. This perspective investigates, for instance, the use of irony, with which the book of Jonah is so replete. My own preference has been for rhetorical criticism, which in the case of the Old Testament is modeled on the work of James Muilenburg. It looks for literary patterns in the biblical material, by which its own thrust and purpose may be discerned.

These literary approaches mark the swing of a pendulum. They signify a protest against the limitations of form criticism, which goes a certain way in differentiating Scripture from Scripture but tends to bracket together kindred Scriptures without establishing the

"The Old Testament uncovers spirituality, the impact of God upon all too human situations."

individuality of a particular Scripture. They are a protest too against historical criticism, whose bankruptcy some practitioners of the new literary criticism like to trumpet. Another branch of this general approach has been Brevard S. Childs' canonical perspective (*An Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, 1979; *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context*, 1986). Especially in his earlier work there has been an unfortunate tendency to denigrate historical criticism, along with a welcome emphasis on Old Testament books as literary wholes.

The dangers of extremes

Literary perspectives such as these noted above reflect a healthy reaction against scholarly subjectivity. But there is danger in giving them a monopoly in biblical study. It is sadly significant that a number of more conservative scholars have jumped on the bandwagon of rhetorical criticism as a means of pursuing painless, respectable study without the hassle of the older critical approaches. The newer insights need to be embraced without abandoning the practice of the older methods in a positive form. Some literary critics appear as virtual existentialists, dealing with a literature that floats free of historical moorings. But the biblical revelation is essentially grounded in history. The redactional headings to the prophetic books (e.g. Hosea 1:1) take pains both to affirm the anchoring of the original word in history and to convey a sense of distance from that history, which implies the relevance of the earlier word of God for a later generation.

It is the task of the commentator to investigate the growth from oral word to written scroll, discerning in this human process the overshadowing of

the Spirit of God. Childs, in his later work on Old Testament theology from a canonical perspective, endeavors to grapple with the tension inherent in the combination of earlier sources. He seeks to wrest from this tension a theological coherence that seeks to do justice to various layers of material. The parts are not to be studied for their own sake. Nevertheless, the parts must be studied, if we are to discover the complex meaning of the whole.

Scholarship has come a long way from the days of C.A. Briggs' commentary on the Psalms (1907), which pruned away the excess foliage of massive glosses to expose a tiny stem that was the real psalm! Yet we must not overlook the factor of valuable redactional activity in the Psalms, which both re-used older material for new ends and grouped poems in meaningful juxtaposition (see my *Psalms 101-150*, 1983; *Word Biblical Themes: Psalms*, 1987).

It is becoming less fashionable to embrace Krister Stendahl's distinction between what Scripture meant and what Scripture means. It is true that there is a gap between exegesis and exposition, of which the ministerial student is painfully aware. This distance is a useful reminder that the preacher must journey back to the biblical past, if he or she is to discern in the text value for the present. Nevertheless, the canonical approach, as practiced in different ways by Childs and by James A. Sanders (*From Sacred Story to Sacred Text*, 1987), reveals that Scripture itself is involved in that journey and supplies guidelines for later generations to continue.

Moreover, the older critical approaches, if practiced positively and in conjunction with the newer literary perspectives, are by no means sterile. Rather, they uncover divine-human experiences that Scripture itself intended as models, incentives and warnings for God's people thereafter.

As a collection of faith documents, the Old Testament paints pictures of human needs and of divine resources, whether spurned or thankfully received. In a word, it uncovers spirituality, the impact of God upon all too human situations.

The Old Testament perspective

The Old Testament views the Exodus and entry into the Promised Land as a time when theological foundations were being laid for the future, and the love and power of God were revealed to his people once and for all. It thus provides a cue for the New Testament's interpretation of the crucifixion and resurrection. It hails God as Creator of the big world and of the little individual, and as Lord of history, even as it grapples with his seeming absence from human life. Above all, it seeks to find meaning in life and urges its actors and audience to walk in faith and hope.

The Old Testament is full of theology without being a theological textbook. Its theology is applied, pastoral and relational: it challenges its participants and readers to explore divine truth in human situations. It may make use of propositional theology, but only in a context of application. Thus Psalm 116:5-6 takes up a credal statement, only to envisage it as a spiritual resource and then to consider how it had come true within the psalmist's own life in the passing of crisis after urgent prayer. Joel 2:12-14, after explaining God's punitive work in a sort of hellfire sermon, turns to his grace in a closing appeal for repentance. Yet, lest God be regarded as an automatic machine that delivers the candy when a quarter is put in the slot, his personal freedom

Faith and Biblical Criticism

by Donald A. Hagner

is affirmed with a qualifying "Who knows whether...?" Not right doctrine as an end in itself, but an authentic relationship between divine and human persons is the burden of the passage.

The task of the commentator

The task of the commentator is to help the reader to discern the spirituality of Scripture. On its pages human predicament and human pride both find God knocking at the door, seeking admittance. The whole business of life, sordid and successful and simply ordinary, is God's business, and no situation is too public or too private to keep out his care and claim.

People sometimes say that they are sorry for me, because as an Old Testament scholar I do not deal with "the Christian part of the Bible." At the least they expect me to look at the Old Testament through New Testament glasses. But as I see it, the task of teaching the Bible is (to use C.S. Lewis' words) to take "the whole syllabus in

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LESLIE C. ALLEN is professor of Old Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary. His Ph.D. is from London University. Among his publications are *Psalms 101-150* in the *Word Biblical Commentary*, 1, 2, *Chronicles* in the *Communicator's Commentary*, *Hosea-Malachi* in the *Bible Study Commentary* and *Word Biblical Themes: Psalms*.



One of the most remarkable developments in university faculties of theology in Germany over the past decades has been the emergence of the strong, moderately conservative Protestant faculty in the University of Tübingen. Generations of American seminarians have learned to associate Tübingen with a radical form of New Testament criticism, exemplified in particular by the work of F.C. Baur (1792-1860) and the perspective of the so-called Tübingen school. Baur and the Tübingen school championed a "purely historical" and a "purely objective" interpretation that left the New Testament virtually in shreds. This was a classical manifestation of the use of the historical-critical method, and if not many of Baur's specific conclusions survived the 19th century, the kind of method modeled here became typical of the critical approach to the New Testament that has dominated the 20th century. Tübingen thus became the fountainhead of a criticism that has been destructive of the historical worth of the New Testament documents and inimical to the faith of believing Christians.

Fresh winds, however, are blowing in Tübingen these days. The Protestant faculty is flooded with theology students who want to expose themselves to first-class scholarship but, understandably, in a context where their faith will be encouraged rather than undermined. It was my privilege to be a visiting scholar at the University of Tübingen during the 1987-88 academic year and to observe the present situation at first hand.

Scholarship for the church

The New Testament faculty, with whom I am mainly concerned here, consists of such luminaries as Peter Stuhlmacher, Martin Hengel, Otfried Hofius and Gerd Jeremias (a son of

Joachim Jeremias). Formally retired, but still quite active in directing post-graduate students is Otto Betz (also retired, but elderly and much less active are Otto Michel and Ernst Käsemann — the latter, however, being distinctly in disagreement with the current trend).

Although these men can hardly be said to agree on everything, it does seem clear that in the main they are on the same wavelength. To begin with, they all agree on the indispensability of the historical-critical method. They furthermore are amenable to a considerable number of critical conclusions that would be unacceptable to most of American evangelicalism. At the same time, however, they have clearly avoided the extreme negativism usually associated with the more radical forms of historical criticism.

Their teaching, rather than being detrimental to the church, is serviceable and even edifying. It is in that sense truly evangelical, though not in the sense of being a "party line." To be sure, their teaching will not infrequently correct the church and inform or refine the church's teaching on some points. But what is important is that scholarship is never used against the church. The believer, just because he or she is a believer, is invited to engage in the historical-critical investigation of the New Testament.

During my stay in Tübingen two significant commemorations were held: one for the 300th anniversary of the birth of Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752) and one marking the 50th year since the death of Adolf Schlatter (1852-1938). Both were connected with Tübingen, Bengel first as a theological student and then for a few years as a tutor of other students; Schlatter also as a student, but then as professor of

"Schlatter made use of the historical-critical method to illuminate the text of Scripture, not to tear it down."

New Testament from 1898 until his death. What I found interesting was the combination of faith and scholarship in both men; like the present-day faculty of Tübingen, neither found any fundamental incompatibility between critical scholarship and the faith of the church.

Johann Albrecht Bengel

Bengel was of course active before the formulation and practice of the historical-critical method of the modern era. He is best known for his *Gnomon Novi Testamenti* ("Index" or "Pointer" [i.e., "Guide"]) to the New Testament, composed originally in Latin (1742), later translated into German and eventually available in English in a five-volume edition produced in the middle of the 19th century. This verse-by-verse commentary on the entire Greek New Testament, a model of conciseness (which modern commentators could stand to emulate!), made use of the best philological and historical knowledge of the day.

Bengel's skill as an exegete combined naturally with the pietism of his native Württemberg to produce a commentary that is still useful (and still mentioned in Tübingen's lecture halls). John Wesley's "Expository Notes on the New Testament" (1755) were avowedly dependent to a considerable extent upon Bengel's *Gnomon*.

Bengel was furthermore a pioneer in textual criticism, producing a critical edition of the Greek New Testament (1734) on the basis of methodological principles far ahead

of his time, some of which were eventually to become standardized through the work of Westcott and Hort.

Bengel of course held many views that are no longer acceptable to New Testament scholars, for example especially in his eschatology, his notion of the chronological development within the New Testament, and his excessive valuation of the Apocalypse. The point to be celebrated, however, is not that Bengel was always correct, but rather that he effectively combined the best scholarship of his day with the faith of a believer.

In the preface to the smaller edition of his critical Greek text, Bengel articulated the unified perspective that was to be reflected in the *Gnomon*: "*Te totum applica ad textum; rem totam applica ad te*" ("Apply yourself wholly to the text; Apply the subject wholly to yourself"). This attitude of full investigation of the text combined with full openness to the message of the text is remarkably close to the emphasis made nowadays particularly by Peter Stuhlmacher.

Adolf Schlatter

Schlatter anticipates even more than Bengel the present state of affairs at Tübingen, and his accomplishment is all the more impressive given the intellectual milieu in which he had to work. Schlatter, who was a specialist both in New Testament and dogmatics, published among other writings *Der Glaube im Neuen Testament* in 1885 (Faith in the New Testament), a two-volume *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (later given the separate titles *Die Geschichte des Christus* [The History of Christ] and *Die Theologie der Apostel* [The Theology of the Apostles]), *Das*

christliche Dogma (The Christian Dogma), *Die christliche Ethik* (The Christian Ethic), *Geschichte der ersten Christenheit* (History of the First Christianity) — most of these appearing in several editions during his lifetime.

In addition to monumental scholarly commentaries on, among others, Matthew (1929), James (1932), the Corinthian Letters (1934) and Romans (1935, under the title *Gottes Gerechtigkeit* [The Righteousness of God]), Schlatter published a popular devotional commentary on the entire New Testament in 10 volumes (*Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament*, republished in Germany as recently as 1987).

In his work Schlatter affirmed and made use of the historical-critical method. Yet that method was used constructively to illuminate the text of Scripture, not to tear it down. For Schlatter any approach to the New Testament that was not open to God's revelation of himself in history could not be effective. He was convinced of the necessity of arriving at a critical, scientific assessment and evaluation of the text. It was of crucial importance to him that the text really be seen for what it is.

"Science," he wrote, "is first seeing, and second seeing, and third seeing, and always again and again seeing" ("*Atheistische Methoden in der Theologie*," 1905). For Schlatter true observation of the New Testament led to faith not to skepticism. There is perhaps no better way to express Schlatter's remarkable ability to hold

"...those who defend the historical-critical method appear now to be on the side of the angels."

together faith and criticism than by his own words:

For me, therefore, the two activities — faith and criticism — were never separated in an opposition, so that I had to think sometimes as one who believes the Bible and sometimes as one engaging in criticism. Instead, I thought critically exactly because I believed the Bible and, on the other hand, I believed the Bible because I read it critically (*Rückblick auf meine Lebensarbeit*, 83).

The present-day New Testament faculty at Tübingen thus stands in the tradition of Bengel and Schlatter when it affirms the importance of historical criticism and is at the same time open to the revealing work of God in history as witnessed to by the New Testament writings. And in the same way that Bengel and Schlatter came under the attack of fundamentalists, on the one hand, for their use of the critical method, and of radical scholars, on the other, for their conservative conclusions, so too today the Tübingen faculty is attacked from both the right and the left.

Turning the tables

In the current mood of New Testament scholarship, as is increasingly evident in professional meetings, the historical-critical method is regarded by many as bankrupt: its results are largely negative or thought to be hopelessly contradictory. There is therefore now the call — wrong-headed, in my opinion — for a new approach to the Bible, based on modern trends in literary criticism, called variously "reader-oriented" or "reader-response" criticism (see E.V. McKnight, *Post-Modern Use of the*

Bible: the Emergence of Reader-Oriented Criticism [Abingdon, 1988]). Here, put very simply, it is the reader who constitutes the meaning of the text. And since the text has no meaning of its own, other than that brought to it by the reader, the "meaning" of a text can vary — and legitimately so — from reader to reader. The text itself is thereby lost in a haze of subjectivity; it is the reader who is now autonomous, no longer the text.

The result of these new developments is that those who defend the historical-critical method appear now to be on the side of the angels. To my mind, there can be no question but that the historical-critical method is indispensable. At the same time, it does seem obvious that the method must be tempered. A method that starts with presuppositions against the possibility of God acting in history — the central point of the documents being studied! — is self-evidently inappropriate. Against the argument that the historical-critical method can only exist with precisely those presuppositions, we must be prepared to stand our ground, and to assert that it is indeed possible to utilize appropriate criteria to evaluate the worth of the evidence contained in the writings themselves, even, or perhaps especially, when they witness to the activity and revelation of God in history.

The answer to the bankruptcy of radical historical criticism is not to reject the method, but to modify it so that it is more appropriate to the material under investigation. Only when it is adapted in such a way as to allow openness to the transcendent and a hermeneutic of consent (a

willingness at least to hear what the text has to say), to use Stuhlmacher's language, can historical criticism again serve the church rather than automatically undermine its witness.

The need for the method

The historical-critical method remains of vital importance to us. Only by this method do we have any hope of arriving at what the biblical texts meant. Obviously it cannot answer all our questions. We can expect from it, indeed, not proof, but evidence of probability. (This should not disturb us, since almost all of our knowledge depends upon probability rather than certainty, and in the living of our lives we are constantly dependent upon probable rather than certain knowledge.) If probable knowledge is all that history can ever afford, we may take comfort in the strength of the biblical witness, which provides probability sufficient to warrant belief.

What will characterize the historical-critical scholar who uses the method wisely will be humility rather than arrogance. The text will not be subjected to the arbitrary predisposition of the interpreter, and adjusted accordingly, but instead the interpreter will be attentive to what the text says, open to its message, and willing to come to self-understanding through it. In short, the interpreter will not dictate to the text, but will enter into dialogue with it (again Stuhlmacher's language).

Many questions, of course, remain so far as the working out of this modified historical criticism in its application to the Bible is concerned. We may not always expect agreement in our conclusions. It seems fair to say, however, that real commitment to historical criticism, even as appropriately modified, may involve the alteration of some of our views and the acceptance of (or at least openness to!) conclusions hitherto regarded as

"...the historical-critical method, far from vitiating the faith of the church, will in fact vindicate that faith..."

inappropriate for evangelicals. This is only as it should be, for as Van Austin Harvey rightly reminds us in his useful book, *The Historian and the Believer* (1966), it will not do to appeal to historical evidence when it favors our views, but to turn our backs upon the same kind of evidence when it goes against them.

Faith vindicated

But what is so wonderfully refreshing, even exhilarating, about what is going on in Tübingen these days, is the conviction that the proper use of the historical-critical method, far from vitiating the faith of the church, will in fact vindicate that faith in its essentials. The answer to the negativism of the radical critics is not in the repudiation of the method, but in the practice of a more adequate and hence a better historical criticism — quite literally, better scholarship. The New Testament faculty at Tübingen is in the process of proving just that point.

The story of biblical studies at Fuller has in its own way centered around the attempt to show the compatibility of evangelical faith with critical scholarship. Fuller Theological Seminary, like Bengel, Schlatter and the New Testament department at Tübingen, knows well what it is to be attacked from those both to the right and to the left! No one who studied with William Sanford LaSor, George Eldon Ladd or Everett Falconer Harrison needs to be persuaded about the importance of the historical-critical method! And no one who has been in the graduate program at Fuller

has gotten very far without being able to think and work critically.

It would be an understatement to say that there is much work to be done in showing, not just theoretically, but in actual practice, the compatibility of the faith of the church and a sensible historical-critical method. In his apropos book, *Between Faith and Criticism* (1986), which studies the history of biblical scholarship among American evangelicals, Mark A. Noll puts the challenge to American evangelical scholars in these words:

Practitioners of believing criticism, in sum, face two tasks. First is a question of scholarship: Are believing critics able to make convincing arguments to support their interpretations of the text? The second is a question of theory formation: Can believing critics demonstrate that their exegetical conclusions are compatible with larger evangelical convictions? Both concerns, and their connection, are worthy of harder work from evangelical biblical scholars and more comprehensive understanding from the evangelical community at large (p. 173).

There can be no doubt but that the newly constituted Center for Advanced Theological Studies will make an important contribution in this area through its graduates in the years to come. The challenges will not be easily met, but we cannot allow ourselves to be daunted by them. For in the end, what is at stake is nothing less than the truth claim of the gospel. No work is more important or more rewarding than that which lies before us. ■

For further reading: W. Hehl, *Johann Albrecht Bengel. Leben und Werk* (Stuttgart, 1987); W. Neuer, *Adolf Schlatter* (Wuppertal, 1988);

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The Importance of History

by Richard A. Muller

The scholarly or objective study of the history of Christian doctrine is a relatively new phenomenon in theology. The discipline is barely 250 years old in an intellectual community that has been studying theology for more than 17 centuries. Before the early 18th century when Mosheim wrote his *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History* and Walch produced his introduction to the religious controversies both in and beyond the Lutheran Church,¹ the history of Christian teaching and religion was, typically, a function of dogmatic theology. A portion of each locus of the dogmatic system was devoted to a polemical description of the "state of the controversy" in which the views of opponents of all sorts — ranging from the perpetually refuted arch-heretics of the patristic period, to various writers of the Middle Ages, to contemporary adversaries — were ranged in chronological order as part of an etiology of error. The construction of such etiologies is, of course, a time-honored practice, dating back to the classical period and observed by the fathers of the church from the late second century onward. Hippolytus dispensed with the gnostics by arguing the origins of Gnosticism in the errors of Greek philosophy and Athanasius exposted the virtues of Nicaea in his survey of the materials and debates of subsequent councils during the battle against Arianism.²

The object of all these early attempts at the history of Christian doctrine or of heretical opinion was not history as such, but rather a nonhistorical truth standing outside and above the chronology of a problem. History, in other words, has always been recognized as having some importance for the identification of truth, but only in recent times has history been recognized as having an

importance in itself as the embodiment of a kind of truth. This latter recognition was, in its initial form, the contribution of Mosheim, Walch and the theologians of the 18th century who followed in their steps.

In very short order, the 18th century saw the rise of historical-critical method in the works of Baumgarten and Semler³ and the beginnings of the historical approach to biblical theology and to Christian doctrine in the writings of Gabler and Münscher respectively.⁴ Gabler and Münscher were able to perceive that the materials of the past, whether biblical or churchly, could only be brought into the service of contemporary formulation if they were first understood in their own right and independently, without the interference of modern theological categories and opinions. This perception, refined considerably beyond the views of Gabler and Münscher by biblical and historical scholars of the 19th and early 20th centuries, is fundamental to modern theological scholarship and provides the primary rationale for the study of history in seminaries and in graduate programs in religion.

Understanding the past

The importance of history and the dominance of historical method in the contemporary study of religion and theology bear witness, therefore, to the realization that a right understanding of the documents and of the concepts with which theology works is a historically defined and historically governed understanding. The fact that this is a comparatively recent realization means, however, that very few of

the documents and concepts of theology will themselves contain or, in their fundamental intellectual direction, oblige a historical model for understanding their own contents or implications. At one level, then, the importance of history is that it provides a context of meaning that was not immediately or even fully available to the creators of the documents.

The people of the fourth century, for example, certainly knew collectively more about the events of their time than we today can ever reconstruct. Much of the past is lost to us forever. Nonetheless, when we pose the question of the meaning and implication of recorded events, we are in a position, today, through the use of historical method, to know more about the fourth century — or about any past century — than any individual who lived at that time. It is not simply that we know the course of events beyond the life span of individual people. We also are able to understand trajectories of ideas and patterns of debate free from the blinding biases of the moment.

We can draw, by way of illustration of the point, on one of the previously mentioned examples: Athanasius' chronologically organized analysis of the fourth-century councils has little understanding of either the Arian or the Nicene or the non-Nicene, non-Arian views of the relationship of the Father and the Son as growing out of and dependent upon an earlier history of developing Christian God-language. It never occurred to Athanasius that the Arian and the various non-Nicene views of the Godhead had roots in the undeniably orthodox teachings of such writers as the Apologists of the second century, Hippolytus of Rome and Irenaeus, and even had some affinities with the pronouncements of Tertullian. Tertullian, after all, saw no difficulty for Christian theism in the

"The past...cannot mean what we want it to mean — its ideas cannot be forced...into our contemporary context of meaning."

statement that "there was a time when...the Son was not," the very sentiment for which Arius was condemned.⁵ It also most probably never occurred to Athanasius that the gnostic and hermetic use of the term *homoousios*, still remembered by the church at the time of Nicea, may have exerted a positive influence on ecclesiastical usage.⁶

History and self-understanding

Historical understanding of documents and ideas will, therefore, frequently be rather different than the self-understanding of those who held the ideas and who produced the documents, although it will try to analyze and to grasp that original self-understanding as part of the task of historical interpretation. These two elements or aspects of historical understanding are crucial to the work of reconstructing the past, whether for the sake of an accurate representation of the past in and for itself or for the sake of the present-day use of the materials of the past. On the one hand, accurate reconstruction entails the establishment of a legitimate vantage point for the analysis of an idea or document. This vantage point will allow the historian to take into consideration the cultural context, antecedent to, contemporary with and subsequent to, the particular object of study.

In the study of the history of doctrine, the methods of intellectual history demand attention to the development and use of particular vocabularies and to the way in which those vocabularies function in a specific, historically discerned and reconstructed context of meaning. The past, in other words, cannot mean

what we want it to mean — its ideas cannot be forced, certainly not as an initial stage of interpretation, into our contemporary context of meaning. The very terms of an argument, even if they continue to be used in seemingly identical arguments today, will have changed in meaning, if ever so slightly — with the result that our contemporary understanding of those terms will stand in tension with our right understanding of the way in which they functioned in a different time and place.

On the other hand, present-day use of the materials of the past also requires a clear sense of the difference and distinction between the setting of the document and the contemporary setting, as well as a knowledge of the historical path that connects the document with the present and that, in addition to enabling it to speak with a continued relevance to our situation, accounts for the differences between the perspective of the document and our present-day perspective. In those cases when the contents of a document are totally or nearly totally strange to us, the cultural context of the document, in its social, religious, political and linguistic particularity will most certainly provide the best, if not the only, corridor of access to the meaning and implication of the document. Without a grasp of that context, the contents of the document will either remain utterly puzzling to us or they will be assimilated to — and therefore misinterpreted by — our own cultural and intellectual milieu. The point is particularly telling when a specific

document or set of ideas, despite the remoteness of its situation from ours, so belongs to the foundations of our own thinking that its right interpretation is necessary to our own self-understanding.

An example of this latter dilemma (again, remaining within the bounds of the historical problems already noted) is the attempt of a fairly well-known contemporary theologian to argue that the Nicene or Athanasian *homoousios* means "that God himself is the content of his revelation in Jesus Christ" and that the "Gift" is "identical" with the "Giver."⁷ In the first place, the term *homoousios* implies no particular theory of revelation, most certainly not a theory of revelation as "personal" rather than "propositional," such as appears to underlie these statements. In the second place, although the term certainly does indicate the essential (although not the individual or personal) identity of God the Father with the divine Logos incarnate in Jesus Christ, it in no way implies either the identity of God with Jesus Christ, who was both divine and human, or the identity of Jesus Christ with the entirety of God's revelation. After all, Athanasius strongly affirmed, in agreement with virtually all of his predecessors in the patristic era, the revelatory work of the *Logos asarkos*, that is, of the Logos apart from the flesh, in and through the created order. Moreover, inasmuch as revelation is the work and not the being of the Logos, the Logos itself cannot be identical with revelation. In addition, Athanasius' clear distinction of divine persons, together with his assumption that the Logos, as second in order, serves a mediatorial function, precludes any theory of a total revelation of the transcendent Father — and, therefore, once again, any thought of an identity between God

"Where the ethicist, the philosopher or the theologian judges crime or error or heresy, the historian reports analytically..."

and his self-revelation.⁸ Whatever the merit of a 20th-century theory of the identity of God with his self-revelation, it is an example of badly done history to thrust the theory upon Athanasius. It is also exceedingly unlikely, at least to the mind of this writer, that badly done history can be the basis of well-done theology.

The importance of history

The point is not that history "teaches lessons" about the good and the bad, the moral and the immoral. Such lessons are the province of ethics, not of history. The importance of history lies instead in the realm of the identification and definition of issues and of the cultivation of objectivity in judgment. The assignment of value — whether ethical, philosophical or theological — to the ideas and events of the past is not, per se, a historical task. Where the ethicist, the philosopher or the theologian judges crime or error or heresy, the historian reports analytically with a view toward meaning in the original context. When a historian does write of crime or error or heresy, those judgments arise not out of the opinion of the historian but out of the clear presentation of the views of the contemporaries of the individual, idea or event in question: thus, Arianism is not a heresy and the teaching of Athanasius not orthodox because a contemporary historian says so, but because the church of the fourth century, represented in two ecumenical councils, offered that opinion.

When, moreover, historians reappraise decisions of the past, they do so on the basis of evidence drawn from the past, not on the basis of

present-day assumptions. Thus, several 20th-century scholars have argued that Nestorius was, at least in his intentions, essentially orthodox. Their point is not that the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon were incorrect in their assignment of boundaries to Christological orthodoxy in the fifth century — and certainly not that the 20th century can claim, on historical grounds, that what was once heterodox can now be appropriated as useful teaching. Instead, these scholars have examined a recently rediscovered treatise by Nestorius and have reexamined the evidence from Nestorius' debate with Cyril of Alexandria and have concluded that Nestorius' views may have been misconstrued for political reasons. In other words, the theological rectitude of the councils is not an issue — but the accurate representation of the views of the historical Nestorius and of his relationship to the views known as Nestorianism is an issue for the historian.⁹

The importance of history, therefore, in general and in its specific relationship to the graduate study of the Christian church and its tradition, can be found both in the importance of the remains of times past and in the importance of the cultivation of an objective approach to the materials of religion and theology. If Leopold von Ranke's maxim concerning the reconstruction of the past "*wie es eigentlich gewesen*" (as it really was) is understood not as an attainable object but as the description of the fundamental intention of historical method it ceases to be an unattainable dream and becomes a practical guide. More than that, it becomes the first step in a process of education or, perhaps, a hermeneutical circle, that moves from the materials of history to the historian or theologian in the present-day context and then back

again to the materials, that creates a perspective for understanding the materials themselves, the larger tradition to which they belong, and in addition one's own situation in the present, and that provides an attitude and a set of intellectual tools for the better evaluation of all of the ideas and materials of theology.

If the graduate study of the Christian church and its tradition is to be designed to train teachers and leaders for service in seminaries, universities and churches, the balance and the objectivity together with the understanding of materials, past and present, and of one's self that are to be gained from historical study are indispensable. History provides, on the one hand, a source of breadth for contemporary theology inasmuch as its vast resources of ideas and perspectives manifest a variety and a range of insight quite beyond the reach of an individual mind or of a community of minds at a particular time. When approached by means of a balanced and objective historical method, these resources — simply by reason of their breadth and of their cultural and intellectual relation to our present — lend a certain balance and objectivity to our own discourse.

On the other hand, history offers a source of limitation inasmuch as its resources frequently manifest the failure of plans, projects, ideas and systems, or demonstrate the inability of certain teachings to bear an intellectual freight for which they were not designed. One of my teachers in patristic theology liked to observe, with a wry smile, that the modern church, usually because of its ignorance of the patristic period, tended to duplicate in its theology most of the errors and problems of

"Objectivity arises out of a willingness to let the materials of history speak in their own terms..."

the first five centuries of Christian thought. When approached in a balanced and objective manner, history provides insight into the limitation of our powers if only by preserving the reasons for the failures of the past and, in the case of the theological tradition, showing the boundaries within which the community has chosen to formulate its views.

Objectivity and self-discipline

Our final question, therefore, is the question of objectivity. Historians have long debated the question of whether or not objectivity is possible, granting the involvement in one way or another of the historian in and with the materials of history. Can Christians write objectively about Christianity? Can Christians deal with their own history in such a way as to discern accurately and responsibly its meaning even when that meaning does not oblige their preconceptions? And, if so, can they build on what they have found? It is fair to say that scholars have long recognized that the claim of scientific objectivity made by historians of the 19th century cannot be ratified. The materials that we deal with are not "brute facts" — they already contain elements of interpretation in themselves. In addition, we cannot as historians so abstract ourselves from our own opinions and presuppositions that our analysis contains nothing of ourselves. We bring to the historical task, at very least, some existential reason for analyzing this particular set of materials rather than some other. History, thus, cannot be purely impartial reportage. The selectivity

involved both in the creation and preservation and in the scholarly gathering of materials bars the way to such impartiality.

Nonetheless, most contemporary scholars have also resisted the inclination of some early 20th-century historians and of some modern hermeneuticians to become lost in a mire of subjectivity and relativism and to claim that the materials of the past mean whatever can be made of them. Certainly, the significance of materials changes over time and new levels of significance are added as materials are carried forward in a tradition of interpretation — but the meaning of the document in its original situation not only does not change but also continues to limit the significance of the document in the present. Objectivity arises out of a willingness to let the materials of history speak in their own terms while the historian, at the same time, exercises a combination of critical judgment and careful self-restraint.

This objectivity, so important to the understanding of both past and present, results neither from an absence of presuppositions, opinions and existential involvement nor from an ability to set aside such biases. Rather it results from an honest and methodologically lucid recognition and use of the resident bias as a basis for approaching and analyzing the differences between one's own situation and the situation of a given document or concept. In other words, involvement in the materials of history can lead to a methodologically constructed and controlled objectivity that is quite different from and, arguably, superior to a bland, uninvolved distancing of the self from the materials that must, ultimately, remove the importance from history.

How is this possible? I believe that the historian can build on negative and positive encounters with materials

by asking the basic question, "Granting my negative, my positive or my surprised reaction, what is there about these materials, their cultural context and the opinions or presuppositions of their author(s) that leads their author(s) and presses these materials in a direction other than that to which I am accustomed?" Couching the question in this way opens the historian to differences between past and present and places the emphasis of the investigation on the character of the past as worthy of being known in and for itself, *precisely because it is different*. The results of this kind of historical investigation can, moreover, be used by others — theologians or philosophers — to raise questions about the present and to develop or augment their self-understanding. The basic methodological question concerning differences of opinion or presupposition can, after all, be reversed in its direction, with a similar result as long as the initial historical work has been done with a certain degree of objectivity.

The importance of objectively recounted history lies, therefore, both in the task itself and in the use of its result. From the task itself not only is

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Current Research in Church History

by James E. Bradley

Major methodological advances in the humanities are usually not as frequent, nor as dramatic, as advances in the natural sciences. Two notable exceptions to this rule are found in the Enlightenment and in the current revolution in the storage and retrieval of information. Modern critical historical studies emerged in the late 17th century in the wake of the wide dissemination of the scientific method. The discipline of church history benefited enormously from the new empirical techniques of science. By the mid-18th century, church historians expressed a greater interest in the analysis of primary documents and they interpreted their findings in ways that did not lead to predetermined, sectarian goals. For the first time, the critical study of church history involved an investigation of the circumstances in which documents originated and the cross-examination of sources. Increasingly, confessional biases were consciously suppressed, and one found a new, more detached and comparative approach to research. From the Enlightenment forward, the critical study of church history has entailed the use of "unaided" reason and the consistent application of the latest analytical techniques.

For 200 years the basic methods of historical investigation have remained essentially the same. But while the mental tools of the Enlightenment have not been superseded, they are no longer sufficient for critical historical study. Advances in technology are currently influencing the humanities on a scale comparable to the impact of the scientific method during the Enlightenment. Ten years ago it was commonly thought that the use of computers and sources in microform

applied to only certain types of historical investigation, such as economic and social history, or more narrowly, to those areas that were susceptible to quantification. Research on the impact of religious belief on voting behavior is one good example of the value of quantitative studies. But a number of well-known scholars resisted the so-called "new history" with a passion that bordered on paranoia. They feared that the new methods would drain history of meaning; most of the critics worked in the field of intellectual history, and in their apprehensions, the specter of economic determinism was always standing in the wings.¹

Church historians have been even more reluctant than historians of ideas to embrace the new technology, and apparently for the same philosophical reasons.² Recent innovations in storing and searching documents have simply passed these critics by and placed the debate on an entirely new footing. It is now evident that scholars in most fields of history must become familiar with at least the rudiments of the new techniques. The revolution in the manipulation of information made possible by the computer is clearly transforming the nature of research, though, to be sure, the mental habits of disciplined study and critical judgment remain unchanged. The unparalleled access to sources in the new mediums of microfilm, microfiche and compact disk is a closely related phenomenon.

This essay will argue that the new technology, understood broadly, is no longer optional. Human reason can

now be significantly "aided," and this new approach to research needs to be conceptualized as the new critical method, rather than one method among many that may or may not be adopted. The term "critical" is used to denote both the importance of these new methods and sources, and their power to aid analysis. The scholar who neglects current technological advances in the manipulation and accessing of sources puts him or herself in the position of the student who refuses to adopt the methodological advances of the Enlightenment; they become, by definition, pre-critical.

The areas in which students can safely ignore the new critical method are becoming fewer, and even those scholars working in areas as yet untouched by this technology can still benefit from an exposure to the conceptual elegance of unimpeded research and exhaustive, near-perfect bibliographies. In many, if not most, fields of historical inquiry, the nature of critical study today thus necessarily entails the utilization of new searching techniques based on modern technology. We shall test the thesis by examining several large collaborative projects that have great significance for the study of church history, and conclude with observations on the implications of these techniques and collections for Fuller's Center for Advanced Theological Study.

The new databases

Two interdisciplinary collaborative efforts, each little more than a decade old, have already transformed the way church historians study the past. The one pertains to the first centuries of the church, the other to the modern period, but both offer the student unprecedented ease of search and stunning breadth of bibliographical

"In 30 minutes at a computer terminal, it was possible to search 16 major research libraries throughout the U.S. and Great Britain..."

sweep. The *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* project is currently collecting and entering into a computer the standard scholarly editions of all Greek authors who wrote from the time of Homer (ca. 750 B.C.) to A.D. 600.³ This massive database will eventually comprise some 60 million words and is one of the largest collections of machine-readable texts in the world; it is currently two-thirds complete. The works of all of the Greek fathers of the early church may now be examined and compared in ways heretofore thought impossible. All of the occurrences of a word or a phrase or a combination of words and phrases may be located in minutes.

The *Thesaurus* is the lexicographer's dream come true, but it offers perhaps even greater potential for the church historian. Studies of theological terms and phrases in the large corpus of the works of Athanasius, or the Cappadocian fathers, or Eusebius of Caesarea, will undoubtedly bring many new insights to light. For example, a search of all references to women would reveal the precise usage and intent of the fathers, and examination of terms related to ascetic practices will give us new insights into the spiritual disciplines. Study of early Christian usage with respect to the Romans and the state should result in clearer understanding of church-state relations. Comparative studies will be equally useful; the comparison of Christian and pagan authors may show new ways in which early Christians related to the surrounding culture.

The *Eighteenth-Century Short Title Catalog (ESTC)* project has cataloged on computer approximately 200,000 titles of 18th-century books, sermons,

pamphlets and ephemera.⁴ Nearly 1,000 libraries worldwide have contributed records to the *ESTC* file, making it the largest single retrospective cataloging operation ever undertaken. This computer-based bibliography puts incredible searching power at the fingertips of the historian; in addition to locating all of the published works of individual authors, it is possible to search any word or combination of words in a title. My current research on the pulpit in late 18th-century British politics provides three useful illustrations.

In a matter of seconds one learns that the output of Anglican sermons three years into the French Revolution (1792) is almost double the number of sermons published at the height of the American Revolution (1778). A very small investment of time thereby yields a valuable comparative datum that may lead to a working hypothesis concerning the influence of the pulpit in the age of revolution. But since the *ESTC* lists all of the libraries in which a given document is located, one of the most valuable uses is found in its noting the physical location of documents. In 30 minutes at a computer terminal, it was possible to search 16 major research libraries spread throughout the United States and Great Britain for sermons preached during the opening year of the French Revolution. The bulk of the sermons are predictably found in the British Library and Cambridge University Library, but the search revealed unique copies of sermons that can be obtained nowhere but at Exeter Central Library, Birmingham Public Library and Liverpool University Library.

Because of the wide geographical dispersion of sources, in the past a

scholar was physically limited to the collections of a relatively small number of major libraries. Commonly, the scholar who cast the widest net commanded the greatest authority. But a library's holdings are ordinarily established on the haphazard basis of the availability of primary sources, not on the rational grounds of collecting all the sources pertaining to an individual scholar's narrow interests. And thus even a tolerably complete search would sometimes result in serious lacunae; and since the process of interpretation begins with the selection of sources, we cannot construe the old approach of examining collection after collection as genuinely critical. Today, for the first time in history, the researcher enjoys the possibility of perusing all the extant literature in a field. Where the bulk of sources is too great, samples can be chosen on rational grounds of selection rather than simply one's ability to travel the distance. In this case, the method is thus genuinely critical and not dependent on haphazard collecting.

The greatest use of the *ESTC*, however, lies in its providing a nearly complete bibliography of all published works on a given topic. Within a few hours, one can obtain a complete list of all sermons printed in Great Britain during the American Revolution (the years 1774-1783 yield 1,259 titles) and the French Revolution (the years 1789-1798 yield 2,316 titles). Using traditional techniques for this task would have

"It is currently impossible to use large research libraries without an elementary introduction to computer searching..."

consumed four to six months of full-time research, and the expense would have been prohibitive for most scholars.⁵

Important contemporary topics such as toleration, secularization, religious pluralism, and spirituality can now be examined in detail, exhaustively tracing their roots in the early modern period. The director of the North American branch of the *ESTC* is currently seeking funding to put on line all titles in English from the beginning of printing to the year 1700. The power these tools offer the historian is simply unparalleled in history, and the same observations apply to searches of secondary literature, both unpublished (dissertations) and published (articles and monographs). Clearly, traditional hard-copy bibliographies will remain useful, but given the current rate of proliferation of monographic literature, it is entirely likely that computerized searching will be mandatory in five years. It is currently impossible to use large research libraries without an elementary introduction to computer searching and microfiche readers.

The new sources

The miniaturization that is made possible by new technology in microform and compact disks rivals the searching power of the computer in importance. Illustrations from the period of the early church, the Reformation and the modern church will substantiate this contention. Currently 8,400 separate Greek works (of a total that will eventually number 18,000) are available in their entirety

(41 million words of text) on a single 5.25 inch compact disk. The *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* project does provide individual searches for scholars, though the disk itself may be obtained by institutions willing to agree to licensing stipulations. Scholars will still find Migne's *Patrologia* useful, but it will only be a matter of time before the new medium will force such traditional sources, when used in isolation, into obsolescence.

With the advent of printing, the bulk of available source material becomes daunting, and yet enormous strides in filming documents have recently been made. Between the Center for Reformation Research in St. Louis, Missouri, and Interdocumentation Company of Zug, Switzerland, one can find in microform virtually every significant document of the Protestant Reformation. The Center has filmed both manuscript and printed sources, while Interdocumentation Company has major microfiche collections on Reformed Protestantism, 16th-century pamphlets in German and Latin (1501-1530), the Radical Reformation, and Dutch Protestants (ca. 1486-1684). The German and Latin pamphlet series alone comprise approximately 5,000 separate documents, and individual items may be purchased separately.

University Microfilms International may be thought of as the English counterpart to Interdocumentation Company. It has microfilmed virtually every pamphlet and book found in the Short Title Catalogs of Pollard and Redgrave (through the year 1640) and Wing (through 1700). Research Publications of Woodbridge, Connecticut is well into the process of reproducing on microfilm most titles in the *ESTC*. When combined (and completed in the mid-1990s), these

two publishing ventures will provide access to every important book or pamphlet published in English from the beginning of printing in 1475 through 1800. University Microfilms has already photographed most of the printed sources in English from the beginning of printing until 1700; what is not currently available at nearby university libraries may readily be ordered on 35 mm microfilm. Nor are these projects limited to the filming of printed materials; major archives of manuscript material are now being put on microfilm or microfiche. The historian who neglects the availability of these new techniques of searching and new sources of historical information will do so to his or her own great harm.

Implications for the Center for Advanced Theological Studies

The new techniques and sources have considerable relevance for research students in the Center for Advanced Theological Studies. Given the contemporary ease with which computers are linked to databases, the need for scholars to locate themselves near large research libraries is definitely lessened. The Southern California area, however, does offer the research student a number of unique advantages. In years past, scholars in the humanities often thought of the Western United States as an intellectual wasteland, with the possible exception of that oasis of learning, the Huntington Library in San Marino, California. Such an uncharitable judgment can no longer

"Above all, however, the new technology bodes well for the creation of new research projects..."

be credibly maintained. With its excellent collections in 17th- and 18th-century English history and literature, the Huntington serves a wide community of scholars and provides extraordinary opportunities for research. Godfrey Davies, author of *The Oxford History of England* for the period of the early Stuarts (1603-1660), observed that the 17th-century English history holdings of the Huntington Library were so strong that he could work "as conveniently in San Marino as anywhere in the world,"⁶ and he wrote before the advent of the computer.

The student who uses databases like the *ESTC* will be surprised at the vast extent of the Huntington's rare book and pamphlet collection. On a recent trip to Harvard University, out of curiosity I compared the number of Anglican sermons held by the Andover-Harvard Theological Library, the Widener Library, the Houghton Library and the Boston Athenaeum to those held by the Huntington Library, and found that the Huntington held six sermons to every one located in the greater Boston area. The Huntington's English language holdings in the period from the Reformation through the early 19th century, when combined with the resources of the William Andrews Clark Library of UCLA, rivals, and in some specialized areas exceeds, many East Coast university libraries.

The University of California campuses in the Southern California area offer the student additional advantages. The *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* project is located at the University of California, Irvine, and the North American branch of the *ESTC* has recently moved to the University of California, Riverside. Research

students are cordially received at these centers and tutored in the new searching techniques free of charge. Since UCLA purchases all of the microfilm printed by University Microfilm and Research Publications programs, the sources can either be consulted at UCLA or brought to Fuller's McAlister Library on interlibrary loan. Fuller is thus ideally located relative both to major research libraries and scholarly projects.

On the Fuller campus, the student has ready access to the research tools mentioned in this essay. For example, in addition to all of the standard databases in dissertations and religious subjects, McAlister Library is now linked to the Research Library Information Network that accesses the *ESTC*. When used in conjunction with the libraries and programs in the Los Angeles area, these resources provide unusual advantages to the student. Both professors in church history at Fuller have worked extensively in primary documents in the early modern period and both have considerable experience in using the new techniques and sources. Graduate students can thus expect a rigorous introduction to these methods in the jointly taught course on historiography.

Above all, however, the new technology bodes well for the creation of new research projects which have been alluded to throughout this essay. Indeed, old topics can now be reexamined, but with more extensive documentation and hence, greater precision. New areas of research are opening rapidly as the capabilities of the new techniques are recognized. For example, it is now possible to study the number of editions of religious pamphlets and the place where they were published, and this in turn will allow us to offer new interpretations concerning the influence of religious ideas. Since the

college library holdings for the 18th century of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge are now being put on computer, it is entirely likely that hitherto unexamined titles in theology will come to light, thereby opening yet another series of topics for research students. The entire written corpus of less well-known persons can now be examined, and these works will often provide enough new material to sustain a thesis or dissertation. Clearly, the use of the new techniques for identifying people in the past has implications for women's studies in church history.

Since the church history department is committed to locating new areas of research, and since the use of the new technology offers the greatest likelihood of generating these projects, the new critical study of church history will continue to be a marked feature of the Center for Advanced Theological Studies. ■

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Philosophy and Ethics at Fuller

by Richard J. Mouw

One of my philosophy teachers liked to begin his introductory courses by telling his students that philosophy is "excessive questioning." In saying this he did not mean to denigrate his own subject matter. Nor was he suggesting that philosophical questioning is the sort of thing people engage in only when they can justify a bit of self-indulgence. Instead, he was challenging his students to think about how they lay out the boundaries of the "excessive" in forming their own intellectual habits. Philosophy, he was saying, deals with issues that are *considered* to be excessive by people who are simply bent upon getting things done. Philosophy calls into question that which we take for granted as we pursue the ordinary business of life.

This teacher had found a clever way of characterizing the nature of the philosophical enterprise. Philosophy examines presuppositions. Philosophers reflect critically upon the beliefs and principles and norms that we take for granted in our ordinary pursuits (even our ordinary intellectual pursuits). And it would indeed be "excessive" if we were always to be philosophical in this sense. We cannot stop to think everything through each time we are called upon to perform a task or make a decision.

The failure of conservative Protestantism

A community is in bad shape, however, if it never thinks critically about presuppositions. This is certainly true of the Christian community. Disciples of Jesus Christ need to engage in that kind of "excessive questioning" which gives them a perspective on who they are and how they are to conduct their lives.

Carl F.H. Henry recognized this back in 1947, when he published his little book *The Uneasy Conscience of*

Modern Fundamentalism. In that discussion, Henry dissected conservative Protestantism's failure, during the first half of the 20th century, to engage the important issues of North American societal life. But Henry's intent was not to encourage evangelical Christians to correct their past mistakes simply by launching new programs of social reform. He was convinced that the failure to demonstrate an evangelical sense of social responsibility was connected to some bad intellectual habits. The proper antidote to an unthinking inactivism, Henry recognized, was not an unthinking activism, but a reflective attempt to chart out new patterns of obedience. His therapeutic proposals, then, placed a strong emphasis on the need for an evangelical scholarship that paid careful attention to presuppositions.

Many of the things that Carl Henry called for in 1947 have begun to be realized in the evangelical community. Evangelical Christians have a stronger sense of cultural responsibility today than they did 41 years ago. And important gains have been made in bringing about the kind of reflective evangelical scholarship that he envisioned then. Indeed, it is not an insignificant fact that Henry's analysis of conservative Protestantism's "uneasy conscience" appeared in the year that Fuller Theological Seminary was founded. The fostering of cultural responsibility and scholarly integrity has been a consistent theme throughout Fuller's history.

A seminary is one important place where Christians can engage in "excessive questioning." To be sure, it is not the only place. The important task of fostering presuppositional

awareness also requires the efforts of Christian scholars who are working in other sorts of scholarly settings. But there is a kind of philosophical investigation that is proper to a seminary context.

Why do philosophy and ethics in seminary?

A few years ago, Princeton Seminary's Diogenes Allen wrote an important book entitled *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*. The very title of Professor Allen's study highlights the significance of his discussion for seminary education: in what way can philosophy contribute to the kind of understanding that is necessary for a healthy theological curriculum?

Theological educators have often operated with a rather narrow conception of the role of philosophy in the quest for theological understanding. For one thing, we have often focused our attention almost exclusively on what we might think of as "the philosophy of God." Our seminary philosophy courses have either focused on problems associated with the divine attributes, such as God's being, goodness and power, or they have explored topics associated with *belief* in God, especially the cluster of philosophical issues having to do with the connection between "faith and reason."

To be sure, these are important matters to study in a seminary context. But there is no reason why philosophy has to play such a narrow role in theological investigation. Indeed, philosophical inquiry should range as wide as the seminary curriculum itself. It certainly can deal with questions that go beyond a focus on the being of God and our knowledge of things divine. Theology itself has a larger subject matter than

"...many questions of concern to Christians have not been the topics that secular graduate schools have viewed as important..."

those topics, and philosophy can explore the broader reaches of theological subject matter: human nature and destiny, the character and goals of the historical process, the patterns of cultural development, and so on. Diogenes Allen rightly notes that a key topic for philosophical theology today is "the hermeneutical question," which is, in his apt characterization, "the question of how to understand or to interpret texts from periods and cultures that are not our own."

At Fuller, the possibilities for a broad-ranging philosophical inquiry are enhanced by the presence of strong programs in both psychology and cross-cultural studies. Topics in the philosophy of the human sciences — sociology, anthropology, as well as psychology — are of great importance in such a setting. Indeed, the very presence of three separate faculties within one theological seminary brings to the surface significant interdisciplinary issues that might easily be ignored in theological seminaries with less ambitious curricula.

A similar far-ranging role can be claimed for ethical studies — the other half of my own assignment at Fuller. People often attempt to cordon off ethical concerns into a curricular corner; ethics becomes an optional activity for people who are interested in "practical applications."

But ethical issues arise at every point of the curricular spectrum in theological education. For one thing, we cannot study the Bible properly without treating it as a profoundly moral book: the biblical narratives detail the efforts of God's people to understand and to obey the divine will in all things. This same narrative is

extended into the historical development of the Christian church, where many of the deepest divisions that have long plagued the Christian community are rooted in moral disagreements. And not only do questions about ethical norms arise in various pastoral settings, they are crucial to discussions about the cross-cultural transmission of the gospel message.

Advanced studies

These considerations about the general role of philosophical and ethical studies in seminary education are very relevant to more specific questions about the nature of the kind of advanced *graduate* scholarship in these areas that can take place in the context of theological education.

There are certainly many excellent doctoral level programs available to Christians who want to engage in high quality research in philosophy and ethics. Fuller is not a university; nor does it have a large faculty in which people are engaging in various specialized studies in the philosophical and ethical disciplines. Given these limitations, then, how can Fuller support the kind of graduate scholarship in philosophy and ethics that will draw upon its unique institutional strengths and gifts?

At least two dimensions of Fuller's institutional character are important for answering this question. The first is the obvious fact that Fuller is a theological *seminary*. I have already pointed to the way in which special kinds of philosophical and ethical

issues emerge within a seminary context, issues that range over the whole of the theological curriculum.

There is an important need for graduate programs wherein scholars are able to prepare for the kind of teaching of philosophical and ethical subjects that is appropriate for seminary settings. Many existing doctoral programs, even some of the very best ones, are not especially good settings for graduate students who are preparing for careers in seminary teaching.

Notre Dame philosopher Alvin Plantinga has pointed to the fact that many of the philosophical questions that are of genuine concern to Christians have not been the sorts of topics that the secular graduate schools have viewed as important, or even legitimate, matters for sustained investigation on the part of doctoral students in philosophy. A similar point can be made about those philosophical and ethical topics that are of special interest in the context of seminary education. If adequate preparation is to be offered for persons who sense a vocation to teach these subjects in a seminary context, it is important that graduate programs be developed where this subject matter is treated as a legitimate — and even an exciting — area for scholarly investigation.

But a seminary graduate program in philosophical and ethical studies can also play a supportive role in preparing scholars for other areas of seminary teaching. Graduate students in New Testament studies, for example, can benefit greatly from the presence of philosophy and ethics mentors who are interested in exploring, say, the relationship between philosophical

"The evangelical community has a lot of ethical homework to do, an assignment that will necessitate careful scholarly reflection."

ethics and scholarly studies in "the ethics of Jesus," or the relevance of general philosophical theories of hermeneutics to questions of biblical interpretation.

Servant leadership

A second relevant dimension of Fuller's institutional character is its identity as an *evangelical* seminary. Fuller is an important training ground for people preparing for leadership positions in that network of ecclesiastical, parachurch and educational ministries that is crucial to the life of conservative, evangelical Protestantism. Increasingly, the evangelical community is insisting that its leadership be well-educated. Graduate studies programs that are sensitive to evangelical concerns — including uniquely evangelical concerns regarding philosophical and ethical issues — have an important role to play in this kind of leadership training.

And evangelicals do have unique needs and concerns when it comes to ethical and philosophical issues. These matters need to be addressed if evangelicals are to make peace with our collective "uneasy conscience," by assuming a more responsible cultural role in the life of the larger human community.

It is important, for example, that evangelicals engage in careful, critical reflection on the ethical patterns of the Christian life. Back in the early 1970s, when there was a new outbreak of "evangelical social action" in North America, it was common for analysts to remark that evangelicals had long been strong in the area of personal ethics, but were only now getting interested in social ethics.

The fact is, however, that we evangelicals have not really been very strong in *either* personal or social

ethics. For example, long before the "televangelist" scandals of the recent past, professional evangelists have been well-known for exaggerated claims regarding successes in "soul-winning," as well as for extreme laxity in their patterns of financial accountability. And neither have we evangelicals been especially noteworthy for our patterns of truth-telling in our dealings with our neighbors. As a people whose theological habits have been shaped by the harsh realities of ecclesiastical warfare, we have regularly set forth less than honest accounts of the viewpoints and intentions of our theological opponents.

The evangelical community has a lot of ethical homework to do, an assignment that will necessitate careful scholarly reflection. But many of the defects that we must correct in our ethical outlook are related to serious philosophical shortcomings.

Habits of mind

Not that evangelicals have simply ignored philosophical discussion. On one level we have actually paid considerable attention to philosophical ideas. But the quantity of our philosophical thoughts has not always been matched by a high quality in the results of our labors.

Evangelical philosophical reflection in North America has been hampered by a number of unfortunate intellectual habits. One such item is our strong pragmatist mentality in dealing with philosophical questions. This tendency to reduce everything to "practical" relevance is not, of course, a unique feature of evangelicalism. It is very much an *American* habit of

mind. But we evangelicals have often outdone other North Americans in our commitment to pragmatism, because of our special theological emphases. We have often viewed ourselves, for example, as an embattled cognitive minority; as such, we have not allowed ourselves the luxury of the kind of critical reflection that requires a careful examination of our own patterns of thought. When we add to this our strong sense of the evangelistic urgency of "getting the message out," it is easy to see why philosophical reflection has often been tolerated only if it has been harnessed to pragmatically directed "causes."

Since evangelical philosophizing has often been done under pragmatic pressure, it has typically been characterized by a strong apologetic tone. The same spirit that has harnessed philosophy to pragmatic programs has employed philosophical reasoning primarily as a means for reinforcing evangelical identity.

Thus, to choose just one example, Hegel's philosophy has regularly been presented in the form of an easy to understand, handy, one-paragraph summary, and the presentation has been made in a context where the goal has been to show that, say, Barth is a Hegelian and evangelicals ought not to be Hegelians. This sort of practical-apologetic approach has often prevailed over an interest in studying Hegel for the purpose of providing the Christian community with leaders who have wrestled with important philosophical ideas by way of engaging in a careful examination of their own worldview.

Evangelical ecumenism

Graduate studies at Fuller Theological Seminary can provide an important environment for fostering the kind of critical spirit that is so

"The evangelical community desperately needs to cultivate more ecumenically honest habits of thought."

important to the health of evangelicalism. People who will be serving evangelical churches and organizations, and especially those who will be teaching in institutions where poorly developed philosophical habits have long prevailed, can benefit from the opportunity to engage these issues in a supportive evangelical environment.

The presence of both the School of Psychology and the School of World Mission at Fuller can only be an added benefit in this regard. Certainly very few graduate students at Fuller will go on to work in environments where interdisciplinary and cross-cultural issues are of little concern. At Fuller, they can take advantage of a dialogue across disciplinary and cultural boundaries that will be crucial for the pursuit of their vocations as evangelical leaders.

There is yet another kind of dialogue that is crucial to Christian ethical and philosophical investigations: *ecumenical* dialogue. The evangelical community desperately needs to cultivate more ecumenically honest habits of thought. Not that philosophers and ethicists can solve all the problems in this area. But they do have a contribution to make in the quest for Christian truth-telling.

Many of the points of conflict that have long characterized our relationships with our Christian siblings in mainline Protestantism, Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy have strong connections to ethical and philosophical matters. The opportunity to explore these issues

in an atmosphere permeated by what Fuller President David A. Hubbard has referred to as "evangelical ecumenism" is an exciting one. And it provides us with yet another good reason to explore the ways in which Fuller can be a supportive environment for advanced graduate scholarship in philosophy and ethics. ■

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Why Another Old Testament Commentary

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order, as it was set." It is to eat "the dinner according to the menu." So I must teach the Old Testament on its own terms: I must walk with God and Israel, retracing the path of his journeying with them, and lead others along that path, until I can hand them over to other guides trained in New Testament terrain.

On my stretch of the walk I find meaningful, if incomplete, truth, with which the Christian dare not dispense. I see God's involvement in the ordinary realities of life — sometimes more clearly than I can espy it in the otherworldliness and ecclesiasticism of the New Testament! As a bonus, I realize and affirm the value of the Old Testament as laying (as C.H. Dodd put it) "the substructure of New Testament theology." I am proud that the New Testament's record of the work of God in Christ used the Old Testament as a series of models and patterns to capture the theological significance of Christ and the church.

Much more is involved in making a commentary. Bibliographical resources have to be compiled and sifted, for biblical interpretation is an exercise in fellowship, and not a matter of riding your own hobbyhorse. Often a new translation has to be made, which is modern and yet faithful to the original

"From the result of objective historical investigation comes an indispensable tool for the exercise of critical judgment..."

text. It must also reflect the insights that the commentator has finally gained. Then there is the painstaking task of textual criticism that must be done in order to establish what Scripture really says.

Each pericope (self-contained section of the text) has to be analyzed from many different angles, so as to see the total picture. Concentric circles have to be drawn as the pericope is related to the wider context of the book, the Old Testament, the whole biblical canon, and life itself. And on an emotional level, I must confess to the terror of the next pericope and the dismay its shadow casts — and the gut gratitude to God, when it eventually yields up its agenda and grants insight to see beyond what it says to what it meant and means. ■

The Importance of History

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there gained a knowledge that has its own value as knowledge but also the mind of the investigator is trained in an approach to materials that yields balance and solidity of judgment as well as clearer self-understanding. From the result of objective historical investigation comes an indispensable tool for the exercise of critical judgment and for the formulation of ideas in the present. Theological and religious understanding have profited immensely from the revolution in historical thinking that took place during the 18th century. Training in theology, especially at the advanced level of a graduate program, whatever the field or sub-discipline, gains its substance and its perspective from history. ■

Notes

¹ Johann Lorenz von Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History, Ancient and Modern*, trans. James Murdock, 4 vols. (London: Longman, 1841) originally published in 1755; Johann Georg Walch, *Historische und theologische Einleitung in die Religionsstreitigkeiten der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche*, 5 vols. (Jena, 1730-39); and idem., *Historische und theologische Einleitung in die Religionsstreitigkeiten, welche sonderlich ausser der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche entstanden*, 5 vols. (Jena, 1733-36).

² See Hippolytus of Rome, *The Refutation of all Heresies*, Book I, prooemium, in ANF, vol. 5, p. 10; Athanasius, *De Synodis*, in NPNF, series 2, vol. 4, pp. 448-480.

³ See the discussion in Hans W. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth*

Century Hermeneutics (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), pp. 88-91, 111-112, 157-161, etc.

⁴ On Gabler see *ibid.*, pp. 159, 163, 165-167, 248-251; for a discussion of Munscher, see Adolph von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 7 vols., trans. Neil Buchanan (repr. N.Y.: Dover, 1961), vol. 1, pp. 13, 31-32.

⁵ Tertullian, *Against Hermogenes*, chap. 3, in ANF, vol. 3, p. 478; cf. Arius, *Letter to Alexander*, in Athanasius, *De Synodis*, 16. (N.B., Tertullian's language is clearer in the Latin original: "Fuit autem tempus...et filius non erat" in PL, 2.200.)

⁶ On the history of the term *homoousios*, see G.L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought* (London: SPCK, 1952), pp. 197-201; and for the usage in the hermetic literature see *Hermetica*, 4 vols., edited and trans. Walter Scott (repr. Boston: Shambhala, 1985), vol. 1, p. 118 (*Poimandres*, 10).

⁷ Thomas F. Torrance, *The Trinitarian Faith: The Evangelical Theology of the Ancient Catholic Church* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), pp. 138, 305.

⁸ Cf. G.L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought*, pp. 214-218, especially p. 218 with Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971-), vol. 1, pp. 202-206.

⁹ Cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrine*, revised edition (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), pp. 310-317.

Current Research in Church History

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Notes

¹ Jacques Barzun, *Clio and the Doctors: Psycho-History, Quantohistory, and History* (Chicago, 1974); G.R. Elton, "Two Kinds of History," in Robert W. Fogel and G.R. Elton, *Which Road to the Past?* (New Haven, 1983); Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The New History and the Old* (Cambridge, Mass., 1987). Recent quantitative research in popular religion and popular politics has in fact demonstrated the influence of ideas on behavior, but with far greater authority than the old analysis of literary sources.

² The briefest survey of major periodicals like the *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* and *Church History* will demonstrate the lack of interest in these topics.

³ John J. Hughes, "From Homer to Hesychius — The *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* Project," *Bits & Bytes Review* 1 no. 7 (1987): 1; *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae Newsletter* no. 13 (May 1988).

⁴ It will reach its projected total of 400,000 imprints by the mid-1990s, but since many of the titles to be added are editions and variant printings, the vast majority of works is currently available. Henry L. Snyder, "A Major New Bibliographical Tool for Scholars," *The Clark Newsletter: Bulletin of the UCLA Center for 17th and 18th Century Studies* no. 13 (Fall 1987), p. 4; *Factotum: Newsletter of the XVIIIth Century STC*, occasional paper 5, March 1987.

⁵ For a comparable project, see Peter Hogg, "The Abolition of the Slave Trade: A Bibliographer Looks at the ESTC," pp. 93-104 in M. Crump and M. Harris, eds., *Searching the Eighteenth Century* (The British Library, 1983).

⁶ Godfrey Davies, *The Early Stuarts, 1603-1660* (Oxford, 1959), p. vi.



FOCUS ON FULLER

The Inter-School Ph.D. by Paul G. Hiebert

Information explosion. We have become accustomed to terms like population explosion and urban explosion. We are only now becoming aware of the effect of the current information explosion on our lives. We are told that the knowledge added each year would fill an *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and that the total volume of human knowledge doubles in less than seven years.

We know the benefits of new information in the sciences and humanities, but new information has also enriched biblical studies and church ministries. We are often less aware that this explosion creates serious problems. To handle the explosion of knowledge we must specialize. In the church we have specialists in the Old and New Testaments, in theology, in small group ministries, in evangelism, in cross-cultural missions and more. Each of these leads to further specializations. Some become experts in evangelizing Muslims, others in reaching Hindus, Buddhists and Secularists. Others concentrate on North America, Africa, India, China or New Guinea. In each of these specializations new languages are developed and theories formulated to help us understand our increasingly complex world.

Fragmentation

Specialization, however, fragments our world. New Testament scholars find it almost impossible to master the literature on the Old Testament, let alone on church administration, missions and small group dynamics. Old Testament scholars find it hard to talk in depth with Christian psychologists and anthropologists. In the long

run we lose sight of the big picture, and are content to solve immediate problems in our own fields.

What does Christianity have to offer the contemporary world? The simplest answer is reductionism — to say that the church must address the question of human sin and salvation, and to assume that all other human problems will disappear if this one is solved. A second answer is compartmentalization — to say that the church must deal with salvation, and leave other human agencies to deal with the problems of poverty, crime, oppression, meaninglessness, marriage instability and mental disorders. In the church this leads us to say that one agency will evangelize, and others will feed the poor, offer marriage counseling and deal with drugs and gangs.

Integration

Neither of these answers is biblical. The gospel addresses the whole of the human dilemma. Humans are created in God's image — body and spirit — and God is concerned with all areas of their lives. Consequently the church must proclaim salvation. It must minister to Christians and non-Christians whose marriages are breaking up, to young people on drugs, to the poor who have lost hope, to those who live in fear and oppression. And it must integrate these various ministries so that the light of the gospel shines through all of them.

In an age of high specialization, how can a seminary prepare ministers and churches for integrated ministries? Early on Fuller Theological Seminary began to grapple with this question. It opened schools of psychology and mission in which the understandings of psychology, linguistics and anthropology are added to biblical and

theological studies. The faculties of the three schools are exposed to the questions and knowledge of other disciplines, and students take courses in fields other than their specialization.

In recent years the coming of international students and faculty have added another important dimension to integration, namely global awareness. They have helped us to see the church and the world through other eyes.

The Inter-School Ph.D.

Recently Fuller established an inter-school Ph.D. program as another way of helping the church counter the fragmentation of specialization. This degree will enable a few advanced students to master more than one academic discipline in order to develop more comprehensive Christian ministries. For example, a scholar may work on the integration of theology and the social sciences, or on the relationship of Christianity to other religions. Or he or she may bring both theological and social science understandings to bear on specific ministries such as urban church planting. Because the degree is offered by the seminary as a whole, the student can draw more freely upon the wide range of expertise already available in the three schools. The degree is another step in Fuller's search for whole ministries in an increasingly complex and fragmented world.

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