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## Church and Church History in the Confessions

By JAROSLAV PELIKAN

**T**HE current revival of interest in the doctrine of the Church has far-reaching significance for many areas of theological study. Without an adequate appreciation of the nature of the Church much of Christian doctrine cannot attain full articulation. For example, there has always been a close connection between the doctrine of the Church and the doctrine of the means of grace, as Article V of the Augsburg Confession shows. The study of the Old Testament as the record of God's dealings with His people, of the New Testament as the account of God's establishment of His new people, of liturgy as the way the Church worships—these and other fields of theological investigation need to find rooting in the doctrine of the Church and its implications.<sup>1</sup>

In no field is this need more evident, however, than in historical theology, concerned as it is with the Church and its history. As the best study of mankind is man, so the best study of church history is the Church. But from this it follows that some doctrine of the Church, whether explicit or implicit, underlies any presentation or study of church history. If this is so, it would seem that an inadequate or erroneous interpretation of the nature of the Church will also issue in a fallacious method for the study of its history. By a corollary, then, the study of church history must be prefaced by an understanding of the Church as such, just as such study will lead to a deeper understanding of the Church's nature.

As they sought to articulate the doctrine of the Church in antithesis to the various false theories current in the sixteenth century, the Lutheran Confessions presented that doctrine in a form which is of much value to the study of church history. Those

false theories about the Church bore fruit in false theories about its history and about how that history is to be studied. In combating them, therefore, the Confessions also pointed out the weaknesses in the views of history which they produced. Because of the unique contribution which the Confessions make to a study of the doctrine of the Church, and therefore to the study of historical theology, this essay will seek to draw some of the implications of the Lutheran doctrine of the Church for the method and the approach of historical theology.<sup>2</sup>

## I

The principal target of Confessional polemics on the Church was the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Church. According to this doctrine, the Church which Christ established is coterminous with the institution which the Pope heads. All the rights, privileges, and attributes that the New Testament ascribes to the Church are assigned to the papal institution, and properly to it alone; thus this doctrine "transfers to the popes what belongs to the true Church."<sup>3</sup> If anyone wishes to find the Church, he need only look for the presence of the Roman Catholic organization, its bishops and its hierarchy; for our Lord committed to Peter, and through him to his successors, sovereignty over the Church. The Church is, then, essentially a sociological entity, like the family, the State, or any other social grouping in which men band together for certain specific purposes. And to be a member of the Church means to be associated with that sociological entity, regardless of conviction or conversion. Thus for Rome the Church is merely an "external government,"<sup>4</sup> differing from other forms of social organization principally by virtue of its divine validation. Good and evil men belong to it, bound together by their external membership in the ecclesiastical organization even though the objects of their religious loyalty may be as divergent as Christ and Belial.<sup>5</sup>

Against this institutional interpretation of the nature of the Church the Apology of the Augsburg Confession directs very vigorous criticism. If the Church is a sociological entity among sociological entities, what is the qualitative difference between the Church and Israel of old, in which good and evil were held together by their external association with the Israelitic people rather than by a common bond of faith? In Israel there were those whom the

Apology terms "the carnal seed,"<sup>6</sup> carried along by the external promises given the entire nation, but not sharing in the blessings of the everlasting covenant. If the Roman definition of the Church holds, there is no difference between the old and the new Israel on this point. But then the substance is no better than the shadow;<sup>7</sup> and membership in the Church has no greater spiritual significance than did citizenship in Israel. It is a purely sociological function.

Actually this doctrine of the Church had its source in the rationalization of the politico-ecclesiastical situation rather than in a primary theological concern. It was intended to provide divine validation for the organizational maneuverings of the Roman bishop, and the exegetical and doctrinal support for it was supplied after the fact. The theory of papal sovereignty appeared in its most extreme form during the medieval controversies between Church and State. Indeed, one of the most extravagant statements uttered by a Roman Pope, at least before 1859, was the bull *Unam Sanctam* of Boniface VIII, a direct result of his controversy with the king of France.<sup>8</sup> It was at times like these that the papacy defined the Church as a "supreme outward monarchy of the whole world, in which the Roman Pontiff necessarily has unquestioned power . . . therefore, the Pope must necessarily be lord of the whole world, of all the kingdoms of the world . . . and must have . . . both swords, temporal and spiritual."<sup>9</sup> Recognizing this desire for organizational prestige and power as the source for Rome's doctrine of the Church, the Smalcald Articles employ deft sarcasm to explain how "the Papacy came to the aid of the poor Church" and accuse the Papacy of having drawn its viewpoints "from the imperial and heathen law."<sup>10</sup>

Because it falsely interprets the Church in terms of its own ecclesiastical institution, Rome inevitably falls into the same fallacy in its interpretation of church history. Compelled to validate its divine right by reference to precedent and example, the Roman system must find support even where there is none. And because it endows a human institution with divine right, it must also endow that institution's history with a divine quality which it does not possess. This need to find historical legitimation for the ecclesiastical institution and its patterns of thought and action causes Rome to attribute to its own history an absolute character which

cannot stand up under the impact of historical criticism. Without such historical legitimation the Roman claim to superiority loses all basis in given fact; hence the desperate insistence upon historical absolutes on the part of Roman Catholic theologians and historians.<sup>11</sup>

In an effort to supply this historical legitimation Roman Catholic historical theology is first of all concerned to demonstrate the historicity of its theory of organizational continuity. The question of the Church's continuing through the ages it answers by pointing to the supposedly unbroken succession which its organization has maintained since Apostolic days, and it proposes to assure the believer that the Church will never perish by reference to the integrity of the Roman institution through the ages.<sup>12</sup> This it does in the face of the fact that often the Church has come to such a state "as if there were no Church, as happened under the papacy,"<sup>13</sup> and in the face of Scriptural warnings "that there will be wicked teachers and wolves."<sup>14</sup> The assurance of the Church continuity cannot come, therefore, from a hypothetical and non-existent organizational succession; for it is a matter of fact "that the holy Church was without the Pope for more than five hundred years, to say the least" — a point to which the "Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope" devotes much attention.<sup>15</sup> If the guarantee of the Church's historical continuity is derived from the historical continuity of the papal institution, it cannot withstand the scrutiny of honest historical research.

One feature of this theory which attracted particular attention in the Confessional discussion was the Roman claim that not only the organization as such, but also its rites had been uniformly maintained through the centuries. To the Augustana's thesis that "it is not necessary for the true unity of the Christian Church that everywhere there be observed uniform rites, instituted by men"<sup>16</sup> the Confutation had replied with the insistence that such ceremonial uniformity was indeed necessary for the Church's unity and that it was historically demonstrable.<sup>17</sup> The lengthy and penetrating refutation which the Apology offers to this insistence is based not only upon such Biblical evidence as Col. 2:16 ff.,<sup>18</sup> but also upon irrefutable historical evidence assembled from the fathers and councils of the ancient Church as well as from the churches of

Eastern Christendom,<sup>19</sup> proving "that a lack of uniformity in human observances does not injure the unity of faith."<sup>20</sup>

But the most presumptuous claim to historical absoluteness made by the Roman institution is neither organizational continuity nor ceremonial uniformity, but theological infallibility. Arrogating to themselves all the attributes of the Church, the Popes lay claim to being "pillars of truth."<sup>21</sup> Although the dogma of papal infallibility did not become official until the nineteenth century and had a rather checkered history in the Middle Ages,<sup>22</sup> there was rather wide agreement on the notion that the Roman Church, whether represented by Pope or council or the two in conjunction, was the pillar of truth and that therefore its theological development was a source of religious truth. And though he rarely acted alone in such matters, the Pope did insist that "all rights exist in the shrine of his heart, and whatever he decides and commands with his church is spirit and right, even though it be above and contrary to Scripture or the spoken Word."<sup>23</sup> Viewed in terms of its implications for history, this theory means that what the Popes, councils, and churches have said since the close of the New Testament is not only uniform, but true and binding.

It does not require profound or extensive historical knowledge to demonstrate that this colossal assumption of absoluteness is contrary to the facts of history. For one thing, there is no uniformity in the theological development, for "the writings of the holy Fathers testify that sometimes even they built stubble upon the foundation."<sup>24</sup> After all, the Fathers were men, too.<sup>25</sup> Even if there were a uniformity in the Church's theological tradition, this would not be binding; for "it will not do to frame articles of faith from the works or words of the holy Fathers."<sup>26</sup> And for that matter, the Fathers did not intend their actions and words to become normative in the Church.<sup>27</sup> On both counts, uniformity and authority, the Confessions make use of historical insights to refute Rome's claim of historical absoluteness.

Because of its doctrine of the Church, Roman Catholicism is compelled to interpret church history on the basis of a preconceived system and to explain away the many stubborn and embarrassing facts that cannot be accommodated to that system. Having absolutized its ecclesiastical organization, it must go on to absolutize

that organization's history by ascribing to it an organizational continuity, ceremonial uniformity, and theological infallibility that have no substantiation from historical evidence. The critical attitude of the Confessions toward the idea of an absolute ecclesiastical organization enabled them to be equally critical in dealing with the historical assumptions from that idea and thus to make room for the exercise of objective, critical historical methodology in the study of church history.

## II

But the institutional perversion of the Church and of its history on the part of Roman Catholicism was not the only pivot of the Confessions' concern with the Church and with church history. The Confessional doctrine of the Church, like its doctrine of the Word<sup>28</sup> and of the Lord's Supper,<sup>29</sup> was developed in simultaneous conflict on two fronts. The Confessions rejected with equal vigor the heteronomy of the Roman Catholics, whose institutionalism caused them to ascribe absolute authority to the empirical Church, and the autonomy of the spiritualists, whose Biblicism and individualism caused them to think that each man is his own authority in religious matters.<sup>30</sup>

Only in terms of this ambivalence can the Confessional doctrine of the Church, and therefore its interpretation and use of church history, be adequately understood. Faced by the power of the Roman institution and sensing the loneliness of one whom God had called to a task, Luther had sometimes given voice to what seems to be an individualistic view of the Church.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, when the "enthusiasts" sought to carry out a thorough individualism, he stoutly insisted that no man makes the Church and that membership in the Church is necessary for salvation.<sup>32</sup> The Confessions take account of both these fronts—the Roman Catholic and the radical Protestant—when they articulate the doctrine of the Church in such a way as to avoid the error in both. And as they were compelled to take issue with the Roman Catholic institutionalization of the Church, so they had to defend the reality of the Church, and therefore the value of its history, over against the radical individualism of many Protestants.

Believing that they were carrying out in consistent practice what Luther had asserted in theory,<sup>33</sup> the *Schwaermer* espoused just such a radical individualism. These "fanatics"<sup>34</sup> changed Luther's criti-

cism of the institutional Church into a deprecation and ultimately a rejection of the empirical Church as such. Their deprecation of the empirical Church is particularly evident in their attitude toward the ministry. They held that "the ministry of the Church, the word preached and heard, is not a means whereby God the Holy Ghost teaches men" and that therefore "the minister of the Church who is not on his part truly renewed, righteous, and godly cannot teach other men with profit or administer real, true sacraments."<sup>35</sup> Consistently applied, such a spiritualization of the Church leads to the conclusion that the Church has no concrete reality, but is merely an idea, a "Platonic republic," or, as the German text of the Apology has it, "an imaginary Church, which is nowhere to be found."<sup>36</sup> Only the individual matters, not the Church; for by his decision the individual creates the Church. For this reason the Anabaptists followed through on their individualistic view of faith when they rejected the validity of the Church's Baptism of infants.<sup>37</sup>

In order to defend the reality of the Church against the *Schwaermer* and in order to avoid being classified with them, the authors of the Confessions made their antithesis to this spiritualism very explicit. The two points on which the *Schwaermer* had concentrated in their attack upon the Church, the ministry and Baptism, were also the points of the Confessions' defense. They wanted to defend the ministry "against fanatical men, who dream that the Holy Ghost is not given through the Word"<sup>38</sup> and who therefore despised the ministry and the empirical Church. For this reason the Confessions wanted to retain ordination and were even willing to have it called a sacrament.<sup>39</sup> And in antithesis to the individualism of the Anabaptists, the Confessions stressed the fact that in the Sacraments of the Church, specifically in Baptism, it is not man and his decision, but God and His condescension that has the initiative; for "Baptism is a work, not which we offer to God, but in which God baptizes us, i. e., a minister in the place of God."<sup>40</sup> Underlying the spiritualists' opposition to the empirical Church was their insistence on absolute purity and their refusal to accept anything less than absolute purity in the Church. From its proponents in the ancient Church this viewpoint had derived the name Donatism, but it was by no means restricted to the day of St. Augustine.<sup>41</sup>



In the era of the Reformation, too, some had arisen who maintained "that a congregation in which sinners are still found is no true Christian assembly."<sup>42</sup> Only that is the Church which is absolutely pure, and a group where such absolute purity did not exist they would not call the Church. On the basis of this approach they made of excommunication, that is, of the process of purification, an essential mark of the Church; and "offended by the private vices, whether of priests or of people," they created schisms.<sup>43</sup>

Because Lutheranism, by contrast, wanted to take the empirical Church and its ministrations seriously, it wanted also to take account of the weaknesses which afflicted the Church, and it refused to let those weaknesses frighten it. The Confessions acknowledge that there are those "who hold power *in the Church*, who under the pretext of religion assume to themselves the kingdom of the world . . . who have instituted new services *in the Church*."<sup>44</sup> They realize that wolves and false teachers "become rampant *in the Church*" and that "in the Church itself, infinite is the multitude of the wicked who oppress it."<sup>45</sup> But the Church does not live by its purity; it lives by the forgiveness of sins. And as all life in the forgiveness of sins is the life of one who is at the same time righteous and a sinner, so it is with the Church; "for that is always the kingdom which He quickens by His Spirit, whether it be revealed or covered by the cross . . . and He teaches that the Church has been covered by a multitude of evils, in order that this stumbling block may not offend the pious."<sup>46</sup> Thus also Luther warned his contemporaries: "That is the true Church which prays seriously and in faith: 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.' That is the Church which grows day by day, which day by day puts on the new man and puts off the old man. That is the Church which receives the first fruits of the Spirit: not the tenth part, much less the fullness. We are not yet fully rid of the flesh but are in the process of shedding it and of going forward or growing. Whatever is left of sin, therefore, offends the spiritual Donatists, Manicheans, and Papists; but it does not offend God, for because of faith in Christ He overlooks and forgives it."<sup>47</sup>

An insistence upon absolute purity makes spiritualism contemptuous of the liturgical and theological heritage received from

the ancient, albeit impure, Church of previous centuries. Thus the spiritualists maintained that pure Christians ought not attend services "in those churches in which formerly papal masses have been celebrated and said."<sup>48</sup> In their theology, as in their liturgy, the spiritualists proceeded as though the tradition of past centuries were irrelevant to the theological task and as though they could think theologically without reference to what the Church had thought in the past.<sup>49</sup> The Confessions are anxious to avoid the impression that they share this contempt for tradition. In fact, Article VIII of the Augustana was added for this very reason, to avoid the impression that the Lutherans were Donatist sectarians.<sup>50</sup> Against the charge that they were abolishing the Mass or clerical vestments or other ancient liturgical usages, the Confessions insist that the Lutherans retain all of these; indeed, that they are more faithful in their liturgical observance than are their Roman Catholic opponents.<sup>51</sup>

The spiritualist attitude toward tradition shows the general disregard for the past characteristic of spiritualism. That disregard of the past, in turn, was the product of spiritualism's view of the Church as a Platonic republic; for being a timeless, abstract idea, a Platonic republic has no history.<sup>52</sup> History is of time and space and of the concreteness that is the basic feature of spatio-temporal reality. If the Church is a "civitas Platonica," then its reality cannot be discerned in the ordinary dimensions of space and time. In short, there can be no such thing as church history. The only thing that has a history is empirical Christendom with its errors, impurities, and mistakes, and this empirical Christendom is not the Church.

The history of Christianity since Apostolic days, consequently, emerges as a series of apostasies, in which heresy followed heresy until now, for the first time since the days of the New Testament, a pure Christianity has emerged once more.<sup>53</sup> The principal value of the history of Christianity, then, is a negative one, to show how far from the truth previous generations have strayed. Spiritualism assumes that it can dispense with all that previous generations have thought or done and can read the Scriptures as though no one had ever read them before. These Scriptures it interprets legalistically, even to the point of "imposing upon us the judicial laws of Moses."<sup>54</sup> Between the Scriptures and the present there is very

little that is worth while, for only that is Church which is pure. The history of Christianity is not pure, and therefore the history of Christianity is not the history of the Church.

Carried to its logical conclusion, the spiritualist disregard of tradition and its insistence upon absolute purity ends in a hyper-criticism which supposes that because it can discern the errors of the past, it has been released from the errors of the present. Indeed, since it does not regard the historical Church as Church at all, it deals with this historical and empirical Church as though it were purely a secular thing. There is no need to take the history of the Church seriously, for the Church lives as a Platonic republic, which no one has ever seen or experienced. There is a direct line from this attitude toward the Church and its history to the historical relativism which has been so predominant a feature of many modern church historians.<sup>55</sup> According to this view, all the systems of the history of Christian thought are to be explained in terms of their environment, of the ideological backgrounds of their originators, and of the tradition which they inherited from their past; but none of them can lay claim to the truth, since, in Troeltsch's famous phrase, to be historical is to be relative.<sup>56</sup>

And so Harnack could write the history of dogma as the record of a process which issues in the dissolution of dogma and the re-establishment, after all these centuries, of the "undogmatic Christianity" which was the original message of Jesus.<sup>57</sup> The vast historical learning of Adolf Harnack, who has had few peers, became a tool for his essentially spiritualist contention that the task of the modern Church is to liberate itself from the onus of the past and to demonstrate the untenable character of all that this past has produced. Viewed in this light, the work of the church historian is to debunk the work of his predecessors and to destroy the golden calves of historical tradition. Thus the history of the Church ultimately becomes merely a part of secular history, while the Church as a Platonic republic remains abstracted from the historical process in a realm of superhistorical purity.

### III

From what has been said thus far, the distinctively Lutheran view of the Church and of church history should become clear. For in their articulation of the doctrine of the Church, and hence

in their use of church history, the Lutheran Confessions come to terms with the valid emphases of both Roman Catholic institutionalism and radical Protestant spiritualism, without involving themselves in the errors of either. An oversimplified solution of the dilemma would have been to assert the existence of two Churches—one of them possessing all the attributes which Rome ascribed to the Church, the other characterized by all the qualities which spiritualism assigned to the Church. Such a solution would have meant a position between the two alternatives. But as Gerhard succinctly summarized the Confessional position, "we do not posit two churches."<sup>58</sup> Rather than taking the stand between the two alternatives, the Confessions go beyond them both to the Biblical view of the Church as the "body of Christ,"<sup>59</sup> of which institutionalism and spiritualism, as well as a combination of the two, are misinterpretations.

In relation to Rome therefore the Confessions seek to take the empirical Church seriously. They share the deep concern of Roman Catholicism for the Church as it is, since there is no other. It is this Church which through Baptism and preaching has become "the mother that begets and bears every Christian."<sup>60</sup> It would be crass ingratitude to despise this Church; for, as Professor Nichols has put it: "We recognize the Church as our mother, through whom has come, whether we like it or not, our spiritual life. It is wise to admit the human weaknesses of our parents; it is unwise to suppose that we can dispense with our particular parents now that we have achieved the abstract conception of parenthood."<sup>61</sup> The concluding paragraphs of the Formula of Concord, therefore, enunciate its testimony "in the sight of God and of all Christendom"<sup>62</sup>—no less. But in its profound regard for the empirical Church, Lutheranism rejects the Roman fallacy of equating the Church with any human, historical institution. Indeed, it sees such an equation as an expression of the pride with which churches seek to absolutize themselves and as a mark of Antichrist.<sup>63</sup>

In rejecting Roman Catholic institutionalism, Lutheranism affirms the correctness of a basic spiritualist emphasis, namely, the insistence upon purity. Repeatedly the Apology asserts that the Church is holy<sup>64</sup> and that this holiness cannot be predicated of

any institution, and especially not of the Roman Catholic institution. With spiritualism the Confessions insist that the Church must be holy and that this holiness dare not be taken lightly. But Lutheranism rejects the conclusion which spiritualism draws from this insistence upon holiness: since the empirical Church is not holy, since indeed no one has ever experienced a pure and holy Church, the Church must be an abstract, a Platonic republic. Rather, Lutheranism emphasizes at the same time the holiness and the reality of the Church, and it sees in this paradox merely another example of the "already — not yet" that marks the entire Christian life.<sup>65</sup>

The interpretation of church history flowing from this we have sought to summarize thus: "According to Lutheran theology, it would seem that history is the conditioned bearer of the activity of God. This applies alike to the Church and to the Church's witness. For this reason, Lutheranism is not fearful of historical criticism, for it does not pin its faith on the infallibility of the historical Church. But when such criticism discovers that the historical Church is indeed historical and that it has not managed to escape the corruption that affects all things historical, Lutheran theology does not discard its regard for the historical Church. . . . It devotes itself to the study of Patristic theology, not with authoritarian reverence, nor yet with supercilious contempt, but with a deep regard and a healthy suspicion."<sup>66</sup>

Lutheranism should, therefore, strive to agree "with the holy Fathers . . . and with the holy Church of Christ"<sup>67</sup> and to take the past seriously; but in the process it should not become idolatrous or obscurantist, even and especially about its own past. It should, rather, remain critical, even of ancient and venerable tradition, as was Luther in his examination of the ancient councils.<sup>68</sup> But in its criticism it ought not become relativistic or iconoclastic, for despite all its failings this is still the history of the Church. It would require another essay to demonstrate this attitude of critical regard in the historical work of Chemnitz, Seckendorf, the authors of the *Magdeburg Centuries*, and other Lutheran church historians.<sup>69</sup> But this critical regard is surely the only approach which is permissible in the light of all that the Lutheran Confessions have to say about the nature of the Church and of its history.

St. Louis, Mo.

## NOTES

1. Cf. the comments of K. L. Schmidt *s. v.* ἐκκλησία in Gerhard Kittel (ed.), *Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, III, p. 525, on the inseparable conjunction of the Messiah and the people of God. On Art. V of the Augustana see the essay of F. E. Mayer, "De Ministerio Ecclesiastico, Augustana V," *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, XXI (1950), pp. 881—895. A handy summary of the revival of interest in the Church among Continental theologians is the little volume by W. A. Visser 't Hooft, *The Kingship of Christ* (New York, 1948), esp. pp. 89—116.
2. For some stimulating suggestions on this theme cf. Walther Koehler, *Historie und Metahistorie in der Kirchengeschichte*, Heft 28 of "Philosophie und Geschichte" (Tuebingen, 1930); James Hastings Nichols, "History in the Theological Curriculum," *Journal of Religion*, XXVI (1946), pp. 183—189; Reinhold Niebuhr, *Faith and History* (New York, 1949), esp. the closing chapters, pp. 196—243; Wilhelm Pauck, "The Dynamics of Protestantism," *The Heritage of the Reformation* (Boston, 1950), pp. 147 to 156.
3. Apology, Art. VII, par. 27, *Concordia Triglotta* (St. Louis, 1921), p. 235.
4. The phrase occurs several times in the Apology, Art. VII: "politia externa certarum gentium," par. 10, *Triglotta*, p. 228; "externa politia bonorum et malorum," par. 13, *Triglotta*, p. 230. Caspar Cruciger makes use of the same phrase in his criticism of the Roman view, *In epistolam ad Timotheum priorem commentarius* (Strassburg, 1540), p. 114.
5. Apology, Art. VII, par. 16—19, *Triglotta*, pp. 231—233, on the wicked in the Church. See Luther's strong answer to this theory: "Von dem Papsttum zu Rom wider den hochberuehmten Romanisten zu Leipzig" (1520), *Werke* (Weimar Ed., henceforth abbreviated as *W. A.*), VI, 301.
6. Apology, Art. VII, par. 14, *Triglotta*, p. 231. Precisely this was Luther's argumentation already in the "Dictata super Psalterium" (1513—1516), *W. A.* III, 632; cf. also *ibid.*, IV, 24, on the same issue.
7. Apology, Art. VII, par. 15, *Triglotta*, p. 231.
8. On this entire development cf. Albert Hyma's concise chapter on "Church and State in the Middle Ages" in his *Christianity and Politics* (Philadelphia, 1938), pp. 11—59, with helpful bibliography; and the more recent work of Gerd Tellenbach, *Church, State and Christian Society at the Time of the Investiture Contest*, tr. by R. F. Bennett (Oxford, 1940), esp. pp. 38—60, on "The Medieval Conception of the Hierarchy."
9. Apology, Art. VII, par. 23, *Triglotta*, p. 235. On the development of the "two swords" theory, see Ph. Kates, *The Two Swords. A Study of the Union of Church and State* (Washington, 1928).
10. Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. III, par. 24, *Triglotta*, p. 485; Part II, Art. IV, par. 14, *Triglotta*, p. 475.
11. Thus Leo XIII insisted that the Catholic historian "must never lose sight of the fact that history contains a collection of dogmatic facts which impose themselves upon our faith and which nobody is permitted to call in doubt," quoted by J. H. Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 184.
12. In opposition to this Luther set his view of the "successio fidelium"; see the summary comments of Karl Holl, "Die Entstehung von Luthers Kirchenbegriff," *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte*, I, *Luther* (7th ed.; Tuebingen, 1948), pp. 298—299.
13. Apology, Art. VII, par. 9, *Triglotta*, p. 229 (German text); cf. also Apology, Art. XXIV, par. 97, *Triglotta*, pp. 417—419 (German text).

14. Apology, Art. VII, par. 22, *Triglotta*, p. 235.
15. Smalcald Articles, Part II, Art. IV, par. 4, *Triglotta*, p. 473; "Tractatus," par. 12—21, *Triglotta*, pp. 507—509.
16. Augsburg Confession, Art. VII, par. 3, *Triglotta*, p. 47.
17. "Confutatio pontificia" in M. Reu, *The Augsburg Confession* (Chicago, 1930), II, pp. 353—354.
18. Apology, Art. VII, par. 35, *Triglotta*, p. 239.
19. Apology, Art. XXIV, par. 6, *Triglotta*, p. 385.
20. Apology, Art. VII, par. 45, *Triglotta*, p. 243; also Apology, Art. XV, par. 49—52, *Triglotta*, p. 329.
21. Apology, Art. VII, par. 27, *Triglotta*, p. 235; see also par. 20, *Triglotta*, p. 233, for the Apology's interpretation of "pillars of truth" in 1 Tim. 3:15.
22. See the interesting compilation of data on the patristic and medieval development in W. J. Sparrow Simpson, *Roman Catholic Opposition to Papal Infallibility* (Milwaukee, 1910), pp. 9—65.
23. Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. VIII, par. 4, *Triglotta*, p. 495; also "An den christlichen Adel" (1520), *W. A.* VI, 459.
24. Apology, Art. VII, par. 21, *Triglotta*, p. 233; on the lack of uniformity among the fathers in the matter of terminology, cf. Apology, Art. XIII, par. 2, *Triglotta*, p. 309.
25. "Thus the fathers were men, too, who often made concessions to the customs and opinions of their times": Martin Chemnitz, *Examen Concilii Tridentini*, ed. by E. Preuss (Leipzig, 1915), p. 624.
26. Smalcald Articles, Part II, Art. II, par. 15, *Triglotta*, p. 467.
27. Apology, Art. XV, par. 13, *Triglotta*, p. 319.
28. Without an understanding of this, Luther's view of the Word becomes autonomy (everyone believes what he pleases because of the "right of private interpretation") or heteronomy (the Bible is a code of law, whose authority is legalistic in nature and derivation). That neither of these was his view in the controversy with the *Schwaermer* and in the controversy with Rome is the central thesis of R. H. Gruetzmacher, *Wort und Geist. Eine historische und dogmatische Untersuchung zum Gnadennittel des Wortes* (Leipzig, 1902).
29. From the voluminous literature I cite the penetrating essay of Erich Seeberg, "Der Gegensatz zwischen Zwingli, Schwenckfeld und Luther" in Wilhelm Koepf (ed.), *Reinhold Seeberg — Festschrift, I, Zur Theorie des Christentums* (Leipzig, 1929), pp. 43—80, pointing out the importance of seeing Luther's doctrine of the Lord's Supper in terms of the several fronts on which he was fighting.
30. The authoritative presentation of Luther's relation to the spiritualists is still that of Karl Holl, "Luther und die Schwaermer," *op. cit.*, pp. 420—467.
31. Professor Pauck's chapter on "Luther's Faith" and on "Luther's Conception of the Church," *op. cit.*, pp. 15—54, highlight this ambivalence in Luther's view of his own task and his view of the total Church; see the passages quoted by Pauck, *ibid.*, pp. 297—298, note 33.
32. "Without the Church, no one can come to Christ the Lord," Large Catechism, Part II, par. 45, *Triglotta*, p. 689; "outside the Church, where there is no Gospel, there is no forgiveness," *ibid.*, par. 56, *Triglotta*, p. 693. Cf. also Apology, Art. IX, par. 52, *Triglotta*, p. 245: "the promise of salvation . . . does not, however, pertain to those who are outside God's Church."

33. Holl, "Luther und die Schwaermer," p. 423, n. 1.
34. Apology, Art. XIII, par. 13, *Triglotta*, p. 311.
35. Formula of Concord, Solida Declaratio, Art. XII, par. 30, 35, *Triglotta*, p. 1101.
36. Apology, Art. VII, par. 20, *Triglotta*, p. 233. It is typical of Lutheran presentations of this matter that Cruciger (see note 4 above) immediately follows his rejection of the "external government" theory with the warning, *op. cit.*, p. 115: "We do not speak of the Church as a Platonic republic, which exists nowhere." This was the Roman Catholic charge; for Rome, like the *Schwaermer*, did not see the Lutheran view as a *tertium quid*; cf. Luther's reply to this charge, *W. A.*, VII, 683.
37. Cf. Jaroslav Pelikan, "The Relation of Faith and Knowledge in the Lutheran Confessions," *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, XXI (1950), pp. 327—328.
38. Apology, Art. XIII, par. 13, *Triglotta*, p. 311.
39. On ordination, Apology, Art. XIV, par. 24, *Triglotta*, p. 315; on ordination as Sacrament, Apology, Art. XIII, par. 11, *Triglotta*, p. 311, and R. H. Gruetzmacher, "Beitraege zur Geschichte der Ordination in der evangelischen Kirche," *Neue Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, XXIII (1912), pp. 363—379.
40. Apology, Art. XXIV, par. 18, *Triglotta*, p. 389.
41. Augustana, Art. VIII, par. 3, *Triglotta*, p. 47; Apology, Art. VII, par. 29, *Triglotta*, p. 237.
42. Formula of Concord, Solida Declaratio, Art. XII, par. 14, *Triglotta*, p. 1099.
43. Apology, Art. VII, par. 49, *Triglotta*, p. 245; on excommunication cf. Formula of Concord, Solida Declaratio, Art. XII, par. 34, *Triglotta*, p. 1101.
44. Apology, Art. XXIV, par. 41, *Triglotta*, p. 399; italics my own.
45. Apology, Art. VII, par. 22, *Triglotta*, p. 235, and par. 9, *Triglotta*, p. 229; italics my own.
46. Apology, Art. VII, par. 18—19, *Triglotta*, p. 233. On "simul iustus et peccator" cf. my brief comments, "The Doctrine of Man in the Lutheran Confessions," *The Lutheran Quarterly*, II, (1950), pp. 42—44; on the Kingdom as hidden by the Cross, cf. Tileman Hesshusius, *Examen theologicum* (2d ed.; Frankfurt, 1578), p. 230.
47. "Enarratio Psalmi XC," *W. A.*, XL-3, 506. Actually Luther had come to this insight much earlier; thus he says already in the "Dictata" of 1513 to 1516 that "this is spoken of the Church Militant; all who are in this are standing and growing, not sitting and possessing, as do the blessed in glory," *W. A.*, IV, 400.
48. Formula of Concord, Solida Declaratio, Art. XII, par. 15, *Triglotta*, p. 1099.
49. The contrast between Luther and spiritualism on this point is well brought out by Karl Eicke, *Schwenckfeld, Luther und der Gedanke einer apostolischen Reformation* (Berlin, 1911).
50. See the explanation given by the Apology, Art. VII, par. 3, *Triglotta*, p. 227.
51. Apology, Art. XV, par. 38—44, pp. 325—327; *ibid.*, par. 51—52, *Triglotta*, p. 329; also Art. XXIV, par. 1—3, *Triglotta*, pp. 383—385; Art. VII, par. 33, *Triglotta*, p. 239.
52. Cf. Oscar Cullman, *Christ and Time*, tr. by Floyd V. Filson (Philadelphia, 1950), p. 52 and *passim*.
53. "Just as it is possible to travel in strange lands and observe only that the natives are so ignorant that they cannot speak English, so one may retrace history, even the religious history of his own community, with patronizing



- provinciality," Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 186. Cf. also the somewhat surprising comments of Karl Barth, "Ueber die Aufgabe einer Geschichte der neueren Theologie," *Die protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert* (Zurich, 1947), pp. 1—15.
54. Apology, Art. XVI, par. 55, *Triglotta*, p. 331.
  55. On this relativism and its philosophical derivation, cf. R. H. Gruetzmacher, "Die skeptische Stellung zur Geschichte in der systematischen Theologie der Gegenwart," *Neue Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, XXIII (1912), pp. 675—689.
  56. Otto Hintze, "Troeltsch und die Probleme des Historismus," *Historische Zeitschrift*, CXXXV (1926—1927), pp. 188—239, is all the more illuminating because it is not written from the specific viewpoint of church history.
  57. Cf. the brief but unusually scintillating discussion of Werner Elert, *Die Kirche und Ihre Dogmengeschichte* (Munich, 1950), pp. 3—8, on the connection between Harnack and Biblicism.
  58. Johann Gerhard, "Disputatio de Ecclesia," *Disputationes theologicae* (Jena, 1655), p. 1533, where he continues: "we believe and confess one Church, and assert that this is treated in Scripture in a double way (bifariam)."
  59. Apology, Art. VII, par. 5, *Triglotta*, p. 227; par. 29, *Triglotta*, p. 237.
  60. Large Catechism, Part II, Art. III, par. 42, *Triglotta*, p. 689. For an interpretation of this passage, cf. Gustav Aulen, *The Faith of the Christian Church*, tr. by Eric H. Wahlstrom and G. Everett Arden (Philadelphia, 1948), pp. 347—350; on the concept of the Church as mother, see the dissertation of Joseph C. Plumpe, *Mater Ecclesia. An Inquiry into the Concept of the Church as Mother in Early Christianity* (Washington, 1943), particularly the illuminating discussion of Cyprian, pp. 81—106.
  61. *Op. cit.*, p. 185. Another statement from the same paragraph: "It is well to confess that Christianity has been in a sense an earthly failure, provided we can also discern how from the resources of her memory have come again and again the pricks of self-condemnation and abasement, provided we observe how uniquely she has confessed the holiness and mercy of God amid her own corruptions."
  62. Formula of Concord, Solida Declaratio, Art. XII, par. 40, *Triglotta*, p. 1103.
  63. Apology, Art. VII, par. 24, *Triglotta*, p. 235 (German text); and Art. XV, par. 19—21, *Triglotta*, pp. 319—321.
  64. Most expressly in Apology, Art. VII, par. 7—8, *Triglotta*, p. 229; also par. 16, *Triglotta*, p. 231, and *passim*.
  65. On this paradox and its application to various areas see the "Foreword" of F. E. Mayer, *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, XXI (1950), pp. 1—7.
  66. Jaroslav Pelikan, "Form and Tradition in Worship. A Theological Interpretation," *Essays Presented at the First Liturgical Institute* (Valparaiso, 1950), pp. 22—23.
  67. Apology, Art. III (actually part of Art. IV), par. 268, *Triglotta*, p. 225; see also the following paragraphs on the Roman Church.
  68. "Von den Conciliis und Kirchen" (1539), *W. A.*, L, 509—653; Walther Koehler, *Luther und die Kirchengeschichte*, I (Erlangen, 1900); and Otto Ritschl's chapter on "Luther und die dogmatische Tradition der alten Kirche," *Dogmengeschichte des Protestantismus*, I (Leipzig, 1908), pp. 268 to 275.
  69. For an evaluation of Seckendorf's objectivity, see Lewis W. Spitz, "Veit Ludwig von Seckendorf and the *Historia Lutheranismi*," *Journal of Religion*, XXV (1945), pp. 33—44.