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AUFZEICHNUNGEN AUS DEN BÖHMISCHEN DÖRFERN II.

Was genau ein Theologiestudium bedeutet, wird erneut auch in Prag, Budweis und Olmütz, in den Orten der insgesamt fünf theologischen Fakultäten der Tschechischen Republik, diskutiert. Es geht einmal darum, ob es sinnvoll ist, weiter mit den Adjektiven „evangelisch“, „katholisch“ und hier in Prag auch noch „hussitisch“ das ganze Gebiet der Theologie zu unterteilen (katholische Fakultäten in Olmütz und Budweis benötigen die Beifügung sowieso nicht). Der Prager Systematiker Petr Macek hat sich bei der Diskussion des Lehrkörpers der Evangelisch-Theologischen Fakultät der Prager Karlsuniversität im Sommer 2003 (und später auch in seinem Artikel „Jakou teologii?“, „Was für eine Theologie?“ in *Teologická Reflexe* 2003/2) für eine Theologie ohne Beifügungen ausgesprochen, denn diese – eben in der Auffassung der Reformatoren, desto mehr dann angesichts der globalen Herausforderungen von heute – beabsichtigt doch, eine allgemeine („katholische“) christliche Theologie zu sein. Dem entspricht nicht nur eine konstante Anzahl von römisch- oder altkatholischen, freikirchlichen oder konfessionell gar nicht gebundenen Studierenden, sondern auch die Ausrichtung der einzelnen Fächer. Und seit vier Jahren sind dem Studienangebot der Ev.-Theologischen Fakultät auch zwei bisher unabhängige, vom inneren Aufbau jedoch katholische Bakalaureatsprogramme beigefügt: das von Salesianern konzipierte dreijährige soziale und seelsorgerliche Programm und das von der dissidierenden katholischen Untergrundkirche gegründete vierjährige Programm einer „Theologie der christlichen Traditionen“. Gegenargumente lauten: Es geht doch bei den Attributen wie evangelisch usw. nicht um Gegenstandsbestimmung oder sogarbegrenzung, sondern um die Angabe der Methode und der Perspektive, aus der die jeweilige Theologie getrieben wird. Im Fall der Ev.-Theologischen Fakultät geht es in der Tschechischen Republik auch darum, sich zu dem böhmischen und mährischen Reformerbe zu bekennen, das sonst – so meint der „evangelische“ Flügel – ungepflegt bleiben würde. Außerdem könnte es derzeit als ein enteignender Schritt gegenüber den anderen theologischen Fakultäten verstanden werden.

Hinzu kommt neuestens ein anderer Aspekt: die von der EU langfristig und in der sog. Bologna-Erklärung von 1999 verankerte Anforderung der Mobilität der Studenten zielt darauf, das Studium deutlich auf zwei Stufen zu verteilen. Nach dem Abschluss der ersten Stufe (eines Bakkalaureats) sei es möglich, das abgeschlossene Fach oder aber ein ganz anderes bis zum Magistergrad weiterzuführen. Doch lässt sich Theologie, wie sie im mitteleuropäischen Raum für Jahrhunderte getrieben wird, so leicht zerteilen? Welches Profil kann ein dreijähriges, zum Abschluss führendes und gewisse Kompetenz garantierendes Programm haben, das zugleich eine Vorbereitung für ein anschließendes Masterprogramm sein soll? Bis jetzt hat man in Prag daran festgehalten, dass ein volles Theologiestudium, das sein Ziel in „dem sich Aneignen der Fähigkeit eines fachlich kompetenten theologischen Urteils“ (Macek) sieht, kaum „billiger“ absolviert werden kann als in dem klassischen fünf- oder sechsjährigen Gang. Es bleibt jedoch die zu diskutierende Frage, was alles heute zu dieser theologischen Kompetenz gehört: wer bestimmt es, und wie verhalten sich dabei Kirchen, Universität und eine sich des eigenen Gegenstandes bewusste Disziplin der Theologie zueinander? Ein Gespräch zu diesem Thema wäre auch gerade in dieser Zeitschrift willkommen.

In diesem Heft bringen wir zwei Erträge des *Colloquium Biblicum*, das zur Osterzeit dieses Jahres, schon zum 11. Mal, in Prag stattgefunden hat: Zunächst macht Edgar Kellenberger in seiner exegetischen Studie auf die Parallelität von schriftlicher und mündlicher Überlieferung der biblischen Traditionen aufmerksam. Er hält diese für eine Erklärung der Varianten zwischen dem griechischen und dem hebräischen Text und skizziert mögliche Inspirationen für Homiletik und Katechetik. Dann erinnert Marianne Grohmann in ihrem Beitrag an die oft marginalisierte alttestamentliche Prophetin Hulda und bezieht jüdische Auslegungstraditionen ein. Von einer ganz anderen Perspektive, das vierte Evangelium auf dem Hintergrund der Aristotelischen rhetorischen Schemata lesend, formuliert János Bolyki Ausgangspunkte Johanneischer Ethik. Eine reiche Portion aus der Dogmengeschichte bietet Thomas Fudge, und zwar zu einem nicht geringeren Thema als dem Heil. Auch alle drei Rezensionen dieses Heftes setzen sich mit Persönlichkeiten (J. M. Lochman) oder Fragen

(neuere Entwürfe der Geschichte Israels und Modelle der Beziehung des Christentums zu den Weltreligionen) auseinander, die fraglos zur theologischen Klassik gehören. Möge das Heft die Urteilsfähigkeit unserer Leserinnen und Leser schärfen.

Petr Sláma

ÜBERLEGUNGEN ZUR GLEICHZEITIGKEIT VON SCHRIFTLICHER UND MÜNDLICHER ÜBERLIEFERUNG¹

Edgar Kellenberger, Liestal

Die folgenden Überlegungen sind mein persönlicher Versuch, mich aus einer Reihe von Frustrationen zu befreien, welche mich sowohl bei den diachronen wie den synchronen Auslegungs-Methoden plagen. Diachrone literarkritische Analysen zerstückeln den Bibeltext in künstliche und letztlich tote Fragmente, ohne dass die zuvor beobachteten Spannungen des Textes sich alle auflösen liessen. Sogar wenn man zusätzlich zu den klassischen Quellen noch eine Reihe von späteren Redaktionen annimmt, geht die Sache trotzdem nie auf.² Andererseits beschert mir die synchrone Sicht ebenfalls Frustrationen. Als Beispiel sei die schöne Arbeit von Georg Fischer (1995) genannt, welcher Ex 1-15 als einheitliche, in sich kohärente Erzählung sieht.³ Sehr schön zeigt Fischer die zahlreichen inneren Bezüge innerhalb von Ex 1-15 auf. So wird ein wahres „Gewebe“ (textum) sichtbar, so dass kein einziger Vers isoliert gegenüber dem Textganzen dasteht.

Mich beschäftigt, dass Fischer weder Anfang noch Ende dieser seiner Erzählung klar abgrenzen kann bzw. will. Denn Fischer findet hier auch Verweise auf Verse in Gen, Dtn und DtrG. Diese Verweise lassen sich nicht redaktionskritisch aus dem Textganzen herauslösen, ohne dass dadurch der Textverlauf beschädigt würde. Doch ist es überhaupt denkbar, dass Ex 1-15 jemals als isolierte Erzählung exi-

¹ Diese Ausführungen gehen auf ein Referat anlässlich des *XI. Colloquium Biblicum* in Prag zurück (April 2003). Die anschliessende engagierte Diskussion mit ihren weiterführenden Anregungen, für welche ich sehr dankbar bin, wurde von mir nach Möglichkeit in vorliegenden Aufsatz eingearbeitet.

² Siehe z. B. die Auflistung bleibender Widersprüche in Ex 1-15 bei so unterschiedlichen Forschern wie Fischer (1995, 203f), Houtman (1996, 16f) und Kratz (2000, 244ff.296ff). Unbefriedigend bleibt ebenfalls die jüngste, sehr gründliche redaktionsgeschichtliche Analyse durch Gertz (2000).

³ Ähnlich, und unabhängig von Fischer, auch Owen (1996).

stierte? Ist ein Erzählabschluss mit dem Schilfmeerwunder möglich, ohne dass die Wüstenwanderung als Fortsetzung im Blickfeld steht? Jedenfalls gibt zu denken, dass Fischer keinen überzeugenden Erzählabschluss nachweisen kann. Zu diesem Defizit passt eine weitere Beobachtung: Alle alten jüdischen Unterteilungen in Sinnabschnitte verbinden das Mirjam-Lied mit der folgenden Wüstenwanderung, indem sie einen neuen Abschnitt erst mit Ex 16,4 oder gar 17,17 beginnen lassen.⁴

So bleibt für mich ein Dilemma, das durch die bisherige Forschungsgeschichte nicht aufgehoben werden konnte:

- Auf der synchronen Ebene hängt alles mit allem zusammen.
- Gleichzeitig weisen unauflösbare logische Spannungen und Nahtstellen auf einen langen und komplexen Wachstums-Prozess hin.

Dieses Dilemma muss tiefere Gründe haben. Ich hege den Verdacht, dass die Forschung an einem wesentlichen Punkt von einer unzutreffenden Voraussetzung ausgeht: Sowohl diachrone wie synchrone Forschung rechnet mit schriftlicher Überlieferung, welcher ein mündliches Stadium vorausgehen mag. Dieses Nacheinander von Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit stelle ich infrage; stattdessen plädiere ich für eine *Gleichzeitigkeit bzw. für ein In-einander von Schriftlichkeit und Mündlichkeit*.⁵

Bevor ich meine „Vision“ entfalte, möchte ich Texte betrachten, welche durch grössere Differenzen zwischen MT und LXX auffallen (in der Forschung wird von unterschiedlichen Rezensionen gesprochen): 1Sam 17 sowie Dan 4–6.

Zu 1Sam 17

Bekanntlich hat hier die LXX* einen bedeutend kürzeren Text. In der Forschung wurde bisher vor allem diskutiert, ob die kürzere oder die

⁴ So der drei- sowie der einjährige Lesezyklus; sie beginnen den Wochenabschnitt mit Ex 14,15 bzw. 13,17. Ferner ist das Gliederungsmittel der *Petucha* in Ex 15,20 (also zwischen Mose- und Mirjam-Lied!) und in 16,4 zu beachten, wogegen in Ex 15,22 (also nach dem Mirjam-Lied) nur eine weniger gewichtige *Setuma* vorliegt. – Die christlich-mittelalterliche Kapitel-Einteilung schliesst Kap. 15 mit der Wüstenwanderungsstation Elim ab.

⁵ Vgl. die kurze Bemerkung von Fraade (1999, 35), mit Verweisen auf weitere Literatur aus meist ausserbiblischen Disziplinen.

längere Rezension älter sei. Jedoch interessanter dünken mich die Beobachtungen von Stoebe (1956), welche von der weiteren Forschung jedoch nur wenig beachtet worden sind. Stoebe arbeitete zwei unterschiedliche erzählerische Konzeptionen heraus: Die eine schildert David als halbwüchsigen Hirtenknaben, die andere als erwachsene Rettergestalt (analog zu Gideon oder andern Richtern).

Besonders deutlich lassen sich diese beiden Konzeptionen in Vers 39 nachweisen:

David als Erwachsener:	als halbwüchsiger Hirtenknabe:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MT: <i>David nimmt sein eigenes Schwert</i> • MT: David ist Sauls schweren Panzer <i>nicht gewohnt</i> und zieht ihn darum <i>selbständig</i> aus. 	<p>LXX: David erhält (erst jetzt) <i>von Saul dessen Schwert.</i></p> <p>LXX: David als unselbständiges Kind: Sauls Waffenrüstung <i>ermüdet</i> David bald, und <i>Sauls Diener</i> müssen sie ihm wieder ausziehen.⁶</p>

Überraschend ist: die beiden Konzeptionen lassen sich nicht je auf die beiden Fassungen MT/LXX aufteilen. Der Sachverhalt ist komplexer das Konzept des Hirytenknaben – in der folgenden Grafik jeweils mit fetten Einrahmung – erscheint je abschnittsweise entweder nur im MT oder nur in der LXX:

MT	LXX*
1-11: Goliath fordert Israel zum Zweikampf heraus	
<p>12-31: Der junge Hirte David besucht seine Brüder im Feld. Er hört von Sauls Suche nach einem Duellanten und will dies tun, obwohl seine Brüder ihn für zu jung erachten.</p>	<p>—</p> <p>—</p> <p>—</p> <p>—</p>
<p>32-54: David überwindet Goliath</p> <p>38: וילבש אתו שריון 39: ויהגר דוד את חרביו 39: ויאיל ללכת כי לא נסה</p> <p>39: ויסרים 41.48b.50.51ay: Détails betr. der Kampfeshandlung von zwei Erwachsenen</p>	<p>32-54: David überwindet Goliath</p> <p>38: — 39: καὶ ἔζωσεν τὸν Δαουὶδ ... 39: ἐκοπίασεν περιπατήσας ἄπαξ καὶ δίς 39: ἀφαιρουσιν 41.48b.50.51ay: —</p>
<p>55-58: Saul begegnet (erstmalig) David (logischer Widerspruch zu 1Sam 16,14ff!)</p>	<p>—</p> <p>—</p>

⁶ Dass das Anziehen des Panzers (Vers 38) in LXX gar nicht erzählt wird, mag ebenfalls damit zusammenhängen, dass kein Kind die Rüstung eines Mannes trägt.

Aus diesen Beobachtungen schliesst Stoebe, dass „schriftliche Fixierung und mündliche Weitergestaltung an der endgültigen Ausgestaltung nebeneinander beteiligt sind.“ An den beiden Fassungen lässt sich das Weiterwirken der mündlichen Tradition bzw. das wechselseitige Einwirken der verschiedenen Rezensionen auch nach ihrer Verschriftung beobachten. Denn im Abschnitt 17,32–54 ist die LXX-Fassung „in ihrer Darstellung durch die gleiche Vorstellung bestimmt, welche zur Erweiterung von MT in 17,12–31 geführt hat.“ So ist das textkritische Problem dieser Perikope als ein Glücksfall zu werten, welcher „erkennen lässt, wie fließend und wenig gefestigt, aber auch wie mannigfaltig die schriftliche Überlieferung noch war.“⁷

Zu Dan 4

Auch in den drei Erzählungen von Dan 4–6 finden sich massive Differenzen zwischen MT und LXX*. Albertz hat hier zwei unterschiedliche, doch je in sich stimmige Konzeptionen herausgearbeitet:⁸

<p>MT (apokalyptisches Interesse):</p> <p>Ziel ist die Durchsetzung von Gottes eschatologischer Königsherrschaft gegenüber den totalitären Machtansprüchen des heidnischen Herrschers.</p>	<p>LXX* (missionarisches Interesse des hellenistischen Judentums):</p> <p>Ziel ist die individuelle Abwendung von den Götzen und die Bekehrung zum wahren Gott. Dies wird an der Bekehrung des heidnischen Herrschers gezeigt.</p>
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Im folgenden beschränke ich mich auf Dan 4, d.h. auf Nebukadnezars Traum vom Weltenbaum. In der gleich anschliessenden Grafik ist die Thematik der Königsherrschaft Gottes jeweils durch die fette Einrahmung bezeichnet:

⁷ Stoebe (1956, 411–413). In seinem 1973 veröffentlichten Samuel-Kommentar wagt sich Stoebe allerdings nicht mehr so weit vor.

⁸ Siehe Albertz (1988 und 1997).

MT	LXX* Verzählung korrespondiert nicht mit MT
III 31-33: Sendschreiben Nebukadnezars mit Doxologie. KÖNIGSHERRSCHAFT GOTTES	— — —
IV 1-14: Ich-Bericht des Traums	4-17: Ich-Bericht des Traums
15-24: Er-Bericht der Traumdeutung	18-28: Ich-Bericht der Traumdeutung
25-30: Er-Bericht von Nebukadnezars Hybris+Fall	29-33: Er-Bericht von Nebukadnezars Hybris+Fall
31-34: Doxologie Nebukadnezars KÖNIGSHERRSCHAFT GOTTES	33A-36 Ich-Bericht von Nebukadnezars Bekehrung 37: Gebet mit Gottesbekenntnis Nebukadnezars
	37A: Gelübde Nebukadnezars (Abkehr von Götzen)
	37B: Sendbrief Nebukadnezars: Lobaufruf und Dank
	37C: zweiter Sendbrief Nebukadnezars (sekundär!) KÖNIGSHERRSCHAFT GOTTES

Typische Eigenheiten von MT sind:

- Rahmung der Erzählung mittels doxologischer Aussagen zur Königsherrschaft Gottes.
- Dasselbe Thema findet sich gehäuft auch bei den Erkenntnisausagen („bis du erkennst, dass...“ o. ä. in 14.23.27.31).

Typische Eigenheiten der LXX-Fassung sind hingegen:

- Nur hier ist Nebukadnezars Götzendienst ein zu überwindendes Problem, wogegen in MT die Fremdreligiosität ein gegebenes Faktum ist. Nur in LXX wendet sich Nebukadnezar von den Götzen ab.
- Die Rettung Nebukadnezars erfolgt hier erst nach dessen Umkehr, welche durch ein Bussgebet eingeleitet wird.

Für mich ist nun besonders von Interesse, wo sich eine *Vermischung der beiden Konzeptionen* nachweisen lässt, d.h. wo im MT vereinzelt Züge erscheinen, welche eigentlich nur für die LXX typisch sind, und umgekehrt:

- Im MT finden sich einige Motive, die im Verstehenshorizont der Erzählung kaum verständlich bzw. funktionslos sind, hingegen in der LXX-Fassung einen klaren Sinn zeigen. Albertz redet hier von

„Blindmotiven“. Beispiel: In MT redet nur Vers 24 von einer Sünde des Königs; sie soll durch Almosen überwunden werden. Jedoch in der LXX wirkt dieselbe Aussage stimmiger innerhalb der Aufforderung zum Bussgebet (27).⁹

- Auch das Umgekehrte lässt sich beobachten. Albertz findet in der Erkenntnisaussage Vers 31 LXX eine sekundäre Angleichung an Vers 29b MT.¹⁰ Ferner begegnet das für MT typische Thema der Königsherrschaft Gottes vereinzelt auch am Schluss der LXX-Erzählung (Vers 37C).

Letztere Stelle ist der einzige Beleg, der sich überzeugend als sekundäre Hinzufügung isolieren lässt.¹¹ Alle anderen „Blindmotive“ in Dan 4 können nicht so schmerzlos aus dem Textganzen herausgeschnitten werden. Die beliebte Annahme, dass hier redaktionelle Arbeit vorliegt (so u. a. auch Albertz), kann mich nicht befriedigen. Ebenfalls nicht die neuere Sicht, dass massive Differenzen zwischen MT und LXX jeweils auf die Existenz einer älteren und einer jüngeren Edition („*revised edition*“) hinweisen.¹² So kann nicht plausibel erklärt werden, wie es zur Vermischung der unterschiedlichen Konzepte gekommen ist.

Zuweilen sind sogar mehr als zwei Konzepte greifbar. In Dan 5 sind es z. B. drei: Die LXX setzt vor ihre Erzählung von Belsazars Hybris und Untergang eine Art ausführlicher *praefatio*, welche sich durch ihre singulären Erzähl-Züge als eine selbständige Fassung erweist. Hier können wir „einmal direkt greifen“, „was wir für viele Bibeltexte nur erahnen können: dass sie nur eine Auswahl aus einem variantenreichen Strauss der Einzelüberlieferung darstellen“ (Albertz 1988, 81). Leider greift Albertz im folgenden dann doch wieder zum alten Erklärungsmodell zurück, eine primäre schriftliche Fassung zu bestimmen und sie von sekundären, ebenfalls schriftlichen Fassungen zu unterscheiden.

⁹ Weitere Beispiele bei Albertz (1988, 71–76).

¹⁰ Albertz (1988, 65f). – Ferner beobachtet Albertz (1988, 67–70) in der LXX-Fassung auch einige sekundäre Angleichungen an Dan 2.

¹¹ Es fällt auf, dass Vers 37C nochmals ein Sendschreiben Nebukadnezars bringt, nachdem bereits in 37B ein solches erging.

¹² So Tov (²1997, 237ff) und Trebolla Barrera (1998, 393ff); Ulrich (1999, 36–41) bezeichnet in Dan 4–6 sowohl MT als auch LXX als *secondary editions*.

Mir jedoch erscheint dieser überlieferte Varianten-Reichtum am plausibelsten erklärbar, wenn wir ein Nebeneinander mündlicher Traditionen mit je schriftlicher Fixierung sowie mit mündlicher Weiterentwicklung annehmen. Diese mündliche Weiterentwicklung kann auch zu teilweisen Angleichungen zwischen unterschiedlichen Erzählvarianten führen.¹³

Blick auf heutige Erzähl-Erfahrungen mit biblischen Geschichten

Hier sei ein Blick auf die heutige Praxis gestattet, wie ich sie als Gemeindepfarrer erlebe. Wenn ich mündlich eine biblische Geschichte vor Kindern oder Erwachsenen erzähle,¹⁴ stütze ich mich zwar auf die schriftliche Vorlage des kanonischen Textes. Gleichzeitig verändere ich den Text – teils bewusst, teils unbewusst:

- Sogar wenn ich mich um eine möglichst genaue Nacherzählung bemühe, harmonisiere ich unbewusst logische Spannungen im Bibeltext. Dies wurde mir erstmals im Theologiestudium bewusst, als Hans Joachim Stoebe uns Studierende im Proseminar aufforderte, 1Sam 17 sklavisch genau nachzuerzählen. Niemand von uns brachte es zustande, unbewusste Harmonisierungen zu vermeiden.

- Hingegen gehen theologische Akzentverstärkungen oder gar Gewichtsverlagerungen häufiger auf das Konto bewusster Reflexion. Und daraus können sich bei meinem Erzählen u. U. neue logische Spannungen ergeben.

Was die wissenschaftliche Exegese üblicherweise als „redaktionelle Arbeit“ bezeichnet, geschieht analog beim heutigen mündlichen Erzählen. Der Begriff „redaktionell“ ist darum missverständlich, weil wir ihn mit schriftlichen Aktivitäten zu assoziieren pflegen, wogegen

¹³ Albertz teilt mir in seinem Mail vom 13. 5. 2003 allerdings mit, dass er Dan 4–6 nicht als günstiges Beispiel für meine These erachte, weil „auch die LXX-Version eine lockere Komposition darstellt, die mit Stichwörtern auf der griechischen Textebene arbeitet. Höchstens dahinter ist ein ganzer Strom mündlicher Varianten zu vermuten, aus dem die durch LXX und MT belegten nur eine schwächer oder stärker komponierte Auswahl sind.“

¹⁴ Dieser lebendige Strom der Beschäftigung mit biblischen Erzählungen darf nicht unterschätzt werden. Allein in einer Kleinstadt wie Liestal mit 13 000 Seelen werden jede Woche gegen hundert biblische Geschichten an Kinder erzählt.

ich eine mündliche Tätigkeit im Blick habe – sowohl heute wie auch in biblischer Zeit.

Der heutige akademische Alltag ist jedoch geprägt von einer anderen Art Umgang mit biblischen Texten. Wissenschaftliche Exegese basiert auf schriftlichen Text-Analysen, häufig gar mit Hilfe von Computer-Technologie. Deren Ergebnisse gleichen denn zuweilen auch einem „*copy and paste*“ aus der Welt der elektronischen Textverarbeitung. Unsere heutige Schriflichkeit-lastige Praxis prägt unsere Beziehung zu den biblischen Texten mehr, als uns bewusst ist.

Auraler Charakter des biblischen Erzählens

Das alte Israel hat anders mit seinen Texten gelebt. Das Hören auf das gesprochene Wort war wohl der häufigste Umgang. Auch die schriftliche Literatur war geprägt vom Stil des Vortragens.¹⁵ Einige (eher zufällige) Beispiele:

- Ex 10.2: Vor den Ohren deiner Kinder und Kindeskinde soll erzählt werden, wie JHWH mit den Ägyptern verfahren ist und unter ihnen seine Wunderzeichen gewirkt hat, „damit ihr erkennt, dass ich JHWH bin.“

- Der Geschichtspsalms 78 appelliert an die Ohren des Volks, und der Sprecher „tut seinen Mund auf“, um die heilsgeschichtlichen Wundertaten zu erzählen.

- Der alttestamentliche Erzähl-Stil erlaubt Subjekt-Wechsel, ohne dass das neue Subjekt genannt werden muss. Ebenso sind Pronominal-Suffixe möglich, die sich auf eine Person beziehen, welche mehrere Verse vorher genannt wurde. Denn der mündliche Vortrag macht sprachliche Mehrdeutigkeiten eindeutig durch die Modulation der Stimme, aber auch durch Gestik und Mimik.

Ich spreche deshalb vom *auralen* Charakter, welcher die biblischen Erzählungen prägt. Noch im Neuen Testament begegnet übrigens die

¹⁵ Die anregende und innovative Arbeit von Susan Niditch (1996, 126) unterscheidet in der alttestamentlichen Literatur fünf Kategorien mit unterschiedlich hohen Anteilen an Mündlichkeit. Niditch bezeichnet z.B. Ex 7ff als „schriftliche Imitation mündlichen Erzählstils.“

klassische Aussage, dass der Glaube aus dem *Hören* kommt.¹⁶ Wo das NT jedoch das „Lesen“ (*ἀναγιγνώσκειν*) erwähnt, kann dies sich auf dreierlei beziehen:

- öffentliches Vorlesen (z. B. Luk 4,16: Jesus liest in der Synagoge vor)
- private, laut gesprochene, Lektüre (z. B. Apg 8,30: Philippus hört den Äthiopier laut lesen)
- Abrufbarkeit kanonischer alttestamentlicher Texte (z. B. Mark 12,26: „habt ihr nicht im Buche des Mose gelesen beim Dornbusch, wie Gott ihm sagte: ‚Ich bin der Gott Abrahams...‘“).¹⁷

Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit dürfen allerdings nicht gegeneinander ausgespielt werden, sondern stehen in einer engen Wechselbeziehung. Schriftliche Fixierung ist unentbehrlich für die Kontinuität der Überlieferung sowie als persönliche Gedächtnisstütze. Doch gleichzeitig geschieht das Erzählen auch in einer gewissen Bandbreite von Variationen.

Unterschiedliche Fassungen einer biblischen Erzählung

An den Rändern des Kanonisierungs-Prozesses wird die Variationsbreite am deutlichsten sichtbar. Ich nenne willkürlich einige Beispiele:

- Tobit-Erzählung: zwei unterschiedliche Fassungen in der LXX, zudem Fragmente in Qumran.
- massive Differenzen zwischen MT und LXX wie z. B. in den oben erwähnten Erzählungen 1Sam 17 und Dan 4–6. Diese eher seltenen Fälle sind wohl auf besonders populäre Erzählungen beschränkt (auf die Vorkommnisse in den Prophetenbüchern möchte hier nicht eingehen).
- In Qumran sind verschiedene Texte aufgetaucht, welche von der Forschung meist als „Paraphrasen“ zu einem Bibeltext bezeichnet

¹⁶ Röm 10,17. Grundsätzlich zum auralen Charakter in der griechisch-römischen Antike sowie insbesondere im Neuen Testament vgl. Achtemeier (1990). – Vgl. auch die klassische Formulierung der »*Confessio Helvetica Posterior*« (1562): »*Praedicatio Verbi Dei est Verbum Dei*« (BSRK 171).

¹⁷ Willi (2000,49) betont mit Recht die grundsätzliche Priorität der Mündlichkeit noch in frühjüdischer Zeit, wo die Berufung auf Schriftlichkeit „den Bezug zur eigenen lebendigen, mündlichen Tradition nicht nur nicht preisgibt, sondern im Gegenteil voraussetzt.“

werden. Für das Exodus-Buch verweise ich z. B. auf 4Q365 (Rewor-
ked Pentateuch^c), 4Q422 (Paraphrase of Gen and Ex) sowie die grie-
chischen Papyrus-Fragmente 4Q127 (pap4QParaExod gr).

Die bisherige Forschung hat sich m. E. zu sehr darauf konzentriert,
primäre und sekundäre Fassungen zu eruieren. Man spricht dann von
einer früheren Edition sowie einer *“revised oder secondary edition”*
(„Edition“ ist ein rein schriftlicher Begriff!). Tov und andere sehen
z. B. in der MT-Fassung von 1Sam 17 eine *revised edition*, wogegen
die LXX auf eine ältere hebräische Edition zurückgehen soll.

Ich möchte die Fragwürdigkeit solcher Annahmen am Beispiel des
Exodus-Buchs zeigen. In der sogenannten Plagen-Erzählung Ex 7–11
wird die jeweilige Ankündigung einer Plage unterschiedlich ausführ-
lich fomuliert; zuweilen fehlt in MT und LXX eine Ankündigung,
sondern es wird nur die Ausführung der Plagenhandlung erzählt. Was
hier in MT und LXX zu fehlen scheint, findet sich jedoch im Samari-
tanischen Pentateuch sowie in zwei Qumran-Handschriften aus has-
monäischer Zeit (4QpaleoExod^j und ^m). Tov und andere bezeichnen
nun diese harmonisierende Fassung als jüngere *revised edition*. Diese
Annahme – so plausibel sie auf den ersten Blick erscheint – reibt sich
aber mit der Sicht, welche die gleichen Forscher beim Stiftshütten-Bau
in Ex 35–40 vertreten:

ältere „Edition“	“revised/secondary edition”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ex 35–40: LXX • Ex 7–10: MT, LXX 	MT , 4QpaleoExod ^m , Samaritanus 4QpaleoExod ^j und ^m , Samaritanus

Dass MT in Ex 7–10 die ältere Edition bieten, hingegen in den
letzten Kapiteln desselben Buches die *revised edition* bringen soll,
erscheint mir nicht überzeugend. Zumindest müsste man dann die
revised edition ebenfalls als relativ alt ansehen; Sogar Ulrich (1999,
109) tut dies, wenn er als ein Befürworter von solchen schriftlich
fixierten Editionen vermutet, dass diese *secondary edition* bis ins
5. vorchristliche Jahrhundert zurückgehe. Die *pluriformity of texts* ist
offenbar um Jahrhunderte älter als die uns erhaltenen Textzeugen.

Die häufige Mischung verschiedener Textfassungen in Qumran, im
MT und in den alten Übersetzungen zeigt uns einen zeitlich begrenzten
Ausschnitt aus der langen Geschichte der Überlieferung. Ich möchte

im folgenden zeitlich sowohl nach oben als auch nach unten gehen. Ich beginne beim weniger hypothetischen Teil, d. h. bei der späteren Zeit:

Ursachen von Textveränderungen beim Abschreiben

Das Abschreiben einer Handschrift ist kein rein mechanischer Vorgang. Textveränderungen können aus den verschiedensten Gründen geschehen:

- Unbewusste Abschreibfehler können aus persönlicher Flüchtigkeit des Schreibers stammen. Allerdings häufig haben sie kein langes Leben, sondern werden spätestens bei der nächsten Abschrift wieder korrigiert.

- bewusste Korrekturen haben einen Hintergrund. Wer abschreibt, ist gleichzeitig von der liturgischen Tradition sowie der Erzähltradition seiner regionalen Glaubensgemeinschaft abhängig (kann auch zu unbewussten Textänderungen führen)

Solche Einflüsse sind zur mündlichen Tradition zu rechnen, sei es dass sie auf mündlichem Weg zum Abschreiber kamen, oder dass sie aus der mündlichen Erzählpraxis des Abschreibers selbst stammen. Doch gleichzeitig übte die schriftliche Vorlage des Abschreibers auch ein Eigengewicht bzw. Gegengewicht aus. Sie schränkte allfällige Harmonisierungen aus der mündlichen Tradition des Abschreibers ein.

Dieses Wechselspiel ist mit verantwortlich für den auffälligen Tatbestand, dass es weit mehr als ein Jahrtausend bedurfte, bis die pluriforme Überlieferung auf einem langen Weg über mehrere Standardisierungen schliesslich endgültig als masoretischer Text fixiert war.¹⁸

Konsequenzen für die redaktionskritische Methode

Und jetzt möchte ich zeitlich weiter zurück gehen. Dabei kommen wir in diejenige Zeitepoche, wo üblicherweise die Redaktionsgeschichte an Stelle der Textkritik das Feld der Exegese beherrscht.

¹⁸ Übrigens auch der Text des Neuen Testaments brauchte für die Fixierung mehr als tausend Jahre. Der sekundäre Markus-Schluss (Mk 16,9-20) und die ausser-johanneische Perikope „Jesus und die Ehebrecherin“ (Joh 7,53-8,11) setzten sich im Laufe der Jahrhunderte gänzlich durch, doch fehlen sie noch im 12. Jh. in den Minuskelschriften 304 bzw. 1241.

Wenn meine Vorstellung eines Nebeneinanders von schriftlichem und mündlichem Tradieren auch für diese frühere Zeit zutrifft, lassen sich meine eingangs erwähnten Frustrationen lindern. Denn nun wird für mich verständlich, warum sich (sprachliche und inhaltliche) Spannungen im Text nicht durch Herausschneiden der inkriminierten Satz-teile beseitigen lassen, ohne dass dies zur Beschädigung des Text-ganzen führt.

Wenn ich im folgenden konkrete Beispiele aus dem Exodus-Buch vorlege, so hängt dies mit meiner persönlichen Arbeit an diesem Text-abschnitt zusammen. Doch sollte es Ihnen leicht fallen, Ihre eigenen Erfahrungen aus andern biblischen Büchern angesprochen zu finden.

Ex 7-14 sind reich an Aussagen über die Ziele von JHWHs denkwürdigem Handeln, wenn er Katastrophe um Katastrophe über Ägypten bringt und dabei Pharaos Herz verstockt. Dies alles geschieht, damit Pharaos und sein Volk, aber ebenso auch das Volk Israel „erfahren, dass ich JHWH bin...“.¹⁹ Die rund zehn ausgebauten und theologisch dichten Ziel-Aussagen über JHWHs Wunderwirken sowie zur JHWH-Erfahrung machen sozusagen das Salz des Erzähl-ganzen aus; ohne dieses Salz würde das ganze fade.

Manche dieser Aussagen werden von der Forschung als „redaktionelle Einfügung“ beurteilt, so z. B. Ex 10,1b-2.²⁰

1a „Da sprach JHWH zu Mose: ‚Geh zum Pharao hinein. [[1b *denn ich habe sein und seiner Leute Herz verstockt, damit ich diese meine Zeichen unter ihnen tue, 2 und damit du deinen Kindern und Kindeskindern erzählst, wie übel ich den Ägyptern mitgespielt habe, damit ihr erfahrt, dass ich JHWH bin.*]]‘ 3 Da ging Mose zum Pharao und sagte zum ihm: »So spricht JHWH, der Gott der Hebräer: Wie lange hast du dich schon geweigert,

¹⁹ Ex 7,3-5.17; 8, 6.18; 9, 14-16.29; 10,1f; 11, 7.9; 14, 4.17f. Walther Zimmerli prägte seinerzeit dafür den Ausdruck „Erkenntnisformel“, wogegen ich die Bezeichnung »Ziel-Aussage« in Ex 7ff vorziehe. – Siehe auch die inhaltlich vergleichbaren Ankündigungen in Ex 3,20 und 4,21.

²⁰ Als repräsentatives Beispiel nenne ich den Exodus-Kommentar von W. H. Schmidt (BK, Lieferung II/2, 1999, z. St.). – Anders neuerdings Gertz (2000,154ff), welcher Ex 10,1-5ba als redaktionell bezeichnet, was mich ebenso wenig befriedigt, doch zumindest konsequenter erscheint.

dich vor mir zu demütigen? Entlasse mein Volk, damit sie mir dienen! 4 Wenn du dich aber weigerst...«

Diese Stelle „riecht“ in der Tat nach sekundären Erweiterungen. Doch die üblichen redaktionskritischen Operationen lassen einen verletzten Patienten zurück. Die kläglichen drei Worte von Vers 1a können keine vollständige JHWH-Rede sein, worauf der Bericht der Ausführung in Vers 3 unmittelbar anschliessen soll.

Wenn wir hingegen unsere Vorstellung von einer rein schriftlichen Überlieferung verlassen und stattdessen ein Mitwirken mündlichen Erzählens in Variationen annehmen, so wird für mich verständlich, warum sich der Text allen hypothetischen Ausscheidungsversuchen widersetzt. Ich rechne mit einem laufenden Prozess von (kleineren) Hinzufügungen und Weglassungen, wie es beim mündlichen Tradieren natürlich ist.²¹

Meine Sicht hat allerdings zur Folge, dass der Überlieferungsprozess einen fließenden Charakter bekommt und kaum präzise Aussagen ermöglicht. Meistens wird man darauf verzichten müssen, auf analytischem Weg Sekundäres von Primärem zu isolieren. Doch wird man zumindest unterschiedliche Tendenzen und Gewichtsverlagerungen beobachten können. Dies ist m. E. genug für eine theologisch fruchtbare Exegese.

Konsequenzen für die Quellenscheidungs-Versuche

Ich gehe zeitlich nochmals einen grossen Schritt zurück und gelange in die hypothesenreiche Epoche, wo sich das Tummelfeld der Quellenscheidungs-Versuche befindet.²² Dürfen wir auch für diese frühe Zeit

²¹ In der Diskussion am *Colloquium Biblicum* stellten P. Chalupa (Olomouc) und B. Diebner (Dielheim) zu Recht die Frage nach den Kriterien solcher Veränderungen. Bisher sind die Gesetze mündlichen Tradierens wohl noch zu wenig erforscht, um bereits überzeugende Antworten geben zu können. – Ferner fragte U. Bauer (Hunzenschwil), wie die Existenz literarisch gut gearbeiteter Stücke mit bewusst gestalteter Anzahl der verwendeten Wörter mit der von mir vorgetragenen These kompatibel sei. Andere Teilnehmer sahen hier kein grundsätzliches Problem. Bedenkenswert ist die Antwort von P. Tomášek (Prag): „In jeder Phase der Überlieferung war der Text eine Einheit, d. h. er war nie kaputt.“

²² Im Gegensatz zu manchen konsequenten Spät-Datierern unterscheide ich grundsätzlich zwischen „Traditions“- und „Fiktions“-Literatur. Ein Beispiel für die (m. E.

ein Nebeneinander von mündlichen und schriftlichen Ausformulierungen und infolgedessen eine pluriforme Überlieferung des Erzählstoffs annehmen?

Besonders weit werden Erzählvarianten auseinandergehen, wenn derselbe Erzählstoff durch mehrere Trägerkreise mit unterschiedlichen Interessen tradiert wird. Ich denke da an Priester, Leviten, Schreiber, Erzähler und Erzählerinnen, welche unter Umständen sogar gleichzeitig lebten und tradierten. Was die Forschung traditionellerweise als die Quellen J/E/P/D bezeichnet, mag auf solche Ausgestaltungen durch soziologisch unterschiedliche Trägerkreise zurückgehen. Deren Erzählvarianten haben sich im Laufe der Zeit auch gegenseitig beeinflusst, sowohl in mündlichen als auch in schriftlich fixierten Fassungen, und es kam dabei notgedrungen zu logischen Spannungen im Text. Doch mit der exegetischen Brille einer rein schriftlichen Überlieferung lassen sich diese Spannungen nicht weg-analysieren.

Nach diesen – notgedrungen hypothetischen – Ausführungen muss ich abrechnen und tue es in der Hoffnung, dass andere ihr Weiterdenken mit eigenen Beobachtungen verbinden und so die Forschung am Alten Testament weiter bringen.²³

seltener) Fiktionsliteratur ist der Anfang des Judit-Buches mit seinen chaotischen historischen Angaben: „Im 12. Jahr der Regierung Nebukadnezars, welcher in Ninive über die Assyrer herrschte, und in den Tagen Arpaxads, welcher über die Meder in Ekbatana herrschte...“ – Die Traditions-Literatur hingegen bringt mehr zutreffende historische Angaben, was nur möglich ist, wenn schriftliche Informationen als Gedächtnisstütze vorhanden sind.

²³ Nachträglich finde ich in der Darstellung der »Prager Schule« durch Jan Heller (1982) überraschend viele Berührungen mit meinen obigen Überlegungen. – In der Diskussion am *Colloquium Biblicum* betonten vor allem die Prager M. Balabán und M. Prudký, dass die Überlieferung der alttestamentlichen Texte stärker von der liturgischen Tradition abhängen, wogegen die Schriftlichkeit nur ein Hilfsmittel darstelle. Balabán prägte das Bild von der Schriftlichkeit als Brücke zwischen vorangehendem und nachfolgendem mündlichem Tradieren. Prudký wies als interessante Analogie auf die Entstehung heutiger Gesangbücher hin: Während jede Gemeinde ihren eigenen Lieder-Kanon pflegt, ist es die Aufgabe der Gesangbuchkommission, die (in unterschiedlichen Fassungen kursierenden) Lieder in einer verantworteten Form herauszugeben. Diese Analogie halte ich auch deshalb für fruchtbar, weil die mündliche Tradition ständig weitergeht und sich verändert, so dass Nachträge zum Gesangbuch oder gar ein neues Gesangbuch nötig werden (Prudký: „das liturgische Leben geht seine eigenen Wege“). Bei den alttestamentlichen Texten wird zumindest ein Teil des Tradierens auch durch eine Art Kommission, welche zwischen unterschiedlichen Gruppeninteressen auszugleichen hatte, geschehen sein. Doch vgl. P. Tomášek (Prag): „Nur wenn ein Problem da ist, gibt es eine Kommission.“

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ETHICS IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

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Compared to the other three Gospels and their rich ethical teaching, the ethics of John seems to be restricted to ch. 13, “the new commandment” of love, hence the accusation that it is limited, scanty and far from being part of an overall ethical system. This is true only if we understand the ethics of any Gospel as a collection of moral laws and their interpretations. In that case the Gospel of John (GJ) is indeed poor in terms of its ethical content. This paper – making use of some methods of ancient literature – seeks to testify to the hidden ethical dimensions of GJ, beyond the immediate ethical laws.

Ethical conflicts in GJ

As we know from the theory of ancient dramas, the *ethical conflict* is never a “side street” of the dramatic plot. On the contrary, it is the main theme: *the kernel of the tragedy*. According to Aristotle (*Poetics*) the conflict is triggered and carried through by the ethos of the *dramatis personae*. It is so, because the tragedy itself is an imitation of human deeds and these human deeds are nothing else but individual decisions hardened into customs, which we call the character/personality or ethos of a person.¹

In Hegel’s “The Philosophy of Fine Art” the ancient tragedy is called the conflict of partial ethics. After the fall of the hero, the universal order slowly takes shape.² We can assume that this role of ethical conflicts is important also in GJ. It is evidently not one of the ancient tragedies but on the basis of cultural connections, certain literary marks and their common efforts in interpreting myths, it is

¹ *Poetics* 48a1.

² Friedrich Hegel, “The Philosophy of Fine Art” in R. W. Corrigan, *Tragedy. Vision and Form*. New York, 1981. pp. 331–342.

influenced by them.³ If we can call a ballad “a tragedy told in a song” (Zsolt Beöthy, a renown Hungarian literary critic), this writing of the New Testament can be easily called “a gospel told in a tragedy.”

Once this dramatic nature of GJ is taken into consideration, we might ask: How is this theory of ethical conflicts in the ancient tragedies, represented in the *basic conflict of GJ*? In ancient tragedies the *hero* needs an adversary of equal quality, the protagonist needs an antagonist. Though GJ does not know of any adversary equal to Jesus, it obviously speaks of two collective adversaries: the Jewish religious leaders and the Roman authorities represented by Pilate.

Let us first take a look at the *Jewish religious leaders* as adversaries in GJ. Among their members we find the high priests of the aristocratic hierarchy, the scribes (Torah-lawyers) representing the holy tradition and finally the Sanhedrin with influential “elders” representing the lay people. The latter’s majority belonged to the Pharisees (“the separated”), who – as the antagonists of Jesus in the other gospels – have worked out his death penalty and execution at the Roman procurator. Of course, the same happens in GJ. What is different, though, in terms of the special role of this Sanhedrin, Jesus’ first and greatest enemy, is that in this Gospel the Sanhedrin represents the ideas of the Council of Jamnia (GJ was written not only after the destruction of the Temple in C. E. 70, but also after C. E. 90). The Council of Jamnia tried to reconcile the situation of Palestinian Jewry after the disastrous Jewish War. There was no state anymore, no Temple, no cult, no priesthood. There was nothing a new community could be built upon. The Jews could not even think about a new revolt for more than fifty years. The remnant had only two options left: one was the new rabbinical movement, the other was the Jesus-movement or Jewish Christianity. These two movements had a very problematic relationship (a necessary feature of every religious com-

³ F. R. M. Hitchcock, “The Dramatic Development of the Fourth Gospel” *The Expositor* IV (1907), 266–279; idem, “Is the Fourth Gospel a Drama?” *Theology* 7 (1923), 307–317; C. M. Connick, “The Dramatic Character of the Fourth Gospel” *JBL* 67 (1948), pp. 159–169; J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel I*, New York-Evanston, 1968; L. Schenke, *Das Johannesevangelium. Einführung-Text-Dramatische Gestalt*, Stuttgart-Berlin-Köln, 1992; W. Verburg, *Passion als Tragödie? Die literarische Gestaltung der antiken Tragödie als Gestaltungsprinzip des Johannespasion*. Stuttgart, 1999.

munity coming from the same family and later split apart): the Jesus-movement tried to evangelize the non-Christian Jews, while the Synagogue excommunicated those attached to the Jesus-movement as we can see in GJ ch. 9. The excommunicated usually lost their entire social existence. When we see this in GJ, it is necessary to be aware of the fact that this is a conscious projection back into Jesus' days (about 55 years earlier): John did not want to write an autobiography (or an ancient *bios*) but rather a drama about his "hero." The ethical conflict between Jesus and the Sanhedrin can be formulated this way: which is the better way of survival for the Jewish people deprived of their political and religious existence? The rabbinical way (cultural separation from the world and preservation of the traditions) or the Jesus-movement (radical change of traditions and mission towards the world, i.e. the Roman Empire)? Although rabbinical Jewry also had a kind of missionary activity before the Jewish War, with pagan converts called proselytes, the Jesus-movement was much more successful by the time of GJ, because in their understanding the Mosaic Law was not a condition to become a Christian convert. In Hegelian terms the ethical conflict was about the fight of two particularities: the Jewish "mother-religion" and the separatist Jesus-movement. The former is represented by the Sanhedrin, the latter by Jesus. At the same time, dialectically, the Jesus-movement was a particularity with universal claims: it offered an alternative to Jews against the rabbinical option, and to the whole Roman Empire, introducing itself as a religious community based on moral principles.

On the other hand, the dramatic conflict between Jesus and the Roman procurator, Pontius Pilate, can be called *a conflict of opposing programs*. Politically speaking, Pilate was the champion of the universal imperial interests, while Jesus was on the side of the particular tradition of a small province. For the Empire, it was necessary to integrate the traditions, language, law and religion of every single subjugated province through the force of the legions and the global Hellenistic culture. Jesus' particularity (in a historical sense) consisted in his representing a religious community concept, "the Kingdom of God" – a tiny subculture compared to the immense Empire. Although in a historical sense it was particular, as a claim and program, the term "Kingdom of God" was universal and far beyond the

limits of the Roman Empire. So, it is rightful to call this scenario a conflict of heroes with opposing programs.

At the same time there are also other dramatic factors. One of these is the conflict between *power and lack of power*. Pilate warns the prophet from Nazareth who is standing before him in chains: “Surely you know that I have authority (Greek: ἐξουσία, Latin: potestas) to release you, and I have authority to crucify you?” (NEB, 19.10). He had military, legal and executive authority at his disposal. Jesus did not deny that but rather interpreted it in another way: “You would have no authority at all over me, (...) if it had not been granted you from above...” (19.11). In other words: this authority is not inherently yours, it is only temporarily bestowed on you from the real source of authority. It was quite well known that the emperor had appointed Pilate and he depended on the mercy of consul Sejanus, whose position has become very doubtful at that time. That is why – in order to secure his status – Pilate tried to make friends with the Jewish leaders and the people he had despised and on many occasions humiliated before. In GJ and the ancient tragedies we often find words with a double meaning. In the light of this Jesus’ words about the authority “from above” can be metaphorical: God has given this authority to you, so you can use it in a right way in my case: I represent God on another level, not as the representative of political authority, but as God’s messenger: “My task is to bear witness to the truth” (= to bear witness to the Reality) (19.37). In a metaphysical sense this is the conflict of the brutal political power and the spiritual authority bearing witness to the reality. Jesus (and thus the drama of GJ) does not deny the existence of the secular authority *eo ipso*, but rather understands it as derived, temporary and contrary to the Ultimate Reality. One thing is sure: Jesus does not behave as a subject before Pilate.

The ethical conflicts of GJ are not limited to *the centre of the Jesus-drama*: they can be found in almost every chapter where Jesus’ public ministry is pictured. Let us mention just three examples: in ch. 5 Jesus heals a man who has been crippled for thirty-eight years – on the Sabbath. He says to the healed man: “Take up your bed and walk” (5.8). On the other side of the story, the religious leaders keep telling the healed man: “It is not allowed to carry your bed on the Sabbath” (5.10). This is a real ethical conflict. On one side the old

authority, Moses and his followers and abusers: the Scribe-Pharisees. On the other side, the ethics of a carpenter from Nazareth, unable to legitimate himself by his background (1.46; 7.41), without license to teach the Torah but able to perform miracles and to heal human lives even at the cost of corrupting the Sabbath. He calls the attention to the authority of God, who sustains this world even on Sabbaths, legitimating Jesus' behavior of healing people on the seventh day.

The other conflict with the Jewish religious leaders is in chs. 7–8. As the Greek tragedies are often about the collision of the primitive-tribal and urban-civilian ethics (e.g. the third part of the Orestes-trilogy shows how the right to punish a certain crime was transferred from tribal vendetta to the civil court), these two chapters of GJ treat the ethical conflict of the primitive-tribal “Abraham’s children” (8.39,53) concept of the Jewish religious leaders versus Jesus’ “God’s children” (8.38,49) concept. Jesus admits that his adversaries are Abraham’s descendants in biological sense: “I know that you are descended from Abraham but” he continues “you are bent on killing me” (8.37). He is God’s child on the basis of his mission from the Father and its faithful accomplishing (8.38,42,54–55), which was denied by the adversaries. It means that they contradict their father Abraham and even themselves when they turn against Jesus, because “This is not how Abraham acted” (8.40). In the course of this passionate debate both parts demonize each other (8.44,48.52) and deny that the other can really be a child of Abraham. Jesus did so only in spiritual sense but his adversaries challenge his very biological origin (“you are a Samaritan... and you are possessed” 8.48). Thus, GJ reveals an ethical conflict of the Jewish tribal (a close community also in the diaspora) and Jesus’ universal (applicable within the social frames of the Roman Empire) ethos.

Conflicts coming from the shift of ethical paradigms

When Zsigmond Ritoók interprets the role of myth in the tragedies, he turns our attention to the importance of paradigm (παράδειγμα).⁴

⁴ Ritoók Zsigmond – Sarkady János – Szilágyi János György, *A görög kultúra aranykora Homérostól Nagy Sándorig (Golden Age of the Greek Culture from Homer to Alexander the Great)*, Budapest, 1984. pp. 284–286.

The genre of drama itself was born with the intention of showing and promoting various values and recommending one of them as a paradigm that had been proven to be valuable.⁵ The ethical paradigms themselves never cause conflicts, what is more, many times they have a preventive, value-guarding role. They are a possible source of conflicts only if there is a need of *new ethical values or order of values* (paradigm shift) after some considerable socio-historical change. That is why in the Greek tragedies social evolution always comes with shifts of ethical paradigms. As early as in the epic work of Homer, we can notice the difference between the ethical values of the aristocratic soldier-hero Achilles and the shrewd citizen, Odysseus (a paradigm shift coming from social changes). This is even more so in the Greek tragedies. Aeschylus' work, *The Eumenides*, is a good testimony of the confrontation between tribal vendetta and the civil right of the cities.

The most important example of paradigm-shift in GJ is the so-called *washing of feet* (13.1–17) with the *command of love*. This prophetic act is called a ὑπόδειγμα, almost a synonym of παράδειγμα, by Jesus himself.⁶ At that time the washing of feet was the duty of slaves except in the case of engaged/married couples (JosAs 20,1–4) or hosts honouring their guests (Luke 7.36–46). Rabbis (“You call me ‘Master’ [i. e. Rabbi]” 13.13) never did such a thing to their disciples. The second part of the story (12–17) is the ethical paradigm or paradigm shift par excellence. Jesus demonstrates that the greater and the more powerful is to serve the weaker and the fallible – at least among his disciples (15–16). G. Theissen⁷ thinks that the story has a threefold ethical function in GJ: 1. Exhortation to hospitality, since this gesture was a privilege of only the most precious guests. At the same time visiting each other was the best sign of Christian unity.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ The meanings of Classical παράδειγμα are example, model, scheme, design. The Hellenistic Greek ὑπόδειγμα means example, ideal (John 13.15), the reflection or anti-type of the original (Hebrews 9.23ff), an admonition (2Peter 2.5; Hebrews 4.11), signal, instruction, example. Cf. H. Schlier, Art. de... knumi, *ThWNT* Bd. II., 1935, pp. 32–33.

⁷ G. Theissen, *Az első keresztyének vallása. Az őskeresztyén vallás elemzése és vallástörténeti leírása (Die Religion der ersten Christen. Eine Theorie des Urchristentums)*. Transl. Csaba Szabó, Budapest, 2001. p. 261.

2. Giving up of social status: Jesus acted as a slave in a class-oriented society, testifying to the unity of Christians. 3. An allusion to his own imminent sacrifice, strengthening the Christians' willingness to undergo martyrdom. According to Zumstein, a paradox statement is being formulated here: the real power is to serve others.⁸ It is not enough to understand this: it needs to be repeated and acted out (13.14–17). The two parts of the story belong together. Behind the sacrificial death of Jesus that wipes away all sins, there lies the attitude of serving others: the washing of others' feet is an emblematic sign of this attitude. The hybris (arrogance, pride) is the greatest sin of mankind in Greek tragedies. Compared to this, the attitude of feet washing in GJ represent an ethical U-turn: a paradigm shift. This attitude is the perfect opposite of hybris.

It is also important that at this point of the story Jesus gives his disciples a “new” *commandment* (a shift of ethical paradigm): *the commandment of love*. If we look at it from a chronological point of view, the “newness” of this commandment seems to be groundless. Already in the Pentateuch we find the commandment to love one's fellow-countryman (Lev 19.18), later extended to the alien settled down among the Jews (Lev 19.34). According to the synoptic Gospels, Jesus connected the love of neighbors to the love of God (“Great Commandment”) thus formulating the very centre of his ethics (Mk 10.31), which was actually extended to the love of enemies (Mt 5.43–48). Compared to these, the “new” element in the ethics of the Johannine Jesus is that *a new measure of love is given*: I do not have to love the other “as myself” but “as I (i.e. Jesus) have loved you” (Jn 13.34b). The measure of our love towards each other is Jesus' love towards us. This is by far the greatest love, for “there is no greater love than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends” (15.13). This is how Jesus loved his disciples and from this point he called them his “friends” (15.14–15). According to Theissen,

⁸ J. Zumstein, “Die johanneische Interpretation des Todes Jesu, in: *Kreative Erinnerung. Relecture und Auslegung im Johannesevangelium*. Zürich, 1999. pp. 113–114. In a study (“Die johanneische Auffassung der Macht, gezeigt am Beispiel der Fusswaschung Joh 13,1–17”) Zumstein proves that the story of feet washing – starting from the christological teaching and through the ecclesiology – leads into the ethics (p. 114).

here the commandment of love is – beyond the realms of ethics – a metaphysical revelation about God’s Reality.⁹

Obviously, as far as criticism is concerned, this is the most vulnerable part of the Johannine love-concept: the disciples’ loving each other is often called introverted and sectarian.¹⁰ We cannot leave it out of consideration that in these days the Qumran community publicly propagated that the sectarians had to love each other and hate those in the outer world (IQS I.3f.9f.), while the Gnostics and the adherents of the mystery religions despised “all the outsiders” and the “uninitiated.” It is also important to mention that words “as I have loved you” refers to all those who read and hear this teaching in the future (the whole Oecumene, where those who follow Jesus’ ethics are present) and not only to the small Johannine circle.

Besides the paradigm shift treated above, GJ has many smaller units where this main topic is detailed and applied. Let us examine two of these. The first is in the story of the man born blind, in ch. 9. This drama is partly ironical and partly – not in the modern sense of the word – comic. As to the content, the hybris and blind pride of the religious experts (Scribes and Pharisees) is contrasted with the common sense, which – on the basis of the pure facts – necessarily leads one to faith in Jesus. On the one hand, the Pharisees show how blind a proud man can be, driven by his principles. On the other hand, the man born blind unintentionally demonstrates the fact-based, gradually developing and permanent faith in Jesus. As the drama unfolds, the “blind” leaders (two times: “we know” vv. 24–29) become blinder, while the man born blind first physically and later spiritually “sees” Jesus and believes that he is the Son of God (v. 38). The drama is closed by Jesus’ sarcastic words addressing the Pharisees: “If you were blind..., you would not be guilty, but because you say ‘we see,’ your guilt remains” (v. 41). The story shows how a person who directly adores the divine authority can be free from the religious experts representing the traditional religiosity.

The other example is a series of situations reflecting the ethical awakening from the tribal-national to the civil *modus vivendi* and the

⁹ Op. cit. p. 261.

¹⁰ J. A. T. Robinson argues against these charges: 1999. pp. 337–347 (“Der Vorwurf der Introversion”).

involved ethical questions. As far as the material basis of this civil existence is concerned, it is more and more well-known that the cultural-economical background of GJ is different (more well-to-do and socially higher) from that of the Synoptic Gospels: the Synoptics suggest that Jesus and his disciples lived from the donations of those sympathizing with them (Mk 15.41). According to John, Jesus and his followers helped the poor with regular donations (13.29). In GJ five out of the seven miracles happen in an urban-civil environment. Even more important is the role of the *individual* in GJ. For Jesus' adversaries the collective identity is of crucial importance: they are "the children of Abraham," a term of tribal national and religious significance. The Johannine Jesus as the individual Son of the Father stands before God. His relationship and connection with God is not of tradition, but of trust and sense of mission. He calls his followers to this kind of relationship. Individual decision-making also plays an important role in GJ. There is also a new, civil perspective behind the importance of actions. Aristotle says that tragedy is the imitation of human deeds, and behind the deeds there lies the ethos of the individual – a fixed way of acting. It is a characteristic of the civil perspective to judge someone on the basis of his/her deeds and motives. In GJ Jesus says: "Accept the evidence of my deeds, even if you do not believe me" (10.38). According to Jesus, his deeds are characterized by the mission he has received from God. This can be a small starting point for a civil sense of mission. "God... from him I come... he sent me" (8.42). We can find several such statements scattered all around GJ. Finally we mention the civil concept of *freedom* in GJ. We know of a number of independence- and partisan-insurrections in Palestine from the thirties of the first century. Each of them was suppressed by the Romans. Some people expected Jesus to initiate something similar, some people tried to crown him a king (6.15). He said two important things concerning this matter in GJ. First, "If... the Son sets you free, you will indeed be free" (8.36). Second, "You shall know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (8.32). He did not mean a collective-political but an individual independence. He thought that the way to this independence leads through these: the Reality that had been revealed by him, the dignity before God and the trust towards him.

Community creating functions of the ethical paradigms

Community ethics is always formed within the frames of a moral story or a “story of origin.” The classical Greek societies (the soils of the tragedies) can be traced back to the conflicts of the heroic societies.¹¹ Religious communities also need such a story of origin in order to place it at the background of their morals, to discover their historical and cosmic place and to distinguish themselves and their morals from others.

The moral background of the Jewish people is the exodus from Egypt. It is not mere coincidence that the Torah continuously retells this story, together with the divine laws given to Moses. Obviously, the moral story of the Christian Church is the whole corpus of the Jesus-stories and his teachings. That is why – compared to the Synoptic Gospels – there are hardly any moral laws in GJ. The author, instead of creating a detailed norm-system, tried to formulate a kind of “moral story” for his community, in order to characterize it vis-à-vis the Graeco-Roman morals. This must have been earlier than the definition of a detailed moral system. The moral story of GJ can be called “*dualistic universality*.”

On the one hand this *universality* was of missionary character: regardless of how small the community of the moral story was, they had a message for the whole Roman Empire and for all the Hellenistic inhabitants of the Oecumene: everybody had to be aware of the same redemption.

On the other hand “*dualistic*” meant that they counted with the fact that some people would accept and others would reject this way of salvation. Humankind is divided on the basis of individual decisions: those “who put their faith in him” and “the unbeliever” (3.18).

We can also explain the universality of the Johannine ethics on the basis of hamartology. Just as GJ lacks a detailed ethical norm-system, it does not have a moralizing hamartology, either. GJ knows of only one great sin. In Jesus’ words: to refuse to believe in him (cf. 16.9).

¹¹ Ungvári Zrínyi Imre’s presentation: “Az etikai alap dialogikus értelmezése és alakítása” in: *A polgárság etikai eszmélkedése és a tragédia mint ennek műfaja (The Ethical Awakening of the Civil Society and Tragedy as Its Genre)* MTA-PTI Conference. Budapest, 30th November, 2001. p. 3.

Compared to this, not one particular sin counts! GJ thus made sin a universal phenomenon, just as the Greek tragedies had done. As Miklós Almási emphasizes: sin is a category of universal human existence.¹² The author of GJ handles also the demonic world with universality. He is the only evangelist who is silent about Jesus' exorcisms. Jesus's enemy is the Satan (the Evil One who was a murderer from the beginning and the father of lies, cf. 8.44) and not the demons. In this case the dualism is also relevant. Its ethical conflict is part of the cosmic conflict.

The afterlife of the ethical conflicts of GJ

As the Church spread in the Eastern and Western basin of the Mediterranean Sea in the first two or three centuries, more and more people were able to experience and understand the ethical conflicts of GJ. The influence GJ had on their lives can be called "testimony." This is a threefold term. First, it refers to the testimony of the missionaries, to the drama of an expanding Christian faith, with thousands of conflicts like the radical life-changing of the new converts. Second, it refers to the dramatic events of martyrdom, the trials and executions of Christians – we know some of these also from official administrative reports, and not only from the legendary acts of the Christian martyrs: the first Christians took their testimony extremely seriously and accepted the consequences whatever they were. The ethical-legal conflict of the Roman authorities and the Christian martyrs took place for more than 200 years. And third, the "testimony" meant a dramatic shaping of liturgy with its effects on the history of drama and ethics. Ethical archetypes evolved in the European culture, like Judas the betrayer, the denying Peter, the crying Mary with the broken heart, standing under the cross, John the Baptist pointing to Christ, the waving Pilate and the changeable mob. No doubt, GJ belongs to the ethical heritage of the European civil society.

¹² Miklós Almási, *Anti-esztétika. Séták a művészetfilozófiák labirintusában (Anti-aesthetics. Walking in the Labyrinth of the Philosophy of Art)*. Budapest, 1992. p. 208.

HULDA, DIE PROPHETIN

(2Kön 22,14–20)

Marianne Grohmann, Wien

1. Kontext: die „joschijanische Reform“

Bekannt ist 2Kön 22–23, für die „joschijanische Reform“. V. a. die Auffindung eines סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה, einer *Tora-Rolle* / eines *Tora-Buches* gehört zu den Eckdaten und „den am wenigsten umstrittenen Fakten der Geschichte ‚Israels‘.“¹ Das Finden des Buches und die sog. Reform des Joschija lassen sich auf das Jahr 622 v. Chr. datieren, nach 2Kön 22,3 das 18. Jahr seiner Regierungszeit. Fragen der konkreten Abfolge dieser Reform, ihrer Historizität und Datierung, des Inhaltes der Rolle, der Einordnung in deuteronomistische Theologie etc. gehören zu den vieldiskutierten Themen alttestamentlicher Forschung² und sollen hier nicht erörtert werden. Ich möchte mich vielmehr mit einer Person beschäftigen, die in diesen Diskussionen eher marginalisiert wird,³ obwohl sie doch zentralen Anteil am Geschehen hat: der Prophetin Hulda.

Die Ereignisse werden in 2Kön 22 so erzählt: Im Zuge von Ausbesserungsarbeiten am Tempel findet der Hohepriester Hilkija ein סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה (*Tora-Buch*). Er bringt es zum Schreiber Schafan, dieser liest es, geht zum König und liest es ihm vor. Als Joschija den Inhalt des Buches hört, zerreißt er seine Kleider – wohl aus Trauer und

¹ Diebner, Bernd / Nauwerth, Claudia: Die inventio des סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה in 2Kön 22. Struktur, Intention und Funktion von Auffindungslegenden, in: DBAT 18/1984, 95–127, 95.

² Vgl. dazu die Forschungsüberblicke bei Lohfink, Norbert: Zur neueren Diskussion über 2Kön 22–23, in: ders. (Hg.): *Das Deuteronomium. Entstehung, Gestalt und Botschaft* (BETHL 68), Leuven 1985, 24–48. Spieckermann, Hermann: *Juda unter Assur in der Sargonidenzeit*, Göttingen 1982. – Als kleine Auswahl aus der umfangreichen Literatur vgl. Groß, Walter (Hg.): *Jeremia und die „deuteronomistische Bewegung“* (BBB 98), Weinheim 1995; Braulik, Georg : *Studien zum Deuteronomium und seiner Nachgeschichte* (SBA 33), Stuttgart 2001.

Entsetzen, weil er weiß, dass er und sein Volk der in diesem Buch gegebenen Tora nicht entsprochen haben. Er schickt eine Delegation seiner Regierung, um Gott zu befragen: **דָּרְשׁוּ אֶת־יְהוָה בְּעָרֵי וּבְעָרֵי־הָעָם וּבְעָרַי כְּלִי־הַיְהוּדָה** (V 13: *Sucht / Befragt / Bittet JHWH für mich, für das Volk und für ganz Juda!*). Die Delegation geht zur Prophetin Hulda. Ihre Prophezeiung ist Anlass für umfangreiche Maßnahmen Joschijas, eine Kultzentralisation im Sinne des JHWH-Monotheismus.

Die Prophetin Hulda soll nun zunächst im Kontext der biblischen Erzählung in 2Kön 22,14–20 und dann von ihrer Rezeption in der jüdisch-rabbinischen Tradition her beleuchtet werden.

2. Zu Huldas Person

Hulda ist nur aus 2Kön 22,14–20 und der Parallelstelle 2Chron 34, 22–28⁴ bekannt.

Sie wird in 2Kön 22,14 als Prophetin vorgestellt: **הַלְדָּה הַנְּבִיאָה** (*Hulda, die Prophetin*). Es wird ganz selbstverständlich berichtet, dass die Delegation des Königs zur Prophetin Hulda geht, sie also die für diese Gottesbefragung zuständige Instanz ist. Nach außerbiblischen Texten zeitgenössischer Prophetie dürften Frauen als Prophetinnen nichts Ungewöhnliches gewesen sein.⁵ Hulda ist die einzige Prophetin der Königszeit, die namentlich bekannt ist. Aus dem Text lässt sich nicht sagen, ob sie am Tempel angestellt war oder als „freie“ Prophetin wirkte. Aus **דָּרַשׁ בְּעָרַי** (V 13: *suchen / befragen /*

³ Ausnahmen bilden zwei neuere Veröffentlichungen aus dem Bereich feministisch-theologischer bzw. geschlechterfairer Exegese, die sich den alttestamentlichen Prophetinnen widmen: Butting, Klara: *Prophetinnen gefragt. Die Bedeutung der Prophetinnen im Kanon aus Tora und Prophetie* (Erev-Rav-Hefte: Biblisch-feministische Texte 3), Knesebeck 2001, 126–164; Fischer, Irmtraud: *Gotteskünderinnen. Zu einer geschlechterfairen Deutung des Phänomens der Prophetie und der Prophetinnen in der Hebräischen Bibel*, Stuttgart 2002, 158–188.

⁴ Zur Parallele in der Chronik vgl. Glatt-Gilad, David A.: *The Role of Huldah's Prophecy in the Chronicler's Portrayal of Josiah's Reform*, in: *Biblica* 77/1996, 16–31; Jonker, Louis C.: *Reflections of King Josiah in Chronicles. Late Stages of the Josiah Reception in 2Chr 34f.* (Textpragmatische Studien zur Hebräischen Bibel 2), Gütersloh 2003.

⁵ Vgl. Fischer, *Gotteskünderinnen*, 27; Spieckermann, *Juda*, 302. – Handy, Lowell K.: *The Role of Huldah in Josiah's Cult Reform*, in: *ZAW* 106/1994, 40–53, zieht Parallelen von Huldas Rolle als Prophetin zu mesopotamischen Texten, in denen bei Orakelpriestern eine zusätzliche Bestätigung über eine göttliche Anweisung eingeholt wird.

bitten für) lässt sich vielleicht ableiten, dass das Prophetenamt wie bei Moses die Fürbitte beinhaltet: „Die Propheten, die [im deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerk] befragt werden, sind Jesaja, Jeremia und Hulda. Hulda hat somit keine geringere Dignität als die beiden Propheten.... [Sie ist] Inhaberin des mosaischen Amtes, die legitime Amtsnachfolgerin Moses.“⁶ Nach deuteronomistischer Konzeption sind die Funktionen Lehrer der Tora, Fürbitter und Inhaber des mosaischen Prophetenamtes eng miteinander verknüpft,⁷ und diese Verbindung zeigt sich auch in der Gestalt der Hulda.

Sie ist Frau des Schallum, eines Beamten, des שֹׁמֵר הַבְּגָדִים (*des Hüters / Bewahrers der Kleider*), worunter man sich wohl einen Verwalter der Kleiderkammer am Tempel vorzustellen hat. Das *Bewahren* der Kleider steht in dieser Erzählung im Gegensatz zum Zerreißen der Kleider, der Trauergeste des Königs. Ob Hulda Kinder hat, wird nicht berichtet, sie wird über ihr Amt – Prophetin – definiert. Die Septuaginta macht Hulda zur „Mutter“ des Schallum: Das ist wohl ein Zeichen dafür, dass schon in dieser alten Übersetzung Bedenken darüber aufgetaucht sind, dass eine Frau über ihr Amt, unabhängig von jeder Mutterrolle, vorgestellt wird. Sie wohnt בְּיְרוּשָׁלַם בְּמִשְׁכַּן הַנְּשִׂיָה in der Neustadt von Jerusalem.

Der Name חֻלְדָּה kommt in der Hebräischen Bibel nur hier vor. Er ist die weibliche Form von חֻלְדַּי *Maulwurf / Wiesel* oder genauer *Stumpfschnauzenmull*.⁸ Dieses Tier zählt nach Lev 11,29 zu den unreinen Tieren. Hulda befindet sich mit ihrem Namen in dieser Erzählung in guter Gesellschaft: Mitglieder der – sicher angesehenen – königlichen Delegation tragen ebenfalls Namen unreiner Tiere (Lev 11,5.29): der Schreiber heißt שָׁפָן Schafan: *Klippdachs*, und in Achbor klingt die unreine עֶכְבָּר *Maus* an. Der Name Hulda lässt sich vielleicht auch mit חֻלְדָּה *Lebensdauer* in Verbindung bringen.⁹

⁶ Rütterswörden, Udo: Die Prophetin Hulda, in: Weippert, Manfred und Stefan Timm (Hg.): *Meilenstein* (FS Herbert Donner, ÄAT 30), Wiesbaden 1995, 234–242, 240.

⁷ Vgl. Rütterswörden, Prophetin Hulda, 239.

⁸ Rütterswörden, Prophetin Hulda, 235.

⁹ Vgl. Nöldeke, Theodor: *Beiträge zur semitischen Sprachwissenschaft*, Straßburg 1904, 80.

3. Huldass Prophezeiung

V 15-20 hält Hulda eine Rede in zwei Teilen an die Delegation des Königs. Eingeleitet mit der prophetischen Botenformel בְּהִאָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (V 15.18: *So spricht JHWH, der Gott Israels:*) gibt sie Gottesrede weiter. Der erste Teil (V 15-17) ist eine Unheilsprophezeiung über Jerusalem: JHWH wird רָעָה (*Böses/Unheil*) über diesen Ort und seine Bewohner bringen (V 16): Grund dafür ist, dass sie JHWH verlassen und anderen Göttern gedient und damit JHWHs Zorn geweckt haben. Der zweite Teil (V 18-20) ist die persönliche Zusage an den König, dass er selbst verschont bleiben wird: Er wird das Unheil, das JHWH über das Land und seine Bevölkerung bringen wird, nicht mehr sehen, sondern in Frieden begraben werden. Die Prophezeiung der Hulda ist mit anderen Worten formuliert als die Erzählung. Nur an drei Stellen gibt es Verweise: V 17 – וַנִּצְתָה חֲמָתִי (*mein Zorn wird entbrennen*) – und V 18 – לְדַרְשׁ אֶת־יְהוָה (*JHWH zu befragen*) – verweisen auf V 13. V 19 – וַתִּקְרַע אֶת־בְּגָדֶיךָ (*du hast deine Kleider zerrissen*) – verweist auf V 11.

Der erste Teil von Huldass Weissagung erfüllt sich im Untergang Jerusalems und in der Verbannung ins Exil. Der zweite Teil erweist sich darin als wahr, dass der König Joschija diese Katastrophe nicht mehr miterlebt. Sein eigener Tod in der Schlacht gegen Necho in Megido (2Kön 23,28-30) ist vielleicht nicht ganz so friedlich wie angekündigt, immerhin wird er aber tatsächlich in seiner Grabstätte in Jerusalem regulär begraben.¹⁰ Unklar bleibt, ob Hulda das gefundene Buch vorgelegt worden ist: V 16 lässt eher vermuten, dass es nur dem König vorgelesen wurde. Indirekt bestätigt sie aber den Inhalt, indem sie genau in seinem Sinne spricht: Grund dafür, dass Joschija verschont bleibt, ist, dass er sich gegenüber dem aufgefundenen Buch einsichtig gezeigt hat.

¹⁰ Vgl. Edelman, Diana: Huldah the Prophet – of Yahwe or Ashera?, in: Brenner, Athalya (Hg.): *A Feminist Companion to Samuel and Kings* (FCB I/5), Sheffield 1994, 231-250, 238-241.

4. Hulda und Jeremia

Es bleibt eine spannende Frage, warum die hochrangige Delegation des Königs Joschija nicht zu Jeremia geht. Jeremia wirkt zur Zeit der joschijanischen Reform schon fünf Jahre lang: Nach Jer 1,2 wird er im 13. Jahr des Königs Joschija berufen, nach 2Kön 22,3 wird die Tora-Rolle im 18. Jahr von Joschijas Regierung gefunden. Er ist auf jeden Fall der Prophet, der zur gleichen Zeit in Jerusalem wirkt. In den Versuchen der Beantwortung dieser Frage gibt es durchaus Kontinuitäten zwischen älteren jüdischen und christlichen Kommentaren: „Warum wird eine Frau konsultiert und nicht die damals wohlbekannten Propheten Jeremias und Zephanja? [...] Der König wünscht womöglich ein günstiges Orakel (cf. I 22,8) und hofft dies von einer Frau zu erlangen, deren prophetische Tätigkeit keinen pessimistischen Anstrich hatte.“¹¹ Dass Jeremia hier gar nicht genannt wird, könnte mit dem „Prophetenschweigen“¹² des deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerkes insgesamt zusammenhängen: Als einziger Schriftprophet wird Jesaja genannt. Zwischen der Sprache von Huldas Prophezeiung und Jeremias Sprache gibt es zahlreiche Parallelen, z. B. in der „Gegengeschichte Jer 36“. Huldas Weissagung ist geradezu eine Zusammenfassung, eine Konzentration der Botschaft Jeremias.¹³ Mit der großen sprachlichen und theologischen Nähe zu Jeremia wird Hulda in die Reihe der großen Schriftpropheten gestellt. Dass hier Hulda und nicht Jeremia vorkommt, hat außerdem eine wichtige kompositorische Funktion: Die beiden Prophetinnen Debora (Ri 4) und Hulda stehen am Anfang und am Ende der Vorderen Propheten und bilden so einen Rahmen um diese Einheit.¹⁴

¹¹ Šanda (EHAT 9,II, 1912), zitiert nach: Rütterswörden, Prophetin Hulda, 234–235.

¹² Vgl. Koch, Klaus: Das Profetenschweigen des deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerks, in: Jeremias, Jörg und Lothar Perlt (Hg.): *Die Botschaft und die Boten* (FS Hans Walter Wolff), Neukirchen-Vluyn 1981, 115–128.

¹³ Vgl. Deurloo, Karel Adriaan: Chulda's profetie. Een collage van woorden uit het boek Jeremia (2Koningen 22:15–20), in: *Amsterdamsche Cahiers* 12/1993, 106–115.

¹⁴ Vgl. Venema, G.J.: *Reading Scripture in the Old Testament. Deuteronomy 9–10; 31 – 2Kings 22–23 – Jeremiah 36 – Nehemiah 8* (OTS 48), Leiden / New York / Köln 2003, 81–82.

5. Hulda in der jüdisch-rabbinischen Tradition

In der jüdisch-rabbinischen Tradition wird ein facettenreiches Bild von Hulda gezeichnet: Im Targum Jonathan zu 2Kön 22,14 wird der Wohnort Huldas *בְּמִשְׁנֵה* (*in der Neustadt*) mit der Wurzel *שָׁנָה* *lehren/ lernen/ wiederholen* in Zusammenhang gebracht: Hulda wohnt in einem *בֵּית אִילֵּפְנָה*, einem *Lehrhaus*. Genauso heißt im selben Targum auch das Haus, in dem der Prophet Samuel mit seinen Schülern lebt (2Sam 19,18). Hulda ist also Schriftgelehrte. Nach dem Talmud-Traktat Midot (bMid 1,3) hatte der Tempel fünf Tore: zwei davon sind die Hulda-Tore: Sie liegen im Süden und dienten als Ein- und Ausgang. Raschi kombiniert diese beiden Erklärungen von Lehrhaus und Tempeltor: Das Hulda-Tor im zweiten Tempel war nach Raschi früher das Tor, das zu ihrem Lehrhaus führte.

Nach dem Talmud-Traktat Megilla gilt Hulda neben Sara, Mirjam, Debora, Hanna, Abigajil und Esther als eine der sieben jüdischen Prophetinnen (bMeg 14a). Bei jeder wird mit Schriftstellen begründet, warum sie Prophetin ist. Dies wird für Hulda mit 2Kön 22,14 begründet. Die Rabbinen interessiert v. a. die Frage: „Wie kommt es, dass sie an dem Ort, an dem es Jeremia gab, weissagte [bzw. als Prophetin wirkte]?“, und sie finden darauf drei Antworten (bMeg 14b): „Die Weisen des Lehrhauses von Rab sagten im Namen Rabs: Hulda war eine Verwandte von Jeremia, und er nahm es ihr nicht übel.“ Doch diese Antwort ist noch nicht zufriedenstellend, und so fragen sie von einer anderen Seite: „Wie kommt es, dass Joschija selbst Jeremia beiseite ließ und zu ihr schickte?“ Und die Antwort der Schüler aus dem Lehrhaus von R. Schila lautet: „Weil die Frauen barmherziger [רחמיניות] sind.“ Und die dritte Antwort – von R. Jochanan – lautet: „Weil Jeremia nicht da war, denn er ging, die zehn Stämme zurück zu holen.“ Die Rabbinen sehen also die gleichzeitige Wirkung von Hulda und Jeremia und versuchen zu erklären, warum der König Joschija seine Delegation nicht zu Jeremia, sondern zu Hulda schickt – eine Tatsache, die im Bibeltext als selbstverständlich hingenommen wird.

In der Fortsetzung der Auslegungen zu Hulda (bMeg 14b) fließt in die Deutung ihres Namens und des Versteils 2Kön 22,15b *אָמְרוּ לְאִישׁ* [אָמְרוּ לְאִישׁ אֶתְכֶם אֵלַי:] (*Sagt dem Mann, [der euch zu mir geschickt*

hat) eine gewisse moralische Bewertung: „Stolz ist für Frauen unpassend: Zwei Frauen [von den Prophetinnen] waren stolz, und ihre Namen waren hässlich: Der Name der einen ist Debora [Biene], der Name der anderen Hulda [aram. כרבושתא / *Maulwurf* oder *Wiesel*]. [...] Über Hulda steht geschrieben: ‚Sagt dem Mann!‘ [2Kön 22,15], aber sie sagte nicht: ‚Sagt dem König!‘“ Einerseits wird hier der Name Hulda als Bezeichnung eines unreinen Tieres als hässlich abgewertet – eine Deutung, die sich angesichts der Tatsache relativiert, dass in dieser Erzählung auch andere hochangesehene Personen Namen unreiner Tiere tragen (s. o.). Andererseits wird aus dem lapidaren Satz אַמְרוּ לְאִישׁ (Sagt dem Mann!) eine dem König gegenüber distanzierte oder reservierte Haltung abgeleitet und diese als bei Frauen unpassend und stolz abgewertet. Mit dieser Königskritik befindet sich Hulda aber in guter Tradition der Schriftpropheten, durch die sich eine ambivalente Haltung dem Königtum gegenüber zieht.

Eine letzte talmudische Auslegung betrifft Huldas Herkunft: Einmal wird sie als Nachfahrin Josuas gesehen: Aufgrund der an beiden Stellen vorkommenden Radikale חרס wird בן־חרס (Sohn des Harhas), – Harhas ist der Großvater von Huldas Mann Schallum – in 2Kön 22,14 mit Ri 2,9 verknüpft: וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אוֹתוֹ בְּגִבּוֹל נְחֻלְתּוֹ בְּתַמְנַת־חֶרֶס (Sie begruben ihn [Josua] im Gebiet seines Erbteils in Timnat-Heres). Nach einer anderen Auslegung gingen acht Propheten, die auch Priester waren, von der Hure Rahab hervor, und unter ihnen ist auch Schallum. R. Jehuda meint, dass auch die Prophetin Hulda von der Hure Rahab abstammt: Er setzt beim Namen von Schallums Vater Tikwa תִּקְוָה an und verknüpft 2Kön 22,14 mit Jos 2,18: אֶת־תְּקֵנֹת חוּט הַשָּׁנִי הַזֶּה (die gedrehte Schnur dieses roten Fadens, die Rahab ans Fenster binden soll). In intertextuellen Verknüpfungen mit Stellen, an denen sich lautliche Verbindungen zu den Namen der Vorfahren Schallums finden, wird Hulda als Nachfahrin Josuas oder Rahabs dargestellt. Die Rabbinen schmücken also die knappen Aussagen des Bibeltextes aus und geben Hulda prominente Vorfahren.

6. Zusammenfassung

Die Marginalisierung Huldas in der Auslegungsgeschichte hat keinen Anhaltspunkt im Text der Hebräischen Bibel: Hulda kommt zwar nur in 2Kön 22 (und der Parallele in 2Chron 34) vor, hat hier aber eine wichtige Aufgabe: „In der kurzen Episode um die Prophetin Hulda konzentriert sich brennpunktartig deuteronomistische Geschichtstheologie.“¹⁵ Es bleibt beachtlich, dass Huldas Name und ihre Bezeichnung als Prophetin im deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerk erhalten geblieben ist. Eine Frau als Prophetin war im Kontext der Hebräischen Bibel offensichtlich kein Problem. In der jüdischen Rezeptionsgeschichte spielt Hulda eine prominentere Rolle als in der christlichen. Die Rabbinen schmücken die knappen Angaben des Bibeltextes aus. Ihre Haltung zu Hulda ist ambivalent: Einerseits wird sie als stolz abgewertet, andererseits ist sie ganz selbstverständlich Prophetin und hat ein Lehrhaus. In manchen Auslegungen – wie z. B. zur Frage des Verhältnisses zwischen Hulda und Jeremia – findet sich durchaus eine Kontinuität zwischen rabbinischen Interpretationen und christlichen Kommentaren.

¹⁵ Wacker, Marie-Theres: 2. Könige 22,8.9a.10b.11–20. Hulda – Prophetin vor dem Ende, in: Schmidt, Eva Renate u.a. (Hg.): *Feministisch gelesen* 1, Zürich 1988, 91–99, 94.

CONCEPTS OF SALVATION IN THE WESTERN CHURCH TO THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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The first five centuries of Christianity reflected a process of catholicizing tendencies, institutionalizing, expansion and legal recognition. These same centuries defined theological orthodoxy by hammering out the issues on the anvil of conciliar debate. In general, the Vincentian canon of orthodoxy defined true Christian belief as ‘that which has been believed everywhere, always and by everyone.’¹ On numerous dogmatic matters orthodoxy had clearly been established and agreed upon. Trinitarian dogma had been defined at Nicaea (325). Christological controversies had likewise been largely resolved: the person of Christ at Nicaea, the natures of Christ at Constantinople (381), the humanity of Christ at Ephesus (431) and the divinity of Christ at Ephesus (449) and Chalcedon (451). The process of canonization though never decreed by an ecumenical council was essentially concluded by the end of the fourth century. Issues surrounding ecclesiology and anthropology had likewise been formally debated.

The doctrine of salvation, surprisingly, was another matter. The Apostles’ Creed makes no statement about salvation. According to the fourth-century Nicene Creed, Christ inaugurated the soteriological principle in his own person: ‘*qui propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem descendit de coelis...*’² The Council of Nicaea, convening in 325, could manage little more on the matter of salvation than this enigmatic phrase, ‘who, on account of we humans descended from heaven for our salvation.’ Christ had been crucified nearly

¹ Vincent of Lérins (c. 450), *Commonitorium*, chapter 2, part 6 in Jacques Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae Latina*, 221 volumes (Paris, 1844–64), volume 50, col. 639. Hereafter *PL*.

² Philip Schaff, ed., *The Creeds of Christendom*, 3 volumes (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985), volume 2, pp. 58–9.

300 years earlier and the chief apostles SS. Peter and Paul had been executed thirty to forty years thereafter. The literature comprising the New Testament had been written down and in fragmented circulation since the mid-second century. It is thought reasonable by some to assume that the lack of commentary on the doctrine of salvation at Nicaea is related to a prior publicised and known formulation. That assumption, however, has practically no historical substance.³

This essay examines in overview fashion several concepts of the doctrine of salvation in Latin Christendom from the New Testament, through the patristic age, to notional constructs in medieval history and concludes by noting, only, the doctrinal upheaval caused by the European Reformations of the sixteenth century. The varieties of soteriological conviction and the numerous models advanced drive home the inescapable conclusion that for centuries the western church did not possess a monolithic doctrine of salvation.

σωτηρίᾳ (salvation) in the New Testament

It is a serious error to accept as a matter of course and convention the idea that the Christian Bible presents a single standard theology of salvation. An examination of the relevant texts suggest that there is *prima facie* evidence for diverse understandings of soteriology in the New Testament. Before exploring that dimension it will be worthwhile to set forth what the New Testament does suggest with regard to salvation. The historic mission of Jesus revolved around seeking out and saving those who were lost (Luke 19:10). The dominical words of the synoptic gospels state that Christ came to call sinners to repentance.⁴ The mission of Jesus is related to the proclamation of the Kingdom of God and the forgiveness of sins. The terms σῶζω or σῶσαι (to save), σωτήρ (savior), σωτηρίαν (saving), and σωτηρίᾳ (salvation) retain the meaning to save or to cure (σέσωκέν) evident in a number of texts (Mark 5:34; Luke 7:50, 15:11-32, 17:19, 19:9-10), and the activity of Jesus is set forth in Pauline thought as

³ As noted by Michael Slusser, 'Salvation,' in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, second edition, ed., Everett Ferguson (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1997), volume 2, pp. 1022-25.

⁴ Matthew 9:13, Mark 2:17 and Luke 5:32.

the saving initiative of God (Romans 3:25, 4:25, 5:9–10).⁵ The work of Christ apprehended by faith produces new relations between a formerly estranged humanity and God (Acts 16:30–1; Romans 1:16, 5:6–11; I Corinthians 1:23–4; Ephesians 1:19–23; Philippians 3:10; II Thessalonians 1:11; II Timothy 1:7–8). Salvation history within the New Testament is liberation from wrath (I Thessalonians 1:10), deliverance from evil (II Corinthians 1:10), and freedom from the domination of darkness (Colossians 1:13). In this instance salvation as deliverance is both historical and eschatological. Pauline theology refers repeatedly to the idea of reconciliation. Sin, having divided humanity from God, is destroyed through Christ with the result that reconciliation is effected (Romans 5:10; II Corinthians 5:18–21; Ephesians 2:14, 16; Colossians 1:21–2). Reconciliation allows peace to prevail and the term εἰρήνη (peace) itself is frequently found in soteriological passages (Romans 1:7; I Corinthians 1:3; II Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; Ephesians 1:2, 6:15; Philippians 1:2; Colossians 1:2).

One of the dominant themes present in the soteriological statements of the New Testament is the idea of forgiveness. *Heilsgeschichte* is linked to the Christ event and the passion of the cross (Luke 1:77; Acts 5:31; Romans 4:5, 5:6; Galatians 3:22; Ephesians 1:7, 2:5; Colossians 1:14). Human sinfulness is forgiven in salvation. Following the model of sacrifice outlined in the cult of the Hebrew religion, upon which much of the early Christian experience is based, Jesus becomes the acceptable sacrifice who takes away the sin of the world producing the aforementioned states (John 1:29; Hebrews 2:17, 9:11–14, 10:10–25; I John 3:5).

Freedom, reconciliation, peace and forgiveness are soteriological themes present in the New Testament and each is linked to the Christ event. The New Testament scholar Brooke Foss Westcott was once asked by a student if he was saved. Westcott made a famous reply: ‘I have been saved, I am being saved and by the grace of God I will be saved.’ That response underscores correctly the technical differ-

⁵ One can benefit from the instructive, though technical, essays by Werner Foerster and Georg Fohrer in Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 volumes, trans., Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1964–76), volume 7, pp. 965–1003.

ences in the linguistic constructs employed in the New Testament which reflect salvation as a past, continuing and future state. Ultimate, or final, salvation as described in the New Testament drew on the traditional Jewish imagery of the messianic banquet wherein time is summed up and the redeemed of the Lord sit down at the eschatological supper with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the fully realized Kingdom of God. The liturgical celebration of the eucharist foreshadows this eschatological feast. The historical communing in the body and blood of Christ is, as Ignatius put it, ‘the medicine of immortality.’⁶ The eating and drinking now is a demonstration of the salvific act of Christ’s death, a perpetual reminder of his parousia.

The idea of salvation in the New Testament, then, broadly encompasses the work of Christ, the cross, faith, repentance and the forgiveness of sins. Clearly, theology and praxis must be taken together since it is clear, even within earliest Christianity, that differences in theology and practice can be found and while theology may have indicated one thing, religious practice suggested otherwise. It is precipitous to take as normative narrative sources to the exclusion of other texts. Canonical writings narrowly interpreted to rule out theology and practice reflected in non-canonical sources leads to distortion in the understanding of early Christian doctrine and practice. The canonical *Acts of the Apostles* cannot be regarded as theological reflection and must not be taken in isolation from other historical accounts and certainly not detached from the New Testament epistles as a means of establishing doctrine.

Concepts of salvation are related to Christian initiation but the two are not necessarily synonymous. There were at least three stages of initiation into the Christian faith. The first was by catechism and examination wherein the Christian novices may have been examined and catechized for two or three years. The second stage was initiation by baptism. Evidence from the early church provides indication of different procedures, modes of baptism, and formulae. The third stage was initiation by the eucharist wherein all the baptized proceeded immediately to holy communion. Regardless of the pattern, content

⁶ ‘*qui pharmacum immortalitatis est, antidotum non moriendi...*’ Ignatius of Antioch, ‘Epistle to the Ephesians,’ chapter 20 in *Patrologia Graeca*, Jacques Paul Migne, ed., 163 volumes (Paris, 1857–61), volume 3, col. 709. Hereafter *PG*.

or order of Christian initiation, each was undergirded in general by concepts of the doctrine of salvation which formed liturgical practice.

Perhaps the primary New Testament concept of salvation is that idea linked to the term δικαίωω. To justify is a legal concept meaning to place in correct relation. The Greek term δικαίωσις means to acquit.⁷ In a theological sense it is the process whereby humankind are brought into a proper relationship with God. This implies the matter of reconciliation already alluded to. Christ justifies (I Corinthians 6:11), his death and resurrection was for the justification of humanity (Romans 4:24–5) and this is received by humans not through work but by faith (Romans 10:9–10; Galatians 2:16, 21; Ephesians 2:8–9), a theme which received its most eloquent articulation much later in history. A debate over the role of works in the process of salvation can be evidenced in the primitive church and is reflected in the New Testament itself. An exploration of the epistles to the Romans (chapters 3–5) and the Galatians reveals that Paul was fairly consistent on this matter of faith and works.

From the texts in Romans, Paul makes these points: faithlessness does not affect God's faithfulness (3:3–4); no one is justified by works of law (3:20); righteousness is attainable apart from law (3:21); individuals are made righteous through faith (3:22); grace is a gift which justifies (3:24); this gift is to be received by faith (3:25); the one who has faith becomes justified (3:26); faith supercedes works (3:27); one is justified by faith apart from works (3:28); though the law is not overthrown (3:31) Abraham was justified by faith (4:1–5, 4:9, 11, 22); righteousness comes by faith (4:24–5); one is justified by faith (5:1); or justified by the blood of Christ (5:9); reconciliation is effected through Christ (5:11); this free gift brings justification (5:16); the free gift produces righteousness (5:17); through one man's act of righteousness life comes to all people (5:18); and through one man's obedience many are made righteous (5:19).

The texts in Galatians reinforce the point. Adherence to the ἔργων νόμων [works of the law] are unnecessary (2:3–5); justification is not

⁷ See the article by Gottlob Schrenk in Kittel and Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, volume 2, pp. 211–25, especially pp. 223–4.

by works of law, but through faith (2:16); we are justified by faith in Christ (2:16); no one is justified by works (2:16); if justification were through law then Christ died in vain (2:21). Paul poses a rhetorical question and concludes that the Spirit comes through faith (3:2). He repeats the same question and arrives at the same answer (3:5). Abraham believed God and was righteous on this basis (3:6); those of faith are the children of Abraham (3:7); Gentiles are justified through faith (3:8); all those of faith are blessed (3:9); while those who rely on works are cursed (3:10); since no one is justified by the law (3:11). Indeed, the just shall live by faith (3:11). Law does not rest on faith (3:12); but the promise was made through faith (3:14); for the promise is by faith (3:22); and we are justified by faith (3:24). Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the law (3:25); through faith we are children of God (3:25); heirs according to promise (3:29); redeemed by faith (4:4). We are children of the free woman (4:31); if one observes the law, Christ is useless to that person (5:2); justification by law means severance from Christ (5:4). Through faith we anticipate the hope of righteousness (5:5); and faith works through love (5:6) and the evidence of the Spirit is faith (5:22). These seven chapters from two of the authentic Pauline epistles make clear that the soteriological principle is justification by faith without works. The only positive word in these seven chapters *vis-à-vis* works or law is that noted in Romans 3:31.

Notwithstanding this virtual unanimity, the Pauline principle cannot be regarded as held by all first century Christians. A comparison with the second chapter of James makes the point. James begins with a rhetorical question: can faith alone save (2:14)? He concludes that faith alone is dead (2:17). Faith and works must go together (2:20); faith apart from works is barren (2:20); even Abraham was justified by works (2:21); for faith is completed by works (2:22). For James we are justified by works (2:25). He gives the example of Rahab the prostitute whom he asserts was justified by works (2:25). His conclusion is that faith apart from works is dead (2:26). It is clear that the message of James appears opposite to that of Paul. The letters of Romans and Galatians seem to make one point while James takes up a completely different option.

Most Biblical scholars who have addressed themselves to this

problem conclude by positing a reconciliation of Paul and James. The main explanations seem to follow one of two tracks. First, there is the hypothesis that Paul is speaking of a pre-salvation state (which is why he excludes works) while James is concerned with a post-salvation condition (wherein he adjudicates works as essential). Second, the suggestion has been advanced that while Paul is speaking of the faith which saves, James is referring to the faith that a Christian possesses following salvation. In other words, a line of demarcation has been drawn in the theological sand between ‘the faith which one believes’ and ‘the faith by which one believes.’ As compelling as this might seem these are specious arguments. While both attempts to reconcile these important New Testament texts may appear satisfactory they cannot be maintained. Linguistically there is nothing to separate Paul and James. James says plainly faith cannot σωσῆαι (2:14). His rhetorical question about Abraham concludes that he was ἐδικαιώθη by works (2:21). This conclusion is postulated as the fulfilment of Scripture in terms of Abraham’s δικαιοσύνην (2:23). Since James ratifies this exegesis he concludes that all people are in fact δικαιοῦται by works (2:24). For good measure he includes one further example and declares that Rahab was also ἐδικαιώθη through works (2:25).⁸

The language of James is salvific. As already noted this language implies final deliverance in terms of eschatological salvation. The words used in this narrative allow for no other theological sense than to be declared in a right standing with God. If James really intended to draw a distinction in the idea of faith (and any supposed distinction can only be conjectural) he has ostensibly chosen the wrong words. He begins in verses 15–16 with material concerns but then shifts to spiritual (or theological) issues. Those tenets have been outlined. He returns to this motif in verse 26 but the passage contained in between (verses 18–25) constitute a syllogistic fallacy. Works cannot be inferred from faith, but faith can be inferred from works. There is a dichotomy in New Testament concepts of salvation exemplified in this context. If James does not refer to ‘the faith’ whereby one is

⁸ It is instructive to note that Rahab did not perish in the destruction of Jericho (Joshua 2:1–21, 6:22–5) but is reported to have survived (i. e. been saved) on account of her faith (Hebrews 11:31).

made righteous, but rather the ‘faith’ a Christian has, why does he use the language of the former? Numerous questions arise. Is James a theological opponent of Paul? Or, did James compose his treatise first, thus making Paul the adversary? Does James misunderstand Paul? Did the first century church take sides? Or were both options held by different early Christian communities? According to Paul, salvation is a gift from God to humankind, predicated upon grace, received by faith. Paul does not speak about works in this context. James insists that faith cannot be demonstrated without works. More questions emerge. Is it necessary to prove one’s faith? If so, to whom? If the answer is to God, the riposte can be made that God already knows. If the answer is to humankind, the query must be raised, for what purpose?

According to Paul, ἔργων νόμον (works of law) cannot produce justification. The Spirit of God which enlivens all people is not associated with ἔργων νόμον. Miracles and spirituality are not produced through ἔργων νόμον. Those who rely on these ἔργων νόμον are under a curse. Moreover, ‘works of law’ refer to an existential being and not to general human deeds. These ἔργων νόμον are to be understood in the category of σὰρκι (flesh) and in the specific understanding of religious ritual.⁹ All of this aside, according to Paul, for Torah has been superseded by the Christ-event. So convinced was Martin Luther that the two texts were utterly irreconcilable that he offered a doctor’s cap to anyone who could satisfactorily unite them.

Finally, the argument is made that Paul and James must be taken together in order to fully understand the issue of salvation as it relates to faith and works. The suggestion is anachronistic. It presupposes the existence of an accepted canon, a concept utterly foreign to the first century church, untenable for the second century church, and partial and inchoate for the third century church. The complexity of the process of canonization ultimately spanned several centuries and final disputes were not laid to rest until a half millennium of ecclesi-

⁹ For σὰρκι (*sarx*) see the articles by Eduard Schweizer and Rudolf Meyer in Kittel and Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, volume 7, pp. 98–151. For ἔργων νόμον see the article by Georg Bertram in *Ibid.*, volume 2, pp. 645–52.

astical history had elapsed.¹⁰ In a number of regions the epistle of James was not referred to, quoted from, or apparently used until the fourth century. In sum, soteriology was not uniformly understood in the New Testament. That legacy bequeathed a peculiar heritage to Christendom.

¹⁰ A good discussion of this process is Hans von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible*, trans., J. A. Baker (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984). The canon of the Hebrew Bible was not closed until c. 100 C. E. There was considerable debate (both intellectual and in practice) over what constituted authoritative Christian writings. The ancient Syrian Church limited its canonical epistles to Paul. Alexandria recognized the *Epistle of Barnabas*, *I Clement* and the *Didache* as Scripture. *The Shepherd of Hermas* was used widely in the west until the fifth century. Irenaeus might have referred to all of the now canonical books with the exception of Philemon but he also called *The Shepherd of Hermas* 'scripture.' Origen included the *Epistle of Barnabas*, *The Shepherd of Hermas*, the *Didache*, and the *Gospel according to the Hebrews*. The celebrated fourth-century *Codex Sinaiticus* does include all of the canonical New Testament books, but perhaps just as importantly it excludes Mark 16:9–20 and John 7:53–8:11, while including the *Epistle of Barnabas* and *The Shepherd of Hermas*. The fifth-century *Codex Alexandrinus* includes *I Clement* and *II Clement*. The *Acts of the Apostles* do not appear to have been held in the same regard as the Pauline epistles. There are comparatively few references to this book and at the beginning of the fifth century was practically unknown in Constantinople while its status in Africa in the early third century is unknown. As for the *Apocalypse* it was under severe attack in Egypt by ecclesiastical officials well into the third century. It was not accepted in Antioch, Palestine, Asia Minor or in the Syrian Church. In the fourth and fifth centuries it was excluded in various places. As late as 692 a synod in Constantinople viewed it ambiguously. The church historian Eusebius of Caesarea noted that in the fourth century the epistles of *James*, *Jude*, *II Peter*, *II* and *III John* were disputed. The book of *Hebrews* was long suspect. The western church was silent on *James* until the second half of the fourth century. The Syriac Church substituted the *Diatessaron* for the four gospel 'New Testament.' This church excluded *Revelation* and the catholic epistles for a long time. The Ethiopic Canon had eight additional books. See Campenhausen, Hans Lietzmann, *The Founding of the Church Universal*, trans., Bertram Lee Woolf (London: Lutterworth Press, 1958), pp. 69–104 and F. F. Bruce, *The Spreading Flame: The Rise and Progress of Christianity from its first beginnings to the Conversion of the English* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1973), pp. 221–7 for further details. The twenty-seven books now comprising the New Testament were first mentioned together in Athanasius' thirty-ninth Easter letter in 367. See *PG* 16, col. 726. In 393 a north African synod at Hippo (with Augustine in attendance) decreed the canon of the New Testament in its 36th canon. That decision was ratified in the 47th canon resolved by the Synod of Carthage in 397 (Augustine again in attendance). Neither council possessed general ecumenical authority. Augustine lists the books in his *De Doctrina Christiana*, book 2, chapter 8. In *PL* 34, col. 41.

Salvation and the ‘Fathers’

The Patristic age essentially spans the time from the so-called apostolic fathers – Ignatius, Polycarp, Clement, Diognetus, Barnabas and the anonymous Didache – to Augustine and the Council of Chalcedon in the fifth century. The ambiguity surrounding the doctrine of salvation previously discussed is characteristic of these centuries. There were of course several widely espoused, basic soteriological notions, all of which were derived from the New Testament. For example, the ‘Fathers’ in general affirmed the centrality of Christ in the salvation process, regarded the cross as pivotal and its message as essential, the incarnation as the context for God’s presence in the *heilsgeschichte* process, and the problem of the Devil and the demonic antithesis to Christ and salvation. For all of its monumental importance, the absence of an orthodox doctrine of salvation, clearly and carefully articulated, in the patristic age is altogether striking for its glaring absence. Irenaeus wrote that to follow Christ was to participate in salvation, since to follow the light was to perceive the light.¹¹ The concept of following Christ appears frequently in patristic texts, but with very little expansion, development or articulation. The Apostolic Fathers and the Apologists perceived Christ as the harbinger of divine salvation extended to humankind. How Christ was to be received or followed was not altogether clear. Theologically, Clement of Rome concluded that God’s commandments ought to be observed through love in order that sins might be forgiven.¹² More to the point he enjoins his readers to put all their efforts into behaving properly, ostensibly with the end result that salvation would be achieved.¹³ There is a clear sense in Clement, as in the canonical James, that justification by works is apropos.

Among the earliest attempts to articulate an understanding of salvation was Irenaeus whose doctrine of salvation as restoration is well known as the theory of ἀνακεφαλαιώσις or *recapitulatio* (recapitulation). According to Irenaeus while Christ was manifested as human he summed up in himself the totality of human history, rectifying the

¹¹ *Adversus Haereses*, 4.14.1, in *PG* 5, cols. 911–12.

¹² Clement of Rome, ‘Epistle to the Corinthians,’ 49, in *PG* 1, cols. 469–70.

¹³ Clement of Rome, *Ibid.*, 33, in *PG* 1, cols. 152–3.

damage caused through the Fall, infused grace into the human race, replacing the sin of Adam with the gift of God.¹⁴ Christ identified completely with humankind and in this identification restored creature, creation and Creator. The incarnation has the purpose of undoing the consequences of the Fall. Irenaeus does not develop his theory sufficiently in order to conclude how this restoration occurs.¹⁵

Implicit in the soteriological passages of the New Testament is the problem of how the estranged sinner can be reconciled to God. The incarnation is only part of the solution. The idea of satisfaction developed by Tertullian proposes an ethical and legal situation as a cognitive construct for understanding salvation. Sin has impaired humankind, but more importantly has injured God. God is angry and must be appeased. Satisfaction is then made to God. The act of repentance begins that process. Sin thereafter is an affront to God and results in satisfaction being yielded to the Devil. Through repentance, sorrow and good works the sinner satisfies God. By controlling the flesh and its desires it is possible to attain the forgiveness of sin and avoid punishment.¹⁶ The theological implications of this approach and understanding are significant. Two points are of importance here. First, Tertullian's ideas would be later developed in further discussions of the doctrine of salvation, but more importantly and more immediately, they helped to set the stage for the medieval penitential system which came to characterize ecclesiastical history in the Middle Ages.

Embedded in the early Christian ethos was the conviction of a cosmic dualism; a terrific struggle between good and evil, truth and error, darkness and light, sin and righteousness, God and the Devil. The doctrine of salvation found much of its formulation in the vortex of this cosmic battle. The key point was of course the resurrection of Christ which precipitated the beginning of the end of Satan's rule. Through the cross and resurrection Christ triumphed over the forces of darkness and wickedness and that triumph was not an isolated

¹⁴ *Adversus Haereses*, 3.18.1, in *PG* 5, col. 338.

¹⁵ On Irenaeus see Robert M. Grant, *Irenaeus of Lyons* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997) and Gustaf Wingren, *Man and the Incarnation: A Study in the Biblical Theology of Irenaeus*, trans., Ross McKenzie (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1959).

¹⁶ 'On Penance,' 7, in *PL* 1, cols. 1240-42.

victory. Instead, it constituted victory on a cosmic scale. Eschatology was realized in the last great battle waged on Golgotha. While Jesus was crucified, Good and Evil were engaged. The resurrection was indubitable proof that Good had emerged victorious. The primary promoter of this version of salvation history was the controversial theologian of Alexandria, and posthumous heretic, Origen.¹⁷

In his articulation of this cosmic battle between Good and Evil, Origen developed the idea of ransom. According to Origen, Jesus offered his soul to the Devil in exchange for the souls of all humanity. The Devil accepted. However, once relieved of the sinful souls of humanity, the sinless soul of Christ caused the Devil considerable discomfort and thus the exchange of souls was the outwitting of the ancient foe. Through the sacrifice of the cross, Jesus ransomed humanity from the power of the Devil.

On this basis Origen developed his contentious doctrine of ἀποκατάστασις πάντων [the restitution of all things]. Taking up the implications of I Corinthians 15:24–8, Origen postulated that in the fulness of cosmic and eschatological time, all people, all evil, all demons and even the Devil would be conquered, converted, reconciled to Christ and become recipients of divine salvation. The victory of salvation – the Christ-event – was so pervasive in the thought of Origen that nothing could possibly be excluded.¹⁸ Origen was supported in this theology by Gregory of Nyssa who likewise taught that the Devil would eventually be converted.¹⁹ In the early third century the church had not ruled on these matters. By the sixth century Origen was personally condemned as well as his theories of universal salvation.

¹⁷ Though regarded as one of the Greek Fathers of the church, many of his teachings were denounced by ecclesiastical councils and theologians. The fifth general Council of Constantinople in 553 named Origen among condemned heretics. See the fifteen anathemas against Origen and the nine anathemas of the Emperor Justinian against him in Giovanni D. Mansi, ed., *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*... 53 volumes (Florence, Venice and Paris, 1759–1927), volume 9, cols. 396–400. More recent scholarship has shown that these decrees cannot accurately be attributed to this synod.

¹⁸ *De principiis*, 1.6.1–2, in *PG* 8, cols. 137–40; *Contra Celsum*, 7.17, in *PG* 11, cols. 1443–46; and *De oratione*, 25.2 in *PG* 11, cols. 495–9.

¹⁹ *Oratio Catechetica Magna*, chapters 20–26, in *PG*, volume 46, cols. 55–70.

One of the pervasive major themes in the consideration of soteriology to develop in the Patristic age was the notion of salvation as deification. This concept became a central motif among many of the fathers and can be traced from S. John to Ignatius, Irenaeus, to Methodius and Athanasius. While the idea historically is linked to the eastern or Greek Church, its early formulation was Latin as well as Greek. Athanasius asserted that ‘the Word was made human in order that we might be made divine.’²⁰ The Logos became flesh so that flesh might become Logos.²¹ This was echoed elsewhere.²² In order for this soteriological principle to work, the dogma of the divinity of Christ had to function as an *a priori* assumption.

The formulation of the Nicene Creed is a critical understanding. The orthodox Christian theologian of the fourth century believed ‘*in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum, et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula Deum de Deo, Lumen de Lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero, genitum, non factum, consubstantialem Patri...*’²³ In the process of salvation the human soul is deified as an individual is freed from sin, reconciled to God, experiences the peace of God, and has its sins forgiven. In other words the *imago dei* is restored. God is humanized while humankind are deified.²⁴ Christ partakes in human nature in order to purify and immortalize humanity and to bring humankind into active participation in the image and spirit of God.²⁵

Clement of Alexandria put it thus: ‘The word of God became human in order that we might learn from humanity how humans may become God.’²⁶ The stress in this schema is placed upon the human potential of union with God, rather than on the issue of sinfulness and the Fall of humanity into sin. ‘Through baptism we are enlightened.

²⁰ *De incarnatione verbi dei*, 54.3, in *PG* 25, col. 191.

²¹ *Orationes contra Arianos*, II. 70, in *PG* 26, col. 295.

²² Maximus, ‘Ascetic Book,’ in *PG* 90, col. 911 sees deification as the object of the incarnation.

²³ The text is in Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, volume 2, pp. 58–9.

²⁴ Gregory of Nazianzus, Letter to Cleodnius the Priest against Apollinarius, in *PG* 37, cols. 175–202 at col. 179.

²⁵ John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa*, iv. 13, in *PG* 94, cols. 1135–38.

²⁶ *ἄγγος ὁ προτρεπτικὸς πρὸς Ἕλληνας* [An Exhortation to the Heathen], 1, in *PG* 8, col. 66.

Through this illumination we become children [of God]. By being made children we attain perfection. Having been made perfect we are made immortal.²⁷ Clement of Alexandria's writings frequently return to this soteriological theme. He instructs his readers to fulfill the will of God by listening to the Word and by taking on the saving life of Christ through meditation of heavenly life by which one is deified. On this basis Clement asserts that it is possible to achieve immortality.²⁸ God wills immortality in the process of salvation.²⁹ The point of Clement's theology is clear. 'It is the greatest lesson of all to know one's self. If one knows oneself, that individual will know God and in the knowledge of God that person will be made like God.'³⁰ When the Word of God dwells within humankind, humanity takes on the form of that Word. This means that humankind are fashioned in the image of God. Clement affirms the veracity of the statement made by Heraclitus: 'Men are gods and gods are men.' Humans become God for this is the will and intention of God.³¹

Elsewhere Clement affirms that it is possible to become like God and in the contemplative life, the worship of God means attention also to oneself and through stainless purification it is then possible to behold the holy God from the standpoint of personal holiness. This means, by corollary, that the Creator may be adored in the created order.³² The process of salvation for a number of patristic thinkers involved the reception of divine power by humankind. In this relation, the soul 'studies to be God.' The good individual is godlike in form and semblance with respect to his or her soul, and God is in the same fashion like humankind.³³ The relationship between God and humankind is therefore striking. Whatever is done to humankind, good or evil, is done to God.³⁴

Tertullian makes the same point as Clement by referring to the

²⁷ Clement of Alexandria, *πᾶιδάγωγος* [The Instructor], 1.6, in *PG* 6, col. 160.

²⁸ *πᾶιδάγωγος* [The Instructor], 1.12, in *PG* 6, cols. 703-4.

²⁹ *Protrepticus* 12.120.3 in *PG* 9, cols. 777-94.

³⁰ *πᾶιδάγωγος* [The Instructor], 3.1, in *PG* 6, col. 555.

³¹ *Ibid.*, *PG* 6, col. 557.

³² *Στρωμῆταις* [The Miscellanies, or *Stromata*], 4.23 and 6.9, in *PG* 8, cols. 1355-62 and *PG* 6, cols. 799-803.

³³ *Στρωμῆταις* [The Miscellanies, or *Stromata*], 6.9 and 14, in *PG* 6, cols. 799-803 and cols. 817-821.

³⁴ Clement, 'Fragments,' no. xi, in *PG* 6, cols. 1015-16.

‘sacrament of human salvation’ and asserting that God communicated with humankind in order that men and women might learn to act as God.³⁵ According to Origen, who taught a doctrine of salvation as ultimate and pervasive victory, the apostles were filled with the power of divinity.³⁶ For the rest of humanity, Christ dwells in each individual to the degree that is deserved.³⁷ Hastening to make his point that this deification is restricted not simply to Christ and the apostles, Origen insists that the process is universal. ‘From him [Christ] commenced a union of the divine nature with human nature, so that through communion with the divine, humanity might be enabled to rise to the state of divinity. This was not in Jesus only, but likewise in everyone who believes and enters into the life taught by Jesus.’³⁸ According to Origen, to know God means to be reformed in the likeness of God, a process which yields eventual perfection, so that one becomes like God. Just as the human nature of Christ was eventually taken over by the divine nature and assimilated into an eternal mode of being, so likewise sinful humans are transformed into immortality through deification.³⁹

In his articulation of this process and reality, Origen used Greek words for divinization to frame his cognitive constructs of ‘knowing God,’ or the ‘new being in the likeness of God’ and ‘perfection’ which enables humankind to become as God.⁴⁰ It is somewhat surprising to find this motif as widely employed as the evidence suggests. Theologians generally did not seem to hesitate at the implications this understanding of soteriology presented. ‘You will be a companion of God and co-heir with Christ... for you have become God... you have been deified and born into immortality... Therefore discover God within for God has made you in the divine image... God has fashioned you as God for the glory of God.’⁴¹ The doctrine

³⁵ *Adversus Marcionem*, 2.27, in *PL* 2, cols. 316–18.

³⁶ *De principiis*, 2.6, in *PG* 8, col. 182.

³⁷ *De principiis*, 4.1, in *PG* 8, col. 341.

³⁸ *Contra Celsum*, 3.28, in *PG* 8, cols. 576–7.

³⁹ See *In Iohannem Commentarii*, 1.37, in *PG* 11, cols. 50–1; *Contra Celsum*, 1.68, 8.17, in *PG* 8, cols. 840–3 and *De principiis* 4.4.4 in *PG* 8, cols. 301–2.

⁴⁰ *In Iohannem Commentarii*, Book 1, 27.33, in *PG* 11, cols. 44–5, 47.

⁴¹ Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, 10.34.3–5. The treatise dates from c. 230. I quote from the critical edition of the Greek text. Hippolytus, *Refutatio*

of soteriology has now become drama. Freedom, reconciliation, peace and forgiveness have as an immediate result the deification of humankind. 'What Christ is, Christians shall become, if Christ is imitated.'⁴² Other theologians went further in their articulation of this theme. Some asserted that every saint of God through participation in Christ has been made a Christ. Those baptised into Christ have been made Christs through the Holy Spirit and have been transformed into the very image of the Word.⁴³ Hence baptism was sometimes referred to as being performed in the name of the Trinity which was both life-giving and life-sustaining in deification.⁴⁴

Irenaeus takes up the same theme but undergirds it with the absolute centrality of Christ whom he regards as 'salus et salvator et salutare' [salvation, Savior and saving].⁴⁵ On this basis Irenaeus asserts that Jesus Christ became everything that we are in order that we might become everything that he is.⁴⁶ In the theology of Irenaeus, Christ destroys the power of the Devil and in that triumph perfects humankind in the image and likeness of God.⁴⁷ The plan of salvation in Irenaeus requires incarnation, the work of Christ and the cross. Redemption is effected through the blood of the cross, the soul of Christ is sacrificed for the souls of humankind, his flesh given for the lives of men and women. Christ also facilitates the application of the Spirit of God to humanity for the purpose of union and communion of God and humankind. In this way, God is imparted to men and women though the Spirit and uniting people with God through the incarnation. All of this means that for Irenaeus humanity has received divine immortality.⁴⁸ Those who have received this adoption are

omnium haeresium, Miroslav Marcovich, ed. (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1986), pp. 416–17.

⁴² 'Quod est Christus erimus Christiani, si Christum fuerimus imitati.' Cyprian, Treatise 6: 'On the Vanity of Idols,' 15 in *PL* 4, col. 582.

⁴³ Methodius, Συμπόσιον τῶν δέκα παρρθένων (Symposium, or *Convivium de- cem virginum*) [The Banquet of the Ten Virgins], 8, in *PG* 18, col. 150.

⁴⁴ Maximus, 'Orationis dominicae brevis expositio' in *PG* 90, col. 906.

⁴⁵ *Adversus haereses*, 3.10.3, in *PG* 5, cols. 786–7.

⁴⁶ 'Jesus Christum dominum nostrum: qui propter immensam suam dilectionem factus est quod sumus nos, uti nos perficeret esse quod est ipse.' *Adversus haereses*, 5, preface, in *PG* 5, col. 1014.

⁴⁷ *Adversus haereses*, 5.21.2, in *PG* 5 cols. 1066–7.

⁴⁸ *Adversus haereses*, 5.1.1, in *PG* 5, col. 1015.

called gods. As for his detractors, Irenaeus denounces those who seek to deny the truth of human promotion to deification.⁴⁹ Later theologians defended Irenaeus along these lines in the common declaration that Christ made men and women children of God and deified those people through the incarnation. In other words, Christ became human for the purpose of deifying humankind.⁵⁰

Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus took up the Ignatian theme of the ‘medicine of immortality’ and related this notion of deification to the celebration of and participation in the sacrament of the eucharist. Gregory of Nyssa affirmed that through the eucharist one communes with God and through that encounter humankind may be simultaneously deified.⁵¹ Gregory of Nazianzus affirmed virtually the same conviction in his postulation that God knew that the perfecting of humankind would be facilitated through the sacrament.⁵² For others, that process of deification while rooted in the Christ-event and the cross was much wider than the eucharist insofar as the properties of the divine nature are imparted to creation.⁵³ Life lived according to God yields the result that people become gods.⁵⁴ The reward of divine grace was salvation as eternal deification.⁵⁵ The Christ-event allowed humanity to participate fully in the divine nature.⁵⁶

As late as the seventh century the motif was still being vigorously promoted. The Son of God took on human poverty in order to make humans gods by grace. Since God dwells within humankind it is possible to become gods through divine transformation and imitation.⁵⁷ References and quotations to this soteriological aspect of dei-

⁴⁹ *Adversus haereses*, 3.6.1 and 3.19.1, in *PG* 5, cols. 772–3 and cols. 814–15.

⁵⁰ See for example Athanasius, *Orationes contra Arianos*, 1.11.38–9, in *PG* 26, cols. 34–5.

⁵¹ ‘The Great Catechism,’ 37, in *PG* 45, cols. 94–8.

⁵² Oration 37.14, in *PG* 36, col. 299.

⁵³ John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa*, 1.14., in *PG* 94, col. 859.

⁵⁴ Augustine, *De civitate dei*, 14.4, in *PL* 41, cols. 407–8.

⁵⁵ Maximus, ‘Questions to Thalassius on the Scriptures,’ 61, in *PG* 90, col. 638.

⁵⁶ Cyril of Alexandria, ‘De incarnatione unigeniti’ in *PG* 75, col. 1213.

⁵⁷ ‘Διὰ τοῦτο ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀνθρωπίνην πτωχείαν ἐνδύεται ἵνα θεοὺς ἡμᾶς ἀπεργάσῃ χάριτι καὶ τὰῦτ᾽ αὐτῶν μελωδῶν ὁ θεοπάτωρ Δᾶβίδ... Ἐγὼ εἶπα· Θεοὶ ἔστε καὶ υἱοὶ ὑψίστου πάντες. Θεὸς ἐν ἡμῖν θεωθῶμεν θεϊαίς μεταβολαῖς καὶ μιμήσεσιν.’ Sophronius (7th century monk) in his Christmas sermon. Quoted in Adolf von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, trans., Neil Buchanan, 7 volumes (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1961), volume 3, pp. 173–4.

fication might easily be transposed across the centuries of patristic history without doing contextual damage to the argument of those theologians. There is clearly change and development in the doctrine of salvation between the first and the fifth centuries, but, despite some detractors, one of the stable motifs is the idea of salvation as deification.⁵⁸

Patristic writers articulating this idea of salvation as deification did not invent the concept. Rather, they relied upon a number of Biblical texts which seemed to suggest what they wished to expound. There are six relevant texts. Psalm 82:6, 'I say, "You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you".' John 10:34 cites the aforementioned passage from Psalms and expands upon it. Romans 8:11, 'If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit which dwells in you.' I Corinthians 15:49, 'Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.' II Corinthians 8:9, 'for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.' II Peter 1:3-4, 'His divine power has granted to us all things... [even] partakers of the divine nature.'⁵⁹

Concepts of salvation among the fathers seem to revolve around the person of Christ and the cross as the primary means of salvation. The life and teachings of Christ are foundational. His suffering and death are events of cosmic significance. The resurrection and subsequent glorification become guiding principles for the realization of salvation. That doctrine, though nowhere fully articulated, involves three steps: the revelation of truth in the person of the incarnate Christ, the forgiveness of sins and justification, which leads to deification and immortality. Through Christ, darkened human minds are illuminated and they spring up into light. Through Christ, God has determined to allow humankind to taste the knowledge that is never surpassed.⁶⁰ Deification is not within the natural ability of humankind.

⁵⁸ Theodoret of Cyrus was one who held reservations about the idea of salvation as deification especially in his book *Eranistes*. Theodoret, *Eranistes: Critical Text and Prolegomena*, ed., Gerard H. Ettliger (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), book 3.

⁵⁹ All quotations are from the Revised Standard Version.

⁶⁰ Clement of Rome, 'Epistle to the Corinthians,' 36, in *PG* 1, cols. 280-1.

Only divine grace can effect such a transformation. This is a distinct theme of Patristic theology.⁶¹

Confrontation and Controversy in the Fifth Century

Pauline theology and the issue of justification, though never entirely moribund in the Patristic age, came to full strength in the soteriological disputes of the fifth century. The protagonists in this monumental battle were Augustine of Hippo and Pelagius. The story is well known and our concern here has only to do with its impact upon the formation of the doctrine of salvation. This debate outlines the main contours of soteriology. Pelagius emphasised free will which he regarded as being capable of avoiding sin (*posse non peccare*). He also taught that grace was a natural occurrence. Faith, then, was a matter of human choice and like James, Pelagius placed considerable emphasis upon works. In this way, grace operated with good works and human endeavor. In terms of salvation, the Pelagian emphasis included humankind as much as it did God. Free will enabled humankind to choose salvation and righteousness. God did not appoint some to salvation by immutable decree. Certainly God knew, but God did not on the basis of foreknowledge make sovereign decisions.⁶²

Against this theory, Augustine placed exclusive emphasis upon Christ, maintaining that it was essential for God to have become incarnate. Christ stands as the mediator between God and humankind in the matter and initiative of salvation. In opposition to Pelagius, Augustine declared that free will was not a component in human salvation. Humankind were *non posse non peccare* (incapable of not sinning) and thus the grace of God mediated through the Christ-event was the *conditio sine qua non* for salvation. All human effort was therefore meaningless, since the best humankind can accomplish remains sin. Grace precedes all endeavour and indeed good works are a result of grace. This idea of prevenient grace asserted the divine initiative in salvation. Augustine suggested a theory of predestination

⁶¹ Maximus, 'Questions to Thalassius on the Scriptures,' 22 in PG 90, col. 322.

⁶² See the collection of documents in B.R. Rees, ed., *The Letters of Pelagius and his Followers* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1991).

thus placing the responsibility for human salvation not on humans at all, but rather on God. God is thus the theological *a priori* for Augustine's understanding of salvation. Those who would be saved are thus ordained by God, predestined for salvation. Augustinian theology clearly deems salvation to be too important to be left in the hands of men and women. While Augustine posits a dualism between the saved and the lost he does not teach the double-predestination theory later associated with John Calvin and the Calvinists anchored to the canons of the Synod of Dort. This dualism is present in Paul but comes into sharper focus in the work of Augustine.⁶³

The debate between Augustine and Pelagius continued well into the Middle Ages and variations of the themes were developed. To the ideas of free choice advanced by Pelagius and divine predestination defended by Augustine was added a third *via media* option. This doctrine taught that when God perceived the beginnings of positive action in humankind, God immediately shines light to illumine and thereby urges that individual on toward salvation. The spark now lighted had been struck by God and now God was simply adding fuel to that flame which had now begun to glow through the motivation of human initiative.⁶⁴ This doctrine was called Semi-Pelagianism and both the Pelagians and the Semi-Pelagians were rejected at the Synod of Orange in 529. It was not an unmitigated Augustinian triumph, but the path to salvation through the Middle Ages was lined primarily with stones hewn from the quarry of Augustine.

Salvation in the Middle Ages

The third and fourth centuries witnessed the rise of monasticism and the continuous flight into the deserts of the Near East in search of the solitary life of self-denial, alternative martyrdom and salvation. Austerity was a central motif, especially celibacy. Many of the 'fathers' espoused the celibate ideal. S. Jerome affirmed that Adam and Eve had married only after they had sinned. Joshua, Elijah, John the Bap-

⁶³ A good, concise, overview of this fifth-century debate is in Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 340-52.

⁶⁴ John Cassian, *Collationes* 13.8, in *PL* 49, cols. 932-4.

tist and many other of the holy men of Scripture had not married at all. S. Peter had committed matrimony, but that had occurred before he met Jesus. Jesus of course never married and loved John, who had not married, more than he did Peter who had.⁶⁵

The monastic ideal encouraged people to strive heroically for salvation. Here the conflict between Paul and James, Augustine and Pelagius was accentuated in new and more urgent ways. In the official church, the Middle Ages saw a modification of the Augustinian theory to accommodate human effort and good deeds. In some ways, the ghost of the previously dispatched Pelagius had returned. Building on the notion of satisfaction as articulated by Tertullian a system of penance was developed. The eighth-century missionary to the Germanic lands, Boniface, noted that penance was a second form of cleansing after baptism. The sacrament of water washed away the taint of original sin and the medicine of penance healed those sins committed after baptism.⁶⁶ The Venerable Bede taught the same thing.⁶⁷

Penitentials were developed and these manuals listed appropriate penalties for various sins. Auricular confession developed, sins were confessed to clerics who assigned certain forms of penance in order for absolution to be attained. This can be measured by the ecumenical creedal statements of the church. With respect to salvation the Apostles' Creed makes no reference. The Nicene Creed, as we have seen, makes a single, general statement. What can be said of these two creeds cannot be applied to the Athanasian Creed.⁶⁸ In this third document, salvific statements are made followed by damnatory clauses to the effect that whoever does not believe them cannot be saved. The formulations are '*salvus esse*' [necessary for salvation].

⁶⁵ Jerome's comment comes in his *Adversus Jovinianum*, 1.16, 22 and 26; 2.15, in *PL* 23, cols. 235, 246-8 and 305-9.

⁶⁶ Sermon 8 in *PL* 89, col. 858.

⁶⁷ 'Neque enim sine confessione emendationis peccata queunt dimitti.' Essentially, that without confession and correction sins cannot be remitted. *Super divi Jacobi epistolam*, in *PL* 93, col. 39. For post-baptismal sins, forgiveness is obtained through confession and penance. *Ibid.*, cols. 39-40; *In Lucae Evangelium expositio*, *Ibid.*, volume 92, cols. 342-3 and the idea that sins washed away by the blood are continuously remitted through the sacrament of the altar. *Homiliae genuina* 1,14, in *Ibid.*, volume 94, col. 75.

⁶⁸ The text appears in Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, volume 2, pp. 66-70.

Articles 1,2,28,29 and 44 link proper belief to salvation. The Athanasian Creed demonstrates the prevalent conviction that theology and a correct understanding of doctrine are now linked to the faith, are matters of the faith, and are indispensable for eternal welfare.⁶⁹

The institutionalizing of Christendom began to play a greater role in the matter of salvation. With the increased power and development of the papacy, monasticism, a sacerdotal sacramental system, penitential cycle and adherence to orthodox doctrines become hallmarks of medieval Christianity. All of these structures come to bear upon the doctrine of salvation. In the later Middle Ages this cycle of salvation was institutionalized absolutely.⁷⁰

The Atonement according to Anselm and Abelard

To the historian of theology, it is rather astonishing that one thousand years of ecclesiastical history passed before the idea of the atonement received its first systematic articulation. At the end of the eleventh century one of the key components in the doctrine of salvation finally received attention. In the years 1097–1098, Anselm of Canterbury wrote his *Cur Deus Homo*. ‘Why God became Human’ attempted to outline a theory of the atonement. Divine mercy wished to forgive humanity of sin but divine justice forbade mercy to do so until satisfaction for human sin was made.⁷¹ Anselm develops a doctrine of satisfaction based upon Patristic ideas, especially Augustinian, and for the first time in Christian history shows why the incarnation was necessary and why the cross was essential.⁷² The idea that humanity could make sufficient payment on their own is a notion dismissed by Anselm as an impossibility.⁷³ Satisfaction for the sins

⁶⁹ On this document see J. N. D. Kelly, *The Athanasian Creed* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1964).

⁷⁰ See John T. McNeill and Helena M. Gamer, trans. and ed., *Medieval Handbooks of Penance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990); Mary C. Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners: Public Penance in Thirteenth-Century France* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995) and Henry C. Lea, *A History of Auricular Confession and Indulgences in the Latin Church*, 3 volumes (Philadelphia: Lea Brothers, 1896).

⁷¹ *Cur Deus Homo*, book 1, chapters 11–12, in *PL* 158, cols. 376–8.

⁷² *Cur Deus Homo*, book 2, *passim* in *PL* 158, cols. 399–432.

⁷³ *Cur Deus Homo*, book 1, chapters 22–24, in *Ibid.*, cols. 395–9.

of the world could be made only by an exceptional offering of incalculable worth.⁷⁴ Anselm postulates that the willing sacrifice of a sinless human would be a sufficient payment. Since death was a consequence of sin, one who had never sinned would therefore not be subject to death. The problem is, all humans had sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.⁷⁵ Someone must make payment to God. Anselm puts it thus.

This cannot be effected, except the price paid to God for the sin of [humanity] be something greater than all the universe besides God... Moreover, it is necessary that he who can give God anything of his own which is more valuable than all the things in the possession of God, must be greater than all else but God himself... Therefore none but God can make this satisfaction... But none but a [human] ought to do this, otherwise [humankind] does not make the satisfaction... none but God can make and none but [humankind] ought to make, it is necessary for the God-man to make it.⁷⁶

At this stage it becomes apparent that only God in human form could make sufficient payment for the sins of the world. Hence, the incarnation presents itself as a solution to the dilemma and a means for the salvation of the world.⁷⁷ For Anselm, as for the ‘fathers,’ the idea of Christ as both human and divine is essential. With the voluntary death of Christ, the justice of God is satisfied and the restraints on divine mercy for human salvation are thereby removed through the Christ-event and the drama of Golgotha.⁷⁸ At this point the reality of *heilsgeschichte* intersects with human history and the benefits of God’s mercy become apparent. The problems of sin, guilt and forgiveness are all subsumed in the atonement theory set forth by Anselm. Divine wrath, justice and mercy are all satisfied. Anselm labours to demonstrate that more than an arbitrary act of divine will was neces-

⁷⁴ *Cur Deus Homo*, book 1, chapter 20, in *Ibid.*, cols. 392-3.

⁷⁵ *Cur Deus Homo*, book 2, chapters 6-7, in *Ibid.*, cols. 403-5.

⁷⁶ *Cur Deus Homo*, book 2, chapter 6, in *Ibid.*, col. 404.

⁷⁷ *Cur Deus Homo*, book 1, chapter 25, in *Ibid.*, cols. 399-400.

⁷⁸ *Cur Deus Homo*, book 2, chapters 12-13, in *Ibid.*, cols. 412-14.

sary for the redemption of humankind. That established, Anselm attempts to show that Christ was not made unworthy to have become subject to the cross.⁷⁹

While Anselm's theory of the atonement was the first to be advanced in a millennium of ecclesiastical history, it came under immediate heavy fire. Among those notable medieval detractors was Peter Abelard, the great theologian and philosopher of Paris, who composed a brief but strong response.⁸⁰ If Christ was of infinite value, then how could his death be perceived in a positive light? As Abelard put it, what act of compensation could possibly rectify for the act of the murder of Christ? What type of redemption would the death of Christ produce?⁸¹ For Abelard there seemed to be no pressing need for Christ to appease the wrath of God through the cross nor yet to satisfy divine justice. What the incarnation and the atonement demonstrates is the love of God. Satisfaction and sacrifice are not meaningful elements in the Christ-event. The death of Christ on Golgotha is proof of divine love for humanity wherein Christ becomes the representative of humanity in the presence of God.

At his second heresy trial at Sens in 1140 Abelard was accused of denying that Christ became human in order to liberate humankind from the power of the Devil.⁸² The charge notwithstanding, Abelard regarded the entire sum of human salvation as resident in the incarnation.⁸³ Salvation was not about justice or the law, but rather it was about divine love, a point Abelard's *Exposition on Romans* makes clear. The Anselmian emphases aside, Abelard sees only the principle of love operating in the atonement and in the process of salvation. Human acceptance of this divine love generates redemption, freedom and a proper relationship between humankind and God. Salvation through the suffering of Christ means liberation from slavery to sin-

⁷⁹ *Cur Deus Homo*, book 1, chapter 15, in *Ibid.*, cols. 380–81.

⁸⁰ *Commentaria in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos*, in *Petri Abaelardi opera theologica*, eds. Eligius M. Buytaert and Constant J. Mews, 3 volumes [*Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis*, volumes 11–13] (Turnhout: Brepols 1969–87), volume 11, pp. 113–18.

⁸¹ *Commentaria in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 113.

⁸² Constant J. Mews, 'The Lists of Heresies Imputed to Peter Abelard' *Revue Bénédictine* 95 (Nos. 1–2, 1985), p. 108.

⁸³ *Theologia Summi Boni*, in *Petri Abaelardi opera theologica*, volume 13, p. 201.

fulness and freedom to live as children of God. The state of salvific existence is one based not on fear, but on love.⁸⁴

The Plan and Pattern of Salvation in the Medieval Church

The Patristic principle '*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*' became a reality: outside the church there is no salvation.⁸⁵ Deviance from the emerging mainstream was increasingly repressed. On 4 November 1184 Pope Lucius III issued the decretal *Ad abolendam* wherein heresy was given a much more specific definition than had existed previously. The bull identified any person denying ecclesiastical doctrine related to the eucharist, baptism, the remission of sins or marriage as a heretic. Any individual protecting or defending such persons was likewise considered anathema.⁸⁶ Whatever soteriological theory Lucius had in mind was certainly inferred rather than dogmatically decreed. The aforementioned principle that outside the church there is no salvation took on further dogmatic significance in the formulation of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.⁸⁷

Moreover, the official church defined itself in terms of its hierarchy and applied the definition of the church to the papacy. Thomas Aquinas held to this conviction and popes spelled out the relation between ecclesiastical obedience and salvation in exacting detail.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ *Commentaria in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos*, p. 118. There is a good translation of the relevant passages from Abelard's commentary on Romans in Eugene R. Fairweather, ed., *A Scholastic Miscellany: Anselm to Ockham* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1970), pp. 276-87.

⁸⁵ Cyprian, Epistle 73, 'To Iubaianus, concerning the baptism of heretics,' 21.2, in *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum*, 18 volumes (Vienna: Friedrich Temp-sky, 1866-89), volume 3, p. 795.

⁸⁶ Mansi, ed., *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, volume 22, cols. 476-8 and Migne, ed., *PL*, volume 201, cols. 1297-1300. The document identified several groups of heretics: Cathars, Humiliati, Patarines, Waldensians (referred to as the 'Poor Men of Lyons'), Passagians, the Josephini and the Arnoldists. The decretal was later incorporated into canon law.

⁸⁷ Cyrian, 'To Iubaianus, concerning the baptism of heretics,' 21.2, in *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum*, volume 3, p. 795. Lateran IV reflected this idea in its first constitution. Norman P. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2 volumes (Washington, D. C. and London: Sneed and Ward and Georgetown University Press, 1990), volume 1, p. 230.

⁸⁸ See for example his declarations that the church is requisite for salvation, *Summa Theologiae*, 3a 73, 3; that the pope is the head of the church, *Ibid.*, 3a.8,7; that the

In 1302 Boniface VIII issued his famous bull *Unam Sanctam*: ‘we are required by the faith to hold to and believe... that there is one holy, catholic and apostolic church and outside this church there is no salvation or forgiveness of sins... Beyond this we declare, state, define and pronounce that it is entirely essential for salvation for every person to be obedient to the Roman pontiff.’⁸⁹ Religious dissenters were required to confess this essential dogma.⁹⁰ The transition from the ‘church’ of Cyprian to the ‘one universal church’ of Lateran IV to the ‘Holy Roman Catholic Church’ is evident.

Movements of lay spirituality and the development of the mystical tradition did not often stray measurably from the boundaries of Holy Mother Church. Instead these alternative approaches to God and salvation should most often be seen not in competition with the official church but complimentary to it. As the early church fathers proclaimed, no one could have God for their father without the church as their mother, so likewise they confessed that in terms of belief they would be reluctant to acquiesce unless moved to do so by the church.⁹¹ Hence we find the historic Biblical and ecclesiastical themes of the doctrine of salvation in the writings of late medieval devotional literature.

supreme pontiff takes the place of Christ in the entire church, *Ibid.*, 2a2ae.88,12 (2a2ae.39,1); that the ecclesiastical hierarchy has the power to define and this authority is principally papal *Ibid.*, 2a2ae.II,2 and 2a2ae.I,10; and that the pope has fullness of power in the Church, *Ibid.*, 3a.72,II. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, ed., Thomas Gilby, 61 volumes (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode and New York: McGraw Hill, 1964–1980), volumes 58, pp.10–11; 49, pp.74–5; 39, p.201; 32, p. 87; 31, p. 55; and 57, p. 223.

⁸⁹ The bull became embedded in canon law. Emil Friedberg, ed, *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, 2 volumes (Leipzig, 1879–97), volume 2, cols. 1245–46.

⁹⁰ ‘Corde credimus et ore confitemur unam ecclesiam non haereticorum, sed sanctam Romanam, catholicam et apostolicam, extra quam neminem salvari credimus.’ This was the confession demanded of the Waldensians. Quoted in Joseph Schwane, *Dogmengeschichte der Mittleren Zeit* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder’sche Verlagshandlung, 1882), p. 504.

⁹¹ ‘One can no longer have God as Father if one has not the church as Mother.’ [‘habere non potest deum patrem qui ecclesiam non habet matrem.’] Cyprian, ‘On the unity of the Church,’ 6. Text in W. Hartel, ed., *Opera Omnia*, in *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum*, 3 parts (Vienna, 1868–71). ‘...ego vero evangelio non crederem, nisi me catholicae ecclesiae commoveret auctoritas.’ Augustine, *Contra Epistolam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti liber unus*, 5, in Migne, ed. *PL*, vol. 42, col. 176.

The contents of famous books such as Thomas à Kempis' *On the Imitation of Christ*, Gerard Groote's *Following of Christ* and François de Sales' *Introduction to the Devout Life* are well known and their views of salvation need not be rehearsed here. An examination of lesser known devotional literature is still instructive. Jan Hus' *The Daughter: How to know the correct way to Salvation* serves as a test case.⁹² Hus warns his hearers that the Devil actively works against God, the faith and those who wish to believe.⁹³ Great worth is attached to repentance.⁹⁴ Echoing Clement of Alexandria, Hus calls his readers to know themselves. 'Learn about yourself; because the more you learn about yourself, the more you will learn about God.'⁹⁵ Following the example of Hippolytus, Hus writes, 'remember that God created you in God's image... you will find God in yourself.'⁹⁶ With Clement of Alexandria and John of Damascus, Hus urges his readers to see God in the created order. 'God is divine through all things created.'⁹⁷

Reflecting a Pauline-Augustinian theology of the cross, Hus goes on to incorporate themes suggested in the Anselm-Abelard debate. Hus opined that the Devil provoked the unrighteous ones to murder Christ with a view to seizing his power. The Devil was gravely disappointed, however, in the outcome. 'Had the Devil known that Christ's death would mean his defeat and the salvation of souls, the Devil would rather have prevented Christ's death.'⁹⁸ In other words, with faint echoes of Origenist thought, Hus suggests that the Devil was fooled by the cross. Now, divine grace forcefully breaks into human history and human liberation from sin occurs through Jesus Christ.⁹⁹ Consistent with a Pauline-Augustinian doctrine of salvation, Hus calls

⁹² *Dcerka: O poznání cesty pravé k spasení* was written in exile in 1413 or 1414 at Kozi Hrádek before Hus' fateful departure to the Council of Constance in October of the latter year. I cite from the edition in *Magistri Iohannis Hus: Opera omnia*, volume 4, *Drobné spisy české*, ed. Amedeo Molnár (Prague: Academia, 1985), pp. 163-86. Hereafter cited as Hus, *Dcerka*.

⁹³ Hus, *Dcerka*, p. 173 and *passim*.

⁹⁴ Hus, *Dcerka*, pp. 171, 174 and *passim*.

⁹⁵ Hus, *Dcerka*, pp. 163-4.

⁹⁶ Hus, *Dcerka*, pp. 163-4.

⁹⁷ Hus, *Dcerka*, p. 165.

⁹⁸ Hus, *Dcerka*, p. 171.

⁹⁹ Hus, *Dcerka*, p. 176.

sinner to repentance which functions as a means of receiving grace and provides a gateway to transformation. One of the relevant passages in *Dcerka* is theologically powerful and deserves to be quoted at length.

...if the soul repents... she is taken from the Devil and returned to Christ. Such repentance does not censure anyone, does not make anyone evil... Such repentance saved an adulterous woman caught while committing this sin. Such repentance made an obvious sinner a righteous individual, more just than a proud lawmaker, because this one prayed. Such repentance purified the adulterer and the murderer David and made him a great prophet. Such repentance made an obvious sinner, Matthew, an apostle and scribe of God's son. Such repentance graciously restored Paul, a ruffian of the Holy Church, and Peter, a perjurer, to Jesus. Such repentance opened paradise to an evil blasphemous villain who, while on the cross approaching his own death, cried out, 'remember me oh Lord when you enter your kingdom;' and the Saviour, tortured to death on the cross, said to him, 'I can tell you that today you will be in paradise with me' [Luke 23:42-3]. Why did this happen? First, to give everyone an example to show that no one will be deprived of the heavenly kingdom if they repent at the time of death. Oh, how strangely good is God, how immensely merciful God is, that the one who deserved death, on account of the fact that he was so evil and blasphemed his Saviour, was soon, converted by repentance, and able to hear, 'today you will be in paradise with me!' Oh you villain, how could it have happened that you are together with the victorious king in joy? How could it have happened that you have been raised so gloriously? What power true repentance has to give paradise so soon to a villain, to strengthen the living, to give life to the dead, to make the blind see, to return hope to the desperate, to convert the sons of wrath to sons of love, to make servants of God from servants of the Devil, to make the man who did not know himself to learn about himself through repentance. While he was trying to find himself damned, he was already in peace with God. Whereas

before he was a son of the Devil he finds himself to be an heir to the heavenly kingdom together with Christ, the son of the almighty God.¹⁰⁰

With the sinner's repentance and an infusion of divine grace, Hus enjoins the company of the righteous to partake of the living bread, the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, in order to be strengthened in righteousness and in salvation. He goes as far as to suggest that daily communication may in fact be appropriate.¹⁰¹ Hus fully supports the soteriological emphases of the eucharist already established by Ignatius, Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus noted earlier. From this theology of the cross, divine grace, repentance and the eucharist, Hus stands in a stream of doctrinal thought from Ignatius to Origen to Augustine which also conceived of salvation as deification. 'The dignity of your soul can not be so insignificant when God wanted to become human in order to save her, so that humankind could become God.'¹⁰² These themes emphasized by Jan Hus enjoy a long history within the several streams of the Christian faith. To theologians and Christian pilgrims of the Middle Ages, these themes and realities could only be found, with certainty, within the church.

Outside the church, salvation was regarded as an impossibility in the Middle Ages, though that dogma did little to deter numerous groups from undertaking the search anyway: Bogomils in the Balkans, Strigolniks in Russia, Cathars in Languedoc, Waldensians in the Alps, Lollards in England, Hussites in Bohemia, among others. The primary function of the church was the salvation of souls. The doctrine of salvation in the medieval church cannot properly be comprehended apart from the sacramental and penitential cycles of official religion. Salvation was not a single act or event achieved once

¹⁰⁰ Hus, *Dcerka*, p. 178.

¹⁰¹ Hus, *Dcerka*, pp. 177, 178. Hus is building upon the peculiarly Bohemian eucharistic tradition of frequent lay communion begun by Jan Milič of Kroměříž and supported by Matěj of Janov, Vojtěch Raňkův, Matthew of Cracow, Heinrich of Bitterfeldt, Tomáš of Štítný and others. The idea of frequent communion expanded after Hus' departure from Prague to include utraquism and eventually encompassed all of the baptized including small babies. The practice was at the heart of the Bohemian Reformation.

¹⁰² Hus, *Dcerka*, p. 180.

for all time. The human propensity to sin, the need for forgiveness, the necessity of confessing sin, demonstrating sorrow for personal transgressions, and the context for an infusion of divine grace, were all matters the official church could and did address.

Auricular confession, repentance, acts of penance, absolution, and the sacrament of the altar were the main components of salvation in the medieval church.¹⁰³ Confession was regulated by the medieval church and people were encouraged to confess their sins and show sorrow for their miscreant behavior. Whereupon, priestly absolution would be declared, acts of penance imposed and participation in the celebration of the Mass which was a true sacrament – a means of grace – was an impartation of salvation. *Ex opere operato*. Out of the act of celebration sacramental grace is bestowed. In this connection it is understandable that actual eating and drinking of the consecrated elements was not always essential. It was efficacious for believers to observe the act of consecration and the elevation of the host and chalice. The priest could commune on behalf of all. In this way the church became the essential medium of salvation between God and humankind.

Conclusion

All of this had been the result of a process spanning a millennium and a half of ecclesiastical history. Several notional concepts of salvation coalesced to form a doctrine of salvation. Even with common components embraced by a majority of the western church, differences remained. Paul and James, Origen and his detractors, Augustine and Pelagius, Anselm and Abelard, faith and works, ransom, victory, sacrifice, mercy, justice and divine love were battles which marked the contours of the evolving doctrine of salvation. As the church institutionalized, dogma was defined, orthodoxy was established and tradition took on a history of its own. While the medieval church did not dogmatically decree a comprehensive doctrine of salvation, by the later Middle Ages religious practice had become fairly uniform in the

¹⁰³ There is a helpful discussion of this penitential cycle in Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 79–83.

western church and apart from heretical movements a unanimity had emerged. The uneven landscape of the doctrine of salvation over the course of ecclesiastical history makes quite untenable irresponsible modern claims for certain doctrines of salvation with assertions of unbroken lines of continuity from the New Testament to the present. There was often unity in diversity but conversely that unity was frequently tested and tried by diversity.

In the early sixteenth century an obscure German Augustinian friar named Martin Luther disrupted this apparent harmony. A veritable theological revolution followed in which a deep and penetrating criticism of received wisdom arose which ultimately challenged the magisterium of the church in ways previously unimagined. That sustained criticism of received theological wisdom was nowhere more evident than in relation to the doctrine of salvation.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ I am presenting preparing a study of Luther's understanding of faith which must surely be seen as the hinge upon which his doctrine of salvation turned. That study will serve as a sequel to this one.

Plurality of Religions as a *kairos*

Paul F. Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York, U.S.A., 2002, ISBN 1-57075-419-5.

In his recent book, *Introducing Theologies of Religions*, the Roman Catholic theologian Paul Knitter offers a survey of basic Christian approaches to other religions. His announced goal is twofold: to draw due attention to the theological problem of religious plurality, and to encourage a shift in perspective on this issue. He invites his readers to perceive religious plurality not as a problem (or even a threat), but rather as a promise, a situation that is potentially enriching and that can be viewed as a providential blessing.

Knitter's book began as a revision of his earlier famous work *No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes toward World Religions* (1985). He eventually realized that the development in the field of theology of religions over the last two decades had been so dramatic and rich that a completely new treatment of the topic was needed.

The author offers a (relatively) objective description and analysis of the main schools of thought in theology of religions, neither arguing nor taking sides but primarily drawing a map of the field. His evaluative comments are concerned mostly with inner consistency and the theological balance of the views presented. He deliberately lets authors speak for themselves and carefully reviews the strengths and weaknesses of each attitude under discussion.

He works from the assumption that, in today's pluralist world, any serious statement of Christian faith must include some sort of doctrine of other religions and that interreligious dialogue is an essential part of the calling of the Christian church. Knitter envisions a global dialogical community of communities; his hermeneutical theory is drawn from J. Habermas' notion of "communicative praxis" and his consensual view of truth as emerging in the context of a dialogue among equals.

After introducing his goals, methodology and basic presuppositions, Knitter proceeds to present four main theological options or

“models” for Christian reflection on other religions, which he calls the Replacement model, Fulfillment model, Mutuality model and Acceptance model.

The Replacement model (more commonly called exclusivism, a label that Knitter dislikes and wants to abandon) is the traditional view of most of the Church history. In Knitter’s view, this model is slowly declining, being replaced by more optimistic views, as the Western world faces, today more than ever before, the reality of other religions. In mainstream Protestantism, the Replacement model was revived in the 20th century due to the theological genius of Karl Barth. His understanding of religions is expressed in the famous dictum: “Religion ist Unglaube.” This approach to religion has been very influential in Protestant theology of the last several decades. Some of Barth’s disciples (Knitter focuses on Emil Brunner) modified Barth’s harsh judgement by insisting on the biblical notion of general revelation, universally available and partially reflected in the religious traditions of mankind, though in distorted and unclear fashion. Knitter emphasizes the fact that a generally negative view of non-Christian religions does not necessarily imply damnation of all their adherents. The proponents of the Replacement model, although all of them insist on the ontological necessity of Christ for salvation, do not agree on the epistemological necessity of Christ for salvation: in other words, on the absolute necessity of making a conscious decision for Christ. The Replacement model is still rather common among Fundamentalist and Evangelical Christians, but Knitter notes the lively discussion in conservative theological circles exactly on this topic (in the context of theodicy) and observes a significant shift towards a more optimistic view of the fate of the unevangelized.

Knitter names as the strengths of the Replacement model its undeniable continuity with the biblical message and Church tradition, its acknowledgement of the reality of evil (consequences of the Fall), its faithful insistence on the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as witnessed in the earliest Christian documents and its sensitivity to the demonic, idolatrous aspects of human religiosity.

One of the weaknesses of this approach is, according to Knitter, that the theory is aprioristic, that it does not pay sufficient attention to the reality of other religions, and nor does it really interact with the

claims, practices and social realities of other religions. Knitter also criticizes the simplistic and one-dimensional christology of the Replacement model, since there are, in his view, other options and emphases even in the New Testament which point to alternative possibilities in understanding the uniqueness of Christ.

The Fulfillment model (traditionally called inclusivism, a label which Knitter finds inadequate and wants to replace) is most typical of post-II Vatican Roman Catholic theology. After surveying the historical development of Roman Catholic theology of other religions (from the patristic slogan “extra ecclesiam nulla salus” and the Tridentine idea of “baptism by desire” to the documents of the Second Vatican Council) Knitter analyses the work of Karl Rahner, his former professor, whom he calls the greatest Catholic theologian of the 20th century. Rahner’s suggestion to view the (good) adherents of other religions as “anonymous Christians” is in Knitter’s view just as great and revolutionary as it is a patronizing unwelcome compliment. Building on his theological anthropology, Rahner speaks about the supernatural existential of man, about *Vorgriff*, an inborn openness to Transcendence, which is in correlation with God’s self-revealing activity. So Rahner very much agreed with the statements of Vatican II about the “rays of Truth” and “seeds of the Word,” being present in religious traditions and with viewing them as “preparations for the Gospel.” But Rahner goes even further than Vatican II. He insists that religions should be viewed as “ways of salvation,” positively intended by God as part of the universal *Heilsgeschichte*. Nevertheless, Rahner and other proponents of the Fulfillment model (Knitter focuses on Gavin D’Costa and Jacques Dupuis), consider Christianity to be the best articulation of divine truth, the normative expression of God’s revelation.

Among the positive aspects of Fulfillment model Knitter mentions its generous willingness to see God’s truth and grace operating in non-Christian religions, its insistence on the necessity of interreligious dialogue and its sober reminder that there are some non-negotiables in each religious tradition.

Negatively, the Fulfillment model presents a patronizing presupposition that Christianity is the best and normative religion which often hinders genuine dialogue with people of other faiths because it

is not a dialogue among equals. This model also assumes without question that religious commitment implies and demands absolute certitude about one's truth. Another weakness of the Fulfillment model is that it insists on a tight connection between the Spirit and the Logos, i.e. between the depth of religious experience and the proclaimed Word. This assumption makes it possible to say that only in Christianity we have both and without distortion.

The Mutuality model (earlier called pluralism which is another vague label which Knitter wants to replace) is a relatively new approach. It was suggested by E. Troeltsch, but fully developed and rigorously argued only in the second half of the 20th century. It is associated with names like John Hick or Wilfred Cantwell Smith. The proponents of this model would like to establish a platform for more authentic dialogue; they want to deconstruct the "myth of Christian uniqueness." They encourage fellow believers to "cross the theological Rubicon," i.e. to leave behind the exclusive claims of Christianity which they consider arrogant and baseless. They offer three different bridges across this theological Rubicon: philosophical-historical, mystical and practical-ethical.

The first bridge (philosophical-historical) consists of discovering the historical situatedness of every religious tradition, both in its origins and its truth claims which effectively relativizes any claims for exclusivity and absoluteness. Religions are viewed as historically conditioned responses to the Real. The second bridge (mystical) points to the depth of religious experience as the common core of all religions, variously expressed in different cultural and historical circumstances. These diverse circumstances account for the seemingly conflicting truth claims. The third bridge (practical-ethical) views salvific liberation as the common goal and aspiration of all religious traditions; this approach is therefore soteriocentric or (in Christian theological terminology) Kingdom-oriented. All three bridges presuppose a rough parity of all religions and explicitly reject any claims of Christian superiority. The author himself (Paul Knitter) is one of the best known proponents of the third bridge of Mutuality model.

One of the strengths of this approach is, in Knitter's view, its courage to offer qualitatively new answers to pressing theological dilemmas. Another strength is its option for "sacrament christology," i.e.

the view of Christ as the utmost revelation of God's love (more than anything else). This view makes it possible to insist on Christ's uniqueness without denying the uniqueness and necessity of other religious leaders like Buddha, Muhammad, Krishna etc.

The Mutuality model has three main weaknesses according to Knitter. He calls the first „creeping imperialism” i.e., constructing a typically Western post-Enlightenment “substance” of all religions and pressing it on others. The second weakness is “creeping relativism” which becomes an ideology no better than the despised alternatives exclusivism and inclusivism. The revolutionary theological paradigm shift of the Mutuality model is its third weakness which makes the continuity with any particularly Christian tradition questionable to some extent.

The last model which Knitter analyses in his book does not fully fit any of the old categories (exclusivism, inclusivism, pluralism). Knitter calls it the Acceptance model and adds a subtitle: “Many True Religions: So Be It.” This model welcomes religious plurality and makes no assumptions concerning other religions. The representatives of this view take seriously the epistemological situation of post-modernity. As three examples of this Acceptance model Knitter describes the perspectives of George Lindbeck, Mark Heim and Francis X. Clooney. Lindbeck bases his postliberal view of religion on the insights of the sociology of knowledge (P. Berger) and the philosophy of language (L. Wittgenstein), as well as on some key theological views of K. Barth. Lindbeck calls his view of religion a cultural-linguistic perspective. It is the *verbum externum*, the proclaimed word, what is primary in religion, not any supposed inner experience. Experience is shaped by the word, not vice versa. There is, therefore, no common ground among religions; they are as different as the languages they use. There is a large space for dialogue in the sense of a “good neighbor policy” but nothing else.

Heim focuses on the wide diversity of religious goals. Nirvana is incompatible with the Christian eschaton, as is any unification with Brahma. Heim suggests that fellow Christians enjoy the fact that different religions aspire to different goals which, Heim adds, most likely they achieve. There is a plurality of eternal destinations (which he sees guaranteed in the doctrine of the Trinity), just as there is a

plurality of empirically observable religions. There is nothing wrong with that.

Clooney advises fellow believers to start the theology of religions not from the Bible and church tradition, but from reading the sacred texts of other religions, and then note what productive and enriching semantic clash results, when the biblical world project meets the world projects of other sacred writings.

Heim and Clooney as well as Lindbeck are very much in favor of interreligious dialogue, but they have more modest expectations concerning the alleged common ground or convergence of religious traditions, which are the desiderata of the Mutuality model.

Reviewing the positive contributions of the Acceptance model Knitter points to its recognition that all humans are inclusivists; this is an incurable tendency of all religious believers. Knitter also praises the sensitivity for the value of difference, and reluctance to reduce the Other into the Same by an ideological all-embracing framework (a tendency in the three previous models).

However, Knitter criticizes the overemphasis on the unbridgeable gap between different cultures. One need not be imprisoned by language; communication is difficult, but possible. He also asks, whether the “polytheistic” idea of multiple salvations and multiple Absolutes is intellectually coherent. Does this actually makes sense?

In conclusion Knitter reminds the reader to perceive the plurality of religions, so apparent in contemporary globalized world, not as a problem, but as a promising and potentially fruitful *kairos* in the history of mankind. On the basis of his survey he pleads for an “inter-Christian dialogue” about the different possible approaches to other religions. Faithful to his presuppositions, he perceives the plurality of options for reflecting on non-Christian religions as a “network of checks and balances,” as a very fruitful interplay of emphases and insights. He does not see the alternative approaches as mutually exclusive but rather as complementary.

Knitter also encourages Christians to take interreligious relationships and cooperation seriously and take initiative in developing them. As an example he mentions his longtime personal involvement in the Interreligious Peace Council and shows thereby that his interest in interreligious dialogue is not just academic.

Knitter's book is written in a concise, lucid style: the author obviously has in mind a wider audience than just theologians. The book is packed with information, well-documented with references to primary sources. Knitter has the courage to coin new terminology and his attempt to replace the vague categories of exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism is praiseworthy.

However, his new categories do not seem to really solve the problems associated with the old ones. He ends up putting Pannenberg into the category of the Replacement model (while Pannenberg is an explicit inclusivist). Even more surprising is his treatment of Tillich under the label of Replacement model (while Tillich belongs somewhere between the inclusivist and pluralist camps). Putting Panikkar under the label of Mutuality model and not under the Acceptance model is again rather questionable. Clooney could as well or probably better be viewed as a representative of the Fulfillment model (inclusivism). In short, all categories are slippery, as Knitter himself acknowledges, but it doesn't seem that his proposal helps the situation.

Throughout his book, Knitter lets the reader feel his inclination towards a particular kind of pluralistic ontology, as well as towards a sort of Habermasian epistemology. That both these perspectives have their own weaknesses (and Knitter's book naturally shares those weaknesses) doesn't need to be said. At the same time, Knitter is admirably faithful to the announced "neutrality" of his methodology and he presents fairly and respectfully even the views that are very far from his own perspective. The book is certainly to be recommended for every student and theologian interested in the complex issues related to the Christian theology of religions and interreligious dialogue.

Josef Smolík, Praha

In honour of J. M. Lochman

Theology between West and East. A Radical Heritage. Essays in Honor of Jan Milič Lochman., ed. Frank D. Macchia and Paul S. Chung, Wipf and Stock publishers, Eugene, Oregon 2002.

Frank Macchia and Paul Chung, who were among Lochman's leading students at Basel, collected the essays in this volume on the occasion of their teacher's 80th birthday. The volume is also dedicated to the memory of Friedrich Wilhelm Marquardt (1928–2002), "a theologian who served both the church and the academy with great skill and ecumenical vision."

The essays are introduced by Juergen Moltmann. Moltmann remembers his first encounters with Lochmann during the "Prague spring." Lochman's activities as professor and rector in Basel, in the World Council of Churches and in the Presbyterian Alliance, his lectureships in the USA and Korea made him internationally known. Lochman is characterized as an "ecumenical bridge builder," as an independent student of K. Barth, who reads "Barth through the lenses of the eschatological hope of the Revolutionary Czech Reformation from Hus to Comenius" (4).

In the article "Theology and Cultural Context" Lochman gives in a few watchwords the main lines of his theological thinking: In the beginning-God, Christological Concentration and Trinitarian Theology, Dialogue and Doxology, Church and University. His contribution ends with the words of Comenius: *Status Mundi Renovabitur* which express the hope which Lochman gains from the biblical message interpreted by the Czech Reformation.

The essays contained in the volume are divided into four thematic groups: Ecumenism, Social Concern, Culture, Theological Meditations. Essays on ecumenism place before the reader the current richness of the ecumenical spectrum. S. Chung elaborates presuppositions for interreligious dialogue in K. Barth's *Dogmatics (IV)*, the Finnish Lutheran theologian Veli Matti Kaerkaeinen examines the relationship of Justification and Deification from the perspective of Lutheranism, Catholicism and Orthodoxy, in a search for the ecu-

menical potential of a new perspective on Luther. The growing Pentecostal influence finds its place in theological reflections on the Reformed-Pentecostal Dialogue. The challenge of Auschwitz cannot be overlooked in any theological reflection today. F. W. Marquardt confronts the reader with this challenge in his article „What think you of Christ? Jesus at issue between Christians and Jews“. The former director of Faith and Order W. Vischer examines critically the issue of the practice of indulgences in the Third Millennium. The editors have succeeded in bringing together the most urgent and deepest ecumenical issues examined by theologians engaged in these issues.

In the contributions devoted to social concern the theology of K. Barth is in the forefront. Korean theologian Meehyun Chung considers Barth's theology from the feminist point of view, Paul Hung from the point of a hermeneutics of the poor. In the contribution of Won-Bae Kim from Korea on Bonhoeffer and Barth we find a very critical attitude towards "the spirit of modernity that excessively influenced minjung theology. Minjung theology developed in Korea during 1970s and was decisively influenced by Bultmann's theology and tended to follow unconsciously and uncritically a Bultmannian bourgeois spirit in dealing with the social economic problems of minjung... Minjung theology needs to pay more attention to the socialist praxis of Karl Barth in order to develop a project of Asian liberation theology." (220) We can note the change of atmosphere in Asian theology. Some years ago the secular modernity of Cox's *Secular City* or of Robinson's *Honest to God* attracted the attention of Christians in Korea as bestsellers. Professor George Hunsinger, director of Barth Studies in Princeton, refers to the New Presbyterian Study Catechism in which social issues are addressed. J. M. Staehlin brings into discussion the issue of globalisation.

K. W. Rennstich gives a historical survey of religious socialism. Before the eyes of the reader appear people such as Ernst Faber, Walter Rauschenbusch, Walter Benjamin and others. The author substantiates his thesis that "the total religion today is capitalism." The part containing articles on social concerns ends with two excellent contributions: the article by Professor Miroslav Volf of Yale "Forgiveness, Reconciliation and Justice. A Christian Contribution to a More Peaceful Social Environment" and Professor Charles West from

Princeton, "The Church in a Post- Marxist Society." Volf argues that since we cannot reach absolute justice in history, we should start with the Gospel of embracement, with the will to embrace as the framework of the search for justice: we should in Christian communities reverse the order, first justice, then reconciliation. West, using some studies of J. M. Lochman, discusses the question of the demonic attractiveness of marxism, its collapse which was caused from within not enforced from outside. West mentions some deliberations concerning the future after the fall of the Soviet Union.

This situation has left the Christian church with a massive challenge. What is the form of just, equal and caring society that could take the place of Marxism? What is the vision of common humanity that can transcend the powers and alligences that now divide us? How is Christ at work in a world filled with quarelling demons, few as worthy of ideological engagement as communism was? This vision will not come in the form of a Christian world program, projected by a Vatican or a World Council of Churches, though these agencies may help to cultivate it. Rather it will emerge from the life and mission of churches everywhere in the societies where they live with the powers they confront. Lochman has shown us how this happened through "Christians in unexpected places" in a communist society. [West refers here to Lochman's book *Church in a Marxist Society*, New York, 1970]. We need to work on it place by place, and power by power, in a post- Marxist world. (314f).

In the part entitled "Theology and Culture" Mervyn S. Johnson introduces pietism into academic theological and cultural discussion from which it has long been excluded. Academic scholarly theology does not usually pay attention to pietism. Johnson demonstrates the contribution of pietism and its place within the development of the thinking of Kant, the Enlightenment in general, and in modern philosophy and theology. There is not only conservative orthodoxy and liberal theology. Pietism must be taken into account. The approach elaborated by Johnston invites discussion. Eun-Yong Esther Kim describes Barth's influence in Korea during the dictatorial regime of Park. The opposition led by Kim Chai Choon drew inspiration and support from Barth's struggle against Nazism. Professor Kosuka Nishitani from Japan elaborates the religious character of Nipponism which permeates

Japanese culture. Reading this study, one cannot avoid being impressed with the strength of the spirituality of Nipponism and how strongly it moulds the life of Japanese people without any special religious cult. The western Christian spirituality keeps traditions of worship, but the life of Christians is shaped by the spirit of consumption.

In theological meditations Stefan P. Becker reflects on the popular music of Bruce Cockburn, H. J. Kaegi points out the contribution of Jewish exegesis to German Old Testament studies. M. Rohloff closes his article, which is the last, with words of hope: "My curiosity remains alert, stays attentive until the fulfillment of that which now is shrouded as if by a blanket over all comprehension, understanding, belief and confession: 'Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror, then we shall see face to face' (1Cor. 13,12)."

The volume contains an index of contributors with informations about them and bibliography of J. M. Lochman since 1961. From this it is evident how Lochman publishes more and more in his home country in his mother language.

The volume is more than just a collection of interesting and actual essays on important theological themes, more than a tribute and manifestation of gratitude to the teacher who was trusted in regard of his analysis of marxism and engaged theology because he had personal experiences with a totalitarian system and who was for foreign students not only a teacher but at the same time a pastor and personal friend. The volume is a document on the influence of the theological faculty in Basel and of its famous professor, K. Barth, as well as on European theology represented by names of E. Troeltsch, Ch. Blumhardt, K. Barth, D. Bonhoeffer, R. Bultmann, J. L. Hromádka, J. Moltmann, J. M. Lochman. These theologians whose names we find as titles in many dissertations presented in Basel attracted the theological interest of students from the United States, from Korea, Japan, from Switzerland, Germany, Finland, countries represented in this volume. So we have before us a piece of the history of European theology, of a theology which grew out of experiences of German and Marxist totalitarism. It was a pity that the Iron Curtain prevented more frequent and deeper contact and collaboration with Prague Comenius faculty with its radical reformation heritage where Lochman had his roots.

David Javornický, Praha

The Bible Unearthed

Finkelstein, I.; Silberman, N. A. *The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of its Sacred Texts*. New York: Free Press, 2001, 385 p.

Israel Finkelstein is the director of the Sonia and Marco Nadler Institute of Archaeology at Tel Aviv University. He recently co-directed the excavations at Tel Megiddo. Neil Asher Silberman is director of historical interpretation for the Ename Center for Public Archaeology and Heritage Presentation in Belgium.

Their book begins with an Introduction, in which the authors offer to the readers introductory information about the Hebrew Bible, about the resources and the development of the methods of archaeology and about their own reconstruction of the history of ancient Israel. The main body of the book consists of three parts: "The Bible as History?" (chap. 1-5), "The Rise and Fall of Ancient Israel" (chap. 6-8), "Judah and the Making of Biblical History" (chap. 9-11). The book is arranged according to biblical chronology. At the end are Appendices containing some discussion.

The book is not written for scholars but for general readers. The authors have succeeded in attaining this goal. Their book is very readable. All the arguments are easily understandable, the reader is not overwhelmed with technical details and information comprehensible only to experts. Part of the popular character of the book are its expressive titles such as: "Did the Trumpets Really Blast?" "Too Good to be True?" "History, or Not History?" "Phantom Wanderers" "The Hidden Face of Ancient Judah." The style of the book and the conclusions are often provocative.

In the popular character of the book also lies its weakness. The book lacks footnotes. The curious reader cannot check the authors' arguments. He has to believe them. Even the quotations are without a bibliography. The book also lacks opposing arguments or differing interpretations of the archaeological findings. Some of the different opinions are mentioned in the text, but largely as examples of the old archaeology and its now overcome views. If the authors mention some recent archaeologists, they mention mainly Finkelstein's co-

directors from the Megiddo Expedition, David Ussishkin and Baruch Halpern. Only the Appendices contain some discussion.

The book as a whole presents itself as an objective overall interpretation of Israel's history, which is radically new and which is at the same time almost without any uncertainties, question marks or objections. The authors like to use absolute phrases such as "the truth is," "archaeology reveals," "archaeology contradicts," "what really happened" to introduce their own ideas. By this means and by the absence of serious discussion they create a semblance of objectivity for all their opinions.

Each chapter contains a review of the biblical version of the given period of Israel's history, relevant older archaeological findings and recent archaeological findings interpreted by the authors and leading to an alternative version of Israel's history. The authors call it a "new history of ancient Israel" (3). Finkelstein and Silberman understand the biblical version of Israel's history as a "historical saga" containing some memories of the past, but mostly and as a whole presenting a „retrospective theology“ from the times of king Josiah in the seventh century BCE for which is typical, that "...the new, centralized kingdom of Judah and the Jerusalem-centred worship of YHWH was read back into Israelite history as the way things should always have been." (249)

The main problem of the old archaeology (represented for example by W. F. Albright) was, according to the authors, that it took the biblical text at its face value and tried to look for arguments, which would confirm it. Representatives of the old archaeology used archaeology incontrovertibly with the biblical critics, to show that the Bible is basically trustworthy and contains "a substantial body of accurately preserved memories" (15). The new archaeology has as its goal the use of archaeological data as an independent source for the reconstruction of Israel's history. The recent discoveries of archaeology, according to the authors, "...revolutionized the study of early Israel and have cast serious doubt on the historical basis of ... famous biblical stories..."(3)

How does the "new history of ancient Israel" look? Part of it is an extensive deconstruction of the biblical version of Israel's history. The patriarchs did not exist, the Exodus did not happen. There was

no unified and violent conquest of Canaan. The united monarchy never existed. David and Solomon were historical figures, but the extent and splendour of their realm differs substantially from the biblical picture of the “mythical golden age” (143). Moses, Joshua and David are metaphorical portraits of the king Josiah. The texts about them served his political ambitions and territorial aspirations. They were powerful expressions of his ideology of a Pan-Israelite state with power centralized in Jerusalem in the hands of the king from the Davidic dynasty in and accompanied with “YHWH-alone” worship. They contain some authentic memories, whose extent is impossible to recognize. They should be seen as a powerful tool of political propaganda. In sum, “...it is now evident that many events of biblical history did not take place in either the particular era or the manner described. Some of the most famous events in the Bible clearly never happened at all.” (5)

“The new history of ancient Israel” also contains an extensive reconstruction of the biblical version. In the highlands there always existed two distinct societies, northern and southern. Each of them had a different ecosystem, which caused important sociological differences. The northern society had better economical potential, a denser population, and it was richer and more stratified. It was multi-ethnic and due to that also inevitably culturally and religiously open. The northern society reached fully developed statehood at the beginning of the ninth century BCE. This development was enabled by the sudden and total collapse of the Canaanite system of city-states in the late tenth century BCE. In that time the southern society was still economically and politically marginal. The leaders of the impressive development in the North were the rulers from Omride dynasty.

The authors call their realm “Israel’s Forgotten First Kingdom” and characterize them as powerful kings, with one of the strongest armies in the region, skilful builders and administrators. Finkelstein and Silberman say: “...the Omrides, not Solomon, established the first fully developed monarchy in Israel...” (187); “Omri and his successors earned the hatred of the Bible precisely because they were so strong, precisely because they succeeded...” (194). It was only after the fall of the northern kingdom in 720 BC, that the southern society developed into a full-fledged kingdom with much denser

population, with an important power centralized in Jerusalem. Only now was monotheism born, during the so called “YHWH-alone movement.” Up to this time Judah was multireligious. The main goal of the exclusivist monotheistic theology was to gain control over the countryside.

Finkelstein and Silberman are strong and convincing in their presentations of the new archaeological findings and their significance. They offer to the reader important information, for example, about migrations of Semites from Canaan to Egypt and their violent expulsion, the situation in Canaan in the fourteenth and thirteenth century BCE, the character and waves of the settlement in the highlands, excavations of important cities of the southern and northern kingdom (Jerusalem, Megiddo, Hazor, Gezer, Samaria, Jezreel and others), etc. Very important also is their indication of the change in methodology after 1967. Their comprehensive and yet not too technical information are very useful to every serious student of the Hebrew Bible.

The authors are unconvincing when they leave archaeology and enter on broad generalizations trying to construct the “new history of ancient Israel.” They promised to “...reconstruct the history of ancient Israel on the basis of archaeological evidence – the only source of information on the biblical period that was not extensively emended, edited, or censored by many generations of biblical scribes.” (23) Instead of that, when they are leaving the relative chronology of archaeology and trying to build up the whole system of absolute chronology, they are heavily dependent on documentary hypothesis. All archaeological findings are arranged according to the time axis of their version of this hypothesis. When they are arguing against Y. Yadin for the “low chronology” of the archeological findings in Megiddo, Hazor and Gezer, they deliberately choose to take 1Kings 16:24 and 1Kings 21:1 as their starting point and easily exclude the possibility to start with 1Kings 9:15 as Yadin does. Occasionally even they themselves recognize that the move from archaeological findings to such general claims is vulnerable and problematic. But that does not stop them, or at least slow them down. Their conclusions are often much stronger than the evidence presented allows.

The Old Testament scholar Martin Prudký from Charles University in Prague values Finkelstein and other representatives of the so

called “new archaeology” as scholars, who, from the angle of their specialization, have substantially influenced the “change of paradigm” in biblical studies in the last three decades of the twentieth century. It is typical for these archaeologists that they refuse any apologetical function of their research. From this point of view the book under review is not a good example. It does indeed refuse an apologetical function, strictly speaking, for archaeology. But on the other side the authors make such generalizations and try to present them as so absolute and objective truth, that, using the categories of Brueggemann, Finkelstein and Silberman haven’t successfully handled the “collapse of history” and haven’t dealt with their material in a manner adequate to the postmodern epistemological situation. Their book tries to present itself as “innocent,” but it is not.

Let me illustrate the situation in which the debate about the history of ancient Israel takes place. The editor of *Biblical Archaeology Review* H. Shanks speaks about Finkelstein and other “serious scholars” having a “political agenda” in the current Israeli–Arab conflict. He even designates their views as “anti-Semitic.” In his interview with Shanks Finkelstein is more cautious and admits, that “the interpretation of archaeological materials can be biased” and that “even with an unbiased approach, there are differences in interpretation of the material culture.”

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