Concordia Seminary - Saint Louis
Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary

Master of Sacred Theology Thesis | Concordia Seminary Scholarship

5-1-1974

History in the Hermeneutics of Jurgen Moltmann

Lloyd Gross

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholar.csl.edu/stm

 Part of the Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons

Recommended Citation

Gross, Lloyd, "History in the Hermeneutics of Jurgen Moltmann" (1974). *Master of Sacred Theology Thesis*. 365.
https://scholar.csl.edu/stm/365

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia Seminary Scholarship at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master of Sacred Theology Thesis by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

HISTORY IN THE HERMENEUTICS OF

JURGEN MOLTMANN

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Systematic Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

---

by

Lloyd E. Gross

May 1974

Approved by Martin H. Scharlemann
Advisor

Richard Klann
Reader

TABLE OF CONTENTS

8-30-2000
X

BV
4070
C69
M3
1974
no.1

190031

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"In Europe it is often said that the theology of hope is neither a school nor a movement, but a book:"[1] That book is Theologie der Hoffnung, by Jürgen Moltmann. In Europe no more can be said about the theology of hope than has already been said by Moltmann. His work has become the measure of the school of theology which claims history as its special province! So the study here attempted is devoted mostly to that book in an effort to evaluate and understand the contribution it has made to the contemporary discussion of history and its relationship to Christian hermeneutics.

Dr. Jürgen Moltmann is a professor of systematic theology at the University of Tübingen, Germany. His work is relatively new to the non-German-speaking world. His first book to be translated into English was Theologie der Hoffnung.[2] The translation was made by James Leitch of Liverpool, England, and is entitled Theology of Hope.[3] Since the publication of this translation Moltmann has become popular in the theological academy. He has written many articles in both German and

---

[1] Walter Capps, Time Invades the Cathedral (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), p. 41.

[2] Jürgen Moltmann, Theologie der Hoffnung (München; Kaiser Verlag, 1965).

[3] Jürgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope, translated by James Leitch (New York: Harper and Row, 1967).

CONCORDIA SEMINARY LIBRARY
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

English, as well as another major book. Moltmann's later works develop the theme of a "political hermeneutic," or the interpretation of the New Testament message in terms of political action. But the foundation for everything else that Moltmann says is laid in Theology of Hope.

Why is the concept of the theology of hope important? Because it is the first systematic theology to appear in recent times that departs from the two extreme theologies that have dominated twentieth-century thought. Moltmann does not think in existentialist categories as do Rudolf Bultmann, Heinrich Ott, and Gerhard Ebeling. Nor does he emphasize secular theology as did James Robinson, Thomas Altizer, Kenneth Hamilton, and Harvey Cox. Instead, Moltmann has written the charter document for what he perceived to be the most actively growing school of thought. He wanted to reopen the possibility of learning from the apocalyptic message of Judaism, Jesus, and the early Church. But he did not want to settle for a mere description of that message. He wanted to apply it, in its full biblical context, to action in the present time, in fact, to a specific program of action.

Time is important for Moltmann. His schematization is horizontal rather than vertical, with change more important than permanence, action more dominant than structure.[4] Soteriology is ancillary to eschatology, and the very idea of salvation is corporate and universal rather than individual or particular.[5] But one should not too quickly label Moltmann's theology as purely "secular." He does take history seriously, but

---

[4]Capps, p. 130.

[5]Ibid.

the norm of history is the future, not the present. The dialectical historical process prohibits such a thing as an ontological seculum.

In Theology of Hope, Moltmann attempts to reach back to Albert Schweitzer and the debate about the "Historical Jesus." He sees the time of Schweitzer as the watershed of biblical interpretation, the time when theologians really began to study the Scriptures on their own terms. Moltmann has begun, as Heino Kadai has observed, to forge a language of hope that corresponds to the biblical category of promise, which makes eschatology a dominant theme of Christian preaching.[6]

Along with the new emphasis on eschatology, Moltmann presents the contemporary theologian with a corresponding set of ethical questions. The Christian must live in history. His approach to history must be guided by his theology. The church must minister to history and teach its people how to relate theology to it. Theology of Hope, particularly the last section, is rich in material for the pastor who wants to teach his people to confront history with hope, to produce an eschatological ethics.

Wolf-Dieter Marsch has summarized Moltmann's theology under four key headings. The first is the doctrine of the ultimate time which Moltmann asserts vis-a-vis Bultmann, whose main concern was the liberation of the subject from objective history.[7] Moltmann's concept

---

[6]Heino Kadai, "History and Hermeneutics," A Project in Biblical Hermeneutics (Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, 1969), p. 133.

[7]Wolf-Dieter Marsch, "Zur Einleitung: Wohin-jenseits der Alternativen," Diskussion über die Theologie der Hoffnung (Munchen: Kaiser Verlag, 1967), p. 10.

of ultimate time is within the category of historical time. Secondly, God's "new act" after the death of Christ, which pushes the reader to examine history, directs the attention to promises rather than permanence.[8] Thirdly, God's "apodictic Word," seen as human response to a divine promise, is part of the historical process itself.[9] And, finally, the ethics of criticism, the fellowship of the antithesis[10] causes Moltmann to seek what he would later call his "political hermeneutic" of the Gospel.

The thesis here presented attempts to answer the question whether or not Moltmann's Theology of Hope, offers an answer to the impasse of understanding, described by William Hordern as follows:

> On the one hand, modern theology recognizes that Christianity is a historical faith, rooted in events that happened. On the other hand, when it attempts to show how faith is related to historical studies, there is no agreement.[11]

Chapter II analyzes this impasse in detail. Chapter III analyzes Moltmann's methodology for overcoming it, the "history of traditions." Chapter IV deals with Moltmann's philosophy of history gleaned by the use of his method from the biblical material, describes his eschatology as well as his debt to Ernst Bloch. There it moves on to an attempt at relating Moltmann's work to modern labels on the basis of this one book. Chapter V relates some of Moltmann's lesser works to his Theology of Hope.

---

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

William Hordern, "Introduction" New Directions in Theology Today (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), I, 62-63.

And Chapter VI is the critique, in which the writer uses ecclesiastical standards to evaluate Moltmann's contribution to the contemporary church, attempts to identify the place of the theology of hope on the theological map by tracing selected coordinates and coming to a conclusion. In the conclusion, the writer summarizes his answer to the question mentioned above: whether Theology of Hope offers a solution to the impasse.

In reading this dissertation it will be necessary to understand certain terms used by both the writer and by Moltmann. The term "historcism" denotes the philosophy in which history is a closed system of cause and effect. The terms Historie and Geschichte, presented in this paper in German either in the text or in parentheses, behind the English word "history," were originally coined by Martin Kähler. Kähler was reacting against the attempt of the nineteenth-century theologians to present an historical portrait of Jesus without taking seriously the great salvation which the biblical writers had found in Him.[12] Moltmann uses these terms, as did the existentialist theologians, the former term referring to what can be established as having happened, the latter to the meaning of what has happened.

Another difficult group of words are taken from G. F. W. Hegel and Karl Marx, dealing with the dialectical nature of the historical process. The term "contradiction" (Widerspruch) denotes the ethical activity of criticism, while "anithesis" (Differenze) denotes the entire dialectical "side" in a given cycle of the historical process. "Reality" or "thesis" (Wirklichkeit) represent the other "side."

---

[12] Ibid. I, 58.

The term eschatologia crucis is Moltmann's own, but the idea is borrowed from Luther's theologia crucis. Refusing to accept fully the vertical dimension of Lutheranism, Moltmann tries to find a more dynamic expression. His own eschatology, as will be pointed out below, is a "cross with hope" eschatology, primarily concerned with corporate fellowship rather than with individual blessedness.

Next come the terms dealing with promise and fulfillment. The term Wirklichkeit in the German original sometimes comes close to meaning "fulfilment," but in a "theology of hope" sense; that is, an incomplete, conditional fulfilment, that historical reality which we know, or which some character from the past knew. The promises include Wirklichkeit, of course, but they include something else, the Überschuss, or "overspill" (Leitch), which stands against the historical reality brought about by the incomplete and conditional fulfilment of the promise in a dialectical relationship, creating the antithesis to it. As the horizon of history moves forward, that "overspill" becomes important, and the community committed to the antithesis remembers it. For the contemporary interpreter, past instances of thesis and antithesis alike have become Überlieferungen, or "traditions."

Finally, something has to be said about the term the present writer has coined and employed in the thesis. This is the term "anthropotheism," One might also use the perjorative term "anthropolatry" as a corresponding verbal noun. Both words are synthetic creation of Greek prefixes and suffixes used according to their standard English meanings. The term "atheist" is definitely inaccurate to describe even Bloch, let alone Moltmann. Both Bloch and Moltmann do have a "god." The term

"humanist" is too imprecise, for it is used today to describe, for example, both Bishop James A. Pike and Yevgeny Yevtushenko. Moltmann and Bloch believe in the future of humanity. The difference between them is that in Moltmann's case that future is inseparable from the future of Jesus Christ as he understands the latter.

Has Moltmann found an answer to the impasse of understanding? Does he indeed take history more seriously than Bultmann did? Does his eschatology so color his hermeneutics as to lose the category of history? These are the questions one should ask in order to understand what this study is all about. The writer hopes that his work on this dissertation has helped to provide access to some of the questions raised by the issues.

CHAPTER II

MOLTMANN'S APPROACH TO AN IMPASSE OF UNDERSTANDING: HISTORICISM AND CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

Jürgen Moltmann wrote his Theology of Hope in the face of a long dominant historicism, particulary of the positivist variety. What is of special interest to the present study is the way in which Moltmann has come to grips with the so-called "principle of analogy," as advocated by historicists.

A basic presupposition of historicists (such as Wilhelm Dilthey and Ernst Troeltsch) is a "common core of similarity"[1] underlying all reality. That is, in order to understand the details of history, the historicist assumes methodologically a principle of analogy. He assumes thereby that all events in history take place within those limits of similarity which positivists believe are common to all that is real. Existentialist theologians accepted this principle of analogy and applied it to biblical history. As a result, their various reconstructions of biblical history generally shared a common limit. This limit has influenced the efforts of certain other theologians who are not themselves committed to existentialist theology, such as R. R. Niebuhr when he says:

---

[1] Jürgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope, translated by James Leitch (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 176.

> Whether it be the idea of Jesus Christ, or of faith, or of the Christian community that is offered as the key to the meaning of God's self-revelation in history, the way in which that self-revealing and our own existence participate in the same historical form and substantiality remains obscure.[2]

The words "historical form and substantiality" reveal an acceptance on Niebuhr's part of the principle of analogy; he has assumed that all history, including the history of God's self-revelation, has something in common with present existence. Niebuhr was not advocating this principle. He was using it, and it led him to a problem. He wanted to find a key to the scriptures, but nothing in his own experience presented itself as such a hermeneutical tool.

Moltmann's studies have led him to the same impasse. The Bible has much to say about hope, about the future, about conditions which contradict present conditions. What kind of analogy can one use to interpret biblical eschatology? Then there is the question of Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection. Moltmann does not believe that historicism can ever do justice to this event, or rather these events, because for all their relatedness, these events do contradict one another, and at the present time, if viewed historically, must be viewed separately. The resurrection presents a special difficulty because nothing exists today that is analogous to it. Therefore no principle of analogy can be employed to study it. What methodology can one use, then, to interpret the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

---

[2]R. R. Niebuhr, Resurrection and Historical Reason (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1957), p. 72.

The Principle of Analogy

The situation thus described, which Moltmann faced, involves an understanding of historical inquiry as one which requires analogical reasoning.[3] This methodology, as was mentioned before, is grounded in an "ontological" assumption of a common core of similarity underlying all events. This, for example, was the position of Ernst Troeltsch.[4] Without this more basic, metaphysical assumption of similarity, the analogical principle would be unintelligible. Therefore all historical understanding must remain within the realm of what is comprehensible in terms of analogy.[5]

The biblical message, however, refuses to fit into this predetermined picture.

> In face of this basing of historical understanding on a metaphysical definition of the core, the substance or the subject of history, Christian theology finds itself in grave difficulties as it seeks to reflect upon the proclamation of the resurrection. In face of the pantheistic definition of the nature of history, according to which the eternal idea does not delight to present itself wholly in an individual, it becomes impossible to regard a person and an event in history as absolute.[6]

This is indeed a problem for the Christian theologian, a problem which would not present itself to him if he could either make little of the resurrection accounts, which would be untrue to his theological task,

---

[3]Moltmann, p. 175.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid., p. 177.

or if he could bypass the common core similarity in just one case, not necessarily one event, but one set of events.

> In face of the positivistic and mechanistic definition of the nature of history as a self-contained system of cause and effect, the assertion of a raising of Jesus by God appears as a myth concerning a supernatural incursion which is contradicted by all our experience of the world. And finally, in face of the philosophy of life with its definition of the creative ground of life that manifests and objectifies itself in history, the Easter texts can be taken only as the expression of the life acts of a faith which is in itself unfathomable.[7]

The historian, unlike the natural scientist, is unable to experience his subject matter. So the theologian, confronted with the task of interpreting the Bible, has more in common with the historian (who like-wise cannot deal with empirical data) than with the natural scientist (who insists on dealing with nothing else). The historian uses the principle of analogy to cope with this inability, taking an event which he has experienced or can probably experience as the analogue to the event which he must study. Moltmann, as a theologian who is deeply concerned with history, finds that he has to use the principle of analogy as historians do, but only as a methodological tool. He can pick this tool up and put it down again when he finds that it does not accomplish the task. Moltmann does not tie the principle of analogy to an ontological presupposition of a common core of similarity as Troeltsch once did. This frees Moltmann to explore new possibilities in hermeneutics which would not be permitted under historicism.[8]

---

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid., p. 176.

The existential theologians developed their hermeneutical programs dogmatically, beginning with historicism, then searching around the field of contemporary experience for the analogue. Rudolf Bultmann is a good example. His program was arranged around what Carl Braaten calls his "non-theological point of contact,"[9] a cultural jumping-off place from which to draw the analogy between the present, in which the interpreter must work, and the past, in which the documents arose. For Bultmann this point of contact was the existential philosophy of Martin Heidegger. Bultmann saw Heidegger's alternatives of authentic and inauthentic existence as analogous to St. Paul's dichotomy between the spirit and the flesh. He identified the ancient analogue with the modern, and that identity became the starting point for his theology.[10] Other existential theologians have not gone so far as Bultmann. Heinrich Ott, for example, does not identify his past and present analogues, but strives for meaningful "dialogue" between Heidegger's philosophy and Barthain and Bultmannian theology.[11]

R. R. Niebuhr's limitations under the principle of analogy have been referred to above. He is not an existentialist, like Bultmann and Ott, therefore his non-theological point of contact does not come from Heidegger. He developed one trial point of contact in his essay Archegos.[12] The analogue for Niebuhr is personhood, and the philosopher

---

[9]John B. Cobb, "A New Trio Arises in Europe," New Theology, edited by Martin Marty and Dean Peerman (New York: Macmillan, 1965), II, 260-261.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid.

[12]R. R. Niebuhr, "Archegos," Christian History and Interpretation, edited by W. R. Farmer, et al. (Cambridge: University Press, 1967).

of history Wilhelm Dilthey is his cultural source for his point of contact. The link that connects the reader with Israel or the early Christian community is the "moral experience of coming to life as persons."[13] Dilthey called this "the rediscovery of the I in the thou."[14] This means that the present-day man can identify with the corporate personality of Israel or the early church and so find the analogue which opens the Scriptures for him. In the miraculous beginnings of Israel's history man finds the analogue to his birth. In their many compromises with pressures from the outside he finds something very similar to the experience of personal guilt. In the impotence of Israel in the face of arising danger he finds the analogue to his failures, and to his sense of being helpless in the presence of a power which he cannot use.

Moltmann, however, confronts the existentialists and Niebuhr with the question: So what? So what if we can find a similarity between events in the Bible and events today? Does that completely comprehend the history of Israel? Is that all that history is, the constant recurrence of events that we can experience here and now? What about the resurrection of Jesus Christ? To what does that correspond in present reality? Since the common core of similarity itself, the ground of historicism's principle of analogy, is itself grounded not in empirical evidence but in the positivist's interpretation of that

---

[13] Ibid., p. 94.

[14] Ibid., p. 80.

evidence, Moltmann can dispense with the core, and find new ways to use the principle of analogy, free from the limitations of historicism.

Moltmann's first suggested departure is an application of the principle of analogy that leaves room for the contingent and the new.[15] Instead of presupposing that all events are similar, one might presuppose that no two events are similar, or that some events are similar but not others. For the dissimilar events, Moltmann prefers to use the word "new", because his own point of contact, which will be discussed later, is both dialectical and dynamic. The word "new" lends itself to describe contingent events much better than the static and passive "dissimilar." Should the historian assume that no two events are similar, the consequence would be constant equivocation in every statement he might make about his subject matter. A more responsible assumption is that some events are similar and others are unique, what Moltmann call a "supplementary interest in the new."[16] While Moltmann can find no fault with such an approach on conceptual grounds, he does not find it adequate in itself to explain the history to which the New Testament bears witness. "This would merely represent a variant in the historical picture which would still be possible and conceivable without a theology of the resurrection."[17] The Scriptures do not present the resurrection as an isolated, accidental event that just happened to be dissimilar from other events.

---

[15] Moltmann, p. 179.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

> For the raising of Christ involves not the category of the accidentally new, but the expectational category of the eschatologically new. The eschatologically new event of the resurrection of Christ, however, proves to be a novum ultimum both as against the similarity in ever-recurring reality and also as against the comparative dissimilarity of new possibilities emerging in history.[18]

Medieval theologians used the term novissima to refer to the events of the end of time, to the hora novissima. Moltmann is willing to use the term the same way, not in an Aristotelian sense, as it occurs in Bernard of Morlaix's poem, nor in the accidental sense as the word "new" is commonly used in English, but in an eschatological sense that takes all history seriously.

> By the raising of Christ we do not mean a possible process in world history, but the eschatological process to which all history is subjected.[19]

This is because the resurrection, while it was an event in history, was not part of the system of history as understood by historicism. Rather, it assailed that system from the outside. The term "eschatologically new," based as it is on the medieval concept, denotes the radicality of the event and the force by which the event shapes the future, subjecting the processes of history to its own criticism.[20]

So Moltmann takes his own approach to the principle of analogy, using eschatology as his starting point. This is his "analogy for

---

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid., p. 179-180.

[20] Ibid.

the future." Moltmann had said that theology also had the option of constructing its own concept of history on a basis of an eschatological understanding of the resurrection, freeing theology from any existing concept of history. In this case the theologian could attempt to arrive at a new understanding of history with ultimate possibilities and hopes derived from the presupposition of the raising of Christ from the dead.[21]

What are the consequences of this kind of analogical theory for hermeneutical practice? It directs Christian hermeneutics toward present mission and future hope.

> Then the resurrection of Christ does not offer itself as an analogy to what can be experienced any time and anywhere, but as an analogy of what is to come to all... . . It must therefore contradict all rigid substantiometaphysical definitions of the common core of similarity in world events, and therefore also the corresponding historical understanding that works with analogy. It must develop a historical understanding which works with eschatological analogy . . . .[22]

This analogy for the future will be referred to again when the discussion turns to solutions offered in Theology of Hope. Here the author's only concern is to try to point out some of the cogitations that Moltmann implies he experienced in wrestling with the impasse presented to him by analogical historical reason. In the preceding discussion one problem was central to all of Moltmann's attack on existential theology and historicism. That problem must now be discussed.

---

[21] Ibid., p. 180.

[22] Ibid.

The Historical Question of the Resurrection

It was noted above that according to the canons of "the positivistic and mechanistic definition of the nature of history" with which the existentialists worked "the assertion of a raising of Jesus by God appears as a myth."[23] Moltmann was observing the conclusions drawn by Bultmann, as may be described by the following quotes:

> But what of the resurrection? Is it not a mythical event pure and simple? Obviously it is not an event of past history with a self-evident meaning.[24]

> An historical fact which involves a resurrection from the dead is utterly inconceivable.[25]

By "myth" Bultmann meant an event conceivable to a particular way of looking at the world, the mythological, which was prevalent in the first century but is now generally considered to be untenable. This conclusion lead Bultmann to a program of demythologizing. Hermeneutics involved presenting a gospel that did not depend on a direct relationship to an "utterly inconceivable" event. Moltmann makes a great deal more of this step in procedure than Bultmann, who passes over this important conclusion with a simple adverb, implying that the need for demythologizing is obvious to all.

> The first question regarding the reality of the resurrection of Christ will always be concerned with the fact which is reported

---

[23] Ibid., p. 177.

[24] Rudolf Bultmann, "New Testament and Mythology," Kerygma and Myth, edited by Hans Werner Bartsch (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), p. 38.

[25] Ibid., p. 39.

> and proclaimed by the Easter witnesses. Since this fact is reported as an event, the question as to the reality of this event will in the first instance take the form of a historical question.[26]

So Moltmann is asking a factual question: Is the event which is reported and proclaimed a "real" event? In this context one might well substitute the word "historical" for the word "real," since Moltmann says he is concerned with facticity, and is willing to submit to the results of historical inquiry.

There would be no problem here except for the subjugation of all historical inquiry to positivistic historicism. It was the assumption that historicism contained the only intellectually cogent methods of inquiry that led Bultmann to conclude that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was inconceivable. Moltmann agrees that if one only works with historicism, then history is man's history alone; man is the "real" subject of history in the sense of its metaphysical hypokeimenon, and divine activity, such as the raising of Jesus Christ from the dead is historically meaningless.[27]

For the existentialists on the other hand, meaning is divorced from fact, faith is separated from history, the world is divided into two parts. One is objectivity, dealing with what can be experienced or deonstrated; the other is subjectivity, which is private, individual, inward, concerned with interpretation rather than perception, with

---

[26] Moltmann, p. 172.

[27] Ibid., p. 174.

reflection rather than experience. History, accordingly, is split into two levels which are recognized by their German names: Historie, the pursuit of facts and the findings of that pursuit, and Geschichte, the pursuit of meaning, the interpretation, and the final tale as it is told by the writing historian as the end product of both processes. Christian faith is assigned to the subjective realm, and accordingly, the resurrection, as a product of faith, is expelled from Historie (except in a demythologized form) and is assigned to the interpreters of Geschichte.

The dichotomy between subject and object is a direct result of the positivist view of the world. As a result, it has been criticized by theologians who want to take history seriously. For example, Eric G. Rust in his book Toward a Theological Understanding of History[28] has apparently shared some of Moltmann's concerns about Bultmann's existentialist dichotomy:

> The danger of the movement of Bultmann and his followers is that they should divorce the meaning from the historical actuality, separate Geschichte from Historie, until, for some extremeists, it would not appear to matter whether the resurrection was an actual event in world history so long as the church could affirm its faith in a risen Lord. The recognition that history has an inner and an outer side is one thing. The attempt to emphasize the former at the expense of the latter will mean in the end that the former also ceases to be historical revelation. It becomes dissolved into a modern form of neo-Platonic mysticism, and history does not really matter.[29]

---

[28]Eric G. Rust, Toward a Theological Understanding of History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963).

[29]Ibid., p. 67.

Moltmann like Rust, also warns against this inevitable result of making a sharp division between the subjective and the objective:

> If according to this now universally binding and universally recognized view of reality, scientifically and historically speaking, the gods are silent--or hearing them is optional and left to the individual's discretion - then a theology of the resurrection can be developed only at a point which is not affected by this view of reality and comes under the aegis of the individual's subjectivity--which, however, means only in that realm of human subjectivity and inwardness which is set free by the rationalizing of the world and the historicizing of history.[30]

God, and all kinds of statements about God, are not the subject matter of the historicist's history, of Historie, as Bultmann and Rust have used the term. Moltmann also uses the term this way at the beginning of his book, where he discusses his problem with historicism. Later on, when he proposes his own program for hermeneutics, he uses Historie in another sense, making use of the principles of Wolfhart Pannenberg, which will be discussed in Chapter III below.

The impasse imposed on Moltmann by the historicists may best be summarized by saying that positivistic historicism cannot be used as a way of explaining the resurrection event. (Nor, as will soon be shown, could Moltmann simply turn his back on it.) Those theologians who could see no other form of historical explanation than that contained in historicism had to by-pass history altogether as a hermeneutical category. Moltmann describes his impasse thus:

> If the reality of the resurrection cannot be comprehended by the historical means of the modern age, neither is the modern intellectual way of dealing with history comprehensible for faith.

---

[30] Moltmann, p. 181.

> The fides quarens intellectum must then give up all claim to an intellectus fidei in the realm of history. This is primarily done by the existentialists by theology's leaving aside the historical question as to the reality of the resurrection . . . It then leaves the knowledge of history to all kinds of pantheistic or atheistic principles, and concentrates on the personal encounter, the non-objectifiable experience or the existential decision, to which the Easter kerygma leads.[31]

What is a theologian to do? Could he possibly aspire to attain a theological view of history, "a revolution in the historical way of thinking"?[32] R. R. Niebuhr's claim that theology's problem with historical reason lies in the fact that the theologian has fallen victim to a "heterogenous historical method" and therefore "is bound to become increasingly skeptical about the actual historical data of the New Testament"[33] is another good summary statement of this side of Moltmann's dilemma. Both theologians have noticed the impasse, both are aware that the dichotomy between subject and object is itself non-objectifiable, and the two serve as interlocutors in the developing dialogue in which new possibilities for hermeneutics are "brainstormed." Historicism as a discipline for explaining historical events is heterogeneous to theology, and one might add heteronomic as well. Nevertheless, theological thinking has dealth with no other history than the historicist's. Niebuhr's contribution toward solving this enigma has been the suggestion of two alternatives to historicism:

---

[31] Ibid., pp. 177-178.

[32] Ibid., pp. 181-182.

[33] Niebuhr, Resurrection, pp. 79-80.

> There are two possible methods for attacking the tension between the modern idea of historical causality and the resurrection event. One is to develop a strictly scientific theology with its own unique method which does not borrow critical or positive principles from other disciplines. The other is to reexamine the nature of historical causality and re-define it, if necessary. The latter course would involve a careful inquiry into the nature of historical thought and its relationship to the program of Christian theology.[34]

The first alternative proposes theological science as a new method of historical explanation, in which theology would develop its own canons for interpreting historical events. The advantage would be that theology could no longer complain about a heterogeneous method of studying history. Moltmann does not approve of it however, for it represents the other side of the impasse. He cites Mildenberger's criticism of Niebuhr's first suggestion and agrees that it is subject to that criticism. Mildenberger said that although Niebuhr's scientific theology would enable the theologian so speak "Christianly" about history, it would also subject actuality (Wirklichkeit) to the human community (menschliche Gemeinschaft) as the reality against which one comprehends all events.[35] This human community, then, would take the place of another human community, the scientific and technical community, as the standard by which reality is measured. Now Mildenberger does not say that the scientific and technical community has any ontological ground for its assertions, as Troeltsch's common core of similarity, but he does argue that most people would not be

---

[34] Ibid., p. 33.

[35] F. Mildenberger, "Auferstanden am dritten Tage nach den Schriften," Evangelische Theologie XXIII (1963), 274-275.

able to comprehend the church's proclamation, the apologetic task would suffer, and the church would be drawn into an ideological "ghetto."[36] Moltmann agrees that the church's hermeneutical task would be ill-served if it did not make the faith and its sources intelligible to those outside the church.[37] This, then, is the other side of the impasse. Moltmann is forced to discard the alternative of a theological view of history that by-passes, rather than confronts, positivism.

Niebuhr's second alternative was to seek within the discipline of history itself a new definition of history which would be more amenable to theology. If that were possible it would not be subject to Mildenberger's criticism, because theology would still be using a discipline that was comprehensible to the community outside the church. Niebuhr faults historicists for treating historical events as though they were natural phenomena, and thereby making the canons of natural science the principles of historiography, forgetting that a "non-natural dimension of history" also exists.[38] As Schleiermacher erred because he used rules of natural law instead of the canons of historical sequence at the critical point of contact between Jesus and the early church, Niebuhr believes that by reversing the process the resurrection can become meaningful to the historical reason of the Christian theologian.[39]

---

[36] Ibid.

[37] Moltmann, pp. 181-182.

[38] Niebuhr, Resurrection, pp. 77-78

[39] Ibid.

Moltmann has found such an alternative to historicism within the theological and the historiographic communities which he believes will properly deal with the resurrection event. This is the optimistic, future-oriented analogy principle resulting from an eschatological understanding of the reality of the resurrection, making use of the principles of Wolfhart Pannenberg, and a subsequent eschatological view of history, which will be discussed in Chapters III and IV below. By beginning with the New Testament itself Moltmann comes to this conclusion:

> The historian who enquires into the reality of the resurrection of Jesus is confronted in the biblical texts not only by realities of history, but also with a different outlook on the experience and significance of history, which sets the event here recounted in a different light. The experience of history which is expressed in the historical approach is here confronted not merely by events which are more or less well testified, more or less imaginatively embellished, but this experience of history is also confronted by a different experience of history. Hence the historical question as to the reality of the resurrection recoils upon the historical enquirer and calls in question the basic experience of history which is the ground of his historical enquiry. The historical question as to the historicity of the resurrection of Christ is thereby expanded to include the questionability of the historical approach to history as such.[40]

So right in the New Testament, at theology's fountain and source, Moltmann finds the key that unlocks the hermeneutical door, but not in a way that makes apologetics impossible, for he is dealing with a cultural, though non-positivistic, principle of historical analogy. Not only has Moltmann made a negative remark about the historical explanation of the resurrection, he has in fact made a negative remark about

---

[40]Moltmann, pp. 174-175.

all that the modern world has commonly called historical explanation. He says it is questionable. But this does not mean that he is ready to set history aside. He is only willing to set positivistic historicism aside. Moltmann still refuses to accept the subjection of generally recognized standards of inquiry to the faith of the church, and he finds Niebuhr's methods inadequate to explain the event of Jesus' resurrection (the first because it was subject to Mildenberger's criticism; the second because he preferred the eschatological point of contact to the "non-natural" yet historical). So he begins where Albert Schweitzer departed, with the eschatological understanding of history as a method more homogeneous with Christian theology, still capable of being comprehended by the community outside the church, filled with the category of the new and the different, the categories of promise, expectation, and hope.

The Eschatological Problem

In addition to historical analogy and the peculiar problems arising from the historical question of the resurrection, Moltmann presents his new approach to the impasse most clearly in the area of the eschatological theme in the Bible. Albert Schweitzer had pointed out that this theme was central to the message of Jesus and of the entire New Testament. The basic content of the theme was the expectation of the return of Jesus as the Son of Man at which time the kingdom of God would begin as a universal condition rather than a community's hope. Schweitzer held that the failure of the parousia during the apostolic generation meant that the eschatology of the New Testament had been invalidated.

This judgment was accepted by the exponents of "liberal" theology and the "religious-historical school" (Religionsgeschichtlicheschule).[41] The effect upon hermeneutics was the removal of eschatological considerations from serious theology and the quest for a cultural point of contact. In other words, historicism had laid claims to the future as well as the past. If theology was going to accept the principle of historicism as scientifically validated it would have to remove the religious element, the "God talk," from the sphere of history past, present, and future.[42]

Carl Braaten claims that eschatology is incredible to modern man.[43] Nevertheless, it is central to Jesus and the New Testament. Theologians are responsible for the hermeneutical task of explaining how that eschatology is relevant to our time.

> Few theologians have agreed with Schweitzer. Somewhat piously they have assumed that what is so central to the New Testament must still somehow be relevant to our time. It is as if they had their hands on a cord attached to a powerful electric generator, but haven't found where to plug it in. That is what we mean by the need for a cultural point of contact.[44]

"Pannenberg, Johannes Metz, and others" have made many similar statements. They realize that the classical dogmatic treatment of eschatology has been to append that doctrine to their systems under the heading of "The Last Things" (Johann Gerhard), or it has been

---

[41]Leonhard Goppelt, "The Easter Kerygma in the New Testament," The Easter Message for Today, translated by Salvator Attanasio and Darrell Guder (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1964), p. 30.

[42]Ibid.

[43]Carl E. Braaten, "Toward a Theology of Hope" New Theology #5 edited by Martin Marty and Dean Peerman (New York: Macmillan, 1968), p. 95.

[44]Ibid.

dechronologized so that every critical situation is viewed an eschatological (Kierkegaard, C. H. Dodd, and the Bultmann school). Speaking to this problem, Johannes Metz urges theologians not to reduce eschatology to a part of their theology but to understand it radically as "the determining factor in all theological statements."[45] For Metz the "cultural point of contact" was, at least experimentally, the process philosophy of the universe. Eschatology, then, is theology's statement about the process which is so central to all of life. "It is only in the eschatological horizon that the world appears as a becoming reality whose development is entrusted to the freedom of man."[46]

Moltmann sees the connection between the kind of eschatology that these theologians are calling for and the promise and hope scheme which is central to the history of Israel. He also sees the connection between the static view of the world presented by historicism and existentialism and the static idea of the Greek κόσμος as the epiphany of the eternal present, the appearance of truth.[47] As a result, Moltmann finds that he cannot work with any static concept of eschatology or of the world, but, beginning with the New Testament history itself, in order to start the hermeneutical task over again, he can approach his material directly, using eschatology itself as a key to the Scriptures.

---

[45]Johannes Metz, "Creative Hope" New Theology edited by Martin Marty and Dean Peerman (New York, Macmillan, 1968), V, 135.

[46]Ibid.

[47]Moltmann, pp. 40-41.

> If Pannenberg and Moltmann are right we will again have to endure the tedium of another effort to activate the meaning of eschatology, and try to understand it, because without biblical eschatology nothing remains that deserves to be called "the biblical message."[48]

The impasse which Moltmann reached may be summarized as follows: on the one hand, the principle of analogy used by the historicists was too limited to deal with biblical interpretation; on the other hand, for theology to be understood outside of the church, it was necessary to use that principle. Moltmann's approach was to separate the methodology of historicism from its metaphysical assumptions and to apply the principle of analogy under new presuppositions. Moltmann calls these presuppositions the "eschatological understanding of history." The methodology he calls "analogy for the future." They may be described, respectively, as dynamic historicism and a dialectical-critical method, or antithesis criticism. Both Moltmann's understanding of history and his methodology will be studied in detail in the next two chapters.

---

[48]Braaten, XXIII, 95.

CHAPTER III

SOLUTIONS OFFERED IN THEOLOGY OF HOPE

History of Traditions

The previous chapter dealt with Jürgen Moltmann's problem, that hermeneutics had been captured by historicism. Now our discussion must turn away from the problem Moltmann faced, and to which he intended to minister in Theology of Hope, to the solutions he offers in that work. In this chapter the emphasis is on Moltmann's methodological tools for solving the problem, especially his use of the discipline of Überlieferungsgeschichte, which has been translated both as "history of traditions" and "history of the transmission of tradition," the latter with a view toward the process of the evolution of traditional themes. In this study the words of the first translation are employed with a view to brevity, but they should be taken as conveying the content of the second translation. In the next chapter the emphasis will shift from methodology to Moltmann's philosophical basis for hermeneutics, especially his radical eschatology.

The question of continuity in the New Testament as a prototype of the hermeneutical gap

The biblical interpreter is confronted by continuity gaps throughout the practice of his discipline. There are the gaps between

the Old and New Testaments, between the "historical Jesus" and the "resurrected Lord," between the disciples that travelled with Jesus and the apostles who founded the church, and between the Hellenistic church and the thought world of the interpreter himself. Of all these questions, Moltmann makes most of the gap between Jesus before His death and the Lord of the church. Although he treats all the gaps in Theology of Hope, this one forms the microcosm for the others in which Moltmann the problem-solver becomes manifest. For example, Moltmann recognizes that the faith of the church must somehow be related to the life and thought of Jesus of Nazareth; that Jesus cannot be a mere x to the historian. It is no wonder today that we find an article entitled "Did Jesus believe in God?"[1]

The problem here described is one of continuity. Moltmann, like R. F. Aldwinckle, poses a critique for the school of Bultmann. Rudolf Bultmann apparently saw no problem in by-passing any historical discontinuity between Jesus and the church, but the existentialist theologians have made several attempts to answer Aldwinckle's question. Gunther Bornkamm, for example, sought a new revelation given to the post-Easter disciples; Gerhard Ebeling and Ernest Fuchs tried to find evidence for the incipient kerygma in the teachings of Jesus.[2] They found the key to continuity in their concept of "faith as a word-event."[3] They believe that what uniquely came to expression in Jesus was faith. The faith of Jesus, when imitated

---

[1]R. F. Aldwinckle, "Did Jesus Believe in God?" New Theology edited by, Martin Marty and Dean Peerman (New York: Macmillan, 1968), V. 76.

[2]Leonhard Goppelt, "The Easter Kerygma in the New Testament," The Easter Message for Today, translated by Salvator Attanasio and Darrell Guder (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1964), pp. 32-33.

[3]Carl Braaten, History and Hermeneutics (Philadelphia: Westminister Press, 1966), p. 71.

in the faith of the disciples, opened the latter to the future as Jesus was open to it, and it caused them to share God's love as Jesus had shared it.[4] They explained faith thus: man receives the Word, a language event in which the speaker communicates himself in love. The faith which is awakened is the only evidence necessary to establish the language event as the Word of God.[5] But such approaches fall short of the sort of evidence for which Moltmann is searching. Word and faith come into being and leave it again all in the realm of subjectivity. For Bultmann and his disciples it must be so, as was noted in Chapter II, because subjectivity is the only field of human knowledge that is not under the thrall of historicism. Ebeling and Fuchs use the principle of analogy this way and come to this conclusion. Hence any continuity established only on the faith of Jesus is not historical, and therefore it is too small for Moltmann.

The key to the historical problem, as demonstrated above, is the resurrection. Evidence for the resurrection consists of the reports of the empty tomb, the Easter appearances of Jesus, and the sending of the Holy Spirit. The appearance were, notably, only to those who were Jesus' disciples, just as the meanings of the parables were revealed only to the disciples. A message was connected with each appearance. And finally, the resurrection occurred "according to the Scriptures," that is, it fit in with the hopes and expectations of the Jews.

---

[4] Ibid.

[5] John B. Cobb, "A New Trio Arises in Europe", New Theology edited by Martin Marty and Dean Peerman (New York: Macmillan, 1965), V, 259.

Moltmann is not the first to seek the continuity in the event of the resurrection itself as seen in its apocalyptic context. Ernst Käsemann has tried to "rehabilitate" the apocalyptic themes which Albert Schweitzer had shown to be the cruz of Jesus' message, and which Schweitzer later eschewed as incampatible with present thought.[6] Speaking to this impasse brought about by Schweitzer's analysis, Leonhard Goppelt had made an especially clear statement:

> This lonely resurrection would be a meaningless miracle had it been experienced by any other man, a rabbi or a prophet. For the disciples, however, it is substantiated on the basis of an understanding of faith. They knew Jesus from their discipleship of the earthly days as Him through whom God effected His eschatological redemption. Even more they knew Him as the one Who in His Person is the Promised One.[7]

By pointing to the category of promise, Goppelt has brought the entire Old Testament into focus on the resurrection event. Whereas Existentialist exegets had divorced apocalyptic themes from the Old Testament, finding yet another breach of continuity, Überlieferungsgeschichte joins the ends of the gap by concentrating (at least at one period of its development in the early works of Wolfhart Pannenberg, R. Rendtorff, et al.) on the promise-fulfillment scheme of the Old Testament.[8] Pannenberg makes the further claim that

---

[6]Braaten, p. 171

[7]Goppelt, p. 50

[8]Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Redemptive Event and History," Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics, translated by Shirley Guthrie, edited by Claus Westermann (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1960), pp. 321-322.

> The eschatology of the New Testament is no more a radical break with the historical consciousness of Israel than that of the Apocalyptist. Jesus made the hope of salvation depend on a relationship to His Person rather than the Torah, and this is the radical break with the Old Testament. As far as the understanding of reality is concerned, the New Testament is in fundamental agreement with the Old.[9]

So the study of apocalyptic traditions forms the basis of the continuity between Jesus and the early church and between the testaments. Moltmann makes use of Pannenberg's material here and throughout his Theology of Hope, so much so that one or two quotes would never do justice to the picture Moltmann presents. But there is one unique contribution to the continuity question which Moltmann offers. This is the "eschatology of the cross." This, Moltmann claims, is what is uniquely Christian about New Testament eschatology, and also uniquely historical. He examines the contradiction between the cross of Jesus and the resurrection, and finds continuity in the contradiction itself.

> Between the expectations of late Jewish apocalyptic and Christian eschatology stands the cross of Jesus. Hence all Christian resurrection eschatology bears the mark of an eschatologia crucis. That is more than merely a break in the coherent historic tradition of apocalyptic expectations. The contradiction of the cross permeates also the whole existence, life, and theological thinking of the Church in the world.[10]

The contradiction which began with the cross and resurrection did not disappear with the Easter appearances of Jesus. That same contradiction lies deep within the life of the Church, in the first century,

---

[9] Ibid.

[10] Jürgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope, translated by James Leitch, (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 83.

and ever since. Moltmann explains that

> The trend towards the Catholicism in the life and thought of the ancient Church is plain. The ecstacy of eschatological fulfillment in the Christ event is the presupposition for this process of the transformation of Christianity into an ecstatic form of Hellenistic mystery religion and into an ecumenical world Church. This form of "presentative eschatology" . . . can be called an eschatologia gloriae, if it is still possible to comprehend it in eschatological categories at all.[11]

In the above paragraph Moltmann has used some exegetical jargon. By "Catholicism" he means the theology of the Pastoral epistles, of James, Second Peter, and certain select passages in the Fourth Gospel which Bultmann claimed were later additions to that Gospel. This Early Catholicism consisted of a Christianity that had been cultified as a result of Hellenization. For example, the category of Messiah had receded in favor of "the Lord," with kyrios not signifying adonai or יהוה as it does in Paul, but signifying the prince of a spiritual empire. The devotion once given only to the quasi-deified Caesar had been transferred to a Hellenized version of the Great Eschatological Prophet. As Bultmann described "Early Catholicism," worship consisted in celebration of the epiphany of Christ, "which title now signified a hypostasis of God in which the believer could participate through Baptism." Moltmann finds in the epistles of Paul an attempt to combat the "presentative eschatology" of the "Early Catholics," an effort in which Paul was not ultimately successful. Moltmann says,

---

[11] Ibid., p. 159.

> But now, the polemic in which Paul attacks Hellenism is marked both by a new recognition of the significance of the cross of Christ and also by a new recognition of a truly futuristic eschatology, and thus becomes a criticism of presentative eschatology as such. . . . This does not refer to mere repetition or tiresome relics of late Jewish apocalyptic in Paul, but means his own apocalyptic, which is kindled by an eschatology of the cross and is therefore hostile to every eschatological ecstacy of fulfillment.[12]

So Moltmann bases his approach to the problem of continuity between Jesus of Nazareth and the early Church on this very contradiction: the eschatology of the cross, the unity of the crucified with the resurrected, and the suffering-hoping community which is faithful to the crucified and risen Lord.

> Against the uniting of the believer with the dying and rising Lord of the cultus after the fashion of the mysteries Paul asserts an eschatological distinction: baptism is the means of participating in the Christ event of the crucifixion and death of Christ. Fellowship with Christ is fellowship in suffering with the crucified Christ. The baptized are dead with Christ, it they are not already risen with him and translated into heaven in the perfect tense of the cultus. They attain participation in the resurrected by new obedience, which unfolds itself in the realm of the hope of the resurrection.[13]

So Moltmann's Pauline eschatology of the cross is, to Moltmann's essay of thinking, futuristic, bringing hope to an otherwise cheerless present. This hope leads the believer into "the tensions and antitheses of obedience and suffering in the world."[14]

---

[12] Ibid., pp. 160-161.

[13] Ibid., p. 161.

[14] Ibid.

Antithesis is a key concept in Moltmann's hermeneutical approach to the New Testament. He does not view contradiction as a disruption of continuity, but as a dialectical pole that forms part of an historical pattern. Moltmann finds continuity between Christ's own contradiction of his present and the believer's contradiction of his. The resurrection serves as God's vindication of Christ's contradiction, just as the future will serve as God's vindication of the believer's. Around this view of the power of the future Moltmann has constructed a theology, using philosophical categories borrowed from an extremely dynamic form of dialectical materialism as represented by the work of Ernst Bloch.

Moltmann's resultant "eschatological understanding of history" will be discussed in further detail in the second section of Chapter IV below. The chief concern here is to show how Moltmann uses the concept of contradiction in his exegetical methodology. In this case, by the concept of the eschatology of the cross, he brings together the Risen Lord and the crucified Jesus. Moltmann even thinks of his eschatology as a means to take history seriously, for he says,

> only an eschatology of promise can overcome (the epiphany religion) mythical and illusionary view of the world and of human existence, because it alone takes the trials, the contradictions, and the godlessness of the world seriously in a meaningful way, because it makes faith and obedience possible in the world not by regarding the contradictions as of no account, buy by enabling us to believe and obey on the ground of our hope in the overcoming of these contradictions by God.[15]

---

[15] Ibid., p. 163.

Having bridged the ancient gap between Jesus and the Risen Lord, Moltmann also uses the concept of dialectical continuity to bridge the modern hermeneutical gap between the thoughts world of the New Testament and the Church to whom the modern preacher must minister. The Lord is the same. The contradictions between His death and His resurrection are "an inherent part of his identity."[16] The church today is identified with the mission of Jesus, and the mission of the apostles. History today is determined by the future of Jesus Christ. In the resurrection this future was revealed, and now it stands before the Church on its mission as an object of hope.[17]

The history of traditions, data, and analogy

The history of traditions, or the history of the transmission of traditions (Überlieferungsgeschichte) is the hermeneutical discipline whereby traditional sources of theology are interpreted according to the principles of modern historical research with a special intent to investigate the continuity and development of salvation-historical themes throughout the various periods of universal history. This discipline is based on the presupposition that all fields of human knowledge are related. Regardless of the findings of "higher criticism,"

---

[16] Ibid., p. 200.

[17] Ibid., p. 202.

the traditions themselves are historical facts. They belong to the realm of empirical data. Moltmann uses the discipline of Überlieferungsgeschichte as a methodological tool, applying Wolfhart Pannenberg's principle that "what is learned from science and philosophy, as well as world history, must be integrated with what is learned from Scripture and the Christ event."[18] The problem with the principle of analogy which was discussed in Chapter II above arose largely because the sphere of theology had been isolated from other spheres of inquiry. By accepting Pannenberg's principle of mutual relevance between sacred and secular knowledge, Moltmann is, methodologically, able to rise above those "walls erected from the time of Kant to protect the sphere of theology from other spheres of inquiry,"[19] and apply the information gained from this hermeneutical vantage point to interpret the Scriptures. It has been said that Moltmann is dependent on Pannenberg in the same way that Bultmann was dependent on Heidegger.

There is some truth to the contention that Pannenberg is "busy constructing the philosophical underpinnings for the theology of hope,"[20] but one must remember that Pannenberg is himself a theologian rather than a philosopher. He is also involved in biblical interpretation, hence "philosophical underpinnings" does not mean that "philosophical under-

---

[18] Cobb, p. 263.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Richard J. Neuhaus, "Wolfhart Pannenberg: Profile of a Theologian," Theology and the Kingdom of God, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969), p. 10.

pinnings" does not mean the same thing as what Braaten called a "cultural point of contact." In other words, the relationship between Pannenberg and Moltmann is not the same as that between Heidegger and Bultmann, between a cultural philosopher and a theologian-disciple who makes the philosophy the basis for his hermeneutical analogy. Moltmann is not a disciple of Pannenberg, but a brother theologian who is willing to acknowledge his colleague's principles as valuable, and to use them as a point of departure for solutions to his own hermeneutical and eschatological questions.

So far, Moltmann's solutions have been sought mostly in negating methodological procedures of the historicists: the distance between "subject" and "object," the separation between language and event, Historie and Geschichte, or fact and meaning. When one investigates Moltmann's use of Pannenberg's principles, however, he does find a positive statement about the former's own hermeneutics, which are being studied here. The point where Pannenberg and Moltmann agree is stated as follows: "The event of Jesus is not only the chief paradigm in the consciousness of the Christian believer, but public evidence available in history and having a claim on reason's effort to conceive the structure of reality."[21]

It was noted above in Chapter II that Moltmann had found a method of hermeneutical investigation which went beyond the historicists' use of the principle of analogy in helping him to theologize. This method

---

[21] Ibid., p. 37.

begins with the history of traditions. It goes beyond Niebuhr's two alternatives mentioned in Chapter II, but it accepts one heretofore unmentioned idea of Niebuhr's; namely, that the path of theological knowledge must begin with historical particulars, then move to the universal and eschatological.[22] Niebuhr had said that the crucifixion and resurrection traditions occupy an "unassailable centrality" in the form of the entire New Testament history.[23] Moltmann agrees that these events are the starting point for investigating the New Testament. From this point the road leands outward to the context, in agreement with Pannenberg's procedure;

> All theological questions and answers are meaningful only within the framework of the history which God has with humanity and through humanity with His whole creation--the history moving toward a future still hidden from the world but already revealed in Jesus Christ.[24]

And here the question might arise whether God and His acts are really the subject matter of the historian. At least one important modern philosopher of history, R. G. Collingwood, has denied the status of history to traditions involving God. Pannenberg has taken Collingwood to task for his contention. Moltmann does not come to grips with Collingwood's contention in Theology of Hope, but he assumes, as Pannenberg has done, that the traditions are data.

---

[22]Moltmann, p. 141.

[23]R. R. Niebuhr, Resurrection and Historical Reason (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), p. 73.

[24]Pannenberg, p. 314.

The path of theological knowledge finds a center in the Holy Scriptures, then moves outward to wider and wider contexts, using material from each wider context, but interpreting all of it in the light of the center. For Moltmann, (not necessarily for Pannenberg), this center is the "future of Jesus Christ."

> The centre of the New Testament scriptures is the future of the risen Christ, which they announce, point forward to, and promise. Thus if we are to understand the biblical scriptures in their proclamation, their understanding of existence and their understanding of the world, then we must look in the same direction as they themselves do.[25]

In the first century context, Moltmann points to two facts that surround the event of Jesus Christ, that his God was Yahweh, and that He was a Jew. Therefore the proper interpretation of the New Testament is the investigation of its continuity with and contradiction to the Old Testament.[26] The Old Testament, in turn, is investigated using history of traditions, and as a result the theme of promise and fulfillment is singled out for its continuity in New Testament-theology. This will be explained more completely in the first section of Chapter IV.

The next wider context is the setting of the ancient church in which the New Testament Scriptures arose. At this point, it was observed above, there was a continuity gap between the "historical Jesus" and the risen Christ. Carl Braaten, one of the earliest interpreters of both Moltmann and Pannenberg, in attempting to explain their viewpoints has brought the gap down to the New Testament center when he states

---

[25]Moltmann, p. 283.

[26]Ibid., p. 141.

> The question of the continuity between the Easter kerygma and the historical Jesus . . . cannot be answered unless one grasps the connection between Jesus' own claim to authority and God's vindication of that claim by raising Him from the dead.[27]

Here, Braaten, without saying so, has already interpreted the continuity between the Old and the New Testaments, between the "historical Jesus" and the risen Christ, and between Jesus Christ and the earliest church according to Pannenberg and Moltmann's method of the history of traditions. He shows how Moltmann has picked up the promise--fulfillment theme, and developed the New Testament events under it using the nomenclature of "claim" and "vindication."

So far it has only been noted that the promise--fulfillment theme is a major tradition of the Old Testament that carries over into the New. It would appear that Überlieferungsgeschichte is being employed according to what was called the "first translation" above at the beginning of this chapter. In the next chapter, using material from Walter Zimmerli and Gerhard von Rad, Moltmann will be shown as using Überlieferungsgechichte the other way, as the history of the transmission of traditions, especially in the relationships between the prophets and the apocalypticists, and between the apocalypticists and the apostles. But for the purposes of this chapter, this author wants to do justice to the material in Theology of Hope which comes close to, but does not settle on, using the promise--fulfillment scheme developed in Pannenberg's earlier words, as a "philosophical underpinning"

---

[27]Braaten, pp. 93-94.

for Moltmann. Some of the "philosophical underpinning" is to be found in the following paragraph:

> Within the reality characterized by the constantly creative work of God, history arises because God makes promises and fulfills these promises. History is event so suspended in tension between promise and fulfillment that through the promise it is irreversibly pointed toward the goal of future fulfillment.[28]

According to this view, history is a series of events suspended between a divine promise and its fulfillment. What people think and do, especially what they think, within that tension, are the facts of history. Promise and fulfillment give direction to human thoughts. Collingwood, if he believed in promise and fulfillment, would say that these provide the "inside" of each event. It can be said that for Moltmann they provide the dynamic of all history. Since any distinction between subject and object, between sacred and secular, has already been ruled out, the activity of God in promising and fulfilling becomes the dynamic of universal history.

This is not Moltmann's final word on the subject. There is another dynamic tension of cross and resurrection which, as mentioned before, provides a dialectical dimension to history for Moltmann. But for the Biblical interpreter, this dialectical dimension is formed by promises and moves through to fulfillments. Certainly Neuhaus is only partly right when he claims that Pannenberg supplies the "philosophical underpinnings" for the Theology of Hope, but, as has been demonstrated,

---

[28]Pannenberg, p. 317.

Moltmann does use the promise--fulfillment theme in developing his biblical interpretations, and does so in a way that is basically in agreement with Pannenberg.

Let us return to the Jewish context of the center of the New Testament and investigate another direction in which the promise--fulfillment theme will lead. As was noted above in Chapter II, Albert Schweitzer brought an end to the old quest for the historical Jesus by pointing out the apocalyptic nature of Jesus' message. He found the center of Jesus' message to be its continuity with and difference from the intertestamental apocalyptic expectations. Of course, this apocalyptic tradition is a datum for the historian of traditions, and since Jesus was a first-century Jew it is also a portion of His immediate context, of His milieu. Every milieu has a leading edge which, Pannenberg develops as a "horizon of expectation." In Grundzüge der Christologie Pannenberg discussed apocalyptic themes according to this idea of a moving horizon.[29] Moltmann has found in that idea another "philosophical underpinning" for his theology of hope. Such a "horizon" is also a bridge; as, for example, in the words

> Without the horizon of apocalyptic expectation we could not grasp just why the man Jesus should be the final revelation of God, why in him and only in him God himself should have appeared. . . . If this horizon should disappear, then the foundation of faith is lost, then Christology becomes mythology, and it no longer has any continuity with Jesus or the witness of the apostles.[30]

---

[29] Braaten, p. 102.

[30] Ibid.

Here we see the inner working of the history of traditions: a tradition is a public understanding and interpretation of some aspect of life. As these understandings and interpretations change, as they do whenever the milieu changes, public expectations of the future change in the same directions. History is never static, but the historian can isolate so small a segment of it that the amount of change is not a significant factor in understanding it, just as a photographer's product is not influenced by the rotation of the earth. Thus the moving and changing public traditions of a given period can be isolated for investigation by the historian. The furthest possible range of public expectations within the segment selected for study constitutes the horizon, the limit of vision. Specifically, the apocalyptic horizon of expectation was, in Jesus' day, the limit of public vision into the future. Apocalyptic tradition understood the resurrection of the dead as an end-time event. This fact is "an abiding presupposition of Jesus' significance for all later times,"[31] not only for Pannenberg, but also for Moltmann and any other historian of traditions.

Thus Braaten states Moltmann's conclusion,

> In post-exilic apocalypticism the idea of the resurrection of all the dead is an element in its theology of universal history. . . . When the early Christians spoke of the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, as those who shared the apocalyptic expectations of a general resurrection of all the dead at the end of the world, they knew they were speaking eschatologically. . . . The question they would ask is not whether the resurrection could happen, but

---

[31] Ibid.

> whether it had already happened. If it has happened, it is a world-historical event of eschatological significance.[32]

This is history of traditions at work. This is the discipline referred to above by the "first translation" of Überlieferungsgeschichte, the cataloging of themes and cross-referencing of items in the milieu. Here the interpreter selects his slice of history, in this case first century Judaism, isolates it from the rest of history, looks for a theological theme, in this case the resurrection, and examines the resurrection tradition. The first-century Jew expected a resurrection. The predication of a resurrection to Jesus, within that horizon of expectation, constituted an announcement that divine promises has been fulfilled in His very Person. This announcement also has significance today, though the horizon of expectation is different. For the modern interpreter of the New Testament the history of traditions has contributed an understanding of what might otherwise be a difficult part of the Christian message. Moltmann is greatly concerned to bridge the gap between the First Century in which the New Testament arose and the present time in which the interpreter must work. Again, he has used the history of traditions to span the chasm. One theme of the Old Testament is the link between promise and purpose, between call and mission. As Abraham was called, as the promise was announced to him, so was his mission. Likewise the prophets, receiving their calls, were sent to do a specific job. So it is with the "auditory visions" of the risen Christ. The

---

[32] Ibid.

apostles are literally ἀπὸ στέλλειν, sent away from Christ to the world. Moltmann says,

> The link between coming history and past history is provided in the light of this forward-moving, historic mission. The connection between then and now in the history of tradition is a connection in the history of promise and of mission; for tradition, as Christians understand it, means mission that moves forward and outward. The word-event in which past events are brought to expression means the event of being called to the future of salvation in Christ and to the present labour of hope in the service of reconciliation.[33]

A word of explanation is warranted here. How does tradition mean mission? The term παράδοσις in the writings of Paul refers to the content of the apostle's proclamation. Moltmann is assuming that his readers are familiar with that term, and with that content; for Paul's proclamation, like his letters, can usually be divided into credenda and agenda. Just as the content of the Old Testament traditions dealt with a word to be proclaimed, a land to be possessed, a people to be called, a city to be warned, and various other agenda that accompany the promises themselves, so the Christian understands his tradition in the twentieth century in terms of agenda, that is, "the present labour of hope in the service of reconciliation."

History of traditions can also be used in theological polemics. Moltmann uses it so early in Theology of Hope. Karl Barth had asserted that revelation had to be separated from Scripture in so far as Scripture was simply a written report, an historical datum, something in the

---

[33] Moltmann, p. 284.

"objective" realm. Kreck applied this principle to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Kreck actually separated revelation from the Holy Spirit. In reply, Moltmann points out that the Holy Spirit, investigated by history of traditions, is Himself part of the event of Jesus Christ; He is "historical and eschatological . . . the Spirit of the resurrection of the dead."[34] Consequently no one has the right to separate the Spirit from the Scripture, or "subjective" from "objective" revelation.

So the first step in solving the problem, posed by the way the historicist school used the principle of analogy, was for Moltmann to find a methodology in which historically-conscious theology can interpret the Holy Scriptures. Moltmann believes that the history of traditions serves that end.

> The theology of history with its "language of the facts" does not mean bruta facta, which present themselves to the positivistic historian as the end-products abstracted from tradition, but means the divine "language of the facts in that context of tradition and expectation in which the events take place." In this sense, "history is always the history of traditions." (Geschichte is the German term). History of tradition is in fact to be regarded as the profounder term for history (Geschichte) as such. The events which reveal God must be taken in and with the context in tradition in which they took place and along with which alone they have their original significance.[35]

This drives toward the center of Moltmann's theology of hope. It bridges the gaps in continuity, it answers Schweitzer's contention that

---

[34] Ibid., pp. 56-57. Kreck's identity has not yet become available to this writer.

[35] Ibid., pp. 80-81.

the "historical Jesus" is meaningless, and it provides a basis for apologetics and polemics. One more point needs to be made. The history of traditions also serves to lead Moltmann to his ontological understanding of eschatology as the dynamic of history. Here we get closer to the second translation of Überlieferungsgeschichte, the "history of the transmission of tradition," or really, of the "handing down" of the "downhanded."

Applying this history of the transmission of tradition to the Old Testament porphetic books, Moltmann is led to the following observations:

> The message of these (classical) prophets arises in the shadow of the increasing menace from Assyria, Babylon, and Persia, the gathering storm of destruction that broods over the national, political, and Palestinian life of Israel's existence and of the whole history of promise and fulfillment thus far vouchsafed to Israel by God. They interpret this history of collapse as Yahweh's judgment on his apostate people.[36]

One might be tempted to stop at this point and accuse Moltmann of confusing trend analysis with proclamation, but as one reads on he sees the deeper, tradition-historical analysis that he really has in store for his readers. He says, for example,

> This means that the new historic action of Yahweh in the history of nations, which for Israel becomes the history of its destruction, is seen by then as being on the same level as, and even competing with, the historic acts of Yahweh in their own past as remembered in the cultus and the festivals.[37]

---

[36] Ibid., p. 127.

[37] Ibid,

Here one might expect to find an existential or crisis-theological answer, but Moltmann continues,

> This new, and as yet dark and unfathomable action of Yahweh will even go to the length of outreaching and replacing his past actions upon his people. In the historic judgment of Israel, Yahweh not only annuls the debts of Israel, but he annuls also the institutions of his own covenant in his unfathomable freedom to adopt new ways.[38]

So the message of doom from the classical prophets of Israel, interpreted by the history of the transmission of traditions, proclaims further promises which place hope before the hearers and extend the horizon of their expectations into the future. The destruction becomes a sign of the eschaton, hope remains in effect, and fulfillment is not consummated, but made even more universal and eschatological than in the previous form of the tradition.

To summarize Moltmann's methodological solution, the discipline of "history of traditions" uses data which are comprehensible outside of the theologians subculture while remaining amenable to the eschatological content of the traditions it studies. By placing the traditions in dialogue with one another, Moltmann has fashioned a hermeneutical tool to help bridge the gaps that break the continuity of the Bible. Moreover, Moltmann takes seriously the contradictions implicit in the gaps, especially the contradiction between the cross and the risen Christ. These antitheses are the matter which Moltmann's dialectical-critical method treats. Because the history of traditions includes

---

[38] Ibid.

the study of past horizons of expectation, the partial fulfillments, and the "over-spills," it is adequate for a dialectical understanding of history.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTIONS OFFERED IN THEOLOGY OF HOPE

Eschatology

The content of the traditions

In the previous chapter Jürgen Moltmann's procedure of history of traditions was explained. In this chapter the content of those traditions will be sifted in order to uncover what for Moltmann is their precious kernel, namely eschatology. Since Moltmann is not a biblical scholar himself, but a systematician, he relies on Gerhard von Rad and Walter Zimmerli for most of his Old Testament exegesis. The author has also had recourse to von Rad and Zimmerli in order to examine Moltmann's use of his exegetical sources. This will become evident from the citations in this chapter. In the portion of this chapter that deals with the apocalyptic tradition, this author has relied on D. S. Russell for background information.

Just what is it in the content of the traditions which Moltmann studies that forms the basis of his explanation of history? What is the underlying scheme that supports his historical hermeneutics? The answer in Theology of Hope is clear: the traditions are based on Yahweh's promises and the various fulfillments experienced by Israel, each new fulfillment carrying within it a new hope for a new "horizon of expectation." This promise-fulfillment scheme is the hermeneutical key to the history of the Old Testament.

Moltmann accepts Zimmerli's analysis of the promise traditions in the Torah. These might be briefly summarized as follows: The Abrahamitic promise goes beyond the possession of the land and the increase of the patriarch's descendants. A fullness of blessing is announced for the history of Israel, a wholeness that constitutes a universal counter-history to the world-wide history of curse beginning in Genesis 3.[1] As far back as the patriarchs the Yahwist has already sown the seeds of tension that force the post-conquest Israelite to look into the future for a greater realization of the promise. The Priestly account of the same event frames the Abrahamitic promise in covenant terms by placing here the formulary promise, "I will be your God," though reserving for the exodus account the corrollary, "You shall be my people." As was the case with the Yahwist, so with the Priests the promise-fulfillment tension does not end with the conquest of the land.[2]

According to Zimmerli's presentation of the promise and fulfillment scheme, the will of God becomes event in the following:

> All Old Testament history, insofar as it is history guided and given by Yahweh's word, receives the character of the fulfillment; but in the fulfillment it receives a new character as promise.[3]

---

[1]Walter Zimmerli, "Promise and Fulfillment," translated by James Wharton, Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966), pp. 92-93. This work, copyrighted by M. E. Bratcher, 1963, was originally published as Probleme alttestamentlicher Hermeneutik (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1960).

[2]Ibid.

[3]Jürgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope, translated by James W. Leitch (New York, Harper & Row, 1967), p. 109.

Moltmann using almost the same scheme, attributes this "look into the future" inherent in every fulfillment to an "overspill that points to the future"[4] which remains after every fulfillment event. For Moltmann, who views the Old Testament promise traditions from the "horizon of expectation standpoint," promise becomes the hermeneutical key to history and the events (Geschehen) that take place in history (Geschichte). Moltmann says,

> It could perhaps be said that the promises enter into fulfillment in events, yet are not completely resolved in any event, but there remains an overspill that points to the future. That is why reality (Wirklichkeit) as is comes and is awaited and as it passes and is left behind, is experienced as history (Geschichte), and not as a cosmic and ever-recurring constant.[5]

The result of this "oversphill" (Überschuss) is that each generation of theologians has new eschatological homework to do as well as new historical data to incorporate into his corpus of promise tradition. He must bring the new horizon of expectation to bear on the traditions; this task is called "hermeneutics." He must also bring the promise traditions to bear on the new horizon of expectation; this task is called "eschatology." Moltmann gives us an example of "eschatologian-hermeneuticians" at work in Theology of Hope by comparing and contrasting the eschatology of the prophets with that of the apocalypticists, seeking "systematic consequences" for modern eschatology.[6]

---

[4]Zimmerli, p. 112.

[5]Moltmann, p. 109.

[6]Ibid., p. 135

Prophetic eschatology

For his analysis of the content of the prophetic traditions Moltmann relies on von Rad's investigation, especially on his magnum opus, Old Testament Theology. This does not mean that von Rad and Moltmann are in essential agreement about everything they treat. Von Rad is much less sure of what he means by "eschatology" than Moltmann, and he usually hedges the term about with qualifications. But both are concerned about history, and both work with the horizon concept. According to von Rad,

> The message of the prophets has to be termed eschatological wherever it regards the old historical bases of salvation as null and void. But we ought then to go on and limit the term. It should not be applied to cases where Israel gave a general expression of her faith in her future, or, as does happen, in the future of one of her sacred institutions. The prophetic teaching is only eschatological when the prophets expelled Israel from the safety of the old saving actions and suddenly shifted the basis of salvation to a future action of God.[7]

In other words, the horizon of expectation moved beyond another hill, the future of Israel was no longer dependent on the Davidic kingship, or the Temple worship, or the pilgrimages, but would be open to new ways of fulfillment after the purgatorial period.

But prophetic eschatology is not only the continuing vision of the passing away of the Old and the coming of the New. The promise is part of the old tradition: the God who promises is the God who has promised.

---

[7] Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, translated by D. M. G. Stalker (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), II, 118.

The prophets of Israel, therefore, related the future actions of God to the promise traditions. Von Rad calls the prophetic message a "great continuing dialogue" with the election traditions.[8]

> On the one hand, we see with what force and ardour the prophets catch up these election traditions in their preaching; on the other, their relationship to them is a broken one; for they regard the coming judgment as sealing the end of Israel's present existence; the security given her by the election traditions is cancelled out by her guilt. The only thing she can hold on to is a new historical act on the part of Yahweh, the outlines of which the prophets already see, and to which they point with kindled emotions.[9]

Such a message fulfills the requirements than von Rad had so cautiously set to make a proclamation eschatological. Von Rad goes on to indicate the other side of the dialogue: that the forms of the new act of Yahweh are taken from the election traditions.[10] But the preaching of the prophets would have been eschatological whether the new acts were similar to the form of the old or not. The essential thing to note is that the promise was not fully complemented by any past election event. Moltmann has pointed out that the question in the mind of Israel was "Where has the 'God of the promise' revealed His faithfulness?"[11] He agrees that the classical prophets were answering that question when they cast their specific eschatology. He relies on von Rad's exegesis, to show how "that classical prophecy is a specific characteristic of Israelite belief in the promise."[12]

---

[8] Ibid., II, 117.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Moltmann, p. 43

[12] Ibid., p. 125.

Previously in this paper the judgment announced by the prophets was referred to as "purgatorial." Perhaps this term was unfortunate, insofar as it can be misinterpreted in an over-individualistic or particularistic way. Moltmann does not see the judgment of Israel as a purgation of individuals, or even of a culture whose only corruption is in what the Scholastics would have called "accident." The prophets themselves hardly offer the opportunity for such an interpretation within their writings. Even the "remnant" passages prefer the image of the truncated stump to any kind of cleansing imagery, and Amos even pictures the remnant as the barely-recognizable scraps left over from a lion's meal (3:12). Nevertheless, there is hope in the eschatology of the classical prophets. Moltmann says

> This judgment certainly means the annihilation of the people and of the history to which this people owes its existence, but it does not mean the annihilation of Yahweh's faithfulness to himself. It can therefore be conceived as a judgment that paves the way for something finally new, and as annihilation for the sake of greater perfection.[13]

The term "finally new" is important. For Moltmann, unlike von Rad, the truly eschatological is not announced unless there is a dimension of ultimacy, of universality. The visions of the end which the prophets portray include the neighboring Gentiles as well as the people of Israel. Moltmann is willing to call the prophetic message "eschatological" only because of this aspect.[14] So, in the prophets, the material from the election traditions is brought to bear on the new horizon

---

[13] Ibid., p. 129.

[14] Ibid.

of the annihilation of Israel as a nation. The resultant new traditions present an eschatological hope not only Israel, but for the Gentiles as well.

Jewish Apocalyptic eschatology

The field of Jewish Apocalyptic writings has not been so well described by modern investigators as that of the Prophets. In many ways one can see Moltmann doing original work on this subject in Theology of Hope. For some of his ideas he claims dependence on Pannenberg, for other dependence on Rolff Rendtorff.

The chief reason that the Apocalyptic writings are reviewed in this paper is that they might be compared with the Prophetic writings in order to find what Moltmann calls the "systematic consequences" for modern eschatology. See Moltmann believes that the modern theologian is in a similar position to the Apocalyptic writers, and that the tradition he has to work with is similar to the Prophetic tradition. Hence there is a practical lesson for the present-day interpreter in understanding the way the Apocalyptic writers used their material.

Gerhard von Rad lists three main characteristics of Apocalyptic literature. There are dualism, transcendentalism, and secrecy.[15] Its dualism is more chronological than topological. It does not consist so much in "heaven and earth" as in "the present (evil) age," and the coming time of goodness, righteousness, victory for those who love God,

---

[15] von Rad, II, 301-303.

and punishment for those who oppose Him. Its transcendentalism does not completely exclude the earth. There are political and social consequences on the earth that reflect the really important decisions which are being made elsewhere. Secrecy includes the elements of later Gnosticism, the need for "wisdom" in order to understand ciphers and cryptic message. This not the wisdom of Job, Ecclesiastes, or Proverbs, but rather the kind discussed in Rev. 13:18, the wisdom one needs to decipher the "number of the beast."

It is significant that Apocalyptic writings never refer to themselves as "prophecy." They have no root in the election traditions. They reveal no concern with Israel's history but rather with secular empires or even with creation as a whole. Like the Ezekiel tradition, Apocalyptic has a "son of man" but he is a celestial being, not a prophet in any sense.[16]

Lest too much emphasis be placed on the differences between the Prophets and the Apocalypticists, it should be pointed out that both are unquestionably concerned with ethics. They encourage their readers to behave in a prescribed way. Daniel (4:27) even seems to universalize theology and ethics.[17] In Apocalyptic, however, the content is different, the encouragement is more toward martydom than toward reformation.

---

[16] Ibid.

[17] D. S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic (Philadelphia: Westminster, SCM Press, Ltd., 1964), p. 102.

In one impartant way the Apocalyptic writers are closer to the Pharisees than to the classical prophets: they consider the written Torah to be the revelation of God to His people. This Torah is central to their thinking and conduct.[18] In The Manual of Discipline, Chapter I, of the Dead Sea literature we can see how an individual becomes apocalyptically bound to life in the Torah in the hope of eschatological consequences for himself.

Moltmann seizes upon the universal aspect to show how Apocalypticism developed from prophecy;

> But the more the new saving action of God that is to come outstrips all analogies from the history of Israel's dealings with God in past experience and traditions, and the more the judgment that begins with Israel moves on through the history of the nations, the more clearly there appears the first signs of a universal eschatology of mankind. Here, however, we have presumably already the beginning of what must be called apocalyptic.[19]

The Apocalyptic writers were the first to discribe a divine kingdom which was greater than Israel. It was a kingdom for "the righteous." Israel has a role to play in it, but is no longer synonymous with "the righteous."

Von Rad, and even Pannenberg, look on Apocalyptic literature as "application of cosmological patterns to history." Here, Moltmann breaks with his acknowledged mentors. For Moltmann Jewish Apocalyptic writers begin with eschatology, and then give "an eschatological and historic interpretation to the cosmos."[20] He says,

---

[18] Ibid., p. 26.

[19] Moltmann., p. 130.

[20] Ibid., p. 136.

> It might well be that the existing cosmic bounds of reality, which the moving historic horizon of the promise reaches in eschatology, are not regarded as fixed and pre-determined things, but are themselves to be found in motion.[21]

Such a statement would be unthinkable for the existential theologians. Here one might identify Moltmann's position with what Reinhold Niebuhr called "human destiny" and set his against what Niebuhr called "human nature." If Moltmann's conclusions are correct, man has no nature but only a destiny, similar to what Ortega-y-Gasset calls man's "history," and coming close to Sartrian "self-determination" for the physical as well as the social "mankind." This is a ground of hope at the price of all security. Such a doctrine not only set Moltmann against a theological interpretation of "human nature," but against Darwin, Freud, Marx, and the Positivists as well. In fact it puts Moltmann very close to the American Fundamentalists if he follows through this vision of ultimacy and if one takes traditional biblical language to describe it.

Underneath the newness of Moltmann's claim that the cosmic bounds of reality are in motion lies an answer to R. R. Niebuhr's riddle which was described in Chapter II above. There the discussion involved Moltmann's hesitation to accept the presuppositions of the dialectical theologians. R. R. Niebuhr had asked, "Can the tension in Christianity's historical consciousness . . . be resolved before that consciousness enters into the additional work of examining the conditions of its own awareness?"[22] Moltmann answers "No." The church must be aware that its

---

[21] Ibid.

[22] R. R. Niebuhr, Resurrection and Historical Reason (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), p. 34.

consciousness is normed not by an investigation of nature but by promise. It is formed not by understanding, but by hope. Although Moltmann is never quite clear as to whether he is posing an epistemological or a metaphysical question, or both, one must admit that his willingness to share first-century conceptuality in order to get at the eschatological core of the Apocalyptic message is remarkably unique. Different as it may be, however, it is a necessary step in understanding Apocalyptic, because, as he himself says,

> Only if the whole historical picture--contingency and continuity--can be shown to be contingent should we come within sight of the eschatologically new fact of the resurrection of Christ. The resurrection of Christ does not mean a possibility for the world--for existence and for history. When the world is understood as a contingent creation by God, then the resurrection becomes intelligible as a new creation.[23]

The analogy between Apocalyptic eschatology and that of Moltmann is something like this: the Apocalypticist saw in the future a new horizon of fulfillment for God's promises made to Israel; it embraced all nations as included in God's activity of blessing. Therefore the apocalyptic writers went beyond the Prophets in their preaching and writing. Today Moltmann sees a new horizon of fulfillment beyond that described in contemporary "Word" or "faith" theology; so he needs new terms to describe it. Notice that his "new possibility for the world" theme is thoroughly dualistic, completely universal in scope, and, at least in the latter part of Theology of Hope ("Exodus Church"), framed in an

---

[23]Moltmann, p. 179.

ethics of martyrdom. There are differences between Moltmann's work and Jewish Apocalyptic. Moltmann does not deal in cryptograms or practice pseudonymity. Nor is Moltmann disengaged from positivistic "demythologization." Perhaps the ultimate question for Moltmann's disciples will not be their relationship to current secular philosophies, but what they are to do with myth. This is a conjecture, however. The important point to note is that Moltmann not only tells us, but shows us how, by his own example, the modern church theologian can develop an eschatology of history more adequate to his horizon of expectation than that presented to him by the previous horizon's school, and that he shows us this by an additional, more biblical example, of the Apocalypticists developing a new form of theology to present a horizon of expectation which the classical prophets could not see.

Easter eschatology

In the Bible there remains one more eschatological tradition, that of the New Testament. This follows and builds upon the Apocalyptic tradition. The relationship between the Easter and Apocalyptic eschatologies is different from that between Prophetic and Apocalyptic in that, whereas it took a long time for the Hebrews to move from the Prophetic to the Apocalyptic, it took only one sudden event for the Church to move from Apocalyptic to New Testament eschatology. That event was the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. As a result there is far more interplay between Apocalyptic and Easter eschatology than there is between Prophetic and Apocalyptic.

The very idea of resurrection is a main theme of Apocalyptic eschatology. It is the expected event that ushers in the New Age, or the kingdom of the Righteous. Russell interprets Is. 26:19 and Dan. 12:2-3, both of which are resurrection passages, as explanations of the kingdom which is the lot of the righteous. He assumes that the risen bodies are identical to the former physical bodies, and that an everlasting kingdom is to be established upon the earth.[24] Russell's is by no means the only view. In the Pseudepigrapha many other interpretations of the resurrection are offered. Some include only the righteous, others all men. Some involve the physical body, others variously describe "spiritual bodies."[25] But in all the biblical and Pseudepigraphic accounts there is an ultimacy, an eschatological finality, a sense of the end that accompanies the resurrection.

This does not mean that there is no connection between the earlier eschatology of the classical prophets and the resurrection of Jesus. Indeed, there seems to be a progression from the earthy, rough visions of Ezekiel 37 and Deutero-Isaiah, carried through the romantic notions of the end-time one finds in Zechariah, on into the bizarre pictures of the Apocalypticist, then finally emerging in the New Testament with the good news that the resurrection has happened in the case of Jesus.

Zimmerli sees the resurrection of Jesus as a "remnant-event of Israel."[26] For Zimmerli the election-history of Israel has been concentrated in the personal life of Jesus. In the person of Jesus, Israel

---

[24]Russell, p. 376.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Zimmerli, p. 113.

undergoes its deepest humiliation and at the same time the strongest confirmation of its election.[27] As the Prophets had said, the old covenant must come to an end; a new covenant is to take its place. As the Prophets had used language of the Exodus to describe Israel's new relationship to God, so the Apostles used language of the Prophets to describe the crucifixion-resurrection event. Jesus is called the Christ (Davidic tradition), and the Kyrios, which may mean "Yahweh" but may also mean the godly conterpart of Caesar. This last became the most important title because of its universality. Zimmerli, with Oscar Cullman and several others, does not stop with the reduction of the body of the elect to a single person, but goes beyond this to the new Israel which Jesus has chosen, the "Israel of God" which is different from "Israel after the flesh." Zimmerli says, "Now, however, the covenant is established in a freedom which involves the extending of an invitation to those who stand without."[28] And, indeed, why not? If Jesus, and Jesus alone, was the Sha'are Zedek, then Jesus, and Jesus alone has the real authority to invite, to judge Israel and to determine who belongs to it and who does not.

Moltmann, by contrast, does not develop the "True Israel" or the "Remnant" themes. He concentrates on the promise and fulfillment scheme described above in Chapter III. He does so against the background of positivism, taking great care to prevent the confusion of nature with

---

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

history. He is greatly concerned with the threat of death as a thwart to the fulfillment of the promise, and sees the resurrection tradition as a solution to this problem.

> Thus in Israel the idea of "raising of the dead" is formulated in the first instance within the framework of the religion of promise: it is not a case of natural [sic] reanimation, but of fulfilling of Yahweh's promises of life in the dead bearer of the promise.[29]

Moltmann's "bearer of the promise" is very close to Zimmerli's true remnant of Israel."

> It is not until the Apocalyptic writers that the "raising of the dead" is understood in universal terms, in the sense that even beyond death this God will achieve his judgment and his due in both righteous and unrighteous.[30]

Nothing must stand between the promise and the fulfillment. Even when death tries to interfere it is overcome. In fact, Moltmann's claim is

> The late Israelite ideas of creatio ex nihilo and resurrectio mortuorum mark the eschatological extremities of the religion of promise.[31]

In the New Testament one has the additional announcement that the resurrection did indeed happen to Jesus of Nazareth. This, for Moltmann, "must be understood as the eschatological coming to pass of the faithfulness of God, and at the same time as the eschatological authentication of his promise and the dawning of its fulfillment."[32] That is how Moltmann uses the history of traditions. He has taken the exegetical data from von Rad, Zimmerli, and others and framed the conclusions in the language of systematic theology.

---

[29] Moltmann, pp. 209-210.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid.

Formulation of an eschatological understanding of history

In order to make his systematic theological statements, Moltmann applies the content of the traditions dialectically to the questions of contemporary philosophy. According to Moltmann himself he stands vis-a-vis the philosophers with an eschatological-theological, and therefore non-philosophical answer. According to Braaten, Moltmann's answer is dependent on the philosophy of Ernst Bloch. In a sense they are both right, for Bloch's philosophy has an eschatological element, while Moltmann's theology goes beyond Bloch to apply biblical traditions.

Humanism, hope, and wish-fulfillment

Philosophy's side of the "dialogue" presents the questions with which contemporary man is wrestling. One large constellation of these questions surrounds the central one: "What does it mean to be human?" Samuel Keen analyzes this as follows:

> Modern man is rejecting the traditional notion that human life has only limited creative potentialities because the world into which man emerges already has meaning and value. Therefore life is viewed not as a gift but as a burden, and the world as a neutral arena of blind physical laws. Man must assume responsibility for creating meaning. Man has claimed the divine attributes for himself.[33]

Theology is hard pressed to explain what it means to be human because the question is so bound up with static ideas about "nature." Moltmann, and many other theologians, would like to be able to stand up and bear

---

[33]Sam Keen, "Hope in a Posthuman Era," New Theology, edited by Martin Marty and Dean Peerman (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968), V, 81.

their side of the dialogue, but the nature of the biblical material, especially the promises, forbids any static view of humanity in the world. The promises are eschatological, and Moltmann insists that the contemporary theologian's side of the dialogue must also be eschatological. Right now humanity is incomplete. Theology will be able to give a better answer if the question were, "What will humanity be?" The answer to that question puts us into the realm of hope.

During the age of Positivism the very idea of hope aroused suspicion because of the Freudian doctrine of wish-fulfillment. Keen has been careful to distinguish between hope and wish-fulfillment, as one can see in this passage from the essay cited above:

> The optimist conspires to ignore the facts because they suggest an interpretation he does not want to make. Contrariwise, the believer's affirmation of a ground of hope is made in the knowledge that by all realistic calculations human history is utterly tragic. It is in the light of this certain knowledge that the believer sets himself to examine his experience to determine whether there is any basis for hoping that what is penultimately the case is not untimately so.[34]

Moltmann goes a step beyond this. He says that the Positivist has ignored valid evidence, namely, the historical fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus there is evidence against the ultimacy of "utterly tragic" human history. The ground of hope is the "future of Jesus Christ."[35]

---

[34] Ibid., V, 87.

[35] Moltmann, p. 17.

> Christian eschatology speaks of Jesus Christ and his future. It recognizes the reality of the raising of Jesus and proclaims the future of the risen Lord. Hence the question whether all statements about the future are grounded in the person and history of Jesus Christ provides it with the touchstone by which to distinguish the spirit of eschatology from that of utopia.[36]

So Moltmann has made, as his theological contribution to the dialogue, the liberating distinction between hope and wish-fulfilment. It is a liberating distinction because, in contrast to Bultmann who seeks a place for theology around the periphery of philosophy, Moltmann has made an apologetic penetration of philosophy's very citadel. Thanks to Moltmann's boldness, theologians who build on his ideas can walk boldly into the academy with a respect that was not afforded them there a generation ago.

Moltmann's use of Ernst Bloch's philosophy

Part of the dialogue process between philosophy and theology centers around what was described in Chapter II of this paper, in the citation from Carl Braaten; namely, the "cultural point of contact." Braaten made the point that Bloch's philosophy was the "non-theological point of contact" for Moltmann's theology of hope.[37] Curiously, throughout his works, Braaten never cites anything from Das Prinzip Hoffnung which he claims is fundamental to Moltmann's theology. Indeed, Theology of Hope cites Bloch's magnum opus only three times, and the longest quote is a single sentence. So rather than looking for material

---

[36] Ibid.

[37] Supra, Chap. II, p. 27, also fn. 44.

which is carried over from Bloch to Moltmann, the procedure here will be to describe Bloch's hope and see how Moltmann's hope is a theological development of it.

One will find many references to Bloch as a "Marxist," or a "Hegelian" philosopher, and these have some value. But Bloch's works reflect something beyond Marx and Hegel. Bloch is a humanist, not in the classical sense, as for instance Erasmus or Lorenzo Valla were, but in a strictly modern, post-positivistic sense. Consider the following:

> The full genesis, the genesis of human adequacy, is found only in the prophets of the Old and New Testaments; they alone distinguish the new aeon from the old by the cessation of bondage . . . Incipit vita nova is the Dantesque formula that inauguarated the new age. Its roots are in modern economics; but no one can deny that the current which fed the ideological growth of its roots, and which made and makes even the name 'new age' possible, rose from the unsatisfied pathos of a new aeon still animated by Christianity.[38]

The above passage describes a hopeful humanism that is in some ways similar to the hope of the Apocalypticist. Neither the Apocalyptic writers nor Bloch take human nature as a given, the former because of their theocentric view of the universe, the latter, however, from a humanistic and "atheistic" standpoint. Bloch's system centers around the simple proverb "S is not yet P." In his essay "Incipit Vita Nova" Bloch explains what he means by "S is not yet P," namely, that there is no subject for which the ultimate predicate may be asserted.

---

[38]Ernst Bloch, "Incipit vita nova," translated by E. B. Ashton, Man on His Own (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), pp. 79-80.

This must be distinguished from Heraclitus view which might be summarized as "S never has been, is not now, and never will be P." Bloch is not a dynamic Positivist, but a philosopher of hope. The ground for hope lies in the material universe and in the societies that develop among men who live in it. In that very "arena" no subject has its adequate predicate already.[39] Bloch says, "In this impulse and course hope is moving; with close-range objectives in mind when the long-range end is considered, and (with regard to the thing that really matters) with long-range ends in mind when the close-range objectives are in view."[40] Here we have a secular use of the "horizon of expectation" concept with which Moltmann and Pannenberg have been working in their theologies.

There is some evidence in Theology of Hope that Braaten is right in his assertion that Bloch's philosophy is a "non-theological point of contact" for Moltmann's theology. Consider the following:

> The horizon of expectation within which a Christian doctrine of conduct must be developed is the eschatological horizon of expectation of the kingdom of God, of his righteousness and his peace with a new creation, of his freedom and his humanity for all men. This horizon alone, with its formative effect on the present, leads a man in missionary hope to oppose and suffer under the inadequacies of the present, brings him into conflict with the present form of society, and causes him to discover the "cross of the present" (Hegel).[41]

This is no isolated paragraph. It is a central part of Moltmann's conclusion. He has been building up to this through all of his exegesis, all of his analysis of the present situation, all of his polemic against Positivism. Moltmann has described the final adequate

---

[39] Ibid., p. 90

[40] Ibid.

[41] Moltmann, p. 334.

predication of humanity as the work of the promise-fulfilling God, and the age in which people will enjoy the blessings of "the genesis of human adequacy" as the "kingdom of God."

"Now, any modern writer" must be careful to note how he uses the term "humanism." There was a philosophical movement in Germany in the early nineteenth century called Humanismus which was a romantic, idealistic and thoroughly optimistic philosophy. This type of humanism might be called panthistic. Its roots lay in Renaissance humanism; its watchword was, "The proper study of mankind is man."[42] Part of the problem is that the English word "humanism" has another usage, which constantly infiltrates the usage given above. This latter usage has to do with the study of the humanities, particularly of classical languages and philosophies, often by people who accept the classical Greek and Latin values and make them their own. A somewhat static view of the world is usually part of that value system. In the Renaissance, the popular humanistic Weltanschauung was directly connected with the interest in antiquity, particularly in the Classics. While nineteenth-century humanism had a more sophisticated, (and, amazingly, at the same time more romantic) form of pantheism than its fifteenth-century counterpart, even this "humanism" falls short of describing the philosophy of Ernst Bloch. Bloch calls himself an "atheist" rather than a pantheist. Yet Bloch does not write like an atheist, for example, Camus. For want of a better term, Bloch might be described as an "anthropotheist." Bloch, for all practical purposes, accepts the Bible as the Word of God;

---

[42] Webster's New International Dictionary (2nd edition), p. 1212, one finds this interesting definition of "Humanism": "a contemporary cult or belief calling itself religious but substituting faith in man for faith in God."

not the Word of Jesus, Yahweh, the Trinity, and others, but the Word of the man of the future, who is the real "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." If we dare to call Bloch a "humanist," then, it must be with this anthropotheism in mind.

This does not mean that Moltmann is an anthropotheist. He is a Christian theologian. But Braaten may well be correct in his assertion that Bloch's philosophy is a "non-theological point of contact" for Moltmann's theology.

There are differences between Bloch and Moltmann, however. One clear difference is in their exegesis of the Bible. For Moltmann, the center of the Scripture is the resurrection of Jesus. As was pointed out earlier in this chapter, the resurrection, for Moltmann, "must be understood as the eschatological coming to pass of the faithfulness of God."[43] Moltmann refuses to call the intermediate fulfilments of the divine promises "myths." He does attempt to demythologize the future promises (such as "meeting the Lord in the air") in favor of a terrestrial millenium, but the acts of God's event-creating word of promise in the past are taken seriously as the driving forces of history. Bloch, on the other hand, finds the center of Scripture in Genesis 3, the "subversive promise" of the snake.[44] Bloch calls the content of the temptation "the good news of Christian salvation."

> This eritis is clearly the most subversive word in all myths open to an anthropocentric interpretation--from the serpent up to Prometheus, and to the resolution of all longings and

---

[43] Supra, p. 67, fn. 32.

[44] Ernst Bloch, "Religious Truth," translated by John Cumming, Man on His Own, p. 114.

thoughts under God in the "third Gospel" of the Christlike community.[45]

Moltmann will have none of this. He does not even enter into dialogue with Bloch on this point. The only place where Moltmann came close to discussing this matter, and discussing in a very interesting mixture of explication and implication, is in his conclusion to the section called "Revelation and the Knowledge of God." Here Moltmann summons up the specter of Genesis by his reference to God's verdict that all things were very good," but he applies it to the eschaton, to a utopian eschaton. He also uses a pun here, that God stands against (entgegensteht) man until man creates and understands a true fulfilment reality, therefore the God who promises is an object (Gegenstand).[46] There is a philosophical similarity here to Bloch's "S is not yet P," but not an identity. For Moltmann, eschatology does not begin until the historical particularity of Israel appears on the scene, with the patriarchs and their words of promise. Whatever may be said of the antedeluvian events and conversations belongs to aetiology and the epiphany cults.

Moltmann's limited Blochism might be summarized by saying that the rejects anthropotheism for the present even in the form of expectation. He does so because of his intense devotion to the resurrected Lord. Even so he is willing to project Bloch's ideas about the man of the future into his own Apocalyptic interpretation of the kingdom of God and

---

[45] Ibid.

[46] Moltmann, p. 120.

of the possibilities for good and evil in history which lie in the field of hope and can be acquired only there.[47]

Eschatology of history in Moltmann and Pannenberg

The most remarkable item in Wolfhart Pannenberg's apprach to history is that the future is metaphysically paramount. The future is more "real" than the present, which in turn is more "real" than the past. Pannenberg is willing to claim that Jesus gave similar priority to the future. Once this is admitted, Pannenberg is able to give hope-centered interpretations to dominical logia concerning the kingdom at great variance with both the traditional and the existential interpretations. Thus, according to Pannenberg, Jesus did not see the Kingdom of God as beginning with His personal presence to be fulfilled in the future, but as beginning in the future and being realized, or fulfilled, in His personal presence.[48] Pannenberg says, "In this way we see the present as an effect of the future, in contrast to the conventional assumption that past and present are a cause of the future."[49]

> Jesus proclaimed the rule of God as a reality belonging to the future. This is the coming Kingdom. The idea was not new, being a conventional aspect of Jewish expectation. What was new was Jesus' understanding that God's claim on the world is to be viewed exclusively in terms of his coming rule. Thus it

---

[47] Ibid., p. 263.

[48] Wolfhart Pannenberg, Theology and the Kingdom of God (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969), p. 54.

[49] Ibid.

> is necessary to say, in a restricted but important sense, that God does not yet exist. Since his rule and his being are inseparable, God's being is still in the process of coming to be.[50]

For Pannenberg the priority of the future is universal. If we currently beg the question whether God's being and rule are inseparable, which will be taken up in Chapter VI, and admit this presupposition so that we may better understand the relationship between Pannenberg and Moltmann, then the experience of history becomes a realizing process of a prior existing future which is already determined and complete, as complete and perfect as the essence of the deity. This future breaks in upon the present and realizes itself in part. At the end of history the realization process will be finished. The coming to pass of the rule of God, the form of which is predetermined and was revealed through the teachings of Jesus, will be complete.

Moltmann's critique of Pannenberg's "eschatological" world view is part of his more "general critique of the epiphany religions, namely,"

> This situation is ironical because Pannenberg sets out with the proposition that "history is what happens between promise and fulfillment." But he abandons the word of promise in favor of events of promise and fulfillment as the bearers of revelation, therefore he retains the Greek cosmic theology in principle, though making it eschatological from the standpoint of present epistemology.[51]

In other words, Moltmann rejects any and all attempts to objectify the God of the promise, (except in the sense of the German pun cited above). If he is unwilling to accept a theology based upon the manifestation of

---

[50] Ibid., p. 56.

[51] Moltmann, pp. 78-79.

the "eternal present," then he cannot be willing to accept a theology based upon a progressive realization of the eternal future.

The consequences of Pannenberg's position for hermeneutics here criticized by Moltmann would be to view Jesus as a future-existing prophet who made an appearance in time. His death was an historical event. His resurrection was an event of the future, connected with Jesus' death in time only through His person. These events gave authenticity to Jesus' message of the kingdom, a message which differed from the Jewish eschatological hope only in that "Jesus underscored the present impact of the imminent future."[52] This view upholds the finality of God's self-revelation through Jesus of Nazareth testified to in the Bible, but it does so at the expense of the word of promise. According to Pannenberg's view God does not make promises through Jesus, He announces future facts. The rest of the Old and New Testament message has ever-diminishing significance as the possibility of the hearer's reacting to the historical Jesus becomes more and more a possibility of reacting to an account rather than a person. The idea of future facts is not without merit. Moltmann agrees that God promises a specific future to man, just as He promised a specific future to the patriarchs. But according to Moltmann, God's promise sets active hope in motion to claim the fulfillment. For Pannenberg the promise merely announces the inevitable and presents an ethical decision to be made in the light of the inevitable.

Moltmann wants to keep Pannenberg's certainty about a specific future, based on a promise that "binds man to the future and gives him

---

[52]Pannenberg, p. 53.

a sense for history."[53] He also wants to keep the progressive view of promise as a "horizon of expectation," directed into the future and moving along with universal history which "invites us to press futher ahead."[54] And most of all, Moltmann agrees with Pannenberg, and thereby disagrees with Positivism, that because the present is an effect of the future, "reality as a whole" is therefore "historically open and provisional in view of that end of history in which the wholeness of reality will come to light."[55]

Moltmann's Theology of Hope as an answer to Barr's concerns

The last section of this chapter will be devoted to the whole problem of "revelation through history" as it was presented by James Barr in his inaugural address at Princeton Theological Seminary, and as it was reprinted by Marty and Peerman in New Theology. The following is a relevant portion of Barr's address:

> To say this does not mean that we are trying to get rid of the idea of revelation through history. This idea is, I believe, a fair expression of a really important element in the Bible; there really is a Heilsgeschichte, a series of events set within the plane of human life and in historical sequence, through which God has revealed himself. I would not doubt that we have been generally right in saying that this can be taken as the central theme of the Bible, that it forms the main link between Old and New Testaments, and that its presence and importance clearly marks Biblical faith off from other religions. I do feel, however, that there are other axes through the Biblical material which are equally pervasive and important, although they may not be so comforting apologetically.

---

[53] Moltmann, p. 103.

[54] Ibid., p. 125.

[55] Ibid., pp. 276-277.

> And I also feel that our apologetic situation in relation to the world outside of theology is changing, so that the value of an orientation to history may alter.[56]

Moltmann agrees and suggests an answer. His "other axis" through the Bible is eschatology. The response to eschatology is hope. And the link between the eschatological asix through the Bible and the salvation-historical "biblical faith" is the horizon of expectation concept. If Barr was correct in saying that revelation through history was a response to the apologetic needs of the Nineteenth Century[57] when "history" seemed to threaten Christianity, then the modern interpreter has to start looking for that other axis through the Bible which best suits Twentieth Century apologetics. For Moltmann, his understanding of the theology of hope constitutes such an axis. Moltmann applies the apologetics of hope as follows:

> To think God and history together on the ground of the event of the promise in the resurrection of Christ does not mean to prove God from the world or from history, but vice-versa to show the world to be history that is open to God and to the future. Christian theology will thus not be able to come to terms with, but will have to free itself from, the cosmologico-mechanistic way of thinking such as is found in the positivistic sciences - whether in the scientific disenchanting of the world, by which the world not only becomes "godless," as Max Weber has said, but also becomes without alternatives, without possibilities and without any future, as in the factualized and institutionalized relationships of the scientific civilization of modern society, which in the same way is threatened with the loss not only of its future but of its own historic character as well. Theology will be able to free itself, however, only by breaking up this

---

[56] page 69.

[57] Ibid., pp. 62-63.

> kind of thinking and these relationships and striving to set them in the eschatological movement of history.[58]

For Moltmann, therefore, eschatology is the measure of all things. It is the only valid interpretation that turns events (Geschehen) into Geschichte. Another reviewer of Moltmann's work, Herbert Dymale, comes to the same conclusion:

> If hope was the key to what motivated Old Testament people, then it should be the key to our motivation. Theology based on hope is free from all kinds of world views and utopian schemes, for now world history can be experienced in the light of the future of truth.[59]

The key to hermeneutics, then, is not so much the revelation of truth through historical events, but it is the opening up of history through eschatology. In the words of Moltmann himself:

> It is neither that history swallows up eschatology (Albert Schweitzer) nor does eschatology swallow up history (Rudolf Bultmann). The logos of the eschaton is promise of that which is not yet, and for that reason it makes history. The promise which announces the eschaton, and in the eschaton announces itself, is the motive power, the mainspring, the driving force and the torture of history.[60]

So we have seen how Moltmann works with the exegetical data derived from the Bible according to the methods described in Chapter III. The chief datum is eschatology; that is, the presentation of a promise and an invitation to hope. The occurrence of fulfilment events expands the horizon of the promise, alters reality (Wirklichkeit) [which can also mean the dialectical "synthesis"], and focuses attention on the antithetical "overspill" that challenges even the new

---

[58]Moltmann, p. 93.

[59]Herbert Dymale, "What Kind of Hope is Adequate?" Christianity Today, XV (June 18, 1971), 9-10 (877-878).

[60]Moltmann, p. 165.

reality. The final operation of systematic theology is to apply the biblical message to contemporary questions in terms of "dialogue" with the philosophy of the age.

Moltmann's polemics against positivism are very effective. He describes it as a phenomenon of the past--the ultimate place of reprobation. His apologetics are in terms of Ernst Bloch's revisionist Marxism, a system that takes the idea of eschatology seriously. As a result, Moltmann's gospel is primarily a humanistic gospel [certainly not Moltmann's term, but definitely Bloch's] , presented in more or less traditional language. Yet if our only knowledge of Moltmann depended on Theology of Hope, we could hardly conclude that he is nothing more than a revisionist Marxist like Bloch. The language in this book is too ambiguous. As we shall see, some of his shorter articles remove any doubt.

CHAPTER V

HERMENEUTICAL PRINCIPLES IN MOLTMANN'S LESSER WORKS

This chapter, unlike the main section of this study, does not examine Theology of Hope, but seeks instead to find important statements from Jürgen Moltmann in some of his articles. As in the main section, however, the chief concern is with hermeneutics. In particular it deals with the use Moltmann makes of history. Some of the questions raised in Chapters III an IV appear again: whether Moltmann uses the principle of analogy as historians do, whether history is as important to Moltmann as he claims or whether it is really swallowed up by eschatology, whether Moltmann uses words the same way consistently.

In Chapter IV above it was noted that Moltmann was much more sure of what he meant by "eschatology" than the Old Testament professors Gerhard von Rad and Walther Zimmerli. In an essay entitled "The Future as Threat and Opportunity"[1] one finds a precise definition of "eschatology" in Moltmann's own words: "a belief that takes the initiative toward transforming the world by means of the possibilities of the present."[2] This is entirely consistent with the conclusion reached at the end of section

---

[1] Jürgen Moltmann, "The Future as Threat and as Opportunity," translated by Shierry Weber, The Religious Situation, edited by Donald R. Cutler (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969) p. 925.

[2] Ibid.

2 in Chapter IV above; namely, that Moltmann saw himself as the contemporary counterpart to the Apocalypticist whose theological traditions were inadequate to minister to his hope because the horizon of expectation had moved on. Hope must have promises to survive, and Moltmann has found in the Scriptures the promise of a transformed world, a promise that has been neglected by the prevailing voices in theology. One might ask whether Moltmann is qualifying his hope for the future unnecessarily by stating that the transformation is to be accomplished "by means of the possibilities of the present." Moltmann makes it very clear that he is not merely practicing trend analysis. He is not extrapolating the future from the present, but anticipating it. As for the initiative toward the transformation, Moltmann claims that Christian faith "mediates in practice" between the anticipated future and the possibilities of the present.[3]

Moltmann goes so far as to equate "faith" and "hope." That is because the object of faith is the "God in front of us," and the object of hope is "his kingdom" made recognizable in the world. There is no God without the kingdom and no kingdom without God.[4] This transformation of the world is a divine act in the same way that the exodus of Israel and the resurrection of Jesus were divine acts.[5] Whereas in Theology of Hope Moltmann's ethics called for a contradiction of the donditions of the present, in "The Future as Threat and Opportunity" they go beyond

---

[3] Ibid., p. 926.

[4] Ibid., pp. 924-925.

[5] Ibid.

any passive, negative, patient waiting to an active initiative involved in transforming. This activity is probably also Moltmann's intention in Theology of Hope but it is never as clearly stated there as it is in the short article.

If the concepts of "faith" and "hope" have been equated in "The Future as Threat and Opportunity" they are distinguished in "The Realism of Hope."[6] Faith, according to Moltmann, is abundantly present in the church of today, whereas hope, coupled with hunger for freedom, is lacking.[7] Faith here signifies the ability to comprehend and to interpret the Gospel message. There is no want of biblical interpreters in our church, but hope demands that the church go beyond interpretation. It involves the church with the "God in front of us," and makes the church restless for the kingdom. In this article, and in Theology of Hope, Moltmann uses the word "faith" to denote the quiet, passive side of the Christian life. It is almost an intellectual when the context is a discussion of Rudolf Bultmann's theology. "Hope" on the other hand, is the dynamic, active dimension of the Christian life, the outward-looking, world-confronting, future-grasping dimension. Consider this statement:

> Yet faith also underwent a change as this hope that the future was coming . . . was lost in the quicksands of history. . . . All that Easter meant was: there is a life after death.[8]

---

[6]Full title: "The Realism of Hope: The Feast of the Resurrection and the Transformation of the Present Reality," translated by Gilbert A. Thiele, Concordia Theological Monthly XL (March 1969), 149-155.

[7]Ibid., XL, 149.

[8]Ibid., XL, 150.

In Moltmann's judgment, the church relinquished its social eschatology for an individual eschatology. The concern for the world was there all along, but the optimism, according to Moltmann, disappeared. It would have been appreciated a great amount of supportive evidence, especially from the medieval period, for Moltmann's statement. One seeks it in vain. But the intention here is not to evaluate Moltmann's historical judgment. The significance for Moltmann's hermeneutics is this: social eschatology is the key category, the main axis through the Scriptures, around which all of the Biblical teachings are mustered and classified. One ought to expect, therefore, a polemical attitude toward the church which, according to Moltmann, has substituted an individualized for the original social eschatology.

In fact, Moltmann goes beyond polemics to a specific program as outlined in "Toward a Political Hermeneutic of the Gospel."[9]

> One must be able to apply the biblical horizon of concern between the Christ event and the coming of the kingdom to the corresponding present horizon of concern between freedom and oppression.
>
> From this vantage point, then, textual exegesis is no longer only a peculiar concern for self-understanding which will occasionally conform with comprehension. It is more a matter of special understanding of the text's concern which strives for practical congruence between the biblical tradition's horizon of concern and present circumstances. It also perceives the needs and the opportunities of present social reality.[10]

---

[9]Jürgen Moltmann, "Toward a Political Hermeneutic of the Gospel," Union Seminary Quarterly Review, XXIII, no. 4 (1968), 303-323.

[10]Ibid., XXIII, 314.

The content of the specific program is "political hermeneutics," the application of the biblical message to "present social reality" in terms of the political "opportunities." The pattern for political hope is "the biblical tradition's horizon of concern," which it is the function of the modern interpreter to divest of mythology and other hinderances to immediate social applicability. The church then, is to make political decisions which it believes will bring political reality closer to "practical congruence" with the pattern for political hope.

In Chapter IV above, the point was made that Theology of Hope left the role of myth in hermeneutics unclear. In "Toward a Political Hermeneutic of the Gospel" Moltmann does not wait for his disciples to answer the question, but affirms that history is the absolute setting for all hope, and that political action is the only sacrament. Every transcendental element has been removed except "the future," which someday will be immanent but for the present is, at least conceptually, transcendent. The ground for demythologization is not one's world-view, but the cross of Jesus Christ.[11] Now Moltmann does not demythologize the crucifixion. But this historical fact of the cross of Jesus Christ is applied by the Biblical interpreter as the "expression of real human affliction,"[12] the problem, or "need" of present social reality corresponds to it. The resurrection is "the protest" against affliction.[13] It also has a con-

---

[11] Ibid., XXIII, 313.

[12] Ibid., XXIII, 314.

[13] Ibid.

temporary counterpart, namely, the church's political activity in striving for social change. So Moltmann can say,

> Consequently, the missionary proclamation of the cross of the Resurrected One is not an opium of the people which intoxicates and incapacitates, but the ferment of new freedom.[14]

This "ferment" is an "effort to realize" the content of social eschatology. It is an optimistic ferment, because it believes that one day history will be the kingdom of God.

Moltmann's specific program is also a Marxist program. There is no doubt about this. Christian hope cannot be content with a social-eschatological interpretation (Bonhoeffer) nor a rationalistic enlightenment (Feuerbach), but must strive for a historical realization of the Christian religion as outlined by Marx.[15]

What light do Moltmann's short writings shed upon his Theology of Hope? Aside from giving us many more examples of his use of the category of history and the principle of analogy, they give us a clear definition of eschatology as Moltmann understands it. They help us to understand his use of the terms "faith" and "hope," and they spell out, in a way Theology of Hope does not, Moltmann's completely immanent, historical setting for the biblical message and for the kingdom of God.

---

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., XXIII, 312.

CHAPTER VI

CRITIQUE OF THEOLOGY OF HOPE

Moltmann and the Orthodox Christian Church

This chapter is an attempt to evaluate Jürgen Moltmann's Theology of Hope, particularly his hermeneutics and the view of history that lies at the bottom of his hermeneutics. Moltmann's relationship to historical Christianity is discussed first because the prospective assumed by the author is drawn from his commitment to Christianity, particularly Christian orthodoxy. This includes the conviction that theology should be evaluated with regard to its claims of service to the church.

Moltmann does not claim to be orthodox. But as part of the prelude to his labor, he is constantly calling the reader's attention to the history of the church and all of it conflicts. Moltmann definitely conceives of his theology as a contribution to the main stream of ecclesiastical thought. The following attempt to contrast the orthodox Christian faith with Moltmann's theology of hope is arranged around three focal questions: the concept of revelation through history, the path of theological knowledge, and the hermeneutical center of the Scriptures.

Revelation through history: universal or particular?

The most frequent context in which the theme of revelation through history is discussed today is the neo-orthodox contention that revelation

is an individual, subjective matter, quite independent of verifiable data, and the counter-claim that revelation takes place through God's activity in universal history, in verifiable events. This context is, regrettably, independent of the discussion referred to in Chapter II above, namely the work of R. R. Niebuhr[1] regarding historical knowledge as such. In Theology of Hope Moltmann contends against the neo-orthodox view. As was demonstrated above, he refuses to accept the subject-object complex which cut theology off from investigation. But when Moltmann made his decision to stand on history, since he lacked any modern scientific investigation of the historical events upon which the Christian faith is grounded, he accepted the claim of Albert Schweitzer that the events are not verifiable. It is true that he did not accept this without a great deal of complaining, and, perhaps in agreement with James Barr, he has found another important "axis" through the Scriptures, namely, eschatology. Moltmann claims that while for Schweitzer history "swallows up eschatology," he gives eschatology its due by making it the driving force of history in the Hegelian sense. But such a claim is not verifiable (except from the a posteriori viewpoint of one standing at the end of history). No scientific investigation of history has to this date proved that eschatology is its driving force.

Moreover, as Moltmann develops his Theology of Hope it becomes apparent that the "universal history" he is talking about is limited

---

[1] Richard R. Niebuhr, Resurrection and Historical Reason (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1957).

to the Western world, and furthermore to the Kantian era. His view of history is a Kantian view, much like Schweitzer's. And the practical application of his theology is his "eschatological" ethics, his "exodus church," which is a whole community of Albert Schweitzers, or a regiment of people like Francis of Assisi.

The orthodox Christian faith, by contrast, does not speak of revelation in universal history, nor in subjectivity, but in the actual events of the history of a particular people, their prophetic and apostolic interpretation. The orthodox Christian begins with divine revelation and then addresses it to history. This attitude is described by Eric Rust as follows:

> In the Hebrew-Christian tradition the emphasis falls, not on human reason, but on divine revelation. This tradition points to a particular series of events unified around a supreme event, Jesus Christ, his life, death, and resurrection. It regards these events as the medium of divine self-disclosure. The basic promise is that the ultimate truth is not universally available, waiting everywhere to be discovered and unveiled by human reason, as the Greek tradition supposed, but that it is bound up with a particular history. God has been pleased to show himself redemptively, to manifest his true nature, in a special stream of historical events in which he has acted with power and great glory to deliver men.[2]

It has been argued that there is no scientific verification for the theory that God has revealed Himself to man if the particular history of the Hebrews culminating in Jesus of Nazareth. One might reply that there is no evidence to the contrary. This leads to the conclusion that theological knowledge has not yet become verifiable in a scientific way. Although it is commonly held that certain theological postulates (for example, miracles) have been disproved by the

---

[2]Eric Rust, Towards a Theological Understanding of History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 61.

discovery of repeated and predictible patterns (interestingly referred to as "laws") of nature, this common belief is limited to an empirical methodology which cannot investigate the past, and can make historical judgments only by supposing that natural conditions have always been very similar. The orthodox Christian would not agree with that position without some evangelical qualification.

The path of theological knowledge

Moltmann was quoted above in Chapter III to the effect that theological knowledge always begins with the concrete, particular historical data and moves toward the universal and eschatological. So he began by investigating the concrete, particular history of Jesus of Nazareth, the Jewish setting, the influence of the Old Testament on the thoughts of Jesus and the Apostles, the interpretation of the resurrection according to the promises in the Old Testament, the traditions of that Apocalyptic movement which began during the Antiochene persecution and persisted into the earliest church. Next he analyzes these data according to the discipline of Überlieferungsgeschichte, a very thoroughgoing process in which the content of the traditions is used as a curb to channel the thoughts one might have about the resurrection as an event into directions consistent with the Apocalyptic interpretations of the relationship between God and the world. Moltmann observed how the Apocalypticist theologized by building on the prophetic tradition, then he turned his attention to the disciples and how they theologized, applying Apocalyptic traditions to the resurrection. Finally, Moltmann did what he believed the Apocalyptic

writers were doing mutatis mutandis; he theologized by applying neo-orthodox exegetical studies to his new "horizon" of hope.

One promise that underlies Moltmann's Überlieferungsgeschichte is that no one event completely satisfies a divine promise. There is always an "overspill." In English translation the word "overspill" just hangs, unrelated to the concept of "tradition." In German, however, Moltmann is playing with the word, and this complicates his theology rather than clarifying it. Moltmann is never quite clear about his own concept of tradition. If Moltmann is talking Pannenbergian language, and Überlieferungsgechichte means the "classification of overspills," one divine promise always leading to another, (an interpretation which is certainly possible on the basis of Theology of Hope), then only the final generation will know what God's promises and covenant are really all about. All the rest of mankind is putting a puzzle together, handicapped by so many missing pieces, although later generations had more of the pieces than earlier generations. On the other hand, Überlieferungsgeschichte might mean the study of παράδοσις, or what has been called "history of the transmission of traditions." If the latter is true, then revelation is an event experienced by the ancient ones and preserved by subsequent generations, with the original content getting more and more obscure with the passage of time, and complicated by the rise of new traditions.

In Theology of Hope, the former interpretation, "classification of overspills" seems to predominate.

In orthodox Christian theology on the other hand, "tradition" always means παράδοσις. God may have given out limited fragments of revelation in the Old Testament, (Hebr. 1:1), but in the New He has revealed His kingdom, His plans for the future, and His will for His people by "speaking to us through a Son," who is "the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of creation," who "was put to death for our offenses and raised again for our justification." The apostolic generation was the final generation in which revelation occurs. Theologizing takes on a new character after the passing of the apostolic age: no longer is the bearer of the word concerned so much with interpreting, finding meaning for himself, as he is with witnessing, sharing absolute meaning with others. The form of the witness evolves from one generation to the next because the secular history and consequently the "vernacular" language is never stable. But the content is still the apostolic faith, the "faith once delivered unto the saints." There is a qualitative difference between synthesizing a theology from incomplete, elementary revelations, and finding new ways of confessing the one holy faith. This is the contrast between Theology of Hope, insofar as it is Pannenbergian, and the orthodox Christian theology.

The hermeneutical center of Scripture

Ever since the close of the apostolic age the church has been engaged in theological conflicts in which both parties have appealed to the authority of the Bible. Very early in the church's history the canon of Scripture was established. This narrowed the scope of

the conflict to some extent but did not diminish the intensity of it. The establishment of the magisterium served to preserve order in the church as a whole; it determined what was orthodox as far as public teaching goes, but private opinion cannot be regulated, and the magisterium itself was made up of people whose opinions differed. Two ecclesiastical teachers could appeal to the same Scripture to support contrary doctrines, as indeed Jesus and the Pharisees came up with different interpretations for the Old Testament. The Ecumenical Creeds may have been hailed as a rule of faith, but they set out to confess the chief articles of belief, not to provide a hermeneutical principle for the canon. For instance, one might agree with all of the articles of the creed and yet have a position on soteriology which is contrary to John's or Luke's or Paul's.

For Moltmann the hermeneutical center of the Scripture is eschatology, the expectation of the future and the effect of that expectation on the present. Whether Moltmann is talking about Abraham, the Exodus, the Prophets, or the Corinthians, he is chiefly interested in what they expected and how that anticipation changed their lives. Thus the message of the church today consists of a call to anticipate the kingdom of God and, correspondingly, to embark upon the journey of conquest.

This does not mean that Moltmann overlooks the cross of Jesus. On the contrary, Moltmann insists upon what he calls the eschatologia crucis. If anticipation of the kingdom is the chief objective of the kerygma, the memory of the cross is the medium of the message.

Thus, applied to hermeneutics, if the anticipation of the kingdom is the center of the promise, the memory of the cross and resurrection constitutes the center of the proclamation of its fulfilment. Not only is the cross inseparable from the resurrection; neither can dominate nor obscure the other. They constitute one event. The counterpart of that event is the hopeful striving, the expectant conflict of the "exodus church," which is the contemporary disciples of the crucified, risen, and coming Jesus.

For the orthodox Christian church, "eschatology" has always had a transcendent meaning. Some of this may be due to what Moltmann calls Hellenization, but this contention cannot be proved because when one reads the Apocalyptic writings one finds the same transcendental note. In systematic theology, "eschatology" refers to the teachings concerning death, life after death, the παρουσία, and the last judgment. Various sects have insisted on including the millenium as a legitimate biblical eschatological doctrine, but the orthodox church as a whole has taken a negative position on chiliasm (for example, Confession, XVII).

The term "kingdom of God" was at one time identified with the orthodox church as the leadership of a Christian society, or else with "Christendom," society itself. But it was not long before church and society came into conflict with one another, and the church came to view Christendom as a mixed blessing, while it thought of itself as the spiritual empire co-existing with the human city and in dialogue with it. There followed a period of intense conflict between the

church and the Christian society, marked by various attempts to define civil and ecclesiastical preprogatives until the age of Innocent III, when the church emerged as the de facto feudal suzerain over the state. That was a delicate balance which was lost as soon as the church tried to claim legal suzerainty as well. The structure of the spiritual empire crumbled, its institutions were discredited, the identification of the church with the kingdom of God was over. A reaction set in depicting the church as nothing more than a secular organization, while the "kingdom of God" passed from the realm of the realizable in history to the theoretical structures of the theologians. It became an ideal to be realized. And the majority opinion of the theologians who had not been completely secularized was that the realization of the kingdom required some kind of return to the conditions of the thirteenth century.

For Luther the kingdom was not an ideal, but an evangelical reality.[3] Luther could speak of "three kingdoms," the first being the structure of God's Providential rule over the creation, the second being the church, not the institutional church but the hidden (abscondita) church, and the third being the transcendent eschatological estate of the blessed. In an important way these were really only one kingdom, for all were under the same King and His ultimate purposes were the same even though the structures through which He realized these purposes differed.

---

[3]Werner Elert, The Structure of Lutheranism, translated by Walter Hansen (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962), pp. 258-261.

The Reformed position held that the "kingdom of grace," through which the pilgrim progressed, was a visible, institutional entity which the church was obliged to realize in history. As a result of this difference, one might too quickly conclude that Moltmann's eschatology, with its completely visible church, would be more at home with the Reformed than with Luther. Ultimately this may be the case, but historically, the Reformed tendency has been to identify God's providential blessing with His eschatological approval, a doctrine which Moltmann with his eschatologia crucis would repudiate.

In his own historico-eschatological jargon Moltmann affirms the grace of God toward man, and he places the locus of this grace in the sense of promise, at the hermeneutical center. The questions he then brings to the Scriptures are not the traditional ones. Moltmann asks where the God of promise has revealed His faithfulness, and he finds this primarily in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, though the prior revelations to Israel are important to point out God's consistency as well as His radical freedom to adopt new ways. Along with the promise Moltmann finds the demand for parapatetic discipleship, but also anticipant discipleship. This demand gathers together an eschatological community which hopes for the kingdom of God under the conditions of the world, and moves toward the horizon beyond which it knows the future will dawn, bringing with it the new conditions of the kingdom of God.

How can the orthodox church evaluate Moltmann's Theology of Hope? There are two items which are incompatible with orthodox doctrine. The

first is the closed universe; the other, Moltmann's unfortunate mixture of Law and Gospel, which prevents his church from existing in and co-operating with any given historical society. As to the former, Moltmann may be able to produce a substantial polemic against positivistic historicism, but he is able to apply it only to the future. The past is still sealed up within a closed, Kantian system. That system rejects a priori those miracles in which God revealed His grace. The second incompatibility consists in the way Moltmann describes promise, that is, as primarily agenda. To achieve blessedness, who receives the promise will accept and fulfill that agenda. In orthodox theology one must first be blessed in order to undertake the agenda. These faults are the more unfortunate because Moltmann knows the Scripture as well, and because he sympathizes with the Christian Church. But we must classify him as a heterodox writer and theologian the writer of a theology which the church cannot accept as orthodox.

Moltmann and Modern Historical Epistemology

The previous section compared Moltmann's eschatology and hermeneutics with their classical orthodox counterparts. The following section is concerned with the study of history in our time and with how Moltmann's theology of hope "takes history seriously." As this subject is presented the reader is asked to remember once again Moltmann's claim that, while for Schweitzer, while history swallows up eschatology, for Schweitzer and for Bultmann, eschatology swallows up history, the new historico-eschatological school does justice to both.

Since so much of Moltmann's historical study has been devoted to the Bible, and since, as was noted in Chapter II above, there was an impasse between historical reason and the knowledge of faith, the matter of historical epistemology seems to be the critical point. The author has made use of R. G. Collingwood's work, The Idea of History, as representative of the best of modern, post-Positivistic, yet non-theological treatments of historical epistemology. Certain theologians, namely Knox, Thielecke, and Pannenberg, whom Moltmann either quotes or refers to, have also been brought together beside Theology of Hope for purposes of comparison.

What is an event?

Every historician speaks of events. Events are the matter of history. And events are important for Moltmann, too; for his eschatology is grounded in events. Does that mean hope is grounded in fact, or perhaps in facts? Moltmann is able to speak rather comfortably about the fact of the crucifixion, but prefers the term "event" which includes occurrence and interpretation when speaking of the resurrection, although sometimes it is evident from the context (for example, "mere event") that this distinction is far from consistent. It is not clear, then, whether when Moltmann speaks of the resurrection as an event he means it as something less than fact or something more than fact.

> John Knox distinguishes a "fact" from an "event." The latter is the basic category for an analysis of history and the way in which it is known. One cannot speak of an historical subject.

> From this it follows that one cannot point to Jesus without indicating the Christian community, which is the response that constitutes a part of the "Christ-event." Under this procedure, the New Testament does not stand outside of the church as an objective kerygma, but appears in its true identity as a concretion of the earliest portion of the community's memory, representing the living continuity of the present church with its origins. Jesus Christ, church, and New Testament are viewed as an internally related triad after the analogy of the known, the knower, and the knower's interpretation of the known.[4]

Now Knox is using "subject" and "object" language here which Moltmann will not accept, nevertheless, if the New Testament is an "interpretation of the known," and Jesus is "the known," then the "event," the "triad," is not the same thing as the fact. The event is greater than the fact because the fact alone is not part of human consciousness as the event is.

Compare this with Collingwood's analysis of the "inside of the event."

> When a scientist asks why a piece of litmus paper turns pink he means to ask the occasions on which pieces of litmus paper turned pink. When the historian asks why Brutus stabbed Caesar, he means to ask what Brutus thought that made him decide to stab Caesar. The cause of the event, for him, means the thought in the mind of the person by whose agency the event came about: and this is not something other than the event, it is the inside of the event itself.[5]

By this standard, is the church the "agent" by which the kerygma came about? Is the "thought" of the historical Jesus that "made him decide" to go to the cross the real "inside of the event" upon which eschatology depends? Moltmann does not see the question as being this

---

[4]Richard R. Niebuhr, Resurrection and Historical Reason (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), pp. 62-63.

[5]R. G. Collingwood, The Idea of History (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949), pp. 214-215. This work is based on a series of lectures written in 1936.

clear-cut. The church and Jesus are both agents of history, but also products of it. Their thoughts are not so much the "inside" of events as they are the creatures of the historical situation, particularly the "horizon of expectation."

Suspension and tension

Moltmann is essentially in agreement with Collingwood, only instead of "thought" produced by an "agent," Moltmann finds as the true inside of the event eschatology, the promise-oriented aspect of the event, which is a product of "the future" as seen from the historical subject's horizon of expectation. Collingwood says,

> By the outside of the event I mean everything belonging to it which can be described in terms of bodies and their movements. . . . By the inside of the event I mean that in it which can only be described in terms of thought. . . . The historian is never concerned with either of these to the exclusion of the other. He is investigating not mere events (where by a mere event I mean one which has only an outside and no inside) but actions, and an action is the unity of the outside and inside of an event.[6]

Collingwood sees the future as a product of the present. Moltmann sees the reverse. But substitute the term "horizon of expectation" for the term "thought" in the passage just quoted from Collingwood. See that the meaning is hardly changed. For both Moltmann and Collingwood the content of history is tension, tension between the historical subject and his expectations. Because Collingwood sees the future as a product of the present, he would say that historical events are attempts to change or create expectations. Moltmann would disagree. He says,

---

[6] Ibid., p. 213.

> If events are experienced within the horizon of remembered and expected promises, then are experienced as truly historic events. They do not then have only the accidental, individual, and relative character which we normally ascribe to historic events, but also have an unfinished and provisional character that points ahead. Events experienced within the horizon of promise and hope bear the mark of something still outstanding.[7]

They are "still outstanding" because the hope did not originate with the historical subject. What the subject did have was a glimpse of the future. Rather than creating expectations, events, viewed this way, represent attempts to realize expectations.

> The facts of history must be understood not as process complete in themselves but as stages on a road that goes further and elements in a process that continues. Events experienced this way must be passed on because in them something is seen which is determinative for future generations. On the other hand, they may be freely interpreted and actualized by each new present, since they are never so firmly established that we could restrict ourselves merely to ascertaining what they once were.[8]

Thus history, for Moltmann, is the science of this tension that lies between the future which has been partially revealed and the subject's historical situation. Moltmann uses the word "suspension,"[9] a term indicative of instability but also of freedom. Suspension is always between two poles. The future is one pole, the other is the remembered promise, a word from God that calls forth the future.

Reason and faith

The last question to be considered here under Moltmann and historical epistemology has to do with the role of faith (or perhaps

---

[7]Jürgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope, translated by James W. Leitch (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), pp. 107-108.

[8]Ibid.

the role of hope) over against reason in the interpretation of historical events. Moltmann, as was demonstrated in Chapter II above, took care not to subject the secular reality, the Wirklichkeit with which every historian works, to the faith-judgments of a small group of people, lest theology become an obscurantist discipline. To avoid this, that is, to escape what has been called the second side of the impasse, Moltmann insists upon some kind of historical-critical hermeneutics rather than existential, "kerygmatic" theology.

Moltmann here agrees with the position of Helmuth Thielicke, who, in reaction to the neo-orthodox contention that the Gospel needs no historical verification, claimed that more objectivity was needed if the kerygma was to do its job.[10] According to Thielicke, there are at least three good reasons for historical-critical examination: (1) Historical reason may not be supressed, but must be redeemed as part of the total man; (2) The boundary between faith's uniqueness and other knowledge must be determined; and (3) Historical criticism must determine whether or not its results contradict the content of the Easter kerygma, with the stipulation that truth is indivisible, and therefore faith cannot be grounded in a non-event.[11] Moltmann would add, however, that hope is really "grounded" in the event of the future, but that knowledge of the future depends upon the promises, which in turn revolve around Jesus and his resurrection. The resurrection, whatever it may mean historically for Moltmann, is certainly not a non-event. It is an

---

[10]Helmut Thielicke, "The Resurrection Kerygma," The Easter Message for Today, translated by Salvator Attanasio and Darrell Guder (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1964), p. 79.

[11]Ibid., pp. 79-84.

"eschatologically new" event. And the "exodus church" created by the resurrection brings the redemption for human reason. As for the uniqueness of the faith, Moltmann would say that other knowledge depends upon empirical investigation whereas Christian Faith knows the reality of its hope. Hope cannot be empirically investigated in advance. But, because the God of the promise has revealed His faithfulness, therefore He can and does lay His claim upon the reason.

Reason alone does not attribute historical events to the agency of God. Indeed, Collingwood denies that God is, properly speaking, an historical subject, or even an historical object. To Collingwood, the Old Testament is not history at all; true history begins with Herodotus. Pannenberg has taken exception to Collingwood's claim saying that the latter is only interested in methodology, in Historie and not Geschichte, and that Herodotus, whom Collingwood (after the Western academic tradition) calls "the father of history," was really only the father of Historie, that is, of a methodology for ascertaining facts.[12] The facts, however, are not Geschichte. For that, a new understanding of history is necessary.[13]

Is God, then genuine subject matter for history? God can be known by revelation through faith. But the "revelation" and "faith" that Pannenberg, and after him Moltmann, talk about are not special, particular, or even theological. They are available in universal history, although one must begin with particular events to gain knowledge of them.

---

[12]"Redemptive Event and History" in Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics, edited by Klaus Westermann (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966), p. 320.

[13]Ibid.

Here is an even greater difficulty: can a God who does not exist, or at least does not yet exist, be known? If He is known, then will He be in fact what He already is in theory? In Chapter IV the question was begged as to whether God's being and rule were separable. Pannenberg's contention is that they are not. God's being depends upon His rule.[14] Since God's rule has not yet come, then, if Pannenberg is right, God's being is still in the process of becoming. But reason must then have an object for its knowledge. And if God still does not exist then He cannot be the object of reason's knowledge. Therefore no man can say that he "knows God."

Moltmann, as was pointed out in Chapter IV, differed from Pannenberg because of the latter's interest in events, which caused him to lose track of the promises, leading him to "retain the Greek cosmic theology in principle, though making it eschatological from the standpoint of present epistemology."[15] Moltmann does not retain the Greek cosmic theology because he does not tie revelation to events. Events belong to the province of reason, like facts, while the promise that interprets them, the "inside of the event," belongs to the province of hope. God's rule is not an event. But His being, and therefore His rule, can be known to the one who hopes for it.

For Moltmann there is an even more compelling reason for separating God's being from His rule. This is the <u>eschatologia crucis</u>, the contradiction of the cross from which God rules and yet does not rule. The

---

[14]See Chap. IV, fn. 50.

[15]Moltmann, p. 78.

one who hopes knows the contradiction of the cross (in this sense the cross is an event), and in it he knows God. On the cross, God's being is in contradiction to His rule, and there the matter would well rest but for the resurrection which announces the union of God's being and His rule for the future.

Is Eschatology an Adequate Hermeneutical Center?

This final section of the "Critique of Theology of Hope" builds upon what was discussed earlier in this chapter. The same definition of "a hermeneutical center" applies. Here it is the author's concern to deal with a printed criticism of Moltmann, to question the consistency of using Bloch's atheistic eschatology as a philosophical point of contact for Christian theology, and to make a personal evaluation of Moltmann's position.

Dymale's questionable criticism

Every book that presents a new way of interpreting the Bible, Theology of Hope, is bound to have its critics. One early criticism that appeared in the popular press was Herbert Dymale's written from an evangelical viewpoint in Christianity Today.[16] He accuses Moltmann of by-passing the question of the historicity of the resurrection, of interpreting the event without establishing it in fact and thereby simply accepting the principle of analogy which was described above as the first side of the "impasse." It has been the position of this paper that Moltmann does not treat history the way Ernst Troeltsch did; this

---

[16]Herbert Dymale, "What Kind of Hope is Adequate," Christianity Today, XV (June 18, 1971), 9-10 (877-878).

has been demonstrated with material from Theology of Hope. Dymale does not give Moltmann enough credit when he says the following:

> Little is gained by side-stepping the issue of historicity. As important as hope is, we dare not attach it to less than the historic data of an empty tomb and eyewitnesses. Moltmann's refusal to take seriously the question of historicity suggests an attempt to build a socio-ethical structure by capitalizing on the ready-formed sympathies implicit in the name CHRISTIAN sic .[17]

Is this a fair criticism? Moltmann takes history far more seriously than Dymale would appear to admit. Moltmann's Überlieferungsgeschichte is a method of approaching data which even the Positivists would admit as "historical." However, Dymale issues an important caveat when he points out that

> Student activist groups at Tubingen have openly attacked professors and denounced the New Testament, particularly the death of Christ. Everything in the Bible that is not in line with improving society or outright revolution is, they have said, meaningless and irrelevant.[18]

Moltmann himself says that our own understanding of history is historically conditioned, therefore Dymale's insinuation that the activists influenced Theology of Hope fits in even with Moltmann's own analysis. This may explain why in Moltmann's later works the theology of hope is allowed to drift in favor of a political gospel. But in Theology of Hope Moltmann definitely does not denounce the death of Christ. Without denying the truth contained in Dymale's reference to the situation at Tübingen, his primary criticism fails to take into

---

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

account Moltmann's methodological solution to the impasse of historical understanding of the New Testament, namely, Überlieferungsgeschichte.

The gospel according to Bloch--Moltmann's weakness

It appears to this writer that Moltmann's greatest weakness is not with his historical methodology, but rather with his metaphysical system that underlies his eschatological understanding of history. This system is very difficult to pinpoint in Theology of Hope because Moltmann does not describe it. He works with it. One cannot cite metaphysical treaties in Moltmann, one cites practical conclusions that follow from Moltmann's use of Bloch's principle of hope. For example

> This is why all proclamation stands in eschatological tension. . . . It is valid only to the extent that it is made valid. It is true to the extent that it announces the future of the truth. It communicates this truth in such a way that we can have it only by confidently waiting for it and wholeheartedly seeking it.[19]

For both Moltmann and Bloch, hope binds the individual to a specific program that he can find in his historical situation at the point where his vision of the kingdom intersects the horizon of expectation. This program is usually connected with an eschatological community. This limitation is not due to biblical exegesis, but to the metaphysical system of Bloch, for whom there is no real gift in the theological sense.

---

[19]Moltmann, p. 326.

The writings of Bloch make it clear that for him, a true child of the Renaissance who has adopted the literary style as well as the Weltanschauung of the optimistic, humanistic, universal man, Prometheus is normative, Christ is merely a symbol of the same aspiration, and the first Gospel is announced in Genesis 3, not by Yahweh-Elohim, but by the snake.

> But there is in us not only the dim Adam whose thirst to know good and evil was indeed quenched by Jesus the Savior and Aesculapius, the white, whitened, returned serpent of paradise. Standing above Adam is the dim Lucifer, and for his longing to be like God sic , for his truly divine parentage and heritage, not even Jesus himself has brought a recurrence, a clarifying justification, and the triumph of his essence that would clarify God himself.[20]

Bloch credits early Christian Gnosticism for the identification of salvation with what the church properly calls "the Fall." The Ophites and Naasenes, whose cultic names are derived from vocables meaning "serpent," seized upon the concept of knowledge expressed in the temptation of Eve.[21] Bloch presents two curious reasons for containing the Christian Gospel in the assertion "eritis sicut deus":

1. The close connection between that Gospel and his own philosophy, "S is not yet P."
2. The claim that this Gospel "needs no demythologization."[22]

This is not true atheism, as Bloch claims it is. It is Humanism, but Humanism of a more eschatological variety than either classical or

---

[20]Ernst Bloch, "Christ, or the Uncovered Countenance," translated by E. B. Ashton, Man on His Own (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970) p. 109.

[21]See also Hans Jonas, The Gnostic Religion (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958), pp. 92-94.

[22]Ernst Bloch, "Religious Truth," translated by John Cumming, Man on His Own, p. 115.

Renaissance Humanism; indeed, it is anthropotheism. But by the term "anthropotheism" this writer does not wish to impose upon Bloch's metaphysics a false interpretation based on a static idea of what man is. He only wishes to question the need to go to such lengths in philosophy in order to make a theological truth seem more real to the modern reader. Indeed, this is only the beginning, Bloch goes on to posit metempsychosis as a device through which the individual who works with creative hope in the present can lay claim to some future blessedness. Even Plato only spoke of metempsychosis in the last book of the Republic, a section which he himself called a "myth," but such a doctrine "needs no demythologization," according to Bloch.

Bloch's confession of atheism only confuses the matter. Atheism predicates non-existence to God. But if "S is not yet P," how can the basic tenet of atheism be understood? Does Bloch mean that God does not yet exist, or that God does not yet not exist? Whichever way we take Bloch's assertions, for Moltmann, a confessed theist, God is an essential factor for the future. And if He is the God of Jesus, then He is holy, and His holiness contradicts any Humanism that may develop. Moltmann has partly overcome this weakness by separating God's being from His rule, and applying the formula "S is not yet P" only to the latter. God is coming, for Moltmann, God's kingdom is coming. But its "goal can be attained only by obediently following the promise."[23]

---

[23]Moltmann, p. 325.

A personal evaluation

This writer is convinced that Moltmann has found a methodology of historically-conscious biblical interpretation that avoids the impasse of understanding described in Chapter II. He has found a principle of analogy that is not heteronomous to eschatology and yet is able to deal with the facts of history, the methodology of focusing attention on the traditions and on the situations that bounded the horizon of expectation of those who tried to realize past promises. But Moltmann has limited his theology by presenting it strictly in terms of Bloch's humanistic philosophy, a philosophy which, given the present horizon of expectation, directs hope, commitment, and promise to man as he is now, and charges him with the responsibility for realizing the pictures of perfection which come to him in the biblical promises. Specifically, for the present generation, the Christian community can identify its mission with that of the revolutionaries. One suspects that the dialectical-materialist "kingdom" serves the same function in that coming state which the doctrine of eternal life served in the capitalist state.

Moltmann's "exodus church" is a means to an end. It corresponds to Bloch's "church of the future" which seems to generate propaganda for the socialist millenium while silencing criticism of the classless, warless, hopeless society. Both churches, as their authors have presented them, direct people to "creative problem solving."

Such a church would be no church at all in the evangelical sense of that word. The promise ceases to be a gift, and becomes an advertisement. The hearer is not a beneficiary, but a consumer who is invited to do business with the future before it gains monopoly over

all men. He becomes totally committed to the kingdom not because it is free, but because it is so dear that it requires a lifetime to ammortize the debt upon it. This is a pointed and effective way of preaching God's Law; it lays the burden of producing the eschaton upon the conscience, then provides no power.

Creative problem solving, theologically considered, is a demand for love, for ἀγάπη, something which flesh and blood cannot give. There is a place for the cross in Moltmann's theology, but only as a theological interpretation of the contradiction between the eschatological community and the society. One may speak of faith, but only as it works itself out in service to the world. This is a secularized form of fides caritate formata, the Tridentine heresy.

Most of the system of Theology of Hope can be redeemed from its weaknesses and become a useful expression of evangelical theology. To be so redeemed, it needs a concept of grace that does justice to the biblical doctrine of God's concern for the individual's eschatological existence, and that manifested itself in the atoning death of Jesus and the miracle of his resurrection. This miracle, and indeed all miracles, must not be demythologized. This is a difficult thing to say, but miracles are not offensive because of human knowledge; they are offensive because they call nomological existence as such into question, and man depends upon νόμος in all of its forms to justify his existence. A miracle expresses a holy will outside of man's control, and when men see it, as in the case of the Galileans, "fear seizes them all." Man

cannot manipulate the universe by learning its νόμος any more than he can attain righteousness from the moral νόμος. On the contrary, "There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared" (Psalm 130). Once a man surrenders to the Forgiver, then he can say with confidence, "I wait for the Lord . . . and in His Word I hope."

There is much more that could be said about Theology of Hope. However, this critique is concerned only with assigning a label to Moltmann's system which will identify its place in current theology, and to give reasons for the label chosen. The writer regrets that so many words were required for purposes of clarification with a view to dealing with as much of Moltmann's material as possible.

The point of departure for this critique was the relationship between Moltmann and the historical orthodoxy. So a summary conclusion regarding that relationship, heretofore denied the reader, is to be expected. Moltmann does not stand in the orthodox Christian tradition. But he writes in such a way that he seems to be sympathetic with it. In reality he rejects it. For all of Moltmann's polemics against positivism, he cannot escape that label himself, for he is committed to Kantian epistemology. He is different from Schweitzer in that he introduces the expectation of vindication rather than eternal tragedy. But in the essential <u>locus</u>, he is exactly like Schweitzer, for his universe is closed to grace. Moltmann's God is a God who will act, not a God who acts. Grace is a future noumenon, not a present phenomenon. It is a crippled grace, a demythologized grace, a helping of those who help themselves, even if it is not a crass, materialistic self-helping.

This writer has used the word "anthropotheistic" to describe Moltmann's theology. We ought to understand by this term that Moltmann's God is impersonal; either He is the historical process itself, or He is noumenal, but so remote that He can be apprehended only within the historical process. This is not Christian because, as was stated above, the burden for producing the eschaton is laid upon the human conscience, and no real grace is communicated through the promise.

But Moltmann's work need not be in vain. The Law of God needs to be proclaimed in every age, and much of Moltmann's material proclaims it well, when grace and the hope of heaven are then used properly to console, regenerate, and equip the hearer, then a genuine Church can be cultivated which will be on its way to the Kingdom of glory.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Moltman, Jürgen. Theologie der Hoffnung. Munchen: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1964.

- - - - -. Theology of Hope. Translated by James W. Leitch. New York: Harper and Row, 1967.

Books

Capps, Walter. Time Invades the Cathedral. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972.

Collingwood, Robin George. The Idea of History. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949.

Niebuhr, Richard Reinhold. Resurrection and Historical Reason. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957.

Pannenberg, Wolfhart. Theology and the Kingdom of God. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969.

Russell, D. S. The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964.

Rust, Eric G. Towards a Theological Understanding of History. New York: Oxford University Press, 1963.

Articles in Collections

Aldwinckle, R. F. "Did Jesus Believe in God? Some Reflections on Christian Atheism," New Theology No. 5. Edited by Martin Marty and Dean Peerman. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968.

Bloch, Ernst. "Christ or the Uncovered Countenance." Translated by E. B. Ashton, in Man On His Own. New York: Herder and Herder, 1970.

- - - - -. "Incipit Vita Nova." Translated by E. B. Ashton, in Man On His Own. New York: Herder and Herder, 1970.

- - - - -. "Religious Truth," Translated by John Cumming, in Man On His Own. New York: Herder and Herder, 1970.

Bultmann, Rudolf. "New Testament and Mythology" Kerygma and Myth. Edited by Hans Werner Bartsch. New York: Harper and Row, 1961.

- - - - -. "A Reply to the Theses of Julius Schniewind," Kerygma and Myth. Edited by Hans Werner Bartsch. New York: Harper and Row, 1961.

Cobb, John. "A New Trio Arises in Europe," New Theology No. 5. Edited by Martin Marty and Dean Peerman. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968.

Goppelt, Leonard. "The Easter Kerygma in the New Testament," The Easter Message for Today. Translated by Salvator Attanasio and Darrell L. Guder. New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1964.

Hordern, William. "Introduction," New Directions in Theology Today I. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966.

Kadai, Heino. "History and Hermeneutics," A Project in Biblical Hermeneutics. Commission on Theology and Church Relations, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, 1969.

Keen, Samuel. "Hope in a Posthuman Era," New Theology No. 5. Edited by Martin Marty and Dean Peerman. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968.

Marsch, Wolf-Dieter. "Zur Einleitung: Wohin- - jenseits der Alternativen," Diskussion uber die "Theologie der Hoffnung." Munchen: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1967.

Metz, Johannes. "Creative Hope," New Theology No. 5. Edited by Martin Marty and Dean Peerman. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968.

Moltmann, Jurgen. "The Future as Threat and Opportunity," Translated by Shierry Weber. The Religious Situation. Edited by Donald R. Cutler. Boston: Beacon Press, 1969.

- - - - -. "Introduction," Man on His Own. New York: Herder and Herder, 1970.

Niebuhr, Richard Reinhold. "Archegos," Christian History and Interpretation. Edited by W. R. Farmer, et al. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967.

Neuhaus, Richard John. "Wolfhart Pannenberg: Profile of a Theologian," Theology and the Kingdom of God. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969.

Pannenberg, Wolfhart. "Redemptive Event and History," Translated by Shirley Guthrie. Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics. Edited by Claus Westermann. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966.

Thielicke, Helmut. "The Resurrection Kerygma," The Easter Message for Today. Translated by Salvator Attanasio and Darrell L. Guder. New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1964.

Zimmerli, Walther. "Promise and Fulfillment." Translated by James Wharton. Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics. Edited by Claus Westermann. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966.

Periodical Literature

Braaten, Carl E. "Toward a Theology of Hope," Theology Today, XXIII (July 1967), 208-226.

Dymale, Herbert. "What Kind of Hope is Adequate?," Christianity Today, XV (June 18, 1971), 9-10 (877-878).

Hiers, Richard. "Eschatology and Methodology," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXXV, no. 2 (1966), 170-184.

Kaufman, Gordon. "Theological Historicism as an Experiment in Thought," Christian Century, LXXXIII (March 2, 1966), 268-271.

Mildenberger, F. "Auferstanden am dritten Tag nach den Schriften," Evangelische Theologie, XXIII (1963), 265-279.

Moltmann, Jurgen. "Exegese und Eschatologie der Geschichte," Evangelische Theologie, XXII (1962), 31-66.

- - - - -. "The Realism of Hope: The Feast of the Resurrection and the Transformation of the Present Reality." Translated by Gilbert A. Thiele. Concordia Theological Monthly, XL (March 1969), 149-155.

- - - - -. "Toward a Political Hermeneutic of the Gospel," Union Seminary Quarterly Review, XXIII, no. 4 (1968), 303-323.

Pannenberg, Wolfhart. "The Kingdom of God and the Fondation of Ethics," Una Sancta, XXV, no. 2 (1968), 6-26.

Scharlemann, Martin. "Hermeneutic (S), " Concordia Theological Monthly, XXXIX (1968), 612-622.