

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
Dictionary of  
the Ecumenical  
Movement

Edited by

Nicholas Lossky

José Míguez Bonino

John Pobee

Tom F. Stransky

Geoffrey Wainwright

Pauline Webb

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2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

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All biblical quotations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version,  
except where otherwise mentioned.

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The second edition  
of this dictionary is dedicated to  
Marlin VanElderen,  
executive editor  
of the World Council of Churches 1994-2000

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**Geoffrey Wainwright** (Methodist Church of Great Britain) holds the Cushman chair of Christian theology at Duke University, Durham, NC, USA. He was for long a member of the WCC commission on Faith and Order and has since 1986 co-chaired the international dialogue between the World Methodist Council and the Roman Catholic Church. His books most related to the scope of this dictionary are *The Ecumenical Moment* (1983), *Methodists in Dialogue* (1995), *Worship with One Accord: Where Liturgy and Ecumenism Embrace* (1997), and *Is the Reformation Over? Catholics and Protestants at the Turn of the Millennia* (2000).

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# FOREWORD

More than ten years have passed since the first edition of this *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* was published. The decade since 1991 has seen momentous changes in the lives of people and in church and society on all levels, changes which have left their mark on the ecumenical movement as well. The end of the bipolar confrontation during the cold war and the emergence of the process of “globalization” are only two of the significant features of this new era at the beginning of the 21st century. Ecumenically we see, on the one hand, a new emphasis on traditional denominational identities and, on the other, a return of religion into the public space, combined with a growing emphasis on inter-religious dialogue.

If it was a risk to publish a *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* a decade ago because of the ever-changing character of the ecumenical landscape, it is even more of a risk to publish a second edition now when many of the traditional orientations of ecumenism are challenged or called into question. A new generation has moved into the positions of leadership in the churches for whom the ecumenical struggles and advances of earlier periods are no longer part of their personal memory, but at best a significant feature of recent history. Ecumenical leadership formation has become a priority in all churches and regions.

Since its first publication, this dictionary has become an indispensable tool for all those who search for basic information and reliable orientation in the highly complex environment of contemporary ecumenism. The writers and editors have carefully reviewed and updated the original entries and added a substantial number of new ones. Together they have produced a resource reflecting the richness and diversity of ecumenical thought and action, of events and persons.

As my predecessor, Emilio Castro, wrote in his preface to the first edition: “The energy of the ecumenical movement has always been the creative visions, solemn covenants, courageous engagements and fervent prayers of countless women and men, churches and groups. But the ecumenical story is also one of meetings and reports and documents, programmes and declarations and statements, theological convergences and pastoral guidelines. As this movement has, by God’s grace, grown and expanded, the amount of written material with which one must be acquainted in order effectively to build on the past would fill a good-sized library. For those without ready access to such documentary resources, this *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* will be indispensable; even for those who have such access it will provide a reliable starting point for their explorations.”

May this revised second edition of the dictionary once again prove to be a source of inspiration and reliable orientation for all those who have accepted the call to the unity and renewal of the church as a personal commitment. Together

with the readers and users of this dictionary, I pay tribute to the editors and contributors for their dedication which has made this second edition possible. Their efforts are a living testimony that, in spite of all setbacks and uncertainties, the ecumenical movement remains the decisive impulse for the future of the church.

Konrad Raiser  
General Secretary  
World Council of Churches

Geneva, October 2002

# PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

On its original publication in 1991 this *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* was given a gratifyingly positive reception. For some time a new edition has appeared desirable, and it has now become possible. Without changing the basic character of the work, the editors have carefully considered which of their own entries required updating and offered authors the opportunity to do the same. They have also omitted or replaced certain articles, and added over 40 new ones.

In the intervening years, turns of thought and event have occurred whose outcome it is too early to predict. In the WCC arena, some have detected and sought to promote a “paradigm shift” in the ecumenical movement from Christocentrism to an intentionally more expansive Trinitarianism, from the history of salvation to care for the planet, from reconciliation among Christians to common life in the entire human household; others have called for a “return” to scripturally based concerns for the unity of the church and the spread of the gospel; in any case, much of the 1990s was devoted to looking for a “common understanding and vision”, and the search has continued since the Harare assembly of 1998. In Faith and Order, reflection on ecclesial unity has focused on the concept of *koinonia*; while Pope John Paul II in his encyclical letter *Ut Unum Sint* (1995) re-affirmed the “irrevocable commitment” of the Roman Catholic Church to ecumenism and invited the leaders and theologians of the churches to “a patient and fraternal dialogue” about the possible exercise of a universal ministry of unity in a new situation.

On the ground, inter-religious strife, particularly between Christians and Muslims, has rendered dialogue in this area both more necessary and more difficult; while the question of a “theology of religions” has emerged into prominence among Christian thinkers. Geopolitically and economically, the phenomenon of a “globalization” originating chiefly from North America has been both welcomed for its material advantages and questioned on account of its ideological accompaniments and ecological consequences. Socially and morally, matters of gender relations, human sexuality and bio-ethics have deepened or multiplied tensions and controversies not only between the churches but also within them. In Europe, the historic churches have undergone a steep statistical and cultural decline in the face of both secularism and “new religious movements”; while in parts of Africa and Asia, the number of Christians, often of a broadly “Pentecostal” kind, has grown rapidly. The collapse of the Soviet empire has brought with it both evangelistic opportunities and territorial competition among the evangelizers; while the situation of Christians and other religionists in China has attracted worldwide concern about their treatment.

The six editors undersigned wish to thank contributors who have met their requests for revisions of the original articles or for fresh compositions. Warm

thanks are also due to many members of the WCC staff for advice and in some cases updating texts. A number of friends of the Council have also provided invaluable help in the preparation of this edition.

Jan Kok, publisher of the World Council of Churches for nearly 30 years and originator of the first edition of this dictionary, ended a long and courageous struggle with cancer early in 2002, less than a year before this second edition is to see the light of day. An early death robbed us also of the literary skills and encyclopedic knowledge of Marlin VanElderen, and the new edition is dedicated to the memory of this dear friend and colleague who played such an important part in the production of the first edition. In the circumstances, we have been particularly appreciative of the willingness of Craig Noll to place his editorial competence in the service of this enterprise.

Nicholas Lossky  
José Míguez Bonino  
John S. Pobee  
Tom Stransky  
Geoffrey Wainwright  
Pauline Webb

February 2002

# INTRODUCTION

If church history continues to be written, future historians will almost certainly regard the ecumenical movement as one of the most remarkable features of Christianity in the 20th century. To a degree never witnessed before, Christianity became a worldwide religion, spread over the whole inhabited earth. And an unprecedentedly large number and range of Christian communities, hitherto separated by doctrinal and institutional factors, set about a serious process of consultation, cooperation, communion and even union among themselves, inspired by the prayer of the Lord that his followers “be one”, “so that the world may believe” (John 17:21).

A hundred years is a long time for the duration of any “movement” in history. Memories fade, and apparently secure results are forgotten. After a century, it seems wise to draw together a record of this period, while some of the participants who have devoted the greater part of long adult lives to the cause of Christian unity are still present in the flesh. There is, moreover, much work still to do; several traditionally controversial issues remain unsettled among the churches; new questions arise for the Christian faith as a global culture develops with its own characteristics in economics, geopolitics, the religious field, science and technology, information and communication; the kingdoms of this world have not yet become the kingdom of God and of his Christ (Rev. 11:15). To take stock of the past, to interpret the present and to look forward into a new stage of Christian existence are therefore indispensable exercises. This dictionary is intended as a contribution to these ends.

In its beginnings, the modern ecumenical movement was largely the work of Christians in Protestant churches, Reformation and Free, who were committed, in the words of John R. Mott around the turn into the 20th century, to “the evangelization of the world in this generation”. Then, and increasingly, the Orthodox churches began to play a significant part, notably in the sequel of the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s proposal, after the first world war, for a “league of churches”. After initial suspicions, and then cautious beginnings after the second world war, the Roman Catholic Church at the Second Vatican Council recognized that other Christians, by baptism and faith in Christ, enjoy “a certain, though imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church”, and that their churches and ecclesial communities are “not without significance in the mystery of salvation” – so that finally the way was open for Orthodox and Protestants on their side to take the Roman Catholic Church seriously as an ecumenical partner. By enlisting contributions from Protestants, Orthodox and Roman Catholics, and now Evangelicals and Pentecostals, the dictionary seeks to show how the ecumenical movement has been perceived and lived within various confessional perspectives.

Much of the history of the ecumenical movement has to be focused on the World Council of Churches, for this has been since its foundation in 1948 the

institution in which the earlier “Faith and Order” and “Life and Work” movements coalesced, and since 1961 the evangelism and mission represented by the former International Missionary Council. Further ramifications have brought into the purview of the WCC such matters as adult and theological education, medical care, international law and politics, social ministries, public media, and dialogue with people of other living faiths and ideologies. The Roman Catholic Church, which numbers the majority of Christians among its adherents, is not a member of the WCC but is engaged at many levels with its work. Rome has also conducted bilateral dialogues with several of the other Christian World Communions through their respective organizations, and most of these other communions have in turn conducted such dialogues with several respective partners among their own number. This “classical” ecumenism has its critics within all camps, but most notably among Evangelicals who actively oppose some tendencies within the larger movement, and among Pentecostals who have tended to ignore it. More recently, there are some promising signs of change in these directions; and for their part, the WCC and the long-established Christian world communions need the contributions of the Evangelical and Pentecostal visions. The dictionary gives perhaps most attention to studies and activities sponsored by the WCC, but it also devotes considerable space to the ecumenical interests of the Roman Catholic Church and of other Christian families, and it seeks to take account of criticism addressed to classical ecumenism.

At its best, the ecumenical movement has been a search for unity in the truth as it is found in Jesus (Eph. 4:21) and into which the Holy Spirit leads (John 16:13). It has not been a matter, on the one hand, of creating a super-orthodoxy uniformly formulated or, on the other, of doctrinal compromise or indifference. Rather, the churches have together searched the scriptures, the venerable Tradition of the church, and the belief and practice of the contemporary communities with the aim of reaching a “common expression of the apostolic faith today” (to adopt the title of a Faith and Order study). The dictionary contains many articles on doctrinal themes, showing how the churches have converged in their teachings on God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the church, redemption and salvation, grace and faith, the word and the sacraments, and the last things, while indicating also the continuing bones of contention in such matters as pastoral authority and the constitution of ordained ministry.

At its best, the ecumenical movement has embodied a search for the will of God in every area of life and work. It has been a matter neither of a pretentious “building of the kingdom” nor of a quietism that remains unmoved by the world’s needs. Rather, the churches have sought to engage in the studies and action for the furtherance of “justice, peace and the integrity of creation” (to use the title of the programme set out by the Vancouver assembly of the WCC in 1983). The dictionary contains many articles on social, political, legal, cultural and ethical issues from perspectives within the Christian faith.

At its best, the ecumenical movement has sought to discern, proclaim and participate in the Triune God’s eternal and constant purpose for humankind and the mission of God to the world. It has not been a matter either of weakening witness to Jesus Christ or of refusing the truths that can be found outside the institutions of Christianity. Rather, participating churches, whether members of the WCC or not, have “confess[ed] the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour”

and looked to “fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit” (to use the words of the membership basis of the WCC). The dictionary contains many articles on aspects of evangelism and mission, of worship and prayer, of education and renewal in the churches, of care for the needy and the place of the poor in church and society, of witness to the powers that be, and of communication to the world and dialogue with those of other faiths and outlooks.

In the nature of the case, the ecumenical movement is a movement of people. It was the vision of committed individuals that led to the formation of the WCC. Once the Council was established, it was led and served by men and women from many parts of the world. The dictionary must commemorate them and all others who contributed to major ecumenical developments. But any list that is drawn up of such architects and pioneers of 20th-century ecumenism is bound to be incomplete and appear arbitrary. The editors are aware that theirs is, and they hope that the biographical sketches that are included in the dictionary will be seen as a few standing for the many. The index of names allows the reader to trace at least some of the contributions of figures who are not themselves the subject of an independent article.

Ecumenism exists at global, regional and local levels. As a contribution to the sharing of information throughout the churches, the dictionary contains not only articles of direct universal interest but also descriptions of ecumenical relations and activities in the several regions of the world. Moreover, our contributors have been encouraged to include, with inevitable selectivity, examples from very local situations.

Under the ecumenical umbrella, many special interests are at work: liturgists, ecologists, feminists, and several more. Much more often than not, the writers asked to contribute to the dictionary on these subjects have been chosen from among those sympathetic to the respective causes.

Articles in the dictionary are of several kinds. The longest type survey a major doctrinal theme, an entire area of activity; through manifold cross references in the body of the article (marked by an asterisk at the first occurrence) and a final listing of the principal related articles, they direct the reader to detailed items in the debate or to matters of related interest. Articles in the medium range look at more restricted but still weighty topics. Many of the shorter articles provide for quick reference on a precise question. The bibliographies have favoured publications in English, while not neglecting studies in other languages for which there is no English equivalent; they are not exhaustive, and the items they contain have often been chosen precisely because they yield further bibliographical information.

The editors themselves learned once more what it means to engage in team work. After seeking advice on contents and authorship from a widely representative larger board, the six co-editors corporately established the list of articles and of contributors to be invited. Then each editor took under his or her wing a batch of entries matching their own respective interests and competences. Very roughly speaking, Nicholas Lossky attended to the Eastern churches and some of the dogmatic concerns close to Orthodox hearts; José Míguez Bonino to the area of church and society and to matters of moral theology; John Pobee to geographical and cultural variety and to issues in theological education; Tom

Stransky to institutional histories and to matters of specifically Roman Catholic concern within the ecumenical movement; Geoffrey Wainwright to doctrinal issues in faith and order and to the dialogues among the Christian world communions; Pauline Webb to mission and evangelism, communication and renewal. Each editor, however, had the opportunity to make suggestions of detail for all the articles. Much of the minute biographical and bibliographical research was originally done by Ans J. van der Bent, on the basis of suggestions from contributors and editors. For this second edition, Pierre Beffa has brought the bibliographies up to date. The services of the WCC Library and the Language Service have been invaluable.

A word on illustrations. The subject matter of the articles in this dictionary does not lend itself easily to illustrations, and the choice made for the first edition was not always a happy one. It was therefore decided to include only photos – where available – of figures who served in their several generations and now rest from their labours.

# NOTES FOR THE READER

The arrangement of entries in the Dictionary is alphabetical. An *asterisk* in the text refers the reader to a substantial (though not necessarily major) mention of a word to which an entry elsewhere corresponds. At the end of many articles, “see also” sends the reader to yet other entries closely connected to their main themes. There are *no cross references to personalities*; here readers may consult the index of names.

Some *overlapping of information* in articles related to allied subjects has been retained to allow readers to find all the basic information on a specific subject in one article, without having to refer to others.

*Quotations* are short, and have been used only where they support a particular line of argument. The use of *footnotes* has been avoided: reference to works cited in the bibliographies are indicated by the name of the author(s) or title of book(s) in brackets in the text. Other references, also in brackets, give author’s name, title of work, and year of publication.

*Bibliographies* with entries include mainly English works. Where these are translations from other languages, this is indicated by “ET”. Some titles have been included because they themselves contain useful bibliographies. Older references are cited if they are still considered basic works.

In the *biographical sketches*, only the person’s major writings are cited.

Articles about sub-regions (e.g. South Asia) are alphabetized under that region (i.e. “Asia: South”). In a few cases, a single country constitutes a “sub-region”; other than these, there are no entries for individual countries.

*Information of a general nature*, which can be found in encyclopedias and other reference works, has not been included.

The editors have used *inclusive language* as much as they felt possible and certainly in cases where a text has been translated from another language. Some authors have maintained the traditional use of the pronouns “he/him/his/himself” when referring to God; others have avoided this use.

The length of time it has taken to collect all the articles, revised or newly written for this second edition, has meant that some texts are more up to date than others. This is inevitable in a project involving so many authors and areas.

The *list of contributors* gives the title and position of authors as known at the time of publication. The identifying sentence is followed by the title(s) of the article(s) written by that author. (Contributions by the six editors are included in this list.)

The editors believe that this second edition of the *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* will be a useful and reliable reference tool for many years to come. They would be grateful to be notified by users of any errors which may have found their way into the text, as well as to receive suggestions for

improvements in succeeding editions. These should be sent to the Publications Editor, World Council of Churches, P.O. Box 2100, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland.

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## ABORTION

THROUGHOUT the Old Testament numerous passages attest to the sacredness of human life within the womb (Job 31:15; Isa. 44:24, 49:1,5; Jer. 1:5; Ps. 127:3). In contrast, references to abortion are extremely rare. The most important such text is Ex. 21:22-23; even here, however, the reference is indirect. The text stipulates that if a miscarriage results when people are fighting, the guilty party shall be fined; if, however, the woman is killed, the assailant shall “give life for life”. According to the talmudic interpretation of this passage, feticide – unlike homicide – is not a capital offence, since the fetus does not become a person prior to its emergence from the womb. Before birth the fetus is an organic part of the mother. While abortion is thus distinguished from murder or homicide, it is always a matter of extreme

moral gravity in Jewish thought; when abortion is permitted, it is generally justified on grounds of compassion for the mother.

There are no explicit references to abortion in the New Testament. Nevertheless, the early church consistently condemned it in opposition to widespread abortion and infanticide in the Greco-Roman world. Christians found indirect support for their stand in the Septuagint translation of Ex. 21:22-23, which – unlike the Masoretic text – made a distinction between a “formed” and an “unformed” fetus and on this basis made even the accidental destruction of a “formed” fetus a capital offence. Tertullian held that the fetus is fully human from the moment of conception. Abortion was morally permissible, he believed, only when necessary to save the life of the mother. Augustine distinguished between the destruc-

tion of an “animated” and an “unanimated” fetus. Although he condemned abortion at any stage, he did not consider it homicide prior to animation (quickening).

In the 13th century Thomas Aquinas, following Aristotle, held that the infusion of the rational soul occurred about the 40th day following conception for males and about the 80th day for females. Aquinas’s doctrine of infusion of the soul – like Augustine’s earlier teaching concerning animation – provided the basis for a distinction in moral gravity between an earlier and a later abortion. Such a distinction was officially dropped by the Catholic church in the 19th century. In 1869 Pope Pius IX extended excommunication as the penalty for abortion to include the abortion of any embryo. The 1917 code of canon law required that all aborted fetuses must be baptized, clearly implying that the unborn fetus is fully human from the time of conception. This position was re-affirmed by Vatican II in *Gaudium et Spes* (1965) and by Pope Paul VI in *Humanae Vitae* (1968).

Luther and Calvin held that the fetus is both body and soul from conception. Both opposed abortion at any stage. Well into the 20th century, the major branches of Protestantism were closely aligned with Catholicism in this regard. Subsequently, many Protestants and some Catholics have begun to reinterpret the traditional Christian teaching concerning abortion in the light of a number of deep-rooted cultural changes, including new attitudes towards authority,\* the growth of cultural pluralism,\* a revolution in sexual morality, feminism,\* and dramatic new reproductive technologies (see **bio-ethics**).

Theologians and churches have responded to these movements in a variety of ways which can best be understood in terms of a continuum. Well known is the traditional Roman Catholic rejection of any form of abortion, which Vatican II equates with infanticide as “abominable crimes” (*nefanda crimina*: GS 51), a position that the Vatican representatives at the Cairo and Beijing conferences strongly supported. The catechism of the Catholic church (1996) affirms that “human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception” and that consequently “formal cooperation

in an abortion constitutes a grave offence”. As an authority for such a position it quotes the statement of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Donum Vitae III*, “Among... fundamental rights... one should mention in this regard every human being’s right to life and physical integrity from the moment of conception until death”, and that therefore “respect and protection... must be ensured for the unborn child from the moment of conception”. Many Protestants continue to defend a similar view, generally supporting anti-abortion legislation and defending the fetus’s right to life. At the opposite end of the spectrum is a second group which advocates the legal *and* the moral right of the woman to choose whether or not to have an abortion. A third group occupies the broad middle ground between these polar positions. While they differ widely among themselves, those who embrace this position believe that abortion may sometimes be morally justified. For them, abortion is not morally neutral; neither is it murder. While it is always evil, it is sometimes justifiable as the lesser evil or, alternatively, as the most responsible option available. In this view, primary responsibility for the abortion decision rests with the woman.

The WCC has not made any significant statement about abortion beyond recognizing that it presents a serious ethical problem and that most churches are opposed to it (Salonika 1959, Louvain 1971, Nairobi 1975). In the context of a discussion on family planning and population policies, the WCC’s Christian Medical Commission rejected the use of abortion as a means of population control (Zurich 1973). The Roman Catholic Church-WCC Joint Working Group document on “The Ecumenical Dialogue on Moral Issues: Potential Sources of Common Witness or of Divisions” (1995) highlights abortion as one of these potentially church-dividing issues.

In the abortion debate it is important to distinguish clearly between the moral and legal issues involved. Support for the right of a woman to choose an abortion does not in itself imply moral approval. Closely related to the question of a woman’s right to choose is the issue of public funding of abortion for the poor. Those who support such funding do so on grounds of social justice.

In addressing the abortion issue, the churches are confronted with the need to seek ways to alleviate the underlying causes and to provide alternatives to abortion through family planning, adoption and financial assistance. The most basic challenge to the churches is to nurture a fundamental respect for human life, including that of the unborn, both among their members and in society at large (see **life and death**). This respect – rather than the enactment of either restrictive or permissive legislation – is a prerequisite for the goal of preventing abortion without coercing women.

E. CLINTON GARDNER

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## ABRECHT, PAUL

B. 9 Dec. 1917, Cincinnati, OH, USA. Abrecht joined the staff of the WCC in 1949 as secretary for the study programme on Christian Action in Society, and became director of the Department (later Sub-unit) on Church and Society in 1954, a post he retained until his retirement in 1983. In this capacity he organized three ecumenical study projects: “The Responsible Society” (1949-54), “The Common Christian Responsibility towards Areas of Rapid Social Change” (1955-61), and “The Future of Humanity and Society in a World of Science-based Technology” (1969-79). He was also responsible for the organization and follow-up of the world conference on “Church and Society” (Geneva 1966). Secretary of the Ecumenical Commission on European Cooperation, later the Committee on the Christian Responsibility for European Cooperation, 1950-62, Abrecht was greatly influenced by the Oldham-Visser ‘t Hooft emphasis on ecumenical “study” of controversial social questions, and he enlisted contributions to ecumenical social thinking from talented Christian laypersons in economic, political, indus-

trial and scientific disciplines. From a Baptist family, Abrecht did post-graduate studies in economics at the University of California, in theology at Berkeley Baptist Divinity School, and in Christian ethics – under Reinhold Niebuhr and John Bennett – at Union Theological Seminary, New York. He edited the WCC’s periodicals *Background Information* (1959-69) and *Anticipation* (1969-83), and was author of *The Churches in Rapid Social Change* (London, SCM Press, 1961). The WCC’s theological journal *The Ecumenical Review* published an issue on *Church and Society: Ecumenical Perspectives* (Jan. 1985) in Abrecht’s honour, and he was guest editor of another issue of ER on *Fifty Years of Ecumenical Social Thought* (April 1988).

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

## ACADEMIES, LAY

LAY ACADEMIES are church-affiliated conference centres where individuals and social groups meet for encounter, dialogue, research and reflection-for-action. The oldest “academy” was founded in 1915 at Sigtuna, near Stockholm, by Manfred Bjorkquist, but most came into being in Europe after the second world war, many between 1945 and 1955. A European association of academy directors was established in 1956, and the Ecumenical Association of Academies and Laity Centres in Europe now includes some 90 centres in 20 countries, among them a dozen Roman Catholic and two Greek Orthodox member centres.

The term “academy”, used when the first German institute was opened at Bad Boll in 1945 by Bishop Theophil Wurm, one of the leaders of the Confessing Church,\* expressed the original working philosophy of such centres: “dialogue on the world’s agenda”. It derives from the Greek philosophical tradition, where Plato is said to have *educated* his students *in dialogue* while walking in the forest *akademeia*. The initiative for establishing academies was a response to the failure of the German churches to prepare themselves and their members to resist the ideological and political trends of fascism and Nazism and to render a prophetic witness. Academies were thus supposed to serve as centres of education – originally for laypeople but later for “the whole

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people of God” in order to awaken their conscience in political and social matters towards a “spirituality for combat”. Daily worship, Bible studies and theological discourse have always been basic elements in their conferences, seminars, workshops and consultations. Hospitality and sharing have also remained vital elements in the process of education and communication, predominantly led by lay experts from various fields.

Partly independently, partly through the sharing of experiences, insights and resources, lay academies also emerged in Asia, Africa and North America. In Asia they began working during the later 1950s and early 1960s in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Indonesia and India. In the 1960s Africa followed with centres in South Africa, Lesotho, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia, Ethiopia and Madagascar. The centres call themselves “Christian academies”, “ecumenical centres”, “institutes for the study of church and society” etc., and their programmes focus, according to their context, on issues arising from industrialization, nation-building and urban-rural problems, as well as on intercultural and inter-religious dialogue.

A first world conference of lay academies, organized by the WCC in 1972 at the Orthodox Academy in Crete, led to the formation of the World Collaboration Committee for Christian Lay Centres, Academies and Movements for Social Concern (WCOLC). Following the European association, regional associations came into being in Africa (Association of Christian Lay Centres in Africa – ACLCA) and Asia (Association of Christian Institutes for Social Concern in Asia – ACISCA), in North America (Ecumenical Christian Association of Retreat and Renewal Centres and Leaders in North America – NARDA) in 1980, in the Caribbean (Collaboration for Ecumenical Planning and Action in the Caribbean – CEPAC) in 1985, in Latin America (CONOSUR) in the early 1990s, and in the Middle East (Association of Training and Retreat Centres – MEATRC) in 1996.

At its 20th gathering in October 1997, WCOLC adopted the name OIKOSNET – “a global ecumenical network of laity centres, academies and movements for social concern working for just, participatory, sustain-

able and inclusive communities”. In conjunction with the WCC, it now relates to some 600 centres around the world, encouraging communication within the network through the interchange of information and experience, developing programmes in international studies, research, training courses and staff exchange, offering consultative and advisory services on personnel and programmes, and building relations with other agencies sharing similar concerns.

Following Vatican II, growing cooperation between the WCC and the Vatican Consilium de Laicis led to a jointly organized world conference on “New Trends in Laity Formation” in 1974 at Assisi. In 1976 WCOLC organized the first world courses for leaders in lay training (CLLT), which has become a regular annual project of the WCC and the regional associations.

The mission of the laity\* has figured prominently on the ecumenical agenda from the very beginning. One of the institutional first-fruits of this was the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey,\* whose first director, Hendrik Kraemer, wrote an influential book on *A Theology of the Laity*. Kraemer’s associate Suzanne de Diétrich developed a specific Bible study model (“the Bible in the one hand, the newspaper in the other”) which became prominent in the work of lay academies. The WCC’s Evanston assembly (1954) emphasized the role of the laity, which was confirmed at New Delhi (1961), where the ecumenical study on “The Missionary Structure of the Congregation”\* was initiated. Lay academies have played a vital role as instruments for the churches to put this mission into action.

The lay issue assumed new prominence on the WCC agenda after the Canberra assembly in 1991, and a world convention for laity centres, academies and movements for social concern was organized by WCOLC at Montreat, North Carolina, USA, in 1993. The theme was “Weaving Communities of Hope”. About 250 participants from laity centres in 70 countries joined for encounter, exchange and joint planning for action. The conference message, in the form of a “Letter to All God’s People”, confirmed the solidarity within the Network of Hope in all its particularities. Translated into more than a dozen languages, the letter inspired a num-

ber of new laity projects, including the Idris Hamid Institute in Trinidad, a worldwide training course for women, joint projects between centres in North and South.

A document from the Crete consultation (1972) stated: "Our task is liberation and social transformation... our centres have a great opportunity to become places where there is a creative 'doing of theology'... We also have a responsibility in the further training and re-orientation of the ordained ministry and leadership of the church." In pursuing these aims, lay academies have widely followed the principles of "Oldham's method", thus continuing and deepening the concerns of Life and Work through dialogue and confrontation (see **study as an ecumenical method**). They have become prominent agencies for ecumenical learning through relating local and regional concerns with global perspectives and challenges.

Consequently, after the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, many churches in Central and Eastern Europe started to establish and organize lay training institutes. With the advice and support of the Conference of European Churches, centres were opened in Hungary, Romania, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Poland, Lithuania, Estonia and Russia.

WERNER SIMPFENDÖRFER

## AFRICA

AFRICA, the second largest continent, offers a tremendous diversity of climates, vegetation and cultures, and of human and natural resources. The human resources include Caucasoids, Hamites and Negroids, who live in more than 50 countries, each with its own history. Recent research maintains that the first fully sapient human being emerged in Africa somewhere between 200,000 and 100,000 years ago.

A major reality of Africa today is the legacy of colonialization, particularly by England, France, Germany, Portugal and Spain. About 200 years of colonialism linked Africa ineradicably with European nations, linguistically, culturally and economically. While English, French, Portuguese or Spanish have become second languages in many African countries, some 2000 African languages hold their own as vernacular. To this

may be added Arabic. The principal religions are African Traditional Religions (ATRs), Christianity and Islam. These have not lived in watertight compartments but have interacted with each other, principally because traditional African thought and religions, having cultures of hospitality, tend to absorb ideas from elsewhere. Pluralism and diversity thus mark not only Africa as a whole, but also its various sub-regions and even local communities. This fact itself prescribes an ecumenical task – how to avoid violence and unnecessary strife, to seek unity without loss of identity and integrity, and to cherish mutual respect and support in spite of diversities and differences.

The creation of nation states out of congeries of tribes and ethnic groupings has made more evident Africa's brokenness. The new tribalism and tensions between neighbouring nations and tribes plague the new states. Neither the African politicians in power nor the Organization of African Unity (OAU) has been able to forge a unity of Africans across differences of tribe, race and gender. The OAU was established in 1963 as a symbol of unity and mutuality and as an instrument of decolonization and the new order in Africa, but after four decades it is still struggling politically and economically to find its identity and proper place in the modern world. A new organization, African Union (AU), created in Lusaka, Zambia, in July 2001, is a fresh attempt towards finding an African political and economic identity. In addition to this all-Africa attempt at forging links between countries, there are also sub-regional attempts such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADEC), and the Maghreb Union. These, for all their teething problems, serve as reminders that the economic and political health of African states cannot be achieved by individual efforts alone but only in concert with other states. The task is made more difficult because the churches, which claim to be committed to reconciliation,\* are themselves tribal churches, and they fail to translate their rhetoric into action. For example, in the 1980s the Methodist Church of Ghana was in the throes of a struggle between the Fante and the Ga. The central issue was: From which tribe would the president of the conference

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come? In the 1990s the churches of Rwanda and Burundi were torn apart by tribal conflict between Tutsis and Hutus, plunging the whole Great Lakes region into an armed confrontation which is still going on.

South Africa has been a special story. Until about 1994, in the name of the ideology\* of apartheid,\* its government divided the nation along racial lines and consigned all but whites to a life of misery and poverty. Racism\* was the principal ecumenical issue here; it has brought the churches at home and the world church together, to work on the legacy of problems left by that iniquitous system.

Rwanda and Burundi in the mid-1990s offered another illustration of the cutting edge of the contemporary ecumenical agenda. There tribalism expressed in bitter struggle between Hutus and Tutsis issued in widespread intertribal massacres, in which some church leaders were identified as active participants. This has thrown into sharp relief the urgency of the churches and the ecumenical movement working together to secure mutual respect for the common humanity of all in spite of differences of ethnicity and denomination.

### THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN AFRICA

Africa's history has been much influenced by the North in cultural development, economics, politics and religion. Belgian, British, French, German and Portuguese colonialism\* left indelible marks on the political and economic organizations and ideologies, with varying implications for church-state\* relationships, a vital ecumenical issue in Africa. In colonial times, Christian missions in some countries appeared to be ecclesiastical fronts of the North Atlantic colonial incursions. This encounter with the North was a mixed blessing. It brought Africa into contact with modernity and a bigger world, but also contributed to its under-development. The culture of modernity, fuelled by the dream of progress and built on the foundations of science and reason, may serve tremendous social and cultural developments. But in the process many Africans have been disoriented by the growth of great cities and urban life.

Christianity, of course, was in Africa long before colonialism. North of the Sahara

it was present in the Maghreb, Roman North Africa, by A.D. 180, and in Egypt from the earliest times. Egyptian Christianity, said to go back to St Mark, grew into a dynamic force, with its famous catechetical school in Alexandria producing such theologians as Clement, Origen, Dionysius of Alexandria and the great Athanasius. Today, in the face of Islam, the Egyptian church is relatively small. Similarly, Islam all but wiped out the Christianity of the Maghreb, which produced martyrs like Perpetua and Felicitas (d.203) and thinkers such as Cyprian of Carthage and Augustine of Hippo. Here one finds today only a struggling band of Christians within an environment politically, economically and culturally dominated by Muslims.

North African Christianity fell before Islam partly because the church was bitterly divided between Donatists and Catholics. That division was symptomatic of a deeper failure truly to engage the native Berbers. Rather, Christianity imposed a Latin culture on them and responded insufficiently to Berber spirituality, religious epistemology and ontology. The ill-will created in the Berbers opened the gates to the Muslims.

This history raises the missiological and ecumenical issue of whether the people of Africa must become Europeans to be adjudged Christian. Must the African be Christianized, or must the Christian faith be Africanized? This issue continues today in pleas for African and black theologies and in the discussion of indigenization (see **theology, African**). There can be no reconciled church as long as a faith captive to an alien culture\* is imposed on a local people. The ecumenical imperative of ensuring that in the oikoumene and around God's throne no race is excluded (cf. Rev. 7:9ff.) has become more urgent because of the changing demography of world Christianity, whose centre is located in the churches of the South, especially Africa. Among other things, this calls for a renewal of the ecumenical movement whose structures were created when the North was the centre of world Christianity.

In Africa south of the Sahara, Christianity came in fragmented form in the 19th and 20th centuries from the churches of Europe and North America. The denominational-

ism\* of the Northern countries was transported to the South, even though the original causes of the division were not part of the experience of Africans. Often there was no love lost between sister churches. In Portuguese Africa (Mozambique and Angola), and also in the former Belgian Congo, Roman Catholics used the privileged position arising from their intimate connection with the colonial administration to the disadvantage of Protestants. In British colonies, Anglicanism, though not officially established as in England, still had an advantage over other denominations.

Furthermore, the missions, partly as a result of comity agreements ("denominations by geography"), resulted in tribal churches, compounding social divisiveness in nations welded from loosely knit collections of tribes. In Uganda, for example, political parties have followed the Protestant-Roman Catholic divide: the Uganda People's Congress, which is Protestant, particularly Anglican, was nicknamed United Protestants of Canterbury, while the Democratic Party, being Roman Catholic, was nicknamed *Dini ya Papa* (the religion of the pope). Acrimony, divisiveness and hostility have been the result of differences in belief, doctrine and sacramental practice, with far-reaching consequences for national political life. Thus the pursuit of the ecumenical imperative is hardly ever a purely theological issue.

Christian missions were influenced by a crusader mentality. The missionaries viewed Africans as having no valid religious insights at all. They also practised a kind of social Darwinism, which held that peoples of the tropics conducted their business so badly that peoples of the temperate zone had a divine right to manage their affairs for them, including exploiting their resources. For such reasons Christianity as represented by historic churches looked foreign and oppressive – a sore for African Christians and a whipping boy for African politicians. African Instituted Churches\* represent a response to the foreignness and oppressiveness of historic churches, providing "a place to feel at home". These churches are at once a renewal\* movement in the church and a further fracturing of the *una sancta*. The quest for the selfhood of the African churches, the tabernacling of the Word in Africa, is thus a

key issue in ecumenism. Africa desires its rightful place in the oikoumene, a place that respects and responds to the identity and integrity of Africa, as well as its hopes and fears.

Christian missions introduced or became closely involved in Western education and health care in Africa; and ecumenical efforts in Africa have expended considerable energies and resources on institutions of social service. The idea of ecumenism can thus easily be reduced to the transfer of material resources from the churches of the North to the churches of the South. As Africa has gone from crisis to crisis, besieged by famine and drought, floods and violations of human dignity through dictatorships, the valid involvement of the ecumenical movement in social services has loomed much larger than it should, producing a distorted impression of ecumenism.

On the other hand, this involvement in social services has spread the Christian conscience beyond Christians themselves. The church has consequently become "a third race", a new culture. In places it may be the only force besides the political party in power. Since many of the politicians have been reared in the church, they are often not unsympathetic to the churches. The net effect is that churches have become influential, though often not sensitive to the pluralism\* of society and the consequent need for tolerance of others and for dialogue between diverse religions and cultures (see **dialogue, interfaith**).

Hence the changing face of the ecumenical debate. Earlier discussions were shaped by a culture ensouled with the idea and ideology of Christendom. Today, the Christendom ideology cannot be granted a privileged position but must yield to the culture of religious, social and political pluralism. The Christian churches' self-understanding as people of God cannot be looked at in an exclusive sense. Because Christianity is growing faster in Africa than in other continents, the future of world Christianity may well depend on how African Christianity develops.

While ecumenical circles and the churches of the North seek and treasure the insights of a buoyant African Christianity, a critical issue is how these insights are appro-

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appropriated. The tendency is still to do so by agglomeration – “Let us add on Africa” – while leaving the ground rules unchanged. For example, global ecumenical meetings operate according to parliamentary procedure, which is quite alien to Africa. Although there is a “democratic” vote, the decisions seldom become the agenda of the region.

Another difficulty is the type of issues taken up ecumenically. The date of Easter or Christmas, for example, is not a live issue for most Africans, who are unlikely ever to encounter Orthodox Christians who celebrate Easter or Christmas on a different date. Some ecumenical discussions thus introduce issues to Africa which would not otherwise be on its agenda. This argues for a clear distinction between ecumenical issues best handled at the local or regional level and those introduced at the global level, though it is important that local and global ecumenism be dynamically related.

### ISLAM IN AFRICA

Like Christianity, Islam has a history of rich involvement and rapid growth in Africa. It arrived in the area south of the Sahara before Christianity. Through trade, principally along the gold, ivory and slave routes across the Sahara, Islam was in West Africa in the middle ages, leading to the establishment of the Ghana, Mali and Songhai empires. Long before the Portuguese appeared on the east coast of Africa, the Arabs had established commercial and connubial relations with the Bantus from Sofala to Somalia, leading to the rise of Islamized African communities called *habashis*. Statistically, Islam has maintained a strong presence in the population of Africa, at present only slightly less than that of Christianity, as the table opposite indicates.

Christianity and Islam are rivals in Africa because both have become imperialized. Christianity became the official religion of particular nations and empires such as Armenia, Assyria, Byzantium by the 4th century, as it would be later in Belgium, Portugal and Britain. Soon after the Prophet's death in 632, Islam became identified with the caliphate, which ruled a vast empire from the western Mediterranean to central Asia. These two religions are also rivals because both are missionary religions.

Muslims have widely criticized Christianity for corrupting itself into a Western religion, unfaithful to the simple teaching of a semitic prophet. The crusades from the 11th to the 13th centuries largely did away with the respect enjoined by the Qur'an for *'ahl-al-kitab*, the people of the book – Jews and Christians. Christians in some countries were marginalized as minority communities (e.g. Copts in Egypt) and subjected to social legislation, and they closed in upon themselves.

The ecumenical perspectives of both the Qur'an and the Bible have been compromised by subjecting their socio-political teachings to the interests of particular empires and nations. A key issue for African ecumenism is relations between Christians and Muslims in places such as northern Nigeria, Sudan and Gambia: how to recognize the legitimate place for Christians and other non-Muslims in predominantly Muslim societies, and what it means today for a Muslim to call Christians and others *'ahl-al-dhimma*, people of protection, who have full rights to the protection of the Islamic state. A similar issue arises for Muslim minorities in predominantly Christian societies. Ghana is one of several African nations to seek a solution by declaring itself a secular nation, despite evidence of vibrant religiosity of one type or another. The practical question remains as to how Muslims and Christians can live together so that they show they worship the one God, the Creator, respect freedom of conscience\* and religion, and promote the culture of peace and solidarity.

### ECUMENISM IN AFRICA

There are three kinds of ecumenism in Africa. First is the unstructured and natural ecumenism which happens in the nuclear or extended family, which may often include Christians, adherents of an ATR and even Muslims. These different religious affiliations do not lead people to opt out of family obligations and involvements. The rites of passage – birth, puberty, marriage, death – bring the family together, transcending religious affiliations. At these points, the divisions of religions and churches appear as alien and unnatural impositions on Africans. The other side of this is that “natural ecumenism” excludes those outside the kin

## MAJOR AFRICAN RELIGIONS, 1900-2000

Year	Population (millions)	Christianity (% of total pop.)	Islam (% of total pop.)	ATR (% of total pop.)
1900	108	9	32	59
1970	357	40	40	20
1990	615	45	41	14
mid-2000	784	46	41	13

Source: D. Barrett ed., *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Study of Churches and Religions in the Modern World*, 2nd ed., Oxford, Oxford UP, 2001.

group, thus giving it only limited ecumenical significance. Yet it is fair to speak of an ecumenical element in traditional African society. An Akan (Ghanaian) proverb states that “we are each and every one a child of God and no one is a child of this earth”; thus, in spite of differentiation, no one may be excluded from the one household of God.

A second form is enforced ecumenism. Harsh circumstances, from natural disasters to political oppression, have forced African churches and religions to come together to work for survival. A statement on “Renewal out of Africa”, issued by an all-Africa consultation on ecumenical theological formation in August 1995, noted that “when the church focuses on the needs of the world, its pain and suffering, denominationalism becomes relativized and ecumenical commitment is strengthened”. The dictatorship of Kwame Nkrumah (1957-66) forced the Protestant churches and Roman Catholics to work together to seek the dignity and peace of the Ghanaian people. When Idi Amin Dada banned 28 Christian denominations in Uganda in 1973 for alleged subversive activities, some of the groups came together under the wings of the Anglican church. In the face of the lawlessness of the government, Roman Catholic and Muslim leaders sent a joint memorandum to Amin in 1976, documenting their claim that the regime was responsible for the killing, disappearance and flight of hundreds of thousands of Christians. Perhaps the best-known example of enforced ecumenism was the cooperation of the South African Council of Churches and

the Catholic bishops conference of Southern Africa to combat apartheid.

There is another type of enforced unity, illustrated by the decision of President Mobutu of Zaire in 1970 to oblige all the Protestant churches to form a united Protestant church, the *Eglise du Christ au Zaïre* (ECZ), which would be the only Protestant church recognized by the state. However, the ECZ member churches (*communautés*) retained their previous ecclesiastical traditions, structures and fraternal ties. Such enforced ecumenism is of limited value because the basic differences remain untouched. When the pressure is taken off, the separate groups generally revert to denominationalism.\*

Third is structured ecumenism, consciously or unconsciously taking its impetus from the Edinburgh conference of 1910 and the modern ecumenical movement. A good illustration is the creation of more than 30 national Christian councils in Africa. In Ghana, for example, the Christian council was set up in 1929 to foster and express the unity\* of the church, to uphold the principles of comity among the churches, to enable member churches to consult together concerning their Christian witness\* and service, and to promote study of how social and cultural changes in national life affect the task of the church. The Uganda Joint Christian Council was founded in 1963 to assist churches to come together to listen to the voice of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, a voice of love, forgiveness and understanding. It has become the visible expression of the desire of

Ugandan Christians to forget the past and to work together for a better future.

As a result of being together in the councils, churches have begun union discussions. Some have been successful, as with the United Church of Zambia; others have failed, as in Ghana and Nigeria. Such negotiations have been the brainchild of European missionaries and have been influenced by the experience of the united Church of South India. But this model, growing out of the European Protestant ecumenical orthodoxy of the 1930s, may not be suitable for the present time. Meanwhile, the councils themselves, locked into social services, have often become little more than development agencies, thus losing their strictly ecumenical *raison d'être*.

In recent years structured ecumenism has taken shape in sub-regional instruments, including the Fellowship of Christian Councils in West Africa (FECCIWA) and the Fellowship of Councils of Churches in Eastern and Southern Africa (FOCCESA) (since 1999 FOCCISA: Fellowship of Christian Councils in Southern Africa).

Following discussions during an international consultation of national Christian councils in Hong Kong in 1993, FECCIWA was inaugurated in February 1994; its founding members were the councils of Gambia, Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone; Togo, Senegal, Benin and Nigeria joined later. The goal was to build links for stronger fellowship, witness and action among the councils of churches in West Africa in the face of rampant crises in various countries. At the inauguration David Dartey of the Ghana Christian Council said: "We have become more and more aware that our individuality cannot save the world for us. We need to pull together as we deal with life issues. This is the essence of ecumenism... How do we..., a unique ecumenical body, face the prevailing challenges as an organic union with a unity of purpose and mission of facilitating the liberation of the peoples in our part of the world?"

FOCCISA for its part brings together councils in Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. It operates a documentation and information centre (EDICESA) and a resource and training centre. Such sub-regional ecumenical

bodies may prove to be an important network for the future, providing the space needed to debate ecumenical issues. Many national councils of churches have become channels for resources from Northern agencies; and some agencies have themselves become operational in certain countries, making them hesitant about a church or ecumenical identity, especially if their resources derive from government. In any case, the pursuit of social action has led to a tendency among NCCs not to debate ecumenical issues as such.

Other structured ecumenical expressions in Africa include Bible societies,\* churches' medical associations, ecumenical study groups (as in Kampala) and Christian literature associations, which promote joint publication, distribute literature and encourage local writers. Multimedia of Zambia prepares Bible study materials and coordinates Bible study groups. A Christian service committee of the churches in Malawi includes both Protestants and Roman Catholics who work for integral human development, motivating churches and their members for obedience to Christ through service in society. Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation and joint or united theological colleges (Trinity College in Ghana; Trinity College, Umuahia, Nigeria; United Theological College, Zomba, Malawi; Protestant Faculty of Theology, Yaoundé, Cameroon) were established to foster ecumenism through training together persons for different denominations. Many of these institutions appear to be in crisis because the churches' commitment to them is less than to their own denominational colleges and Bible schools.

The constituencies of most of Africa's ten national or sub-regional associations of theological schools encompass Protestant and Roman Catholic seminaries, Bible institutes, university departments of religious studies and other programmes of theological studies. They sponsor conferences and institutes and publish Bible commentaries and studies in Christian education and church history which take the African context seriously. Such efforts foster ecumenical perspectives and spirit. Six continent-wide associations foster cooperation between church-related institutions of theological education and ministerial formation.

Theological education in Africa is so conscious of the pluralism of society that it is more inclined to pursue a curriculum of "religious studies" than of "divinity", which is typically sectarian and almost exclusively devoted to Christian theology. Even those institutions which retain the term "divinity" take religious pluralism seriously. These departments of religious studies introduce students to the entire religious dimension of human life, with all its personal, social and philosophical aspects, and seriously engage indigenous African religions, the scriptures and the historical development and theologies of the main religions in Africa. Above all, these departments seek to bring together persons of different faiths in fruitful human encounter.

The Project for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa was founded in 1960 (under the name Islam in Africa) as a channel for exploring the concerns and responsibilities of African churches in their relationships with Muslims. It reflects the challenge of the large-scale movement of people and ideas across communal and international frontiers and brings the insight of faith and commitment to bear on shared ideals and common failings. Its study of the impulses which motivate and inspire committed people to engage in mutual sharing and exchange has made an important ecumenical contribution.

There are several continent-wide ecumenical bodies. The All Africa Conference of Churches\* (AACC), with headquarters in Nairobi, was inaugurated in Kampala in 1963 as an organ of pan-African cooperation. Over the years, despite problems of mismanagement, the AACC has become an instrument of ecclesiastical cooperation and political influence as well as a public expression of the maturity Protestant Christianity seeks. But it too labours under the legacy of history, principally the multiplicity and poverty of the local churches and the formidable language divide between French, English and Portuguese. With an organizational structure and style of operation based on the WCC model, the AACC is struggling to find its own identity as an African ecumenical body.

Evangelicals\* founded the Association of Evangelicals of Africa and Madagascar (AEAM) in 1966. Although not known for

its openness to non-evangelicals, AEAM is a seminal embodiment of ecumenism in that its membership includes people from various denominations who cooperate and share fellowship. In local areas, however, its churches often function as para-churches. Influenced heavily by its moneyed supporters from the North, the AEAM too needs to find its African identity.

There is also a pan-African Roman Catholic organization, the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM), inaugurated by Pope Paul VI during a 1969 visit to Uganda. Its secretariat is in Accra, Ghana. SECAM has considered some ecumenical themes, such as human rights in various African countries.

Ecumenism in Africa is taking its own course and shape, with denominational consciousness still much in evidence. Mostly it takes the form of occasional celebrations of unity at assemblies, but it is also expressed in meaningful practical cooperation at the national and international levels. Critics may observe that African churches are at a disadvantage in international ecumenism, because its structures and styles are very alien to most of them. The agenda is often not theirs, and even when it is Africans are often addressed in a paternalistic manner. Some of the structures, such as the councils of churches, do not seem to reach the grassroots, and the funds for ecumenical projects often come from overseas. But there are also some bright spots. In South Africa in the 1980s, for example, the Pretoria Council of Churches, especially under the leadership of Nico Smith, was revitalized as an instrument for uniting local churches in their action both in society as a whole and in the black townships. It was motivated by a clear vision of the need for Christian unity and united social action, identifying needs of people such as those imprisoned without trial, bringing pressure to bear on the authorities, arranging legal representation and sending field workers to visit those in distress and need in their homes.

Equally significant was an experiment in integration and reconciliation through sharing of meals together in one another's houses in a country where persons of different races have not normally shared communion. Such koinonia has fostered bonds between churches and races, creating a deep sense of

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religious commitment and political awareness.

African ecumenism is fragile and has shortcomings. Nevertheless, the ecumenical efforts are a measure of the growing consciousness of the church in Africa, of a shared identity as Christians despite differences of language and denomination, and of the celebration of unity, common faith and commitment in spite of diversity.

See also **All Africa Conferences of Churches**.

JOHN S. POBEE

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## AFRICAN INSTITUTED (INDEPENDENT) CHURCHES

THE INITIALS AIC, as the designation of a genre of African expressions of Christian faith of a great variety, are themselves understood in different ways: "African *Independent Churches*" signals that they are independent in their origin and organization, though since the historic churches founded by missionaries in Africa are at least juridically independent from their mother churches, this description is somewhat confusing. "African *Instituted Churches*" signals that they came into being by the initiative of Africans.

A range of other names indicates the variety in the genre. "Separatist churches" un-

derscores that they have broken away from historic churches, e.g. the Church of the Lord (Aladura) broke away from the Church Missionary Society in Nigeria. "Spiritual" or "Pentecostal" emphasize the Holy Spirit and experiencing Pentecost anew, and offer a range of techniques for the emotional enhancement of religious experience (e.g. Musama Disco Christo Church, which broke away from the Methodist Church of Ghana). The "Ethiopian movement" emphasizes the importance of Africans controlling their own affairs in both religious and secular spheres. "Zionist churches" (e.g. the Christian Catholic Apostolic Holy Spirit Church in Zion, founded between 1917 and 1920 by Daniel Nkonyane) are primarily interested in the adaptation of Christian teaching and liturgy to indigenous cosmology and ways of worship; they stress expressive and emotional phenomena and cater to the strong fears of witchcraft among Africans.

Scholars have suggested other interpretative names for AICs of different types, such as "Witchcraft Eradication Movement", because of this preoccupation with exorcism by the power of the Holy Spirit.\* "Messianic movements", built around a messianic leader, serve both as compensation for thwarted social aspirations and as an agency of socialization. In fact, except for Limba, founder of the Church of Christ in South Africa, such leaders have not normally claimed the title Messiah. "Prophetic movements" are so called because they are built on a strong leader, a prophet. This is possible in part because of the scarcity of leadership, which encourages persons with initiative to claim authority. Some AICs are called "apostolic churches", and the Church of the Twelve Apostles of Ghana, for example, includes apostles in its ecclesiastical polity. "Syncretistic movements" reflects a judgment that these churches mix Christian beliefs with traditional African customs and ethos; the designation "naturistic movements" similarly highlights the mixture of Christian belief and traditional African cosmology. These names are not mutually exclusive; two or more may be applied to the same church.

In 1981 AICs constituted 15 percent of the total Christian population in sub-Saha-

ran Africa. At present, assuming a growth estimated at more than 2 million per year, their adherents probably number over 83 million, thus constituting a significant section of African Christian demography.

The AIC represents first of all "a place to feel at home". Western missionaries were largely negative about African culture and Africans were alienated from the gospel dressed in European garb. To that extent, the AICs represent an indigenizing movement in Christianity. They in effect protest the verbal and cerebral mode which puts Western Christianity beyond the reach of people's comprehension and experience. Instead, the AICs offer a celebrative religion, making considerable use of symbols, music and dance. Thus they represent cultural renaissance in reaction to the cultural imperialism of the mission work of the historic churches.

Second, while Western churches emphasize Christology, the AICs make the Holy Spirit the focus of belief and practice. While they firmly believe in the person of Jesus Christ,\* they appear more at home with the Holy Spirit, especially since Christ has ascended into heaven. This affirmation of the Holy Spirit does not just emphasize sanctification,\* as in Methodism, but also points to the Spirit as power made manifest in healing, exorcism, glossolalia and mission. This emphasis on the Spirit asserts both continuity and discontinuity with the many spirits of the heritage of traditional African religious epistemology and ontology. It also represents an experiential supernaturalism which takes seriously the promise of Christ to send his Spirit. To that extent, the phenomenon is a protest against the tendency of the historic churches to institutionalize every manifestation of the Spirit.

Third, the AICs represent a radically biblicalist movement. Taking off from the Protestant claim that the Bible is an open book for individual interpretation, the AICs have seen the Bible as a source to legitimate a wide variety of basic Christian patterns, often of special relevance to local conditions or of special appeal to local people. Thus in Southern Africa the biblical stories regarding the bondage of Israel have become a paradigm for their circumstances. Old Testament accounts of polygyny (e.g. Solomon) and taboos are very much of interest to them. The im-

portance of dreams, visions and trances as media of God's revelation\* (cf. Gen. 40; Matt. 1:18-24) is stressed. The penchant for such visitations reflects the mysticism of the AICs, an experience of the divine on earth.

Fourth, the churches of the West and their daughter churches in Africa have the stamp of individualism, which characterizes society after the industrial revolution. That goes against the ethos of African societies, which proverbially view life in communitarian terms. The AICs thus act as a surrogate or auxiliary tribe, creating a self-selected community (e.g. Holy Apostles of Aiyetoro in Nigeria). This sense of community is manifested in pilgrimages to their holy cities, mutual aid in resources, and the sharing of a common vocabulary.

From the foregoing, it can be argued that the AICs represent a renewal movement, particularly in terms of effective evangelism,\* better communication of the gospel than was received from the churches founded from the West. For the Pentecostals in particular, glossolalia is a supernatural way by which God wishes the so-called heathens to be converted to Christianity. Indeed, the expectation of a speedy parousia of Christ is a reason for Pentecostal missionary engagement.

Since the historic churches have at best been suspicious of AICs, regarding them as a heathenization of Christianity, it is not surprising that they have rarely found a place in the ecumenical movement. The WCC currently includes only two: the Church of the Lord (Aladura) from Nigeria, which claims a membership of over 1 million, and Eglise du Christ sur la terre par le prophète Simon Kimbangu (EJCSK, Church of Christ on Earth by the Prophet Simon Kimbangu), or Kimbanguist Church, from the Democratic Republic of Congo, which claims a membership of 5 million.

In South Africa the Interdenominational National Ministers have sought to bring together ministers of historic churches with those of AICs. However, there are some notable obstacles. Many AIC leaders are unable to participate in the business of regional ecumenical bodies because of the language used (English or French). On the other hand, AIC leaders complain that they are seldom if ever elected to executive posi-

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tions in these bodies. Ecumenism for the AIC is based on a different model: the masses of people who unite in prayer, rather than the institutional leaders. Ecumenical relations between historic churches and the AIC are thus largely limited to cooperation in specific ventures.

On the other hand, African Instituted Churches have made efforts to create their own ecumenical networks. For instance, in Zimbabwe in 1972 independent churches created the ecumenical movement of Zimbabwean independent churches known as *Fambidzano* (cooperative of black – Shona – churches). These churches train their pastors through theological education by extension programmes. In 1978, the Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAICs) was founded in Cairo and registered in Kenya as an international organization. The OAICs works through seven regions, with its headquarters in Nairobi. The regions are represented in the governing body, the general assembly. The OAICs has four programmes: theological education by extension, participatory development, women's issues, and research and communication services. OAICs is an associate member of the All Africa Conference of Churches and is in working relationship with the World Council of Churches.

The phenomenon of AICs on the world ecclesial stage poses a number of issues. Their vibrancy and growth call for a new approach to the tests of being church. How may we find appropriate categories to describe and evaluate their life and mission? There are difficult epistemological considerations to be taken seriously when making abstractions about the meaning of a belief system, especially by those who do not subscribe to it. Second, their presence is a reminder of the limits to well-worn theological approaches. The AICs' constituency is largely non-literate and poor, and they do not respond to neatly defined and articulated theological positions.

JOHN S. POBEE

■ A. Anderson, "The Hermeneutical Process of Pentecostal-Type African Initiated Churches in South Africa", *Missolonia*, 24, 2, 1996 ■ M. Assimeng, *Saints and Social Structures*, Tema, Ghana Publ., 1986 ■ C.G. Baëta, *Prophetism in Ghana*, London, SCM Press,

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## AIDS

THE ACQUIRED immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) caused by infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) was first diagnosed in the USA in 1981, although it had been spreading silently for several decades before. It has now reached all continents and assumed epidemic proportions in many countries. By the end of the year 2000 more than 36 million people were living with an HIV infection and some 22 million had already died of AIDS. In the hardest hit regions, particularly in the southern part of sub-Saharan Africa, 20-30% of the adult population are currently infected and more than 13 million children have been orphaned. It is not only the major cause of premature death; it is beginning to destroy families and communities, with severe consequences for the economy and the social coherence of these nations.

A global response to the pandemic began to evolve in the mid to late 1980s, and laid the foundation for continuing national and international efforts. Governments and civil society organized prevention campaigns, addressing the main ways of HIV transmission: sexual intercourse (heterosexual or homosexual); sharing of blood-contaminated

needles (mainly in the context of intravenous drug use), blood and blood products; and mother-to-child transmission during pregnancy, delivery or breast-feeding. The United Nations has tried to coordinate these efforts through a co-sponsored programme called UNAIDS.

Prevention efforts have evolved considerably since the early 1980s, away from an exclusive focus on individual behaviour change towards a greater understanding of the societal context for HIV-related risk behaviour. For example, it is widely acknowledged that unless women's rights and dignity are promoted and protected, individual women cannot make and implement free and informed choices about their sexuality, including choice of partners and use of condoms. To address this problem, a consultation organized by the WCC in 1995 created an ecumenical platform of action: "Women's Health and the Challenge of HIV/AIDS" (see *Love in a Time of AIDS*). More generally, it has become clear that as the HIV/AIDS epidemic matures in a community or country, it affects increasingly those who were already marginalized, discriminated against or stigmatized within the society before HIV/AIDS arrived. The recognition that lack of respect and lack of human rights constitute the societal root causes of vulnerability to HIV/AIDS has slowly transformed strategic thinking about the problem. Efforts are now under way to identify and respond to these root causes while at the same time continuing traditional risk reduction programmes involving information and services.

Churches all over the world have been actively involved from the outset in providing care for people affected by HIV/AIDS. However, they have had considerable problems to address the underlying issues, in particular sexuality, gender relations, discrimination and the unconditional acceptance of People Living With AIDS (PLWAs). The WCC's executive committee issued the first prophetic statement on HIV/AIDS in 1987: "The AIDS crisis challenges us profoundly to be the church in deed and in truth: to be the church as a healing community. AIDS is heart-breaking and challenges the churches to break their own hearts, to repent of inactivity and of rigid moralisms" (*Contact*, 1987, 7). As it became increasingly impera-

tive to equip the churches better to respond to this crisis and to work on the theological and ethical questions related to HIV/AIDS, the WCC formed a working group that produced a comprehensive study and an official statement, adopted by the central committee in 1997. The statement asked all member churches to "provide a climate of love, acceptance and support for those who are vulnerable to, or affected by, HIV/AIDS" and to promote compassionate care. It emphasized the need for effective prevention and acknowledged all proven methods including sexual abstinence, mutual fidelity, condom use, and safe practices in relation to blood and needles. This document has been very important for the ecumenical movement but still needs to be fully implemented in most member churches.

The Roman Catholic Church has initiated many excellent programmes and been in the forefront of the care response. However, it has always strongly discouraged the use of condoms because of long-held moral traditions prohibiting the use of contraceptives and out of fear that their indiscriminate use might encourage promiscuity. This view has also been shared by a number of other churches. Recently there has been an open discussion about this question among Catholic ethicists and it is to be hoped that the future will see less dogmatic debates and more joint actions of churches and governments.

There has been remarkable scientific progress in the treatment of HIV/AIDS in recent years. The first drug proven to reduce the replication rate of HIV became available already in 1986. But a breakthrough occurred in 1996 when a cocktail now known as highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) became available. It is not a cure in the sense that it cannot eliminate the virus from the human body, but it increases significantly life expectancy and quality of life for those PLWAs lucky enough to live in affluent countries that can afford the exorbitant costs of such drugs (more than US\$10,000 annually per patient). The price and insufficient health infrastructure make them up to now virtually inaccessible for more than 90% of HIV-infected people who are living in less affluent countries. Recently international efforts have led to reduced prices for

these countries, but it needs stronger action by national governments and the international community to overcome this gross inequity and to provide accessible and affordable treatment for all people in need. The recently formed Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance will provide much-needed public and political support for this crucial goal.

Several factors will determine the future of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. As effective prevention strategies are well established by now, the political will to support these approaches is crucial. The UN Special General Assembly on HIV/AIDS in June 2001 demonstrated the unprecedented international attention given to this issue, and provided a unique opportunity to political leaders in the North and the South to express a renewed commitment. Religious organizations and churches in particular have the capacity to influence the behaviour of people so as to render them less vulnerable to HIV, and to promote an attitude of care and love. Uganda is an example where close cooperation between government, churches and other NGOs has led to a reduction of infection rate of about 50%. The joint efforts resulted in delayed sexual intercourse among young people (abstinence), reduced number of casual sex partners (fidelity), and an increase in condom use. The challenge is to replicate this successful model in other countries and regions.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has challenged communities, nations and global society. Insights from experience in confronting HIV/AIDS are not only essential for progress against this specific epidemic, but have helped achieve a broader understanding of the societal and human rights basis of vulnerability to preventable disease, disability and premature death.

JONATHAN M. MANN  
and CHRISTOPH BENN

■ *Contact*, 95, WCC, 1987 ■ *Facing AIDS: The Challenge, the Churches' Response: A WCC Study Document*, 2nd ed., WCC, 2000 ■ J.F. Keenan ed., *Catholic Ethicists on HIV/AIDS Prevention*, New York, Continuum, 2000 ■ J.M. Mann & D. Tarantola eds, *AIDS in the World II*, London, Oxford UP, 1996 ■ G. Paterson, *Love in a Time of AIDS: Women, Health and the Challenge of HIV*, WCC, 1996.

## ALEXIS I (SIMANSKY), Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

B. 9 Nov. 1877; d. 17 April 1970. From 1945 to 1970, he was patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church. After studies in law and then in theology, Alexis became a monk in 1902, a priest in 1903, and bishop of Tikhvin in 1913. Exiled from 1922 to 1926, on his return he took over leadership of the



diocese of Novgorod, then moved to Leningrad as metropolitan in 1933. In 1943 he reached a modus vivendi with Stalin on relations between church and state. After long negotiations the ROC joined the WCC in 1961 at the New Delhi assembly. Alexis was the first patriarch to send observers to the Second Vatican Council.\*

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

## ALIVISATOS, HAMILKAR SPIRIDONOS

B. 17 May 1887, Lixourion, Greece; d. 14 Aug. 1969, Athens. Alivisatos was a member of the WCC central committee from 1948 until his death, and vice-chairman of the sub-committee on "intercommunion" of the Faith and Order commission, at the time of preparations for the 1952 Lund confer-



ence. An Orthodox lay theologian, he obtained his doctorate on John Chrysostom from Athens university in 1908, then studied church history in Berlin and Leipzig under Karl Holl and Adolf von Harnack. Returning to Athens in 1918, he became professor of canon law and pastoral theology at the university. He was particularly concerned with the renewal of the church, the training of priests and the social commitment of Christians. He attended the Stockholm 1925 and Lausanne 1927 conferences, and many of the major ecumenical meetings which followed. In 1936 Alivisatos organized the first international congress of Orthodox theology in Athens, of which he became president. He frequently criticized the WCC for its one-sided Protestant outlook, and pleaded for a more active participation of the Orthodox churches in the ecumenical movement. He was active in the ministry of education and as state representative on the holy synod.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

## ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES

THE AACC is a pan-African organ of cooperation which seeks to provide a common

sense of direction for African churches. Its constitutional preamble and statement of basis read: "Believing that the purpose of God for the churches in Africa is life together, in a common obedience to him for the doing of his will in the world, the churches and the national councils of Africa subscribing hereto have constituted the All Africa Conference of Churches as a fellowship of churches for consultation and cooperation within the wider fellowship of the universal church... The All Africa Conference of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and only Saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit." This self-description closely parallels the WCC basis.\*

Such an all-Africa organization became possible only in the years after the second world war, when African nationalism gathered momentum. Ghana became the first independent black African nation (apart from Liberia and Ethiopia) in 1957; in the next ten years many more nations became independent, though it was not until March 1990 that the last colony, Namibia, achieved that status. In 1994 South Africa, whose policy of racial separation was divisive both politically and in the church, disavowed apartheid as a national ideology and became integrated with the rest of Africa and African institutions. Such political developments inevitably affected things in the religious sphere, for African Christianity had largely been seen as another aspect of colonization.

As these developments were taking place in Africa, the WCC was seeking to address issues of war and injustice through witness, study and service rooted in faith commitment. But in an age of growing nationalism, the WCC could not operate directly in Africa, and it became clear that a regional Christian agency was needed, especially as intergovernmental regional associations and programmes were assuming increasing significance.

Already in 1958 a conference in Ibadan, Nigeria, considered how the churches could best meet the challenges of African nationalism and impending nationhood. It set up a provisional committee, chaired by Sir Fran-

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cis Akanu Ibiam, a Nigerian, to prepare for the first AACC assembly, which took place in Kampala, Uganda, in 1963. Kampala adopted a constitution, appointed the Ghanaian-born S.H. Amisshah as first general secretary, and located the secretariat at the Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation in Kitwe, Zambia, from where it was transferred in 1965 to Nairobi. At this point two other bodies were incorporated into the AACC – the African Sunday School Curriculum Project and the Ecumenical Programme for Emergency Action in Africa.

Currently the structure of the AACC includes a general secretariat which comprises the general secretary, an office of international affairs, information and linguistic services, public relations, and finance and administration. The selfhood of the church unit includes evangelism and Christian education, women's work, youth work, and interfaith and human resources development. The refugee and emergency unit provides general assistance through national Christian councils, leadership development, employment and self-help projects, education and training, awareness-building, and emergency service and emergency preparedness. Research and development consultancy deals with programmes and projects for development, partnership in development, situating development in the framework of African history and community, development exchange (experience sharing), development education and special projects. The communication training centre is concerned with consultations, radio broadcasting, audiovisual aids, creative arts and personnel training. The structure is programme-oriented, with the staff travelling to work with church and community leaders in identified areas of greatest need.

One of the success stories of the AACC has been its communication centre. AACC's broadcasting audiovisual services has accepted students from all over Africa, including some government employees, for courses in broadcasting, script-writing, photography and related areas. Another accomplishment was the AACC's role in the Addis Ababa negotiations which led to the reconciliation of warring factions in the Sudan in 1973.

As an ecumenical body the AACC has many links with other ecumenical bodies,

such as the WCC and councils of churches overseas, with partner churches and with agencies in other areas of the world. Financially, it remains too dependent on overseas partners, since the poverty of African churches affects the ability of many of them to face up to their financial responsibilities. As a result, African churches may to some extent be said to be in the grip of a dependency syndrome.

Africa is a vast continent. A pan-African organization can be effective only in relation to the local church,\* which the AACC considers its vital cell. Local Christian councils are therefore very important to the AACC. For example, since 1989 the national councils of Southern Africa and the AACC have together taken responsibility for coordinating ecumenical emergency work in the sub-region. Similar developments in other sub-regions represent an effort by the AACC to bring the ecumenical movement face to face with local needs and innovative solutions.

But on a continent riddled with linguistic, tribal and ideological differences, there is particular concern that regionalization does not degenerate into regionalism. The AACC has thus given a certain emphasis to all-Africa events (e.g., for women, youth and students, and lay and ordained leaders) to explore the church's mission for today. The hope is that at these meetings the diverse peoples of Africa will share their spiritual and cultural resources, learn from each other's knowledge and experiences, identify common problems and participate in finding possible solutions.

The theme of the 1992 AACC assembly in Harare, was "Abundant Life in Jesus Christ"; five years later its last assembly of the century, in Addis Ababa, had the more sobering theme "Troubled, but not Destroyed". These words, as it were, gathered up the woes of Africa in the last few decades – in Sudan, Rwanda-Burundi, Liberia, Zaire, Nigeria, the flashpoints of internecine strife, abject poverty. The first assembly of the third millennium, in 2002 in Yaoundé, will take place under the theme "Come, Let Us Re-build".

The AACC has been criticized for inefficiency. But it continues to take significant ecumenical initiatives, of which a notable

recent case is its effort to broker reconciliation in Rwanda.

JOHN S. POBEE

■ *The Church in Changing Africa: Report of AACC*, New York, IMC, 1958 ■ *Drumbeats from Kampala*, London, Lutterworth, 1963 ■ *Follow Me – Feed My Lambs*, Nairobi, AACC, 1982 ■ R. Sakala & N.N. Nku, *You Shall Be My Witnesses: Official Report of the Fifth AACC General Assembly, Lomé, 18-25 August 1987*, Nairobi, AACC, 1988 ■ *The Struggle Continues*, Nairobi, AACC, 1975 ■ E.S. Utuk, *Visions of Authenticity: The Assemblies of the All Africa Conference of Churches 1963-1992*, Nairobi, AACC, 1997.

## ALLEN, ROLAND

B. 29 Dec. 1868, England; d. 9 June 1947, Kenya. Allen was an Anglican missionary to China and proponent of reforms in missionary principles and practices which would focus on establishing independent and indigenous churches. His major books, *Missionary Methods: St Paul's or Ours?* (1912) and *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church and the Causes Which Hinder It* (1927), argued that not allowing new Christians to run their own churches was in effect to deny the power of the Holy Spirit. Churches would grow in God's own time as a "spontaneous" process; meddling and control – especially financial – by missionaries would only hinder this process. Allen's missiology has been especially influential in the development of the Three-Self (self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating) movement in Chinese Protestantism. See David Paton ed., *Reform of the Ministry: A Study in the Work of Roland Allen* (London, Lutterworth, 1968).

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL (AI) is an international human rights\* organization and movement which works to ensure that the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights is respected. AI seeks the release of prisoners of conscience and fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners.

It campaigns against torture\* and ill-treatment, "disappearances", political killings and the death penalty and is involved in refugee\* work and in human rights education.

In 1961 the British lawyer Peter Benenson published an "Appeal for Amnesty" on behalf of political prisoners. Originally planned to run for two years, the appeal received such wide support that in 1963 the AI permanent secretariat was set up in London. Its work developed rapidly, at first mostly in Europe and North America, later in other continents. In 1977 AI won the Nobel peace prize and in 1978 the UN human rights prize. By 1997 AI had 1 million members and supporters in 162 countries, with amnesty groups in more than 80.

AI's constitution defines its mandate and working principles. AI does not take a stance on the political intentions and objectives of the governments it addresses regarding their observance of human rights. It campaigns for the release of political prisoners regardless of their political, religious or other conscientiously held beliefs or their ethnic origin, sex, colour, language, national or social origin, economic status, birth or other status, provided that such prisoners have not used or advocated violence.

Strict financial rules safeguard AI's independence. It does not accept financial support from governments, and donations from its members and supporters may not exceed a stipulated amount or be designated for specific countries. Money raised by the sale of materials or received from bequests or fines from lawsuits helps to fund the work.

AI tries by all means at its disposal to draw public attention to those people whose rights are being violated. Its work is directed foremost to governments, reminding them of the obligations they themselves have undertaken to protect human rights (through conventions, declarations, etc.) and publicizing cases of violations. In 1991 AI expanded its mandate to include human rights abuses by armed opposition groups. The AI research department in London makes reliable information rapidly available. The secretariat "adopts" a prisoner before he or she is allocated to a national AI group, which then works for his or her immediate and unconditional release.

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Other AI means for effective protection of human rights are: publication of an annual report on the development of human rights, country by country; campaigns against the use of torture and the death penalty, against extra-judicial executions and against the “disappearance” of persons; international campaigns concerning specific countries; urgent actions where people are under acute threat through human rights violations; and limited financial help to some prisoners or to their families.

The end of the bipolarized political world in 1989 led to the formation of new AI structures in Central and Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa, struggling for the universality and indivisibility of civil and political as well as social, economic and cultural rights.

The increasing conflicts between nationalities and ethnic groups in the 1990s have led to more and more serious human rights violations, especially in countries with collapsing state structures. The 1997 AI report defined the protection of refugees as its central challenge.

AI has formal international relations with the UN, UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the Organization of African Unity (now African Union) and the Organization of American States; it also cooperates in regional human rights work.

VOLKMAR DEILE

■ Annual *Amnesty International Report*, London, available in English, French, Spanish, German and Arabic ■ J. Power, *Like Water on Stone: Amnesty International*, London, Penguin, 2001.

## ANATHEMAS

AN ANATHEMA is a formula pronouncing a ban and so excluding sinners from the fellowship of the church and delivering them up for punishment by God.

In the Old Testament *herem* means something which is under the ban or intended as a sacrifice. It is withdrawn from human use and delivered over to God irrevocably. In the New Testament *anathema* can mean an offering (Luke 21:5), a curse (1 Cor. 12:3), a curse called down on oneself (Rom. 9:3), and above all a curse by which someone is excommunicated and hence cut

off from Christ: if anyone “should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that one be accursed” (Gal. 1:8). And “let any one be accursed who has no love for the Lord” (1 Cor. 16:22). Here Paul probably is using a sacral formula of condemnation taken over from Judaism, in order to express complete separation from Christ, spiritual death and final condemnation.

With the synod of Elvira (around 300) the anathema became a formula of excommunication in the linguistic usage of the church. It added a solemn curse to excommunication,\* thus increasing its gravity. In 343 the synod of Gangra produced for the first time the formula, “If anyone... anathema.” The anathema later became an intensified form of excommunication: while simple excommunication (*excommunicatio minor*) meant only a bar on receiving the sacraments and exclusion from the fellowship of the saints, the anathema meant a complete separation from the church as the Body of Christ.

In dogmatic pronouncements, positive statements of the right doctrine are juridically protected by an accompanying rejection of the opposing position. Most often this is conveyed through the use of the formula *si quis dixerit... anathema sit* (If anyone says..., let them be excluded). This was the form adopted, for instance, by the council of Trent\* in its confrontation with the Reformation, which it condemned as heretical. It should be noted that at this period the concept of heresy\* had not yet been so sharply outlined and legally defined in the sense of false doctrine: any separation from the one church and any opposition to its authority was regarded as heresy. Thus not every anathematization by Trent was directed against a false teaching. Infringement of church regulations on discipline were also anathematized, and those who supported these were excluded from the fellowship of the church.

In so far as an anathema relates to ecclesiastical regulations, it can be revoked (as with the Tridentine canon in *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, no. 1811). With an anathema condemning a false teaching, the first question must be historical: What was it directed against? In many instances, individual sen-

tences torn out of their context, or even mere misunderstandings, were condemned. Doctrines which today are not advanced by the other church were repeatedly anathematized. The formula *si quis dixerit... anathema sit* opens up ecumenical opportunities in all these instances. It does not assert that anyone is actually teaching a position declared to be wrong; the anathema does not excommunicate anyone by name. Thus the study of the joint theological commission of German Catholics and Protestants entitled "Lehrverurteilungen – kirchentrennend?" (Condemnations of the Reformation era: Do they still divide?, K. Lehmann and W. Pannenberg eds) reached the conclusion that almost without exception the doctrinal condemnations of the 16th century no longer apply to the other church and cannot continue to legitimate excommunications dating from the Reformation period. Those censures which still apply even today have in the interval come to be seen within such a broad framework that the commission concluded that they need not divide the church. In 1994 those conclusions were accepted by the Lutheran churches in Germany and by the German Catholic bishops conference. A corresponding affirmation was made at the international level in the "joint declaration" on the doctrine of justification signed by representatives of the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church in October 1999 (see **Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue**).

In a common declaration issued by Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras on 7 December 1965, the mutual excommunications of 1054 were "erased from the memory" of the church, a step that has not yet led to the restoration of communion\* between Rome and Constantinople. In the Leuenberg concordat of 1973, European Lutherans and Reformed included in their establishment of mutual pulpit and altar fellowship the declaration that the mutual condemnations of the 16th century "no longer apply to the contemporary doctrinal position of the assenting churches". The commission for Oriental Orthodox-Orthodox dialogue\* concluded in 1993 that both had maintained the orthodox teaching in Christology and that the "removal of anathemas" should follow.

See also **church discipline, excommunication**.

PETER NEUNER

**ANGLICAN-BAPTIST CONVERSATIONS**

THE LAMBETH conference of 1988 invited the Baptist World Alliance\* to enter into conversations with the Anglican Consultative Council,\* which the general council of the BWA in 1991 unanimously agreed to do. Further encouraged by the Lambeth conference of 1998, these conversations in fact began in 2000.

In an innovative procedure, the small permanent team from each side is joined for particular meetings by representatives from the country and region in which the gathering takes place (in England, with Britain and Europe; in Myanmar, with India, Korea and Australia; in Kenya, with Uganda, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Nigeria).

L.A. CUPIT

**ANGLICAN COMMUNION**

THE ANGLICAN communion, as described by the Lambeth conference of bishops of 1930, is "a fellowship, within the one holy catholic and apostolic church, of those duly constituted dioceses, provinces or regional churches in communion with the see of Canterbury". These churches "uphold and propagate the catholic and apostolic faith and order as it is generally set forth in the Book of Common Prayer". They are "particular or national churches and, as such, promote within each of their territories a national expression of Christian faith, life and worship". "Anglican" refers not to language or culture but to common ancestry in the Church of England. Today, on account of the varied courses taken by prayer book revision, one has to omit the reference to the Book of Common Prayer, but in other respects the description stands.

The Anglican communion began its separate life in the reign of the English king Henry VIII (d.1547). In 1533-34 the Church of England defied the pope and unilaterally asserted its autonomy under God as a local expression of the universal church. This step

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hardly altered the outward appearance of the church; the old mass, for instance, remained its central liturgy throughout Henry's reign. But the principle of autonomy was an explosive force which led to more profound and extensive changes.

In the reigns of Edward VI (1547-53) and of Elizabeth I (1558-1603), the Church of England followed largely Protestant ways and separated itself from the Church of Rome in doctrine and ethos as well as in structure. The cornerstones of this settlement were the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, which rooted the church in the life of the one nation, brought the whole country (in theory) into the one liturgical usage, and stamped an Anglo-Saxon literary style on Anglican worship for future generations. The changes, of course, were originally intended only for the one Anglo-Saxon nation of England.

How did this singular development become a worldwide "communion"?\* From the same period, a parallel church in Ireland also became separated from Rome and reformed by monarchical decrees, though the bulk of the Irish people refused to separate themselves from the pope. Another independent Episcopal church developed in Scotland by the late 1600s – not established by law as the Church of England was. During the 18th century this church devised its own eucharistic rites and thus demonstrated its substantial independence from the Church of England, while it retained profound family ancestries, resemblances and ties in common with that church.

From 1633 onwards, the bishop of London had charge of all Church of England congregations beyond the shores of Britain, whether in the American or other colonies, or on the continent of Europe. No bishop of London ever visited such overseas congregations. Thus when in 1776 the American colonies declared their independence from England, the Church of England congregations there faced a crisis. The church in America suffered severe setbacks in the immediate post-war years because of its former association with the British crown and the number of clergy and prominent laity who had been loyalists during the war. Nevertheless, the church soon established its own separate identity. While no longer wanting to be

viewed as under the British through the bishop of London, they also did not want to lose the principle and practice of episcopacy.\*

Thus, the Connecticut clergy elected Samuel Seabury to be their bishop, and sent him to London for consecration in 1783. The archbishop of Canterbury could not legally give consecration without exacting an oath of loyalty to George III. Not wanting to swear loyalty to the king, Seabury was consecrated instead in 1784 in Aberdeen by three Scottish bishops who had no state connection. Seabury was the first Anglican bishop consecrated for service outside the British Isles.

In 1789 the American Anglicans formed a general convention. The convention modelled its church constitution on the new civil one, authorized a separate prayer book, and declared themselves the autonomous "Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States" ("Episcopal Church" has now become the official alternate name). Thus another adult member of the communion came to be. In 1910 this US church's general convention initiated a commission to bring about a worldwide conference of "all Christian communions" for "questions of faith and order", and later sent delegations to Europe and the Middle East to issue invitations, which in 1927 resulted in the first Faith and Order conference.

Slowly Anglicans in other nations or colonies followed the American pattern. They were settlers on plantations or belonged to companies with private chaplains, or they were the evangelistic result of Anglican voluntary overseas missionary societies of clergy and laity, such as the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (1699), the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (1701) and the Church Missionary Society (1799).

The growing Anglican communities asked the Church of England for bishops. They were consecrated for Nova Scotia (1787) and for other Canadian provinces soon after, and then for Calcutta (1814), Jamaica (1824), Australia (1836), New Zealand (1841) and various parts of Africa from 1853 onwards. Because they were ministering in English colonies, these bishops and their dioceses were viewed as in some

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respects part of the Church of England, though their structural and organizational problems were very complex. In New Zealand the first bishop, Selwyn (1841-68), held a synod of church people, though such a move was impossible in England itself. In South Africa in the early 1860s Gray, the bishop of Cape Town, attempted to depose the bishop of Natal, Colenso, for heresy.\* Colenso appealed to the judicial committee of the Privy Council in London, which in 1865 confirmed him in his episcopate.

At this Colenso decision, agitation arose in the Anglican churches around the world. The church in Canada proposed a common conference “of the members of our Anglican communion” to consider common problems; the archbishop of Canterbury would convene it. From this came the first Lambeth conference in 1867, with 76 bishops in attendance (Lambeth palace is the archbishop’s residence in London). The conference took great care not only to tiptoe around the case of Colenso (who was not invited) but also to ensure that the status of the proceedings was not that of a deliberative synod, but only of a consultative conference.

Since 1867 Lambeth conferences have been held every ten years, except during the two world wars. The conference’s authority remains consultative, not legislative or executive. The archbishop of Canterbury issues the invitations, and thus he decides in doubtful cases who are proper members. To this day, over against this consultative character of the Lambeth conferences, the self-governing churches of the Anglican communion individually enjoy an autonomy comparable to that which the Church of England claimed for itself at the Reformation.

Since the second world war more and more autonomous provinces (or churches, like the Church of England, comprising more than one province) have been created; today there are 38. In recent years inter-Anglican structures or agencies have appeared: at present, the Anglican Consultative Council\* and the biennial primates’ meeting in addition to the Lambeth conferences.

It is very difficult to measure the strength of the Anglican churches. In England, because of the state establishment of the

Church of England, all the baptized are traditionally viewed as Church of England persons *unless* they themselves indicate otherwise. This measure would indicate 20-30 million members, far more than the number who worship on Sundays (attendance is under 1 million). In other provinces, a roll of members may reflect actual church strength more accurately. Similarly, the ratios of bishops to congregations, bishops to clergy, and bishops to lay worshippers vary enormously, and one can gain no good comparison of strength from the numbers of bishops. Thus, for example, it was reckoned in the past that the US bishops made up too high a percentage of the Lambeth conference, but in recent decades the bishops of Africa, Asia and Latin America have caught up with them.

Overall, the communion has over 800 active bishops, and perhaps 70 million active or semi-active worshippers. There are discernible signs of a slowly ageing active membership in the more Western parts of the communion, and of continuing growth in many parts of the two-thirds world, particularly in Africa.

The Anglican communion faces grave questions of unity, identity and calling. The lack of central decision-making means, e.g., that the ordination of women\* to the presbyterate or episcopate is approved and practised in some parts of the communion and not in others. Liturgical revision is pursued on a province-by-province basis. Reunion with other Christian denominations, which is in theory central to the calling of Anglicans, seems to throw up great trouble when it actually becomes imminent. Internal tensions – such as the ordination of women, and especially their ordination as bishops, and issues of sexual and marital norms and disciplines – threaten the unity of the various provinces. And the communion still wrestles with a problem of its cultural conditioning which arises from its original provenance in England, its conservatism in relation to distinctively Anglo-Saxon ways, and its continued role for the see of Canterbury. Within it Catholic and Reformed (and charismatic) understandings of Christianity and the church\* live alongside each other, now in tension, now in some kind of fusion, but rarely truly resolved.

COLIN BUCHANAN

■ R. Coleman & O. Chadwick, *Resolutions of the Twelve Lambeth Conferences 1867-1988*, Toronto, Anglican Book Centre, 1992 ■ G. Evans & R. Wright eds, *The Anglican Tradition: A Handbook of Sources*, London, SPCK, 1991 ■ W.M. Jacob, *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide*, London, SPCK, 1997 ■ S. Neill, *Anglicanism*, 2nd ed., London, Mowbray, 1977 ■ S. Sykes ed., *Authority in the Anglican Communion*, Toronto, ABC, 1987 ■ S. Sykes, J. Booty & J. Knight eds, *The Study of Anglicanism*, London, SPCK, 1998.

## ANGLICAN CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

IN RESPONSE to an increasing need for stronger international bonds within the Anglican communion,\* the 1968 Lambeth conference inaugurated the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC), which met for the first time in 1971. Although its London secretariat is small, it has responsibility for the support of instruments of Anglican unity: the archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth conference, the primates meeting, and the ACC itself. It has no legislative authority.

Each province provides an ACC membership of one bishop, one presbyter and one layperson but the number is in fact determined by the size of the 38 autonomous provinces or churches of the communion: in 2000, a total of 91 members. Convened under the presidency of the archbishop of Canterbury, it meets approximately every two to three years, each time in a different part of the world, and issues a report of each meeting. At the 1988 and 1998 Lambeth conferences, the archbishop of Canterbury invited the ACC members to participate with the bishops. The ACC budget is supported by the provinces and by the Compass Rose Society.

COLIN BUCHANAN

## ANGLICAN-LUTHERAN DIALOGUE

TWO MAIN factors prompted Anglican-Lutheran convergence. First, the worldwide expansion of both traditions brought them into new local contact. Second, this mutual re-discovery fitted well with the ecumenical strategy expressed by the 1888 Lambeth Quadrilateral.\*

## PHASE 1: 1909-39

In 1909 the first official Anglican-Lutheran dialogue occurred in Uppsala between the Church of Sweden and the Anglican communion. Discussion centred mainly on the fourth point of the Lambeth Quadrilateral concerning ministry and succession (see **apostolicity, episcopacy**). The findings were accepted by the Lambeth conference in 1920 and the Swedish bishops in 1922. Anglicans declared that the Swedish church had a true succession of bishops and an orthodox doctrine of the ministry, and that its clergy should be allowed to preach in Anglican churches. Both sides approved eucharistic hospitality and agreed to participate mutually in consecrating bishops.

Similar dialogue was held in 1933-34 by the church of Finland and in 1936-38 by the churches of Latvia and Estonia with the Church of England. Although episcopal succession had been briefly interrupted in Finland and Latvia, it was now decided to restore a common episcopal ministry. On this assurance eucharistic hospitality was approved. Anglo-Scandinavian theological conferences began in 1929 and still meet biennially, Anglo-Nordic-Baltic since 1989.

## PHASE 2: 1947-90

In 1947 dialogue began between the Church of England and the churches of Denmark, Iceland and Norway, whose episcopal succession had been interrupted at the Reformation. Mutual eucharistic hospitality ensued in the 1950s. In 1964 theological conferences began between the Church of England and the Evangelical Church in Germany (Federal Republic), including Lutheran, Reformed and United churches.

In 1968 the executive committee of the Lutheran World Federation\* (LWF) and the Lambeth conference agreed to launch a worldwide dialogue. This began in 1970, and its first-fruits were the 1973 Pullach report, which registered substantial agreements on sources of authority, the church,\* the word and sacraments,\* apostolic ministry and worship. Differing convictions were recorded about the historic episcopate. After this, regional Anglican-Lutheran dialogues developed separately in Europe and the USA.

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The European commission met during 1980-82 and added further substantial agreements on justification,\* baptism,\* eucharist,\* spiritual life and liturgical worship, ordained ministry and episcopacy,\* and the nature of the church. These findings were published as the 1983 Helsinki report. It claimed that no serious obstacles remained in the way of full communion\* and recorded similarities of stance towards witnessing to the gospel in modern Europe. It recommended joint Anglican-Lutheran celebration of the eucharist and occasional mutual participation in presbyterial and episcopal ordinations. Anglo-Scandinavian pastoral conferences began in 1977 and continue biennially.

Lutheran-Episcopal dialogue in the USA began in 1969. The Missouri Synod took part but did not endorse the conclusions. In 1982 the three bodies which later formed the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America agreed with the Episcopal Church to recognize each other as churches in which the gospel was preached, to encourage common action between congregations, and to establish interim sharing of the eucharist (see **intercommunion**).

These regional achievements were summarized in the 1983 Cold Ash report by a joint working group. This acknowledged the helpful influence of multilateral Faith and Order\* discussions and bilateral dialogue\* with the Roman Catholic Church. It defined the goal of full communion and described the stages by which this could be reached. It recommended creating a joint body to foster Anglican-Lutheran relations at world level, and this has functioned since 1986.

In 1987-88 the Church of England held new talks with the Evangelical Church in both German republics, culminating in the Meissen declaration. This was approved in Germany and England in 1990, and established an interim sharing agreement which significantly increased cooperation, but did not achieve full interchangeability between episcopally and non-episcopally ordained ministers.

**PHASE 3: 1990 ONWARDS**

During the 1990s a major advance occurred in the publication of three concordats which overcame the remaining difficulties

about bishops in historic succession. A fresh approach had been suggested by the 1988 Niagara report, which viewed episcopate (“oversight”) in the light of the church’s mission\* and of the ministry of the whole people of God.\* It showed how seriously episcopate was regarded at the Reformation and urged that responsible solutions adopted at times of emergency should be evaluated positively. It saw succession as consisting not primarily in an unbroken chain of ordinations but in maintaining the presiding ministry of a church standing in continuity of apostolic faith. It summarized Anglican-Lutheran doctrinal agreements to date and posed key questions about the reform and renewal of the episcopal office. Anglican churches were challenged to recognize the authenticity of Lutheran ministries, and Lutheran churches to conform to the Nicene canon requiring that a bishop be consecrated by at least three bishops. The Niagara report set out practical steps for realizing full communion.

On this basis conversations between the four British and Irish Anglican churches (England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales) and the eight Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden; Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) resulted in the Porvoo declaration.\* This acknowledged one another’s churches and ministries and, most significantly, “that the episcopal office is valued and maintained in all our churches”. By 1996 this declaration had been approved by ten of the participating churches (not Denmark and Latvia), thus placing them “in communion”. The signatory churches accepted various practical commitments including the interchange of baptized members and episcopally ordained ministers (without re-ordination) subject to local regulations; mutual participation in the ordination of bishops; and the establishment of appropriate forms of collegial and conciliar consultation.

A similar, though not identical, Concordat of Agreement in the USA proposed recognizing the authenticity of existing ordained ministries, ordaining all future bishops in historic succession, and gradually establishing “full communion”. After narrowly failing to secure the necessary special majority on the Lutheran side, these pro-

posals were simplified and clarified in the document "Called to Common Mission", which was then approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Episcopal Church in the USA. Its provisions came into effect from January 2001 and are in process of implementation.

In Canada the proposed Waterloo declaration was published in 1997, and similarly envisaged the interchangeability of existing ordained ministries within the framework of a commitment to value and maintain the historic episcopate in future. This was welcomed in principle by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and by the Anglican Church of Canada with overwhelming majorities, and in 1998 the latter body's general synod gave preliminary approval to a canon which would allow Lutheran pastors to serve without re-ordination. With minor amendments the declaration was approved by both bodies meeting at Waterloo in 2001.

Whilst only these three concordats have so far been designed to achieve full communion, Anglican-Lutheran dialogue continues to gather momentum in other regions, especially in Africa, Australia, Brazil, Germany and Southeast Asia. Fresh stimulus towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry was given by the 1996 Hanover report on "The Diaconate as Ecumenical Opportunity".

DAVID TUSTIN

■ *Anglican-Lutheran Relations: Report of Joint Working Group at Cold Ash*, London, ACC, and Geneva, LWF, 1983 ■ *Called to Common Mission* (proposed revision of Concordat), Chicago, ELCA, 2000 ■ *Called to Full Communion* (Waterloo statement), Toronto, Anglican Book Centre, 1998 ■ C.H. Lyttkens, *The Growth of Swedish-Anglican Intercommunion between 1833 and 1922*, Lund, Gleerups, 1970 ■ *The Meissen Agreement: Texts*, CCU Occasional Paper, 2, London, Church of England, 1992 ■ *Niagara Report: Consultation on Episcopate 1987*, London, ACC, and Geneva, LWF, 1988 ■ L. Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*, Norwich, Canterbury, 1995 ■ *The Porvoo Common Statement*, London, Council for Christian Unity, 1993 ■ *Together in Mission and Ministry* (Porvoo common statement with essays on church and ministry in Northern Europe), London, Church House

Publ., 1993 ■ *Towards Full Communion and Concordat of Agreement*, Minneapolis, Augsburg, 1991.

## ANGLICAN-METHODIST DIALOGUE

IN 1988 THE BISHOPS of the Lambeth conference recognized "with regret that there is no international theological dialogue between the Anglican communion and the World Methodist Council" and requested "the Anglican Consultative Council\* to initiate conversations with the WMC with a view to the beginning of such a dialogue". The WMC welcomed this opening, and a dialogue was begun in 1992.

The historical background in Anglican-Methodist relations is complex. Methodism\* started as a movement of evangelical, sacramental and moral renewal\* within the Church of England. Its chief organizer, John Wesley (1703-91), professed continuing allegiance to the Church of England; but the para-ecclesial structures he created made an eventual separation almost inevitable, and after Wesley's death British Methodism developed into distinct denominations, spread throughout the land, though not so numerous in membership as the mother church. In North America, with the independence of the United States and the breaking of political and ecclesiastical ties to the British crown, Wesley's people very soon constituted themselves as the Methodist Episcopal Church (1784), and the new denomination came to outnumber the Protestant Episcopal Church (i.e. the Anglican body in the USA).

Throughout the 19th century, missionaries and emigrants from both Britain and America established Anglican and Methodist churches in other parts of the world, and in the 20th century some of these churches have engaged in union negotiations and plans, usually with Christians of other traditions also. In the Church of South India (1947) and the Church of North India (1970), Methodists (of British provenance) and Anglicans united in episcopally ordered bodies with Christians of Presbyterian, Congregationalist and (in North India) believer-baptist traditions; some provinces of the worldwide Anglican communion, however, showed themselves

hesitant about establishing full fellowship with these new churches.

In England, a two-stage plan for Anglican-Methodist unity – a growing together through a period of intercommunion, to precede full organic union – was approved by the Methodist conference but twice failed to achieve sufficient majorities in the assemblies of the Church of England (1969 and 1972). The main obstacle was the method and understanding by which British Methodism would “take episcopacy into its system”, i.e. acquire a ministry recognized by the Church of England to be in the “apostolic succession” it claims for itself. In 1982 a proposed “covenant” – this time including also the United Reformed Church and the Moravian Church – broke down on largely similar grounds.

In the USA, Methodists and Anglicans have largely lacked the “special relationship” which has sometimes been felt to obtain in England. But the Episcopal Church (i.e. Anglican), the United Methodist Church and three African-American Methodist denominations have all participated in the wider Consultation on Church Union.\*

The issues with which the Anglican-Methodist International Commission had to deal were, therefore, both familiar and delicate. Work proceeded quickly, and a final text appeared in 1996 under the title “Sharing in the Apostolic Communion”.

Judging that there existed sufficient “agreement in the core of doctrine”, the commission concluded by requesting the Lambeth conference and the World Methodist Council to “affirm and recognize” that “both Anglicans and Methodists belong to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church of Jesus Christ and participate in the apostolic mission of the whole people of God”; that “in the churches of our two communions the word of God is authentically preached and the sacraments instituted by Christ are duly administered”; and that “our churches share in the common confession and heritage of the apostolic faith”. Since canonical authority resides with each Anglican province and each member denomination of the WMC, the international commission also requested the Lambeth conference and the WMC to establish a joint working group to “prepare a way of cele-

brating this mutual recognition” and to “prepare guidelines, in full accordance with the principles agreed in the report of the Anglican-Methodist International Commission, whereby the competent authorities at appropriate geographical levels would be enabled to implement” the component features of “growth into fuller communion between Anglicans and Methodists in faith, mission and sacramental life”, namely: “the mutual recognition of members; eucharistic communion going beyond mutual hospitality; mutual recognition and interchangeability of ministries and rites; structures of common decision making”. Among the “principles” of the report are recognition of “the historic episcopate as one sign of the continuity, unity and catholicity of the church” (70) and – without calling into question “the ordination or apostolicity of any of those who have been ordained as Methodist or Anglican ministers according to the due order of their churches” – the expectation that “following the mutual recognition of our two churches, a bishop of the historic episcopate as we have described it will always take part in the ordination of ministers of the word and sacrament by the laying on of hands” (80).

At Rio de Janeiro in 1996 the plenary assembly of the WMC adopted the requested resolutions. In 1998 the Lambeth conference gave the report a more guarded reception: noting that “the relative development of relationships between Anglicans and Methodists varies very considerably” from region to region, the Anglican bishops recommended further study of the report at regional levels, with a view to developing, “where” and “when appropriate”, “agreements of mutual acknowledgment” (not yet “recognition”), albeit monitored by a global joint working group that would look forward to “the reconciliation of churches and, within that, the reconciliation of ordained ministries and structures for common decision making”.

New proposals for a covenant were to be brought to the British Methodist conference and the general synod of the Church of England for consideration in 2002 and possible voting in 2003; the covenant would entail mutual “affirmation” and a common “commitment” to greater sharing in life and mis-

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sion as steps towards “full visible unity”, although no change in structural relationship between the two churches was planned for the moment. In Ireland, Methodists and Anglicans were already to sign a similarly phrased covenant in September 2002.

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT

■ J.M. Turner, *Conflict and Reconciliation: Studies in Methodism and Ecumenism in England, 1740-1982*, London, Epworth, 1985 ■ *Sharing in the Apostolic Communion*, World Methodist Council, 1996.

## ANGLICAN-MORAVIAN CONVERSATIONS

In 1986 the Moravian Church in England invited the Church of England to explore the possibility of moving into “full communion”. Official conversations were set up after reaching a clear understanding of how each church views the notion of “full communion”. A distinction was made between the goal of “full, visible unity”, which is sought with all Christians everywhere, “visible unity” as a relationship in faith, sacraments, ministry, structures and mission, to be lived with one church in any particular place, and significant “steps and stages” which can be taken on the way to visible unity.

The 1995 report of the conversations, *The Fetter Lane Common Statement*, sets out a portrait of full visible unity drawing on many ecumenical texts, including the 1991 Canberra statement, “The Unity of the Church as Koinonia: Gift and Calling”. Next come agreements in faith, harvesting the results of international, bilateral and multilateral dialogues, made relevant to the very particular history and relationships of Anglicans and Moravians. The text then outlines issues that still need to be faced, including the reconciliation of ministries (both bodies have a threefold ministry\* but Anglicans have not recognized Moravian orders on account of an historic interruption in episcopacy\*) and how minority and majority churches can move to visible unity without the smaller church losing its own distinctive ethos and tradition. On the basis of the agreements set out, both churches affirmed in the summer of 1996 “The Fetter Lane Declaration”, consisting of a series of mutual recognitions and

commitments. A Moravian contact group has been established to give oversight to the new relationship. Wherever there is a Moravian congregation in England, the intention is to establish a formal Local Ecumenical Partnership.\* In this way Anglican-Moravian relations in England will take on a distinctive intensive quality. Although the Moravians are numerically small in England, this new official relationship represents an important step on the way to the visible unity of the two churches and marks the first time the Church of England has formally committed itself to another partner within England.

See also **Moravians**.

MARY TANNER

■ *Anglican-Moravian Conversations: The Fetter Lane Common Statement, with Essays in Anglican and Moravian History*, London, Church of England, Council for Christian Unity, 1996.

## ANGLICAN-ORIENTAL ORTHODOX DIALOGUE

THE HISTORIC Oriental Orthodox churches are the Armenian, the Coptic, the Ethiopian, the Syrian and the Indian. Separated from the great church, some as early as the council of Chalcedon\* (451), they were largely ignored by Roman Catholic and Byzantine Christianity until “rediscovered” between the 16th and 18th centuries by European Catholic missionaries who sought to unite them to the papacy. In the 19th century Protestant missionaries built hospitals, colleges and schools in an attempt to win the Oriental Orthodox for the churches of the Reformation. By contrast, the Anglican churches have sought, in friendships extending over more than a century, to support rather than to absorb the Oriental Orthodox.

A further ancient church, the Assyrian Church of the East,\* broke its official relationship with the churches to the west of it at the council of Ephesus (431). Once numbering millions of faithful, it has been reduced through persecution to fewer than a million members. Here again the Anglican church made a unique contribution in the 19th century: the archbishop of Canterbury’s Assyrian mission was sent to Kurdistan at the repeated request of the people

themselves, not to draw them from their church and customs, but to give them the means of restoring their ancient church to a state of efficiency.

In 1908 the archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, formed a commission chaired by Bishop John Wordsworth of Salisbury to examine doctrinal oppositions and consider and report on reunion and intercommunion with other churches. The first head of a church to meet and discuss doctrinal matters with the Anglicans in this framework was the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch Moran Mor Abdulla II, during a visit to England in December 1908. For a variety of reasons, impetus was lost on both sides until the 1980s, when the archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, and the other Anglican primates asked Bishop Henry Hill of Canada to make a number of semi-official visits to the heads of all the Oriental churches in their homelands and to the catholicos patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East (resident in the USA).

During the sixth assembly of the WCC (Vancouver 1983), with the cooperation of Paulos Mar Gregorios, metropolitan of Delhi (of the Syrian Orthodox Church of India), a meeting was arranged between representatives of all the Oriental churches and Anglicans from England, Scotland and Canada, chaired by the archbishop of Canterbury. The Oriental Orthodox – and the Assyrians who were also present – accepted an Anglican invitation to a theological forum in St Albans, UK, in October 1985.

Discussion at this forum, under the presidency of Samir Kafity, Anglican bishop in Jerusalem, centred on friendship and practical aspects of cooperation, reaffirmed at the Lambeth conference of 1988, such as the development of theological dialogue, establishment of post-graduate theological scholarships, the possibility for some Anglican ministerial students to spend time in Oriental Orthodox theological institutions and monasteries, assistance to theological seminaries of the Oriental Orthodox churches, especially in building up their libraries, exchanging of journals and magazines published by the churches of the two communions, and the establishment of regional coordinating bodies to promote understanding and cooperation among the churches. Noting the particular issues and ten-

sions facing the various Oriental Orthodox churches, Runcie told them, “Your churches are at the interface of some of the greatest issues facing the world today... Anglicans salute your courageous witness. I hope this forum will mark the beginning of a more coordinated Anglican sense of solidarity with you as brothers in the faith. And I believe we are one in faith.”

Archbishop Runcie had further meetings with the patriarchs of these churches, and in July 1997 he and the Coptic Pope Shenouda III signed a common declaration of the Nicene faith, touching on past misunderstandings of the incarnation\* of our Lord, “who is perfect in his divinity and perfect in his humanity in a real and perfect union without mingling or commixture, without confusion or change, without division or separation. His divinity did not separate from his humanity for an instant. He who is God eternal and invisible became visible in the flesh, and took upon himself the form of a servant.”

The Lambeth conference of 1988, in welcoming more Oriental Orthodox observers than at any previous Lambeth conference, thus regaining the momentum from 1908 and 1920, expressed the desire “that in view of the importance of Anglican-Oriental Orthodox relations, the Anglican Consultative Council\* enter into consultation with the relevant Oriental Orthodox authorities with a view to the forum being upgraded to a formally organized commission” (Resolution 5:9). Meetings of the international forum in Egypt (1989) and England (1993) focused on the production of an agreed statement on Christology, but final agreement has been elusive. At the Lambeth conference of 1998 it was noted that the Oriental Orthodox “are uneasy about what may lie ahead in the Anglican communion. In addition to the new context brought about by the ordination of women in many Anglican provinces, they are concerned about current Anglican debates concerning homosexuality, abortion and other ethical issues.”

Regional forums, principally in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Europe, have grown fruitfully; and there are now more Oriental Orthodox students studying in Anglican seminaries and universities than ever before.

HENRY HILL Z

■ H. Hill ed., *Light from the East: A Symposium on the Oriental Orthodox and Assyrian Churches*, Toronto, Anglican Book Centre, 1988.

## ANGLICAN-ORTHODOX DIALOGUE

THERE WERE a few mostly individual contacts between Anglicans and Orthodox from the 16th century to the 19th. Although the two churches were largely ignorant of each other, there was no legacy of mutual hostility. After the first world war contacts became more official as the Ecumenical Patriarchate sent a delegation to the Lambeth conference of 1920, a pan-Orthodox delegation attended that of 1930, and in 1931 a joint doctrinal commission met to discuss the differences between the two churches. It was agreed that the basis of any eventual communion\* between them should be a union of faith.\* Anglicans had earlier pressed for intercommunion\* and recognition of Anglican ordinations, which Orthodox had insisted could come only after doctrinal agreement.

Agreed statements on the mystery of holy orders (see **ordination**), the eucharist,\* holy tradition (see **Tradition and traditions**), justification\* and other matters were drawn up at the Bucharest conference of 1935 between Anglican and Romanian Orthodox theologians. The Romanian Orthodox Church subsequently joined other Orthodox churches which had earlier provisionally recognized Anglican ordinations.

The developing theological dialogue was interrupted by the second world war. Then in 1956 an Anglican-Russian Orthodox theological conference was held in Moscow. When Archbishop Michael Ramsey visited Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras in 1962, the two leaders agreed to begin setting up a joint doctrinal commission. From 1966 to 1972 the two sides met separately to prepare the dialogue.

Anglican-Orthodox joint doctrinal discussions began in 1973. Annual meetings of three sub-commissions followed. The work of this first phase of the official dialogue was drawn together in the Moscow agreed statement of 1976. The titles of its seven sections indicate the subjects covered, on which a measure of agreement was recorded: (1) the knowledge of God, (2) the inspiration and

authority of scripture, (3) scripture and Tradition, (4) the authority of the councils, (5) the filioque\* clause, (6) the church as the eucharistic community, (7) the invocation of the Holy Spirit in the eucharist.

Symbolically significant was the agreement among the Anglican members that for historical and canonical reasons the filioque should not be in the Nicene Creed.\* The first section recognized the difficulties caused for some Anglicans by such traditional Orthodox terms as "divinization", and by the distinction between the essence and energies of God, although agreement on the underlying truths was acknowledged. The fourth noted the traditional Anglican emphasis on the first four ecumenical councils,\* compared with Orthodox insistence on the equal importance of all seven. Anglicans agreed that the veneration of icons\* was not to be rejected but held it could not be required of all Christians.

In 1977 the dialogue ran into trouble over the ordination of women\* to the priesthood, which the Orthodox members realized was now a reality and not just a possibility in Anglicanism. At a special meeting in 1978 the Orthodox made clear their opposition to the ordination of women, but their hope that this would influence any decision at the forthcoming Lambeth conference would be disappointed. Some of them felt strongly that the discussions should now be seen only as an academic and informative exercise, and no longer as an ecclesial endeavour aiming at the ultimate union of the two churches. But a series of visits to the Orthodox churches undertaken in 1979 by the Anglican co-chairman revealed that the Orthodox churches as a whole wished the dialogue to continue. A steering committee that year agreed that the full commission should continue its work.

In 1980 the second phase of the discussions began. Its work was summed up in the Dublin agreed statement of 1984. It contained three main sections, each with several sub-sections: (1) the mystery of the church: approaches to the mystery, the marks of the church, communion and intercommunion, wider leadership within the church, witness, evangelism and service; (2) faith in the Trinity, prayer and holiness: participation in the grace of the holy Trinity, prayer, holiness, the

filioque; (3) worship and Tradition: paradoxis-Tradition, worship and the maintenance of the faith, the communion of saints and the departed, icons.

The statement revealed a useful measure of agreement, although it was clear that further work was needed on several issues, among them the way in which the two churches conceived of the unity\* and holiness\* of the church.\* The Orthodox regarded the Orthodox church as the one true church of Christ, which is not and cannot be divided. The Anglicans saw divisions as existing within the church. The Orthodox could not ascribe sinfulness to the church, while Anglicans saw the struggle between grace and sin to be a characteristic of the church on earth. The statement included an epilogue, summarizing points of agreement and disagreement, and those requiring further exploration. The discussions so far had shown that, specific issues apart, Anglicans as Western Christians had a different approach in general to that of Orthodox.

The commission did not meet again in full until 1989. Meanwhile a new Orthodox co-chairman had been appointed, Metropolitan John (Zizioulas) of Pergamon. In spite of further difficulties caused for the Orthodox by the consecration of the first woman bishop in the Episcopal Church (USA) and the varieties of interpretation among some Anglicans of basic Christian beliefs, the Ecumenical Patriarchate and most of the other Orthodox churches remained firmly committed to the dialogue. The reconstituted commission met in June 1989 in New Valamo in Finland. Its title was altered to International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue. After fruitful discussion the meeting drew up a programme for the third phase of the dialogue, concentrating on ecclesiology and beginning with an examination of its roots in the doctrine of the Trinity\* and in Christology. Since then the commission has met regularly, and in 1998 produced an interim agreed statement on “The Trinity and the Church”, “Christ, the Spirit and the Church”, and “Christ, Humanity and the Church”. Its discussions in 2001 were to concern ordained ministry in the church.

HUGH WYBREW

- *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue: The Dublin Agreed Statement 1984*, London, SPCK, 1984
- K. Ware & C. Davey eds, *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue: The Moscow Agreed Statement*, London, SPCK, 1977.

## ANGLICAN-REFORMED DIALOGUE

THEOLOGICALLY, both Anglicans and the Reformed are indebted to such Reformation figures as Martin Bucer, Peter Martyr and John Calvin. Historically, if some parts of the two communions have had little contact with each other, elsewhere they have known one another perhaps only too well. In any case, the problems and opportunities of present-day relationships between Anglicans and Reformed (Presbyterians and Congregationalists) are profoundly marked by British history.

The Church of England remains the church “by law established”, and its Articles of Religion (1562) acknowledge the monarch as the temporal head of the church. The 16th-century political conviction was that national unity would be cemented by religious uniformity; but to the separatist precursors of Congregationalism, the state church was antichrist, the monarch having no proper authority over the worship and ordering of Christ’s church (see **church and state**).

Some 17th-century Independents, like their Presbyterian counterparts, did not object to the establishment of religion, provided the polity was of their favoured kind. After the Cromwellian era, the English monarchy was restored in 1660, and between that date and the passing of the act of uniformity in 1662 almost one-fifth of the clergy (including 172 Congregationalists and over 1700 Presbyterians) left or were ejected from their livings. They refused to give their “unfeigned assent and consent” to the Book of Common Prayer, to submit to re-ordination if they had been non-episcopally ordained and to abjure the solemn league and covenant (1643). The fact that the act of uniformity did not apply to the “foreign reformed churches” in England did not go unnoticed.

The toleration act of 1689 accorded limited and conditional freedom to many Dissenters. Over the next 200 years, the social

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and other disabilities suffered by Nonconformists were gradually removed, and calls for the disestablishment of the Church of England began to subside. However, the theological questions remain: Who are the church? How are the "crown rights of the Redeemer" to be secured in his church? What is the proper relationship between church and state? Since there are Reformed establishments of varying kinds in Scotland and some of the cantons in Switzerland, and Lutheran ones elsewhere, these questions are of some general ecumenical significance.

Among other traditional difficulties between Reformed and Anglicans are the Reformed opposition in some quarters to confessional subscription (by no means necessarily a cover for heterodoxy) and the Reformed resistance to insistence upon episcopal ordination (see **episcopacy, ordination**), often coupled with a deep suspicion of sacerdotalism (see **priesthood**). While many Reformed churches value the *pastor pastorum*, they fear the sectarianism which attends the elevation of questions of church order\* above the gospel. The Anglicans are variously puzzled and appalled by the diverse theologies and ecclesiologies, and by the propensity to secession, displayed by the Reformed family. The Reformed may appear as less than serious about the catholic heritage of faith\* and its symbols, as taking liberation to the point of licence, as inadequately sacramental and, in doctrine, as varying from the cerebral (whether conservative or liberal) to the innocent or the perverse. (On this last point, Anglicans risk a *tu quoque*.)

Nevertheless, Anglicans and Reformed have managed to cooperate in the Religious Tract Society (1799), the British and Foreign Bible Society (1804), the Evangelical Alliance (UK 1846, USA 1867) and, more recently, in local and regional councils of churches\* and in the WCC. They have united – with others also – in the Churches of South (1947) and North (1970) India; they have entered into a covenant\* in Wales, though the covenant proposed by the (English) Churches' Council for Covenanting failed (1982). There have been Anglo-Scottish Anglican-Presbyterian conversations and, within Scotland, conversations including also the Methodists, although none of

these has led so far to union. Anglican-Reformed union negotiations have failed in Nigeria, Ghana, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

*God's Reign and Our Unity* is the report of the international dialogue (1981-84) sponsored by the Anglican Consultative Council\* and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.\* The report analyzes the obstacles to union between the two families, sets the traditional ecclesiological problems within the context of the common call to mission,\* and concludes with nine specific, challenging recommendations, including the advocacy of reciprocal communion\* as a means to unity,\* where visible unity is seriously sought. The report raises, but does not treat in detail, the questions of establishment and of the ordination of women\* to the ministry (where practice varies in both communions). To date the report has prompted more favourable comment than widespread action.

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## ANGLICAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUE

THE CONTEMPORARY Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue must be understood against the background of the break in communion\* in the 16th century between what were to be known as the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) and the Church of England. This came about over a period of time, for reasons which are both historically and theologically complex.

Among the cluster of events which consolidated the break was the act of supremacy of Henry VIII in 1534, which confirmed the king and his successors as "the only supreme

head on earth of the Church of England, called *Anglicana Ecclesia*". A revised version of this act was passed by Elizabeth I in 1559 declaring the queen to be "the only supreme governor of this realm, and of all other of her highness's dominions and countries as well in all spiritual and ecclesiastical things or causes as in temporal". This legislation deprived the pope of any jurisdiction in the Church of England. Important also was the publication in 1552 of an English ordinal for the consecration of bishops, priests and deacons. The decisive event from the side of Rome was the promulgation in 1570 of the bull *Regnans in Excelsis* by Pope Pius V, which excommunicated Queen Elizabeth and absolved her subjects of allegiance to her.

These events and their repercussions led to an almost complete estrangement between the RCC and the Church of England until the 20th century. The most momentous event for relations during the intervening period was the promulgation in 1896 by Pope Leo XIII of the apostolic letter *Apostolicae Curae*. This letter focused the reasons for the estrangement and also specified the issues that had to be faced between Roman Catholics and Anglicans when relations gradually warmed and theological dialogue began. *Apostolicae Curae* solemnly ratified the consistent practice of unconditionally ordaining Anglican clergymen who wished to be priests in the RCC, judging Anglican ordinations to be "absolutely null and utterly void". The core of Leo XIII's position was that the 1552 ordinal embodied an understanding of the ordained ministry which was in conflict with the teaching of the Catholic church, since it deliberately excluded all reference to the sacrificial nature of the eucharist\* and of the priesthood.\* This rendered the ordinal defective both in its form and intention, so that ordinations in which it was used were invalid. *Apostolicae Curae* elicited a response from the archbishops of Canterbury and York in 1897 in which they stated that the intention of the Church of England in its ordinations was precisely to confer the ministry that was instituted by Christ.

The period since *Apostolicae Curae*, however, has witnessed a slow but sure development in contacts and exchanges between the two communions. Between 1921

and 1925 a series of meetings between Catholics and Anglicans were held in Malines, Belgium, under the presidency of Cardinal Mercier. Official contacts began only after the Second Vatican Council\* (1962-65), at which Anglican observers were present throughout. Vatican II developed the theological principles which gave the RCC a clear dogmatic basis for its ecumenical relations with other Christians. After the Council one of the first ecumenical initiatives was with the Anglicans, who now formed a worldwide communion of independent provinces, united in the fact of their communion with the archbishop of Canterbury. Archbishop Michael Ramsey of Canterbury visited Pope Paul VI in 1966, and together they committed their churches to "a serious dialogue which, founded on the gospels and on the ancient common traditions, may lead to that unity in truth for which Christ prayed".

A preparatory commission worked in 1967-68 to produce the Malta report. The first full commission (ARCIC-I) met between 1970 and 1981 and addressed itself to those matters which were historically divisive between Anglicans and Roman Catholics and which figured in the negative verdict on Anglican orders by Leo XIII, namely eucharist and the ordained ministry, together with the question of authority\* in the church. The purpose of the dialogue was to reach agreement in faith which would establish "unity in truth". The fruits of the dialogue were published in 1982 in the final report of ARCIC-I, comprising statements on eucharistic doctrine, ministry and ordination,\* and authority, together with elucidations. On eucharist and on ministry and ordination, the commission claimed to have reached "substantial agreement" in the sense of unanimous agreement "on matters where it considers that doctrine admits no divergence". The claimed agreements on eucharistic doctrine and ministry and ordination were especially significant, since the judgment of *Apostolicae Curae* was based precisely on there being a conflict between Catholics and Anglicans on these matters in the 16th century, which was reflected in the ordinal of 1552.

The final report was duly submitted to the authorities of the Anglican communion

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and the RCC. The former gave its verdict at the 1988 Lambeth conference, which recognized ARCIC's agreed statements and elucidations on eucharist, ministry and ordination as "consonant in substance with the faith of Anglicans" so that "this agreement offers a sufficient basis for taking the next step forward towards the reconciliation of our churches grounded in agreement in faith". The authority statements were recognized "as a firm basis for the direction and agenda of the continuing dialogue on authority". The Roman Catholic response, published in 1991 by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), called the final report "a significant milestone in relations between the Catholic church and the Anglican communion" but judged that "there still remain between Anglicans and Catholics important differences regarding essential matters of Catholic doctrine". Basically the Roman Catholic response, while praising the achievement of ARCIC, did not find its claim to have reached "substantial agreement" as justified. In September 1993, the co-chairmen of ARCIC-II sent to the Pontifical Council on Christian Unity a text of "clarifications on certain aspects of the agreed statements of the eucharist and ministry" in response to the CDF request. These were well received by the Pontifical Council, whose president, Cardinal Edward I. Cassidy, responded in March 1994 that they had indeed "thrown new light on the questions concerning eucharist and ministry in the final report of ARCIC-I for which further study has been requested", adding that on these issues "no further study would seem to be required at this stage".

During this process of reception and response, the second commission, ARCIC-II, was already continuing the work of the authors of the final report of ARCIC-I. It had been set up in 1982 by Pope John Paul II and Archbishop Robert Runcie of Canterbury "to examine, specially in the light of our respective judgments on the final report, the outstanding doctrinal differences which still separate us" and "to study all that hinders the mutual recognition of the ministries of our communions".

To carry out this task, ARCIC-II began with a study of the doctrine of justification\* which had so divided Christians at the time

of the Reformation. In 1986, it produced an agreed statement on this topic entitled "Salvation and the Church". This was followed by an ecclesiological study which sought to address some of the questions raised in relation to the commission's earlier work. The fruit of this study was a report entitled "The Church as Communion", finalized in 1990. The commission then turned its attention to moral matters, an area widely perceived as seriously divisive between Catholics and Anglicans, producing in 1993 a report entitled "Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church". The report addressed squarely the differences between the RCC and the Anglican communion on key moral questions but expressed the view that Catholics and Anglicans "derive from the scriptures and Tradition the same controlling vision of the nature and destiny of humanity and share the same fundamental moral values". The commission then began further study on the question of authority, seeking to make further progress on what was the most difficult of the issues addressed by ARCIC-I. By the time of its report "The Gift of Authority" (1998), ARCIC-II believed that its work had resulted in "sufficient agreement on universal primacy as a gift to be shared" for the commission to be able to propose that "such a primacy could be offered and received even before our churches are in full communion". This ministry would "even now help to uphold the legitimate diversity of traditions, strengthening and safeguarding them in fidelity to the gospel"; it would "promote the common good in ways that are not constrained by sectional interests, and offer a continuing and distinctive teaching ministry, particularly in addressing difficult theological and moral issues".

The work of ARCIC-II has been overshadowed, however, by developments in the Anglican communion relating to the ordination of women.\* By the time of the 1988 Lambeth conference, six provinces of the Anglican communion had ordained women to the priesthood, and subsequently other provinces, including the Church of England, have gone ahead with women's ordinations. The impact of this on the ARCIC conversations had been summed up in the joint statement of Pope John Paul and Archbishop Runcie at the time of the archbishop's visit

to Rome in 1989: "The question and practice of the admission of women to the ministerial priesthood in some provinces of the Anglican communion prevents reconciliation between us even when there is otherwise progress towards agreement in faith on the meaning of the eucharist and the ordained ministry."

It is clear that the path to fuller communion is longer and harder than some may have initially imagined. Nevertheless, the commitment of both sides to the search for fuller communion remains steadfast, and both Anglican and RCC authorities have called for greater exploration of the possibilities of cooperation and common witness\* currently available.

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## ANOINTING OF THE SICK

TWO PASSAGES in the New Testament speak of anointing the sick: the apostolic ministry of healing (Mark 6:13) and the presbyterial rite of anointing (James 5:14-15). Prayers for blessing oil for this purpose are found in the early liturgical sources of both the Eastern and Western churches: the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus (c.215), the prayer book of Serapion (c.350), the Gelasian and Gregorian sacramentaries.

Virtually all the Eastern churches anoint the sick with oil. The rituals for administration are usually based on the Eastern Orthodox *Euchologion* and when fully implemented are very elaborate, involving seven priests, a deacon, a choir and a representative congregation. The mystery of "prayer oil" (*euchelaion*) intends the spiritual, physical and mental healing of the sick person.

For the first 800 years in the Western church, anointing with oil was used as a rite for the sick. The bishop was expected to bless the oil; the oil once blessed could be applied by presbyters or by laypeople. Pastoral changes during the Carolingian era and the subsequent theological speculation of the scholastics served to transform the rite into a sacrament for the dying called extreme unction ("last anointing").

The reformers of the 16th century repudiated this practice, since it lacked a dominical command of institution. According to John Calvin and Martin Bucer, anointing the sick belonged to the gift of healing of apostolic times, which was not communicated to later generations; furthermore, the extreme unction of their day scarcely resembled the anointing advised by James. The single exception was the optional rite of anointing retained in the first Anglican Book of Common Prayer of 1549, which in the wake of criticism was deleted from the office of the visitation of the sick in the 1552 prayer book and only restored in the 20th century.

For the Church of England, the convocations of Canterbury (1935) and York (1936) officially approved services for the "administration of holy unction and the laying on of hands". The Authorized Alternative Services (1983) also included anointing within its ministry to the sick. Anointing of the sick has also been incorporated into the prayer books of other Anglican churches, notably in the USA (1928 and again in the 1977 revision), Scotland (1929), South Africa (1954) and Canada (1962, 1983).

At the Second Vatican Council\* the Roman Catholic Church initiated a development which has led to the recovery of the original tradition of anointing. The 1972 *Ordo unctionis infirmorum eorumque pastoralis curae*, to be translated and adapted by the local churches of the Roman communion, envisions anointing as a sacra-

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ment\* to be administered to those whose health is seriously impaired by sickness or old age. The priest is to anoint the forehead and hands with olive or other vegetable oil, while using a new prayer formulated from the epistle of James, the teaching of the council of Trent,\* and the earlier *Rituale Romanum* of 1614. One of the most successful of the post-Vatican revisions, the anointing is frequently celebrated within a communal service now sanctioned by the new code of canon law.

Finally, the anointing of the sick is also provided for in the Book of Occasional Services, a companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship (1982); in the Book of Worship of the United Church of Christ (1986); and optionally in the "services for wholeness" provided for use with congregations or individuals in the Book of Common Worship (1993) of the Presbyterian Church (USA). All anointing rites surveyed seem to be cast in the format of a visitation for the sick, which also includes a ministry of the word, confession and absolution, the laying on of hands, intercessory prayers for the sick, and sometimes holy communion afterwards.

CHARLES W. GUSMER

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## ANTHROPOLOGY, CULTURAL

IN RECENT years cultural anthropology has emerged as one of the major paradigms for understanding human beings and the mission of the church. Its particular contribution is deep ethnographic studies of different peoples in order to build bridges of understanding between them, and the use of intercultural comparison to develop broad theories of human organization.

Anthropology in Britain had its origins in the broad Christian humanitarian movement of the 19th century, which was concerned with the welfare of natives in the colonies. In 1843 there was a split over how to protect their rights between those who

wanted to grant them immediately the full "privileges" of Western civilization and those who wanted to study them before seeking to "raise and protect them". The latter party formed the Anthropological Association in 1863, and eventually found their home in universities.

In the late 19th/early 20th century, anthropologists such as E.B. Tylor (1832-1917), Sir James Frazer (1854-1941) and Lewis Henry Morgan (1818-81) postulated the evolution of societies from savagery to civilization, attributing this to the growth of human rationality from pre-logical to logical. Influenced by this theory, many missionaries assumed the superiority of Western civilization and saw their task as civilizing as well as Christianizing the people they served.

After 1930 the theory of evolution came under attack and, after a fierce battle, the term "civilization" was replaced by "culture". Cultures were assumed to be *sui generis*, and their preservation an unquestioned good. Introducing change from the outside was condemned.

Two schools of thought emerged after the first world war: social anthropology, pioneered in Britain by A.R. Redcliffe-Brown (1881-1955) and Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942), and cultural anthropology, emerging in North America under the leadership of Franz Boas (1858-1942), A.L. Kroeber (1876-1960) and their followers. Redcliffe-Brown and Malinowski, who both did anthropological fieldwork, learned to know other peoples personally as fully human beings. Drawing on Durkheim, they argued that systems of relationships are the foundation for human life, and that these obey laws discoverable by empirical observation and human reason.

Social anthropologists studied tribes in Africa and the South Pacific islands which were living, functioning realities. They saw each society as unique, bound in more or less successful adaptation to a particular environment. Each was homogeneous, and could be explained fully in terms of "social facts". Each was made up of parts that "function" to maintain a harmonious, balanced whole. Societies were seen as morally neutral. Religions and other belief systems were seen as social constructs needed to maintain the social order. For people in one

society to judge those in another would be ethnocentric and imperialistic, for there are no moral or cognitive universals by which to evaluate cultures. Social anthropology tends towards social reductionism, and a static view of societies that sees change and conflict as pathological. It has a weak view of history and culture and has to wrestle with its own view of cultural relativism.

Social anthropology has had a deep impact on missions. Liberation theology, the church growth\* movement, and the emphasis on “people groups”, “mass movements” and receptivity/resistance show how social dynamics play a major role in the growth and organization of the church.

The pioneers of cultural anthropology studied the North American Indians whose cultures had been scattered. The questions they faced had to do with cultural change and collapse. For these scholars, culture – the beliefs and practices of a people – was the basis for human organization. Cultures were not seen as bounded, tightly integrated units, but as dynamic systems of symbols, rituals, myths, beliefs and world-views. They saw culture as constantly changing, and change as potentially good. This gave rise to the field of applied anthropology which seeks to introduce change with a minimum of cultural dislocation. Christian missions have drawn widely on its insights in developing culturally sensitive outreach and church planting.

Cultural anthropology in turn gave birth to descriptive linguistics, which has enabled scholars to analyze oral languages. In mission, this led to new methods of language learning and dynamic-equivalent Bible translations. Other offspring were the in-depth study of cultures as seen by the people themselves and analysis of cross-cultural communication. In mission this led to a growing rejection of colonial attitudes, to training culturally incarnational missionaries and to working towards partnership in mission. It also led to concern for the contextualization of the gospel not only in worship forms, church polity and evangelistic methods, but also in the development of local theologies.

See also **anthropology, theological**.

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## ANTHROPOLOGY, THEOLOGICAL

IN THE BROADEST sense, the word “anthropology” is used for a wide range of studies which have for their subject matter the human being, as viewed in one aspect or another. “Theological anthropology”, traditionally called the “doctrine of man”, is the study of the human being in relation to God\* or in the light of a particular theological or religious context. In Christianity, many theologians have maintained that we do not know God “in himself” but in his relation to us, so that all Christian theology is concerned with the human as well as the divine, so much so that Karl Barth said that “theology would be better called “theanthropology””.

Christian anthropology has its roots in the Bible, particularly in the teachings about creation\* and incarnation.\* According to the biblical doctrine of creation, the universe is dependent for its being on a more ultimate reality, namely, God. This is true also of the human being, who is part of the creation. So perhaps the first truth we learn about the human reality is its finitude: it is not self-originating, and its meaning must be sought beyond itself. Yet although the human being belongs to the creation and thus stands over against God, humanity is accorded a quite special place in the creation, for in creating the human race God was aiming to bring into being a creature “in his own image” (Gen. 1:27). There has been much debate as to what this “image” is – some have seen it as dominion, others as rationality, others as freedom or even a limited share in the divine creativity. Or the word “spirit” may be used to express this reflection of the divine in the human, where “spirit” is understood as the capacity to reach out beyond actuality to new possibilities. Karl Rahner, for instance, writes: “Man is spirit, because he finds himself situated before being in its totality, which is infinite.” So we have to ask whether there is a contradiction here. The

human being is said to be finite, yet reaches out towards the infinite!

The same contrast appears in the alternative story of the creation in Gen. 2. There God creates the man “of dust from the ground”, so that humanity is very definitely described as part of the finite creation. Yet it is immediately added that God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life”. Although it would be a mistake to read this in any pantheistic way, it does imply that God has imparted to the human being a special gift that makes the difference between the human and the non-human creation – one that may be called “spirit”. So from the beginning there has been in humanity, if not a contradiction, then at least a polarity – the finitude of the dust conjoined with a reaching out for the infinite.

In speaking of this polarity, we are acknowledging that in humanity there is a duality, but not a dualism. The duality is represented in the Genesis story by the “dust from the ground” contrasted with the “breath of life”, and this may be understood as a whole series of polarities – finitude contrasted with the desire for the infinite, reason contrasted with passion, individuality with sociality, the anxiety that comes from death-awareness with the hope that reaches even beyond death, the acceptance of responsibility with the experience of moral impotence, and so on. These violent polarities in the human being have been taken by some philosophers to mean that the human being is an accidental product of the world process, hopelessly involved in internal conflicts, a “useless passion”, in the notorious phrase of Jean-Paul Sartre. But it can equally well be argued that these polarities are themselves part of the meaning of being created “in the image of God”, for God too has been visualized as a “coincidence of opposites” (Nicholas of Cusa), though it has been held that in God the opposites are reconciled in a perfect unity. It can also be argued that it is the very presence of polarities in the human being that makes possible human transcendence, the plasticity of human nature which is not fixed like the nature of an inanimate object but can move to different and, we may hope, higher levels of being.

The duality (or, better, polarity) in the human being as portrayed in the biblical teaching is quite different from the dualism

found in Gnosticism, Manichaeism and some modern Eastern religions. In the dualistic view, a human being is compounded of two quite different substances: a material body and an immaterial soul or spirit. The body is held to be evil – or, in any case, of inferior worth – while the soul alone constitutes the truly human element. This view in turn usually (though not always) leads to an ascetic mode of life. But on the biblical view, the material world including the body is good and deserving of care. The fall of human beings into sin\* is not the contamination of pure spirit by an alien matter but the fall of the unitary psychosomatic human being. But it must be acknowledged that Christian theology has always been somewhat confused on these matters. While the creation stories and likewise the teaching about resurrection\* imply that the body is an original and authentic constituent of a full human being, there have been subsidiary and apparently incompatible beliefs about the “implanting” and the immortality of the soul as a substantial entity distinct from the body.

Related to the duality or polarity that is characteristic of human life is the matter of sex – human beings are either male or female. The sexual difference is not, of course, distinctive of humanity, for the great majority of living organisms are sexually differentiated. But from the point of view of *theological* anthropology, what is of interest is not the universal biological characteristics of sexuality but rather the important point that when God carried out the intention of forming a creature in his own image, he did not create a solitary individual human being, but a human couple. “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them” (Gen. 1:27). Among modern theologians, Karl Barth has best brought out the significance of these words. From the first, the human being has been a being-in-relation, or, as the matter can also be expressed, there has never been an “I” without a “Thou”. Sexuality is understood here as the primordial form of sociality. Now if humanity is made in the image of God and if this image requires for its manifestation not just a solitary human being but human beings in community, then this suggests that individuality

and sociality, which occur as polarities in every human being and are often in tension with one another, are mysteriously united in the infinite being of God. The insight is already present in the Genesis story, though it was only many centuries later that it came to be theologically formulated in the Christian doctrine of the Triune God (see **Trinity**).

There are other interesting points to be gathered from these early chapters of Genesis, but one which is of fundamental importance is the teaching that this human community speedily fell into sin. The very plasticity of human nature, the fact that it is capable of transcendence and of growing into the image and likeness of God, implies ineluctably that it must also be capable of regression and of falling away from its possibilities. Ironically, the temptation to which the human couple succumbs is "You will be like God" (Gen. 3:5). The human race was destined for partnership with God in building up the creation but was not satisfied with this finite share in the image of likeness and sought rather to become what in modern times Nietzsche called the *Übermensch* (superman) who dispenses with God and claims the universe as his own. So in spite of all the tremendous claims that the theological anthropology of the Bible makes for humanity, it declares that this greatest work of creation has been flawed, that our actual humanity fails to coincide with the image or archetype which the Creator intended and made possible. A Christian anthropology must therefore always oppose facile optimism about the human race as embarked on an inevitable progression towards a utopian society to be devised by its own cleverness and philosophies which claim that the human race has within itself the resources for its own salvation.\* Any view which ignores the universality of sin in human affairs is unrealistic.

Yet the same plasticity of humanity assures the possibility of repentance and renewal. At the centre of Christianity is the doctrine of incarnation, of the Word made flesh, and this is at the same time the re-creation of humanity. Again Barth is worthy of study, for in expounding his theological anthropology, he focuses attention on Jesus Christ\* as the "true man". The "true humanity" of Jesus Christ is more original than

sin as the clue to answering the question, "Who or what is man?"

There have, of course, been quite sharp differences on anthropology during the course of Christian history, but these differences have not been so extreme that there is no possibility of reconciliation. Friedrich Schleiermacher claimed that there are two views of humanity so extreme that they must be excluded from Christian theology – that men and women are so good that they have no need of salvation, or so bad that they are incapable of receiving salvation. But there are many possible positions between these extremes.

The Augustinian-Calvinist position has laid great stress on human sinfulness, even on "total depravity". This teaching has been influential chiefly, though not exclusively, among Protestants, who in turn have accused Roman Catholics of leanings towards Pelagianism or at least towards synergism. But in practice many theologians follow a middle course. It is interesting that there was strong emphasis on sin in the theologies of the earlier part of the 20th century, whereas from about 1960 onward that theme has been muted, and we hear more of hope and transcendence. While the reasons for this are not clear, it does seem to indicate that what is at stake is a difference of emphasis rather than something more fundamental.

Another difference (most clearly seen between Western and Eastern Christianity) is between world affirmation and world renunciation. While the doctrine of creation pronounces the material world and the body to be the work of God and fundamentally good, it may be asked whether the churches of the West with all their affluence have come to over-prize the material. The churches of the East have been more ready to acknowledge the temptations of worldly well-being, and they provide for the West a warning "sign of contradiction".

But there is also at the present time a large measure of convergence on the anthropological question. This is because there has emerged since the time of the Enlightenment a new secular interpretation of the human reality (see **secularization**). It is in opposition to this view that Christian theologians of different traditions have been forced to draw together. The most threaten-

ing feature of this secular anthropology is its treatment of the human being as a part of nature,\* to be studied in the same way as one studies any natural phenomenon. This has curiously contradictory consequences. On the one hand it leads to a diminution of our respect for men and women as persons, for it excludes such “mythological” ideas that they may be created in the image of God, and it has no categories for dealing with what personalist philosophers have called the I-Thou relation. Yet if this view has demeaned humanity in some respects, it has exaggerated its status in others, for in leaving God out of account, it pushes humanity into the place which Nietzsche had claimed for the “superman”, who takes over control from the God who is no more. Many secular thinkers have revolted against this absorption of human beings into the realm of natural phenomena (e.g. the existentialists), and quite naturally they have had an attraction for theologians. The early Marx too was seeking a more human role for the workers in industrial societies, but this phase passed, and the collapse of Marxism in Eastern Europe today is in large measure due to its failure to protect the values of personal life. Thus a major challenge to the churches today is to work out together a convincing anthropology which will be true to the Christian faith and at the same time will meet the deepest needs of men and women for self-understanding.

See also **anthropology, cultural**.

JOHN MACQUARRIE

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## ANTICHRIST

“ANTICHRIST” is the biblical name given to the mysterious figures who “in these last days” deny and oppose Christ, in the Johan-

nine epistles (1 John 2:18-19, 4:3; 2 John 7-10); the Beast, worker of wonders and seducer in Rev. 13 and 17, and in 2 Thess. 2:3-10 the Man of Sin or Rebel who will lead the great apostasy or revolt before Christ's second coming. There are some roots in Jewish eschatology, influenced by Persian and Babylonian myths of the battle between God and the devil, a struggle pictured in Dan. 7.

Throughout the history of the church the antichrist has been named and interpreted as a *person* already on the scene (from Nero to Napoleon, from Hitler and Stalin to Saddam Hussein); also an *institution*, from the Roman empire to the United Nations; or the papacy itself, according to the Albigenses, the early Waldensians, John Hus in Bohemia, John Wycliffe in England, Martin Luther in Germany, and some 19th-century Protestant missionary societies; or a *movement* (New Age, new world order, feminism, secular humanism, rock music; also the ecumenical movement, with the WCC as an instrument of Satan); or a *world faith* (Islam); or simply the personification of all that is evil.

The antichrist is an essential actor in modern premillennialist apocalyptic scenarios, especially as drawn by Christian fundamentalists.

See also **fundamentalists, millennialism**.

TOM STRANSKY

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## ANTISEMITISM

ANTISEMITISM concerns political, social and economic agitation and activities directed against Jewish people, including speech and behaviour derogatory to people of Jewish origin. The hostility towards Jews denoted by the term (coined by Wilhelm Marr in 1879) was justified by a racist theory that peoples of so-called Aryan (Sanskrit, “noble”) stock are superior in physique and character to those of Semitic stock. The Nazis used the term “Aryan” to mean white and non-Jewish.

While the theory of racial superiority has been used to justify the civil and religious persecution of Jews throughout history, the Jewish community, as an available and often isolated minority, has been a frequent target especially in periods of social and economic instability and crisis when frustrations are deflected onto scapegoats.

Anti-Jewish agitation has existed for several thousand years. The Bible reports it. Jewish tradition sees in the person of Amalek the prototype of anti-Judaism (Deut. 25:17-19). The declaration of Haman to King Ahasuerus (Esth. 3:8-9) is a classic example of anti-Jewish incitement: "There is a certain people scattered and separated among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from those of every other people, and they do not keep the king's laws, so it is not appropriate for the king to tolerate them. If it pleases the king, let a decree be issued for their destruction." In the Roman empire the Jews' devotion to their religion and their special forms of worship were used as a pretext for political discrimination; for example, very few Jews were admitted to full Roman citizenship.

Since the 4th century, Christians have regarded Jews as the killers of Jesus Christ, God-killers (*deicidi*). With the eventual civil domination of Christianity throughout the Western world, discrimination against Jews on religious grounds became universal and systematic. Social anti-Judaism appeared. Jews were segregated in ghettos, required to wear identifying marks or garments, and economically crippled by restrictions imposed on their business activities. Forced baptisms, public burnings of the Talmud and other Jewish books, and many massacres, especially during the crusades,\* remain an indelible part of the history of the Jews in Europe.

The French revolution and the age of Enlightenment increased the separation of church and state and gave rise to modern nation states. In Western Europe this contributed to a gradual integration of Jews into the political, cultural and economic realm of society, though their acceptance by the non-Jewish majority was superficial and ran in cycles, depending on economic and social conditions. In Eastern Europe the system of

isolating Jews as an alien economic and social class was never broken. The persecution of Jews culminated in the 1880s in a series of organized massacres or pogroms. Later attacks were stirred up by a forged Russian publication, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (1905), which purported to detail international Jewish conspiracy to dominate the world, under an emerging antichrist,\* the messiah of the Jews.

Antisemitism exploded under the Nazi regime. Hitler announced a "final solution" of the Jewish problem: the annihilation of the Jewish community. By the end of the second world war, about two-thirds or 6 million of the Jews of Europe had been exterminated by massacre, systematic execution and starvation. Recently, small groups of neo-Nazis and white supremacists in different parts of the Western world have been primarily responsible for antisemitic propaganda and acts of vandalism, such as defacing or setting fire to synagogues and desecrating Jewish cemeteries, and physical violence against Jews.

In the Middle East, a new form of anti-Jewish feeling was generated as a result of the escalation of anti-Zionism after the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. Particularly after occupying the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, Israel encroached on Arab land, displacing many Arabs. This aroused opposition that has sometimes used antisemitic stereotypes inherited from the West.

Polemic writings in Islam against Jews and Judaism, focusing on the Jewish rejection of Muhammad, have complicated the history of Jews and Muslims. But besides these dissonances and negative interaction, there are also confluences and positive interchange because of the kinship between Jews and Muslims as Semitic peoples. For most of the middle ages the large majority of Jews lived under Islamic governance; those who lived in Christian countries of Europe were a minority. One of the most creative parts of Jewish history took place in Islamic lands. Renowned synagogue theologians wrote their principal works in Arabic. There was little Jewish writing in Latin in the midst of medieval Western Christianity.

The Jewish-Christian dialogue cannot ignore antisemitism. As anti-Judaism it has

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been part of the church since its earliest generations. Christian theology gradually articulated what Jules Isaac called a “teaching of contempt” of living Judaism. What had belonged to the people of Israel became the property of the church. God had repudiated the election of the Jews and chosen the church to replace them as the new people of God, the new Israel. Centuries of anti-Jewish teaching contributed to the endurance of antisemitism in society.

After the second world war, the dialogue between Christians and Jews led to a changed climate. The WCC’s first assembly (Amsterdam 1948) declared: “We call upon the churches we represent to denounce antisemitism, no matter what its origin, as absolutely irreconcilable with the profession and practice of the Christian faith. Antisemitism is a sin against God and man.” In the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), the Roman Catholic Church formally repudiated the charge that all Jews are responsible for the death of Christ and thus are rejected or accursed by God.

Christian churches have made significant statements on antisemitism in recent decades, articulating a commitment to denounce antisemitism wherever it appears and to deal with prejudices. Yet Christians must still contend with the underlying roots of anti-Jewish teaching. The Christian claim of being the people of God, the followers of Jesus, the Messiah or the Christ, seems to dispossess Jews of their self-understanding and thus leave seeds of anti-Judaism untouched and potentially virulent. The self-understanding of the church is not independent from what it thinks about the Jews. If while antisemitism is condemned at one level, its seeds remain in place at another, are Christians left with the paradox of condemning something they justify theologically?

See also *Israel and the church, Jewish-Christian dialogue*.

HANS UCKO

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## AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

NEW ZEALAND, or Aotearoa (in Maori), began its Christian history on two distinct levels – mission church and settler church. Among the indigenous Maori people there were three early competitors: Anglican, Methodist and Roman Catholic. From the 1830s, Maori evangelists of all three allegiances were taking the gospel throughout the land, and the vast majority of Maori conversions were made by other Maori. By 1860, mission work was widespread, particularly in the more densely populated North Island. A few of the tribes adopted a single form of Christianity, but many remain deeply divided denominationally to this day.

In the South Island, with fewer Maori, denominationally oriented colonies were established – Presbyterian at Dunedin (1848) and Anglican at Christchurch (1851). Elsewhere, settler churches reflected the nationality of the immigrants. Anglicans were most numerous, Scottish Presbyterians second, with Irish Roman Catholics third and Methodists fourth. This ratio lasted until recent times, when Roman Catholics overtook Presbyterians as the second largest denomination. Active participation in all four of the major denominations has continued to diminish.

The treaty of Waitangi, signed in 1840 by a large group of Maori chiefs and the crown representative, gave Queen Victoria sovereignty and protected New Zealand from French colonialism, but it also established a bi-cultural foundation for future Aotearoa New Zealand society.

The Anglican, Methodist and Catholic missionaries sought to build a Maori church, and ministry to the smaller settler community was secondary. But as clergy began to arrive for the settler community, competition developed for control of church leadership, especially because of the valuable land holdings. When national church bodies were established, the Maori were forgotten. The 1857 constitution of the Anglican church has no Maori signatures; although Maori probably made up the majority of Anglicans in the country, it was assumed that the

Church Missionary Society would take care of them. But the settler structures soon found the missionary establishment too threatening, and Maori concerns found little support until well into the 20th century. The first Maori Anglican priest was ordained in 1853, but it was only in 1944 that the first Maori was ordained as a Catholic priest and in 1950 that a Maori was received into full connection with the Methodist conference.

Tribal concerns soon outweighed those of the denomination. Attempts were made to create indigenized forms of Christianity, two of which survive today. The Ratana Church, emerging from the Methodist tradition under the leadership of a powerful healer and preacher, has gained a central position in Maori political life and remains strong. The more syncretistic Ringatu Church comprises a smaller but often more nationalistic membership.

In 1928 an Anglican bishop of Aotearoa – a bishop for all Maori, though only a suffragan to the bishop of Waiapu – was appointed, as much to stem the tide of the Ratana movement as to respond to the concerns of the Maori. Fifty years later the creation of the Maori section of the Anglican church gave the Maori bishop joint jurisdiction with each diocesan bishop. The Presbyterian Maori synod was formed in 1954, the Methodist Maori division in 1973, and the Maori council of the Roman Catholic Church in 1983.

A national council of churches was formed in 1941 and it established a Maori section in 1945. In 1982 the Maori in virtually all the major churches, including the RCC, founded a Maori Council of Churches – Te Runanga Whakawhanaunga I Nga Haahi O Aotearoa. The national council of churches was replaced in 1987 by the Conference of Churches in Aotearoa New Zealand (CCANZ), intended as a truly indigenously expression of the ecumenical journey that could ground ecumenism in local realities. While the RCC joined in organizing and funding the CCANZ, the congregational polity of the Baptists, Congregationalists and Associated Churches of Christ – all members of the former NCC – made it impossible for their national unions to accept the goals of the new body. While the Baptists and Congregationalists remain outside the confer-

ence, a new category of associate membership enabled the Associated Churches of Christ to affiliate with it.

Between the mid-1960s and mid-1970s Anglicans, Associated Churches of Christ, Congregationalists, Methodists and Presbyterians were involved in church union negotiations, but this narrowly failed to secure Anglican approval, even though the Protestants accepted the Anglican insistence on the historic episcopate. A similar fate in 1980 befell a proposal for a covenant and unification of ministries. Many “cooperative ventures” nevertheless sprang up at the local level.

Five Aotearoa New Zealand churches – Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Associated Churches of Christ and Baptist – are members of the WCC and the Christian Conference of Asia;\* the Salvation Army, Congregationalists and Quakers belong to the latter. Despite the country’s location between Australia and the Pacific, Aotearoa New Zealand is not involved in any Pacific ecumenical body. Presbyterians, Methodist and Catholics maintain confessional and missionary ties with Polynesia, and Anglicans with Melanesia. CCANZ made statements about the 1987 coup d’etat in Fiji and the ensuing religious extremism; and Methodists in Aotearoa New Zealand have tried to help relax tensions within Fijian Methodism. Inter-Polynesian tensions in Auckland have also elicited denominational attempts at mediation. Some CCANZ and denominational leaders have expressed the hope that the country’s growing role as a Pacific nation may lead to some sort of South Pacific ecumenical body in the future.

At the beginning of the new millennium, ecumenism in Aotearoa New Zealand is in sad retreat. In 1999, the Roman Catholic Church withdrew from CCANZ, and although there have been new members among the smaller denominations, the financial commitment to CCANZ from the larger denominations has diminished.

RAYMOND OPPENHEIM

■ J. Bluck, *Everyday Ecumenism: Can You Take the World Church Home?* WCC, 1987 ■ C. Brown, *Forty Years On: A History of the National Council of Churches in New Zealand, 1941-1981*, Christchurch, NCC, 1981 ■ Chris-

*tian Order: Bibliography of Current Literature*, Christchurch, Presbyterian Bookroom, n.d. ■ *What Happened at Waitangi in 1983?*, Auckland, NCC, 1983.

## APARTHEID

THE NATIONAL party of South Africa was elected to power in 1948 in a white minority election on a platform of apartheid (lit. "apartness") as a basis for protecting white power and privilege. The relationship between apartheid as a political ideology entrenched in law and earlier forms of racial segregation is a complex one. South African history comprises various initiatives by whites to exclude others from having rights in a common society. For example, the land act, as the foundation stone of the entire apartheid system, became law in 1913, restricting blacks (who constitute over 80% of the population) to 13% of the land surface.

The theological controversy around apartheid is commonly traced back to the debate in the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK) in 1829. The synod of that church found it to be theologically wrong that "persons of colour" should be prevented from sharing in holy communion with whites. Then, in 1857, the synod ruled that "as a result of the weakness of some", segregation should be permitted.

Support for segregation and apartheid within the Afrikaans Reformed churches developed into an involved ideology in subsequent decades, culminating in the 1974 report of the NGK, *Human Relations and the South African Scene in the Light of Scripture*, which provided explicit biblical and theological legitimation of apartheid. This contributed directly to the declaration of heresy against this church by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches\* (WARC) in 1982. A revised document, entitled *Church and Society*, was published in 1986. It moves away from the theological white nationalism of the Verwoerdian-Vorster era of apartheid, but it failed to move the NGK towards the complete eradication of apartheid either in church or in society.

Member churches of the South African Council of Churches and others like the Roman Catholic Church have rejected apartheid on theological grounds but often were implicated (if only by default) in the

practice and implementation of it. At the world level, several churches have also rejected apartheid, declaring it a sin in its persistent disobedience of the word of God, a heresy (WARC 1982), a *status confessionis* (Lutheran World Federation\* 1977). After the Cottesloe\* consultation (1960), the NGK withdrew from the WCC, which has issued several resolutions condemning apartheid as "a sin which, as a fundamental matter of faith, is to be rejected as a perversion of the gospel" (central committee 1980). On a practical level the WCC, through its Programme to Combat Racism,\* implemented and recommended to the member churches and to social institutions measures such as disinvestment (1972), discouraging of white immigration to South Africa (1972), refusal of bank loans (1974), and the application of comprehensive sanctions (1980). The Roman Catholic Church also expressed its rejection and, as part of ecumenical national councils, participated in such direct anti-apartheid actions. But there can be no doubt that the brunt of the struggle against apartheid was shouldered by the people in South Africa and by their lay and religious leaders.

Statutory apartheid ended with the first democratic elections in April 1994, leading to the inauguration of President Nelson Mandela on 10 May of that year.

In 1995 the South African government set up a Commission on Truth and Reconciliation chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, which had as its aim to gather as much evidence as possible on human rights abuses in South Africa during the apartheid period and to enable the people of South Africa to move towards a reconciled future based on the recognition of the truth of the past. It presented its seven-volume report to President Mandela in October 1998. In his address to the assembly of the South African Council of Churches in August 2001, WCC general secretary Konrad Raiser said that the Commission's process and report was "a model of the way in which a society can face up to the painful and destructive memories of the past, and practise reconciliation and restore justice".

See also **racism, Rustenburg.**

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## APOSTASY

THE WORD (from the Greek *apostasia*) means publicly relinquishing one religion for another. The biblical authors use "apostasy" specifically in the sense of falling away from one's religion, rejecting one's faith. Thus Antiochus Epiphanes seeks to get the Jews to apostatize by forcing them to sacrifice to idols (1 Macc. 2:15). The apostle Paul is accused of apostasy by the Jews (Acts 21:21). The apostasy of those who are not true Christians will precede the coming of the antichrist\* (2 Thess. 2:3; cf. 1 Tim. 4:1; Heb. 3:12). When Christians were persecuted by the Roman empire, several types of apostasy were distinguished: *sacrificati* acquiesced in sacrificing to idols, *traditores* handed over the sacred books to the persecutors, *thurificati* acquiesced in burning incense before the images of the false gods or the emperor, *libellatici* obtained false certificates testifying that they had taken part in the worship of idols, *acta facientes* contrived to be mentioned in the public records as having renounced their faith. A notable 4th-century instance of apostasy was that of the Emperor Julian (361-63), Constantine the Great's nephew, who came to be known as "the Apostate".

Apostasy in the early church led to very severe penalties in canon law.\* Clergy who had apostatized because of human fear were repudiated by the church. Clergy who disowned their clerical status as such lost it; if they repented, they were received back as laity. Those who had apostatized and had forced others to do so were excommunicated (see **EXCOMMUNICATION**) for ten years if they were of the laity. According to Basil the Great's canon 73, those who repented after apostatizing had to remain among the penitents ("mourners") for the rest of their lives and were re-admitted to communion\* only

just before their death. Later apostates were punished by the confiscation of their property, exile and sometimes death.

Abandonment of one Christian confession for another has also been called apostasy. In the past such a move could lead to the stake; and it is still regarded by the church as apostasy, and therefore subject in canon law to penalties, which are all the more strict because the transfer can be regarded as heresy\* if there are significant doctrinal differences between the confession left and the body joined. When there is a return to the church that has been left, rites of reconciliation\* are accompanied by rituals for the abjuration of heresy.

The churches permit apostates to be reconciled with their faith. The rites vary, depending as a rule on whether the apostate is a minister of the church, a religious, or a layperson. The former public penalties have been replaced by others within the church courts. In the Orthodox church, repenting apostates, just like heretics and schismatics, are anointed with holy chrism during the ceremony by which they return to the church.

See also **SCHISM**.

ALEXIS KNIAZEFF

## APOSTLES' CREED

SINCE THE early centuries of the Christian era the creed known as the Apostles' Creed has been the confession of faith (or symbol) professed in the Western churches by those receiving baptism.\* The Eastern churches had formulations of the baptismal creed very similar to the Apostles' Creed. Adolf von Harnack and Hans Lietzmann traced it back to the 2nd-century church of Rome. Whether or not this is correct, it is already found in outline by the end of the 2nd century (e.g. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.10.1). Well attested in Rome, Milan and Aquileia, Dalmatia and Africa at the end of the 4th century, it received its final form (*textus receptus*) some time between the 7th and 9th centuries.

From the beginning of Christianity the content of the profession of faith\* at baptism has been regarded as belonging to the heart of the apostolic Tradition. The 3rd-century Syriac *Didascalia* (6.12) attributes

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the formulation of the rule of faith to the apostles; and at the end of the 4th century, Ambrose of Milan (*Letters* 42.5; *Explanation of the Creed* 2-3) and Rufinus of Aquileia (*Commentary on the Apostles' Creed* 3) regard the baptismal creed of the Roman church as the work of the apostles, hence its name.

The Nicene Creed,\* received by the churches of East and West, is similar in structure to the Apostles' Creed but has an important addition on the divinity of Christ, made by the council of Nicea\* (325), and another on the equality of the Holy Spirit\* in relation to the Father and the Son, made by the council of Constantinople\* (381).

The Apostles' Creed is Trinitarian in pattern, i.e. it is structured upon the persons of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The central, Christological part dealing with the work of Christ is the most developed. The mention of the Holy Spirit is followed by the reference to the church,\* in which the Spirit is at work, and to certain essential points of the Christian faith. The Apostles' Creed is not an exhaustive statement of the Christian faith; it says nothing about scripture, the eucharist,\* ministry\* or justification.\* As these points of the Christian faith were not the subject of controversy in the early church, they required no further explanation and are taken for granted here as being derived directly from scripture.

Compared with the Nicene Creed, the Apostles' Creed has ten distinctive features. (1) Unlike all the Eastern creeds, it affirms the faith in the Father, Son, Holy Spirit and church without stressing their oneness (see 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:5-6). (2) It distinguishes between conception through the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:35) and birth through the Virgin Mary. (3) It affirms that Christ descended into hell (see Phil. 2:10-11; Rom. 10:7; Acts 2:24; 1 Pet. 3:19), thus indicating the universality of the salvation\* he effected. (4) It proclaims that Christ is risen "from the dead" (Luke 24:46). (5) It underlines the divinity of the glorified Christ, stating that he is seated at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty (Matt. 26:64 par.). (6) It highlights faith in the holiness and hence the divinity of the Spirit by repeating at the start of the third section the opening affirmation of the creed, "I believe...". (7) It professes the church as

holy (see **holiness**) and catholic (see **catholicity**), expressing by the use of this second adjective the belief that, animated by the Holy Spirit, the church alone is established for the salvation in Christ of all human beings (see Eph. 1:22-23, 3:10-11). (8) It mentions belief in "the communion of saints", i.e. among Christians who are all members of the one body of Christ (see 1 Cor. 10:16-17). (9) Whereas the Nicene Creed affirms that we "look for the resurrection of *the dead*", the Apostles' Creed, countering the Gnostic heresy, speaks of "the resurrection of the *body*" (Luke 24:39; John 6:51-56; Acts 2:30 [Western text]; 1 Cor. 15:36-39). (10) The statement of belief in the Holy Spirit is followed without transition by belief in the church, in the communion of saints,\* the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection\* of the body, and the life everlasting, thereby making it clear that all these are manifestations of the Spirit: the entire life of the church and of the Christian believer, right up to its final consummation, is under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

The Apostles' Creed has a special ecumenical value. In the Lambeth Quadrilateral\* of 1888, the Anglican communion deliberately added it to the four fundamental articles of Chicago (1886) "as the baptismal symbol", while considering the Nicene Creed "as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith". The Lausanne Faith and Order conference of 1927 placed the Apostles' Creed alongside the Nicene Creed as the common expression of the Christian faith. It recognized that although the Eastern Orthodox church gives no place to the Apostles' Creed in its rites, it agrees with its teaching. This was repeated at the Edinburgh conference (1938), and then at the third assembly of the WCC at New Delhi (1961). Traditionally the baptismal symbol of the Roman Catholic Church, the Apostles' Creed has also since Vatican II\* been introduced as an alternative to the Nicene Creed in the celebration of the eucharist.

See also **Athanasian creed, creeds.**

EMMANUEL LANNE

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## APOSTOLIC TRADITION

"TRADITION"\* is a dynamic concept and presupposes a double movement, of receiving and transmitting. The apostolic Tradition is the gospel, the word and event of salvation,\* entrusted by Jesus to the disciples he had chosen as its witnesses so that they in turn might hand it on with authority\* (see Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:21-22). In 1 Cor., the term refers to the teaching Paul transmitted to the church in Corinth (11:2), especially concerning the Lord's supper (11:23) and the event of Christ's death and resurrection (15:3) (see **common confession, creeds, eucharist**). Paul, the last to be favoured with an appearance of the risen Christ (15:8), had himself "received" the apostolic witness which he "handed on" to the Corinthians (15:3-7). What Paul received and transmitted was the gospel (15:1); it was also the meaning and manner of celebrating the Lord's supper (11:20,24-26), the central act of the life of the community Paul had founded at Corinth. The context of 1 Cor. 11 shows that the apostolic Tradition has a "centre" – the gospel of the saving passion of the Lord (11:23-26; cf. 15:1-8) – and a broader context of practices which the apostle bases on the mystery of Christ (11:2-16).

The pastoral epistles do not use the terminology of "tradition", but the idea itself is everywhere implicit. Once again the gospel is the centre of the message (1 Tim. 1:15-18; 3:16-4:6) and connected with it, the context of ecclesial life, though with a new emphasis. False teachings oppose the gospel transmitted by the apostle. This authentic apostolic Tradition is referred to three times as a deposit – that which "has been entrusted" (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:12,14) – associated with the idea of keeping or guarding, and fairly close to the Jewish idea of tradition (Ceslaus Spicq). But what is transmitted and guarded is, above all, the gospel. The organization of the church and the norms handed down by Paul for this purpose are meaningful only in

reference to the transmission of the unique gospel (see **church order, church discipline**).

## THE TRADITION OF THE CHURCH

From the sub-apostolic age onwards, works like the *Didache* formulated the norms of Christian and ecclesial life as apostolic Tradition. The spread of the Gnostic heresy during the 2nd century, which appealed to secret traditions of the apostles, led the mainstream church to define the apostolic Tradition in more precise terms by establishing which writings were of apostolic origin and could and should be read in congregations, thus forming the "canon"\* of the New Testament. At the same time, norms emerged for interpreting these writings in harmony with the prophecies in the Jewish scriptures which foretold the Christ and his work of salvation (see **hermeneutics**).

Around 180, in a work entitled *Against Heresies*, Irenaeus of Lyons established rules for discerning the authentic Christian message in opposition to the errors of the Gnostics. He insisted that the church throughout the world has always had a single and unique rule of faith,\* whose articles constitute the substance of what would become the baptismal creed (see **creeds**), "for although the languages of the world are dissimilar, yet the import of the Tradition is one and the same" (1.10.2; see **catholicity**). The sole content of the Tradition is the preaching of the apostles deposited in the scriptures, interpreted by the bishops instituted in the churches by the apostles (3.3.1; see **teaching authority, episcopacy**). This interpretation goes beyond a simple exegesis of the prophecies recorded in the Old Testament or of the New Testament writings, for, as already in Paul's case, reading scripture in accordance with the apostolic Tradition has concrete implications for the life of the churches and the behaviour of the Christian. In opposition to the secret traditions the heretics claimed to have received from the apostles, Irenaeus asserts the public character of the Tradition and denounces all forms of esotericism. This Tradition is not necessarily written, for the "barbarians who believe in Christ... having salvation written in their hearts by the Spirit without ink... carefully preserve the ancient Tradition" (3.4.2).

This concept of Tradition was developed by subsequent Christian theologians and polemicists (Tertullian, Hippolytus, Origen). Some of them listed the unwritten traditions in force in ecclesial life deriving from the apostles (Tertullian, *Concerning the Crown* 3-4; Hippolytus in his *Apostolic Tradition*, where ecclesiastical organization derives from the apostles by tradition; the Syriac *Didascalia*; and church orders based on these writings). At the beginning of the 5th century a principle was formulated which is rooted in this conception of the intimate bond between the heritage of the apostles, scripture (as read in the universal tradition of the church) and ecclesial life: namely, the normative character of the life of prayer of the universal church for the faith (see *lex orandi, lex credendi*).

#### WRITTEN TRADITION AND UNWRITTEN SECRET TRADITION

With Basil of Caesarea (d.379), there is an appreciable development in the concept of apostolic Tradition. Despite the arguments used in anti-Gnostic controversy, Basil distinguishes between the tradition of the *kerygma* (preaching), open even to the unbaptized, and that of the *dogma*\* (doctrine), reserved for the initiated, those partaking of the sacraments\* (*On the Holy Spirit* 27.66). Basil derives this distinction from the apostles and fathers, who from the beginning arranged all that concerns the churches; in fact, these unwritten secret traditions mainly concerned the rites, formulas and prayers used in the celebration of baptism\* and the eucharist.\* He was alone in his day in developing this distinction between two kinds of tradition; and he affirmed that “both have the same force for the faith”.

#### NICEA II, THE REFORMERS, TRENT

The council of Nicea II (787) legitimated the reverence offered to the holy images by the Tradition of the church, which was seen as comprising both written and unwritten elements. The former is the gospel and the writings of the holy fathers, to the latter belong the holy images and the veneration accorded to the book of the gospels and to the cross. Christian antiquity, especially in its Greek and Oriental form, did not always

distinguish clearly between scripture, commentaries on it and the various traditions which constituted the fabric of the church's life. The Tradition appeared rather as a living continuity with the church of the apostles and fathers, with scripture at its heart.

A clear distinction between scripture and the traditions began to establish itself in the West in the 12th and 13th centuries with the desire for a life in accordance with the gospel *sine glossa*, first with the scholastics, then with John Wycliffe and Jan Hus, who rejected traditions which contradicted scripture and the pure gospel and identified the apostolic Tradition with scripture (see **Tradition and traditions**), thereby laying the foundations for a pivotal principle of Luther and Calvin: *sola scriptura*, on the basis of which every tradition which appeared not to be founded directly on the canonical text of scripture was rejected. While Calvin often quotes the fathers, he does so in order to explain the pure gospel which the apostles deposited in writing as “sure and genuine scribes of the Holy Spirit” (*Institutes* 4.8.9).

In reaction, the council of Trent\* in 1546 affirmed that “the truths and rules” of the gospel are preserved “in [all] the written books” of the OT and NT “and in the unwritten traditions which, received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ himself or from the apostles themselves, have come down to us in the Catholic church in unbroken succession” (H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, 1501). The council refused to set scripture in opposition to the apostolic Tradition but wished also to maintain the position of Basil and Nicea II. Post-Tridentine theologians often misinterpreted Trent's juxtaposition of scripture and oral traditions as pointing to two sources of the Christian revelation\* – some going so far as to assert that truth is “partly” in scripture and “partly” in the unwritten traditions.

#### SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION IN THE CONTEMPORARY ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

Emergence in the second half of the 20th century from the blind alley of four centuries' conflict between Protestants and Catholics is due partly to a better acquaintance with church history and partly to ecumenical contacts with Orthodox. Eastern

Orthodox teaching remained in fact a living reality in the churches of the East, which attach particular importance not only to the teachings of the councils and the fathers but also to the celebration of the liturgy as living and authoritative witnesses to the apostolic Tradition. Orthodox participation in the work of the Faith and Order\* commission and in the debates of Vatican II\* helped to get the dialogue moving again.

The fourth world conference of F&O (Montreal 1963) produced a report on "Scripture, Tradition and traditions" which, by starting from the Tradition of the gospel (the *paradosis* of the *kerygma*; see **Tradition and traditions**), considerably transformed the approaches to the problem.

In November 1962 the Second Vatican Council rejected a draft text entitled "The Sources of Revelation" and then drafted and promulgated another entitled "The Word of God" (the constitution *Dei Verbum*). It outlines the central place of scripture in the life of the church, the relationship (concordance) between scripture and Tradition, and the role of the magisterium\* (the teaching of the bishops, councils and the pope) in the authentic interpretation of the word of God.\* The originality of this text lay in its recalling that the apostolic Tradition had preceded the scriptures of the NT (para. 7), and that the apostolic Tradition embraces the whole life and faith of the church and is continued in the church (para. 8). Scripture and Tradition, "flowing out from the same divine well-spring, come together in some fashion to form one thing and move towards the same goal. Sacred scripture is the speech of God as it is put down in writing under the breath of the Holy Spirit. And Tradition transmits in its entirety the word of God which has been entrusted to... the successors of the apostles so that, enlightened by the Spirit of truth, they might faithfully preserve, expound and spread it abroad by their preaching. Thus it comes about that the church does not draw her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy scriptures alone. Hence, both scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honoured with equal feelings of devotion and reverence" (para. 9). In no way, however, is Tradition a "source" of revelation independent of scripture.

That the problem of the Tradition has largely been settled is recognized in numerous subsequent bilateral dialogues (Anglican-Lutheran 1972, paras 32-44; Anglican-Orthodox 1976, paras 9-12; 1984, paras 47-52,90-92; Anglican-Roman Catholic 1981, para. 2; Disciples-Roman Catholic 1981, paras 46-56; Lutheran-Roman Catholic 1972, paras 14-34; 1980, paras 62-65; 1984, para. 57; Reformed-Roman Catholic 1977, paras 25-30). The 1991 Singapore report of the Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue\* was entirely devoted to "The Apostolic Tradition". Following the official responses of the churches to the Lima document on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*,\* further clarifications were suggested on the relationship between church and word of God, scripture and Tradition (see *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* 1982-1990, pp.131-42); and following the world conference on F&O at Santiago de Compostela in 1993, these led in part to *A Treasure in Earthen Vessels: An Instrument for an Ecumenical Reflection on Hermeneutics* (1998).

See also **apostolicity**.

EMMANUEL LANNE

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## APOSTOLICITY

ALTHOUGH the concept of apostolicity is not found explicitly in the New Testament, the basic range of ideas it expresses appears in such passages as Acts 2:42 ("They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers"), John 20:21 ("As the Father has sent me, so I send you") and Eph. 2:20 ("built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone"). Together with unity,\* holiness\* and catholicity,\* it is one of four con-

cepts traditionally regarded as marks or essential qualities of the church.\*

Although some Protestants explicitly reject the notion of (Roman) catholicity, all churches claim to be apostolic in the broad sense of the word. Apostolicity is not an essentially contested concept to the same extent as catholicity is. Nevertheless, to the extent that the apostolic succession of bishops, guaranteed (as has often been claimed) by the laying on of hands, is treated as a necessary condition of both catholicity and apostolicity, there is still a sharp contrast between many Protestants on the one hand, and the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican and some Lutheran churches on the other, which have bishops and also claim to have preserved the apostolic succession intact. Many Protestants stress instead their faithfulness to the pure doctrines and biblically legitimated practices of the original apostles as the main (if not the sole) criterion of genuine apostolicity.

The uncontroversial aspects of apostolicity were summarized by a WCC Faith and Order consultation (Chantilly 1985) as part of the study "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today". The church is *apostolic* (1) in that it recognizes its fundamental identity with the church of Christ's apostles, as presented in the NT; (2) in its faithfulness to the word of God lived out and understood in the apostolic tradition, guided by the Holy Spirit throughout the centuries and expressed in the creeds; (3) by its celebration of the sacraments instituted by Christ and practised by the apostles; (4) by the continuity of its ministry (whether in the apostolic succession or otherwise is not specified here because it is dealt with elsewhere; see further below), initially taken up by the apostles, in the service of Christ; (5) by being a missionary church which, following the example of the apostles, will not cease to proclaim the gospel to the whole of humankind until Christ comes again in glory. The trend in current ecumenical thinking is to see the basis of what is now called "our unity in the apostolic faith" in the Old and New Testaments, the Apostles' Creed\* and the Nicene Creed,\* and in the two dominical sacraments of baptism\* and the eucharist,\* all as interpreted primarily by the classical ecumenical councils.\*

In addition to the problems posed by the historic episcopate and the apostolic succession guaranteed by the laying on of hands, a number of other issues also arise with respect to the content of the "apostolic faith", e.g. which councils are indeed ecumenical (and should therefore be received by the whole of the undivided church); whether or not the two Marian dogmas belong to the basic apostolic tradition; whether the filioque\* clause should or should not be included in the classic credal statements of the church.

### THE CONCEPT OF APOSTOLICITY THROUGH THE AGES

As a basic concept, "apostolicity" (from the Greek *apostellein*, to send out on an errand or a mission) is intimately related both to the message and to the bearers of the message. The original messengers were the apostles mentioned in the NT. There were also Jewish emissaries who taught in the synagogues and collected taxes to support the rabbis. In late Judaism, however, the task of the *shaliach* was an ad hoc ministry, not transferable to others; nor did the Jewish *shaliach* have an explicit ecclesiastical status or role. His authority, precisely defined by the one who sent him, ended when he had accomplished each mission.

Jesus was sent by the Father; in turn, he called, commissioned and sent out his own disciples to proclaim the coming of the kingdom of God\* and to teach the radical ethic of the kingdom. After Jesus' death and resurrection, however, the main task of the apostle was to proclaim that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead. Paul uses the noun "apostle" to denote those sent out by local churches (e.g. Titus in 2 Cor. 8:23). In the primitive church, there were more apostles than the original twelve called by Jesus, e.g. the successor of Judas, and Paul himself. Peter was often regarded as the first of the apostles; hence the development of a Petrine ministry in the Roman Catholic Church (see *primacy*).

Although it is sometimes argued that the apostolic ministry of the original eye-witnesses was unique and not directly transferable to successors, few Christians would deny that the church is apostolic in the sense

that it is built on the foundation of the original apostles (to the extent that it proclaims their message and performs the same essential tasks). In this sense, the notion of apostolicity is “absolutely basic to the church’s comprehension of itself”, as J.N.D. Kelly insists (*One in Christ*, 1970). Furthermore, the second generation of Christian teachers and evangelists (appropriately called the apostolic fathers) believed they were acting “in the manner of an apostle”, as Ignatius claimed in the 2nd century. Nevertheless, Ignatius did not say that he was acting in an official capacity or by virtue of an explicitly apostolic status; indeed, he clearly states that he was *not* acting “as an apostle” (*Letter to the Trallians* 3.3).

In other words, the quality or attribute of apostolicity is primarily an attribute or quality of the whole church. Its ministry is apostolic because the church itself is (or should be) apostolic. Its teachings are apostolic because, as Justin tells us (*First Apology* 66.3), they are the “memoirs” of the apostles. The church is therefore apostolic to the extent that it participates in the original mission which Jesus entrusted to his own disciples. Those whom Jesus originally commissioned and sent out were commanded not only to teach all nations but also to baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19). They were also commanded to commemorate the Lord’s death “until he comes”, i.e. by celebrating the eucharist in remembrance of Jesus.

But if apostolic ministry involves the right kind of proclamation and the right kind of sacraments, what is the right kind of teaching and sacraments? To counteract heretics and schismatics, lists of authoritative writings circulated, showing which scriptures had been produced by the original apostles or were believed to have originated from an apostle. In this way, the principle of a canon\* of scriptures eventually emerged. Apostolic teachings were also officially codified in the form of creeds\* such as the Nicene Creed and the Apostles’ Creed. The latter was not (as was once believed) composed by the original apostles, but its common name does illustrate that authoritative witness is indeed supposed to be apostolic.

Derivation from the original apostles thus became an essential criterion of what is

genuinely apostolic. Thus it is not surprising that in the disputes with heretics and schismatics at the end of the 2nd century, Irenaeus and Tertullian began to stress not only the continuity of authentic Christian teaching with the original apostolic preaching but also the historical links in the processes of tradition which eventually go back to the original apostles. Irenaeus states that “those who were appointed bishops in the churches by the apostles and those who have been their successors down to our own day” not only possess “true knowledge” but also preserve “the ancient structure of the church throughout the world, and the character of the Body of Christ according to the successions of the bishops to whom they entrusted the church which is in every place” (*Against Heresies* 3.3.1, 4.52.2). Hence the importance which came to be given to Tradition (see **Tradition and traditions**) – the process of handing on the original apostolic message – and to the authoritative interpretation of the original message, whose meaning was now the subject of theological dispute. The process of interpretation also generated traditions, i.e. authoritative interpretations of the original message. Authentic interpreters could trace their line of succession right back to the original apostles, while ecumenical councils were also regarded as authentic interpreters of the same apostolic tradition. Succession lists were soon drawn up in order to demonstrate which bishops were entitled to claim that their sees were apostolic. The so-called apostolic succession by laying on of hands thus came to be seen as a guarantee of authoritative apostolic teaching and validly performed sacraments.

While Tertullian had insisted that every local church founded by an apostle or *sharing in the same apostolic faith* is indeed an “apostolic church”, Cyprian, Jerome and Augustine virtually identify the apostolate and the episcopate.

During the Reformation,\* many Protestants saw the accumulation of “innovations” over the centuries as contradicting the traditional assumption that only the faith and practice of the *original* apostles is authentically apostolic. They applied the criterion “by scripture alone” to determine which doctrines were pure and which practices gen-

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uinely apostolic. Apostolic succession was no longer believed to guarantee the purity and the continuation of apostolic faith and practice – hence the rejection of both apostolic succession and the office of bishops. Since then, episcopacy,\* ministry and ordination\* have been controversial issues between many Protestants and the episcopal churches. The question of whether apostolic faith and practice could legitimately “develop”, raised by Cardinal Newman in the 1840s, became a crucial ecumenical issue.

### APOSTOLICITY IN RECENT ECUMENICAL THINKING

While there is ecumenical consensus on a wide range of issues relating to the apostolicity of the church and substantial progress on the issues of development of doctrine and the precise relationship between apostolic witness and apostolic succession, these issues have not yet been finally resolved. Development of doctrine has been discussed primarily by Anglicans, Lutherans and Roman Catholics, especially in the US. The key questions – the precise criteria of legitimate and illegitimate developments and who decides what the criteria should be – cannot easily be answered as long as either the NT church or the classic conciliar period is regarded as absolutely normative. There is no consensus on the disputed question of the relationship between continuity and change in the Christian church, except that it is impossible simply to repriminate whatever is regarded as *the* normative period.

This particular issue, however, has been placed in a new context by the growing realization that apostolicity is a process with both historical and eschatological dimensions. Even if the structures of “apostolic ministry” which soon developed in the early church have been preserved intact, the *fullness* of church unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity will not be realized until the advent of the kingdom of God. This recognition relativizes the previous assumption that a particular church has been or is a “perfect society” (in the sense of *ecclesiologically* correct, as distinct from morally perfect – a rather different matter). No single church is invulnerable to criticism; all, therefore, need to change. “Normative periods” can no longer simply be appealed to in order to unite divided churches or to realize the

fullness which unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity ultimately seem to require. The notion that the church has ever been undivided and completely perfect (in an ecclesiological sense) is increasingly regarded as a historical myth.

The ecumenical discussion of the relationship between apostolic witness and apostolic succession has primarily taken place in the Faith and Order process which produced the Lima text of 1982 on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (BEM).<sup>\*</sup> Basically, the solution offered to the still-divided churches assumes that what has traditionally been called apostolic succession does not necessarily guarantee faithfulness to apostolic faith and practice, though the recovery of the traditional threefold ministry (including bishops) could properly be regarded as a sign that apostolic continuity has been preserved in practice. The role of charismatic and prophetic leadership is also stressed. In the first place, however, it is the Holy Spirit that keeps the church “in the apostolic tradition until the fulfilment of history in the kingdom of God” (M34). Most important, it is “the apostolic tradition of the church as a whole” which is now regarded as the “primary manifestation of apostolic succession”, though the ministerial succession (by laying on of hands) is also treated as “an expression” of both the permanence and the continuity of the original apostolic mission. The orderly transmission of the ordained ministry not only emphasizes the vocation of the minister but also expresses the continuity of the church throughout history. Ministerial structures which do not serve the apostolic faith ought to be reformed (M35).

While BEM explicitly states that apostolic continuity has been preserved in churches which did not retain “succession through the episcopate” (M37), it also expresses a hope that non-episcopal churches will accept “episcopal succession as a sign, though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the church” (M38). In other words: “The church as the Body of Christ and the eschatological people of God is constituted by the Holy Spirit through a diversity of gifts or ministries. Among these gifts a ministry of episcopate is necessary to express and safeguard the unity of the body. Every church needs this ministry of unity in some form in

order to be the church of God, the one Body of Christ, a sign of the unity of all in the kingdom" (M23). Finally, in order to proceed to the mutual recognition of ministries, it will be necessary for those churches which have preserved episcopal succession to recognize the apostolicity of non-episcopal churches and their ministers; while churches which lack episcopal succession are invited to strengthen and deepen their own apostolic continuity by recovering what is called "the sign of the episcopal succession" (M53).

See also **apostolic Tradition, faith, teaching authority.**

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## ART IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

ART AS A MEDIUM of ecumenical communication was not much evident in the initial period of the ecumenical movement. The main medium of expression was verbal, either through speeches at ecumenical meetings or printed reports and study materials.

While theological emphasis on the proclamation of the word of God reinforced the importance given to biblical preaching and Bible study in the pre-television era, involvement in mission fields led some early pioneers to try to make the arts once again relevant to the expression of the faith. Daniel J. Fleming published *Each with His Own Brush: Contemporary Christian Art in Asia and Africa* (1938), and Arno Lehmann introduced artistic expressions of Christian faith from the third world in *Die Kunst der jungen Kirchen* (1957) and *Afro-asiatische christliche Kunst* (1966).

In assemblies and major ecumenical conferences, the presence of Orthodox representatives with their colourful icons\* not only

attested to a long Christian tradition but also awakened the artistic sensitivity of many other participants. The WCC's Uppsala assembly (1968) broke with the dominating verbal way of communication through the stimulating Czech puppet film *Homo Homini* and a dramatic presentation led by Olov Hartman.

The Nairobi assembly (1975) was not only filled with the sound of African drama and music but also enriched by powerful African artworks related to the theme "Jesus Christ Frees and Unites", exhibited in various parts of the conference centre where the assembly met. There were also enlarged reproductions from *Christian Art in Asia*. One of the most striking and challenging artworks was Brazilian sculptor Guido Rocha's "The Tortured Christ", which vividly depicted the agonizing cry of oppressed and captive people.

Preparations for the Vancouver assembly (1983) included publication of a set of 14 pictures to promote the discussion of the theme, "Jesus Christ - the Life of the World". Visual symbols and images were also taken more seriously by the assembly itself than at previous ecumenical gatherings. A native arbour, "a sacred meditative area among the trees", was set aside, and a 15-metre totem pole, carved by Native Canadian prisoners, was raised (later permanently located in the grounds of the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey), not only to remind participants of the spiritual quest through the ages but also to show concern for the land claims of all indigenous peoples. A major Asian Christian art exhibition included 50 original works by 22 Asian artists. There was also a film festival and a children's art exhibition on assembly themes.

What was most significant about the Christian art at the Vancouver assembly was that it was treated not as a side show but as central to the life of the assembly. The vibrant experience of worship in a large tent was an occasion of celebration that used all the gifts of God, including visual art and music. With the aid of a film on Andrey Rublyev's famous 15th-century icon of the Trinity, the assembly was led in a meditation on the Triune God, the ultimate ground for both the unity of the church and the renewal of the human community.

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At the seventh assembly (Canberra 1991) a large and colourful artwork on the theme by Wenten Rubuntja, one of the outstanding contemporary Australian Aboriginal artists, was placed at the centre of the assembly hall. In the tent where daily worship took place, several powerful Aboriginal paintings stimulated the creative spirit of adoration and communion. Similarly at the eighth assembly (Harare 1998), in a striking reversal of the normal sequence, an artist's rendition of a typical Shona stone sculpture, commissioned for a pre-assembly poster, was later carved by a Zimbabwean artist and served throughout the assembly as a pointer to the theme "Turn to God – Rejoice in Hope", before being presented to the WCC as a gift from the host churches. In the assembly worship tent, a large wooden cross provided a dramatic Christian image in an African idiom.

In 1978 the Christian Conference of Asia\* sponsored the first consultation in Bali for Asian Christian artists, which resulted in the formation of the Asian Christian Art Association and the establishment of a quarterly journal, *Image: Christ and Art in Asia*.

Various fascinating African Christian art works were compiled by Josef Franz Thiel. On the world level, two books written by Hans-Ruedi Weber show the ecumenical relationship between Christian faith and the visual arts.

In recent years, with the universal trend in communication of combining message and image, audio and visual media, the churches at both regional and world levels have intensified the combined effort to use music and visual images, dance and drama in the life and mission of the church. Also there has been a noticeable concern to revitalize the traditional indigenous artistic expressions in the worship life of congregations. An example is seen in the church in Bali, Indonesia, where the offering ceremony is performed by dance with music played on traditional Balinese musical instruments.

There is need for an ecumenical enquiry into the kind of church architecture which can facilitate integrating, relevant and participatory worship. In order to begin to address this need, the Christian Conference of

Asia has undertaken a project on church architecture.

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## ASCETICISM

CHRISTIAN asceticism is as old as the church. In the biblical accounts of the temptation of Jesus in the desert are found all the elements later used in the ascetic traditions: the isolation of the desert, a harsh and discouraging environment which puts one entirely at God's mercy and where one cannot escape God's presence; fasting, which indicates that we seek to live by God alone and not by what we can do ourselves; meditation on scripture, the key to distinguishing between spirits (1 Cor. 12:10); temptation; and the power of the Spirit, guiding the soul safely despite all the promptings of the Enemy. This is the opposite of the path of pride, violence and self-glorification; in fact, it is the way of the cross in the footsteps of Jesus.

This way of following Christ was first experienced in the persecutions during the earliest centuries of the church. Its ideal is martyrdom,\* undergone not arrogantly but with forgiveness for the persecutors. After the peace of Constantine in the 4th century, the monastic life embraced a new way of following Christ (intended to be just as radical), with self-denial and an opening of oneself to the mercy of God through all of everyday life.

Some of the desert fathers and their followers deliberately subjected themselves to great sufferings to renew the power of the spirit over the body and so come closer to the angels, who are bodiless spirits and see

God. But sometimes the only purpose of that suffering was to enable them to be one with the suffering Christ and show him the genuineness of their love.

The search for an austerity which would detach one from the attractions of the flesh and the refinements of civilization led to vows of *chastity*, which called for complete commitment to the age to come, *poverty* and effective care for the poor, and *obedience* to a chosen or simply accepted guide.

Another line of tradition in Eastern and Western monasticism is the quest for purity of heart and continuous prayer, two aspects of the same mystery. Purity of heart, removing every obstacle to the pursuit of love towards God and one's fellow human beings, comes more from our experience of God's mercy than from extended efforts at self-purification. It develops through setting the heart on guard against proud and vain thoughts, doubts, grudges, desires for revenge or domination, and progresses through compassion for all God's creatures, to a desire for the salvation of souls. From this perspective, it is apparent that we need not reach God through great works: total confidence in his love and loving faithfulness in small things also lead to that end. This is the fruitful path of spiritual childhood, well illustrated for modern times by Thérèse de Lisieux.

Constant prayer would make it possible to have real contact of the whole person with God, because it harmoniously eliminates the conflict between head and heart. This prayer is the antidote to every kind of modern depression, to the grip of ideologies and systems and to a naive and sentimental credulity which might otherwise distort our faith. If that faith remains living and true, our common enterprises as Christians of different churches will have their source very close to God and will be safe from rivalries, discouragements and activism. Perhaps we shall then together be able to discover fruitful solutions to the problems of our day, including the divisions among Christians.

Followers of Christ are called to remain in company with God, in the radiance of his splendour, to reject pride and hatred, to consider others as greater than we are, always to hope and to impart hope, to devote ourselves to serving the poor and to being wit-

nesses in this world of a merciful and forgiving God. Our prayer life should be like a great retreat, detaching us from comfort, the consumer society, prejudices and collective selfishness, so that together we may listen to the word of God\* and, in the face of temptations, discover the way Christ marks out for us today. "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me" (Luke 9:23).

See also **mysticism**.

SUZANNE ECK

## ASIA: CHINA

NESTORIAN Christianity, introduced into China in the 8th century, disappeared with the demise of non-Chinese hegemony because most of its adherents were not ethnic Chinese. Nor did a 13th-century Roman Catholic mission attempted by John of Mountcorvo show any lasting results. More successful was the 16th-century approach by the Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci, due to the missionary practice of accommodation, an attempt at interfaith dialogue\* and adoption of indigenous Chinese forms of worship, customs and culture.\* Ricci was ahead of his time; his methods soon led to the rites controversy between the Vatican and the Jesuits and eventually to the banning of Jesuit activity in 1702 by the pope. The principle of missionary indigenization, raised for the first time by Ricci's work, continues to influence both Roman Catholic and Protestant missiological discussion.

In 1807 Protestant missionary Robert Morrison was sent out by a society that was at the time non-denominational. Indeed, the largest of all societies in terms of missionary personnel, the China Inland Mission (now the Overseas Missionary Fellowship) has always been non-denominational. In the numerous areas where CIM worked, the churches it set up were not allied to a Western denomination except in west China, where Anglican CIM workers were concentrated.

Beginning about 1873, an independent Christian movement with Chinese leadership arose. Represented by such indigenous churches as the Little Flock (1924), the True

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Jesus Church (1917), the Jesus Family (1926) and independent gospel halls, this movement tended to be biblicist and ethnocentric in orientation and highly critical of the theologies and politics of the mission-related denominations. Today, as earlier, the inheritors of this independent church tradition are the most reluctant ecumenists.

All this must be seen against the backdrop of the larger story of the struggles of Chinese people – the moral and political bankruptcy of the Ch'ng dynasty, the humiliations of the unequal treaties with Western colonial powers, the republican revolution, the partition of China by the warlords, the desperate and unsuccessful attempts at reform, the anti-Christian movements, massive famine and starvation, the complete breakdown of the social and political fabric, the Japanese invasions, the founding of the People's Republic in 1949 and the regimentation of life under communist rule.

None of these circumstances encouraged ecumenism. The situation is further complicated by the popular perception of Protestantism and Catholicism as two different religions, one worshipping the King Above (Shang Di), the other the Heavenly Lord (Tian Thu). Still, there have been significant if sporadic signs towards oneness and ambitions if ambiguous attempts at unity.\* There were missionary conferences in 1877, 1890 and 1907, comity agreements and cooperation in publishing of Bibles, tracts and other literature. Cooperation in education, especially at the university level but also in secondary schools and theological education, began very early and was seminal in forming the church leaders who led the church unity movement after liberation. The influence of the YMCA\* and the YWCA\* was always a unifying factor. Other pre-liberation expressions of ecumenical life included relief programmes and joint evangelistic campaigns in the cities, with common planning and exchanges of preachers. In the 1940s the relief programmes produced the first working contacts between Protestants and Catholics, one step towards unity.

The beginning of the ecumenical movement in China thus goes back earlier than the founding of the National Council of Churches (NCC) in 1922. The NCC included perhaps half of the Protestant Chris-

tian bodies, mainly the more liberal ones, though some did not join for non-theological reasons, especially the deep hesitation of the Chinese to centralize power.

The Church of Christ in China was formed in 1927. A united church, composed of Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists and Baptists, it became the largest church in China, with about 120,000 members.

When the WCC was founded in 1948, four Chinese churches were founding members, and T.C. Chao, a noted theologian at Yenching University, was elected one of the six presidents. Chao resigned in 1952 in protest against the WCC's approval of UN intervention in the Korean war, and Chinese participation in the WCC soon dwindled and then disappeared for more than 30 years.

When the communists came forcibly to power in 1949, they drastically reduced the number of churches throughout the country and sent pastors and priests to farms and factories. But there were two other developments: the founding of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement and the Catholic Patriotic Association (CPA). The former was conceived in 1951 but formed in 1954 as the only legitimate umbrella grouping for Protestant activities. The parallel CPA held its first national congress in 1957. Both movements were formed at the behest of the government and not as expressions of ecumenicity. Nor did the denominations die out immediately with the founding of the two movements: most existed formally until the cultural revolution (1966). Ties with foreign churches were severed in 1951, after the outbreak of the Korean war, but even before that church workers and Buddhist and Taoist clergy were being "laicized", and some were imprisoned. In any case, with the founding of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement, Chinese Protestantism entered a post-denominational period.

The formation of the CPA meant that the government had decided to split the RCC. Pope Pius XII, on the other hand, also forced the issue of which side the Roman Catholics must take, under pain of excommunication. The CPA thus co-exists with an underground Roman Catholic Church which has consecrated more than 50 bishops, thus

compounding the delicate situation between the two, though neither side has declared the other schismatic.

From 1966 to 1976, during the cultural revolution, organized religious life was impossible. Church premises were taken over and public worship was stopped, forcing Christians to meet in homes. But the cultural revolution and other anti-religious campaigns had a positive ecumenical influence in terms of human relations. Personal contacts and friendships among Catholics and Protestant clergy in prison have helped to change the previous mutually hostile images. Contacts established in the working meetings of religious leaders by the bureau of religious affairs have also helped, and with Buddhist and Muslim leaders as well. But formal Roman Catholic-Protestant conversations are still non-existent, though in Hong Kong, for practical reasons, informal talks occur. The house church\* movement, which has always been a part of Chinese Christianity, assumed an important new role. New communities of faith, consisting of Christians from different traditions, came into being all over the country.

In 1980 another important stage of the story of China began, as the nation opened its door to the world once again. Public worship resumed, first among ethnic Koreans in Shenyang and a few churches in Shanghai. In its first meeting for 20 years, the Three-Self Patriotic Movement announced two historic decisions: the formation of the China Christian Council (CCC), which would henceforth be responsible for the churches' pastoral and theological needs, and the acknowledgment of the legitimacy of the house churches: "All Christians, whether worshipping in church premises or at homes, [should] share in the same mind, looking towards Jesus."

Since then the China Christian Council has helped to re-claim, restore and re-institute thousands of congregations, set up 14 Bible schools and a seminary, and established other support ministries. There is now a common hymnal and a common catechism as a common offering to the churches. Ties with overseas churches both mainline and evangelical, and with ecumenical organizations, were re-established. In 1981 an official delegation of the CCC, led by Bishop

K.H. Ting, met with the leadership of the Christian Conference of Asia in Hong Kong. Soon afterwards, official contacts with the WCC began. In 1989 the CCC sent an official delegation to the WCC world mission conference in San Antonio, Texas, USA. Two years later, after intensive discussions, a Chinese delegation, led by Bishop Ting, attended the WCC's seventh assembly in Canberra. The China Christian Council – seen as a uniting church in process of formation rather than as a national council of churches – was one of seven new members welcomed into the World Council.

Although there was a great deal of support among Christians for the CCC's intensive effort to establish itself as a united church, the attempt was finally postponed due to a strong minority opposition. The Christians of the Little Flock tradition recognize the local church\* as the only genuine form of the church. While participating in the CCC, they could not envisage being part of a nationwide church. In the end, the CCC chose not to go ahead with a plan that would exclude the dissenters. A contributing factor to the hesitancy in some quarters is the traditional suspicion many Chinese Christians harbour towards the idea of episcopacy.\*

In 1984, the Amity Foundation was formed, inspired and led by Christians. Given the Chinese churches' adherence to the principle of self-support, it was seen as a new instrument to facilitate Christian involvement in China's modernization, particularly in education, health and social work. The foundation has received much personnel and financial support from both within and without China, and with the help of the United Bible Societies\* it has built a printing plant in Nanjing which has turned out 1 million copies of much-sought-after Bibles.

Despite the difficulties, the 1980s were probably the most encouraging and fruitful period for Chinese Christianity in a century. Faith took root, witness\* matured, the churches grew, and a spirit of ecumenicity slowly but surely took hold. Then in June 1989, the army crushed the pro-democracy demonstrations in Beijing, and similar protests were suppressed in the major cities in China.

Many Christians had been involved in the popular movement for democracy. Yet

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church growth is still reported to be high: an increase from some 3 million in 1980 to over 20 million in 2000. According to the CCC, the new conversions are largely the result of faith healing experiences.

Relations between the church in China and the church in Hong Kong were broken off in 1956, to be re-established only in 1981 with the visit to China of a delegation of the Hong Kong Christian Council. Since then the CCC and the churches in Hong Kong have regularly exchanged visits of pastors, academics and lay people. Then in 1997 and 1999 Hong Kong and Macau reverted to Chinese rule, and Hong Kong became a special administrative region. In order to promote mutual understanding between the churches in the two territories and to strengthen contact and exchanges, the CCC adopted a policy of "mutual non-subordination, mutual non-interference and mutual respect". With regard to Taiwan, the establishment of ties with the church was to depend on that country not supporting independence or pursuing a two-Chinas or one-China-and-one-Taiwan policy. Such a course of action was considered to be against the will of the people and Christians on both sides of the straits.

Bishop Ting, who had served concurrently as the head of the CCC and the Three-Self Patriotic Movement, retired at the sixth Christian conference in December 1996. The conference adopted the revised Chinese Christian Church Order, which provides guidelines for the running of the churches and the organization of church affairs in the different parts of the country.

The issue of religious freedom in China has endured for over 50 years of communist rule. The severe restrictions applied from the 1950s to the 1970s were lifted with the opening of China to the outside world in 1979. In April 1999, the crack-down on the Falun Gong attracted the attention of the international news media. While article 36 of the 1982 constitution guarantees freedom of religion, the place of religion in China must be understood within the framework of communist ideology. The management, regulation and control of religion and religious activities is the responsibility of the Religious Affairs Bureau (RAB), which was set up to unify groups and individuals outside

the Chinese communist party, and which has taken a more direct administrative role and imposed a tighter rein on the churches. Interpretation of the constitution differs between provinces depending on the RAB official concerned. The CCC has evolved quite a good relationship with the RAB and is able to work without much hindrance, subject to the limitations of a socialist society.

See also **Christian Conference of Asia**.

RAYMOND FUNG and CLEMENT JOHN

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## ASIA: NORTHEAST

THIS ENTRY covers Japan, Korea and Taiwan; see the previous entry for China.

### JAPAN

Although Japanese imperial court chronicles report a visit by Nestorian Christians in 736, there is no record of their activities in Japan. The first missionary to Northeast Asia was Francis Xavier in 1549, but in the 17th century the Catholic church disappeared from Japanese history not only because of severe persecution but also because of rivalry between the Jesuits and other orders. Japanese ports were closed to foreigners in the 17th century, except for Dutch traders, who were allowed into Nagasaki; they were considered anti-Catholic and did not engage in mission work.

The first Protestant missionaries who came to Japan in 1859 believed in cooperation in mission. The first Japanese Protestant church, founded in Yokohama as the Japan Christian Catholic Church, was affiliated with Presbyterian and Reformed missionaries who sought to work with US Congrega-

tionalist missionaries to create united churches, but the Congregationalists rejected the plan for union. As other missionaries arrived, foreign denominations were transplanted onto Japanese soil.

The spirit of unity stayed alive in evangelistic and educational work, including the Sunday school and Kingdom of God movements. A federation of Christian churches in Japan was formed in 1911, and the National Christian Council (NCC) of Japan was organized in 1948. Although Protestant churches were eager for unity on the eve of the second world war, the formation of the United Church of Christ in Japan came about because of pressure from the militarist government, which sought uniformity of Christians in the interest of wartime cooperation.

After the war, Anglicans, Lutherans, Unitarians and other denominations left the United Church, and parts of the Baptist church, Salvation Army and other churches also became separate denominations. Remaining in the United Church were other Baptists, most Presbyterian-Reformed, Methodists, Congregationalists, Disciples, Evangelical United Brethren and some others.

Over the next 40 years, the United Church repented of its collaboration with the militarist government and strengthened its inner unity. Although it is now financially independent, its schools and other institutions continue to employ many foreign fraternal workers in the conviction that this ecumenical presence is important for Christian education.

The churches are concerned about the plight of refugees and migrants, particularly the burakumin and other minority groups such as Koreans and the Ainu (see **minorities**), in face of the hostile policy of the government. The NCC has organized public lectures on Japan's outward "internationalization" which belies the domestic reality of exclusion and isolation of foreigners, and the subtle and not-so-subtle forms of discrimination they face in everyday life. To respond to the needs of foreign women, particularly those in the entertainment industry from countries like the Philippines and Thailand, the Japan Women's Temperance Union has founded a House in Emergency of Love and Peace (HELP): it caters to the needs of

victims of domestic violence, trafficking, invalid marriage, HIV/AIDS and statelessness, and helps women who have entered the country illegally.

The NCC's 1998 mission conference put emphasis on a new kind of missionary work when it said: "As we continue to become aware of the dangers for those who are marginalized, as we sympathize with those who have been abandoned..., this is where we affirm our ecumenical action."

The NCC's assembly in 2000 re-affirmed the emphasis on mission. It also expressed concern about the Japanese Diet passing the revised US-Japan defence agreement; attempts to revise the peace clause in the constitution; the unwillingness of the government to pay compensation to the victims of the Japanese imperial army, including the "comfort women"; and government attempts to distort past history through the educational system by re-writing school text books.

Many Japanese Christians have been actively involved in the work of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) and the WCC. Among the ecumenical issues they are concerned with are the controversies around emperor worship and Shintoism as a state religion, and interfaith dialogue.\*

## KOREA

Protestant Christianity was introduced to Korea in 1884 by US Methodist and Presbyterian missionaries. When Japan colonized Korea in 1910, the churches were persecuted for their leadership in the independence movement. After the second world war, the country was divided at the 38th parallel. The churches in South Korea grew rapidly, with some of their leaders taking important roles in the democratization of the country. The Presbyterian Church, however, has divided into numerous smaller denominations, most of them conservative and remaining outside the national council of churches, which coordinates ecumenical efforts in the country.

Working in close cooperation with the CCA and the WCC, the NCC has provided significant leadership both nationally and internationally. Through the difficult years of the people's struggle against dictatorship, the NCC and the churches were a rallying

point for democratic forces in the country. The church's influence among students and intellectuals was largely due to its stand against militarism\* and state control. A number of the church leaders who were in the forefront of the pro-democracy movement suffered years of imprisonment. The CCA urban rural mission programme was involved in the organization of workers who were often exploited in the name of national development. The emphasis on indigenization led in the 1960s to the birth of minjung theology.\*

Christians in North Korea were long isolated from the outside world. Beginning in the late 1970s, the (North) Korean Christian Federation has had some contact with foreign Christians, which accelerated in the mid-1980s and led to a series of meetings with South Korean church leaders on the reunification of the country. Those sponsored by the WCC dealt with such sensitive issues as separated families, strengthening ecumenical relations, and exchange of information. In 1988 Protestant and Roman Catholic church buildings were put up in Pyongyang, the first since the independence of Korea.

At the end of 1997 Kim Dae Jung was elected president of the People's Republic of Korea, and several ecumenical leaders were appointed to the administration. President Kim's "sunshine policy" of engagement with North Korea received the full support of the churches. In June 2000, he made a historic visit to North Korea; but a return visit to South Korea by the North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il, and indeed the peace initiatives of the South Korean leader, have suffered a setback with the election of George Bush as US president.

However, re-unification remains high on the churches' agenda. In March 2000 over 200,000 Koreans, including clergy and laypersons, joined hands in several cities, and 333 leaders of the seven participating religions signed a declaration for reconciliation and peace.

On Easter Sunday 2001 a prayer service for Christian unity at the Korean Orthodox cathedral in Seoul brought together people from Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican, Evangelical and Assembly of God churches and the Salvation Army.

## TAIWAN

During the 16th and 17th centuries, Portuguese and Dutch occupied some parts of Taiwan but did not leave much Christian impact. Catholicism was re-introduced into Taiwan in the 18th century.

In 1865 the British Presbyterian Mission began work on the island, and it was soon followed by Canadian Presbyterians. Since that time, the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan has accounted for the majority of the Protestant population, although after the Nationalist Chinese retreated to Taiwan other denominations began missions there.

During the 1970s the Nationalist government forced the Presbyterian Church to withdraw its membership in the WCC, but this was later restored, and the church is actively engaged in ecumenical work. The national council of churches in Taiwan, whose membership includes the Roman Catholic Church as well as Protestant churches and organizations, coordinates ecumenical relationships.

At the beginning of the new millennium, Taipei's relations with Beijing remain tense, a tension escalated over the new US administration's decision to sell sophisticated arms to Taiwan. In view of Beijing's insistence on a one-China policy, international ecumenical relations continue to remain a major source of concern for the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan.

In Taipei in April 2001, the first national prayer breakfast meeting – an initiative of clergy and legislators to unite business, government and academic leaders in corporate prayer – was held in the presence of President Chen Shui-Bian and Cardinal Paul Shan of the Roman Catholic regional bishops' conference.

See also **Christian Conference of Asia**.

TOSH ARAI and CLEMENT JOHN

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## ASIA: SOUTH

THE SOUTH ASIAN region – the Indian sub-continent and the islands surrounding it – includes seven nation states: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Despite diversities of geography and physical features, customs and practices, there have been long periods of shared history, culture, art, music, rites and rituals, religious beliefs and practices throughout this region, not least due to the movement of people.

Historically, the sub-continent was divided into different kingdoms and territories, which were governed both by local rulers and by invaders from outside the region. South Asia has always managed to incorporate into its local and regional ethos the strong outside influences to which it has been constantly subjected, thereby producing creative new synthesis. The region struggles to maintain its unique character by preserving the ancient socio-religio-cultural ethos in the midst of modern technological development.

Artists have traditionally enjoyed high positions in South Asian societies. Philosophers, poets, musicians and dancers have held seats of honour in royal courts. Folk art, folklore and dances, associated with particular communities and closely linked to popular religiosity, have survived the turmoil of the changing times to provide elements of community bond.

South Asia is the birthplace of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism, and continues to be home to a large population of Muslims, Christians, Parsis and adherents of several other primal religions. Christianity is not new to this region. There is a strong tradition and consciousness of the apostolic origins of the Christian community in the evangelization by the disciples of Jesus Christ. St Thomas is believed to have arrived in India in A.D. 52 and subsequently to have been martyred and buried in Mylapore; there is also a less strong tradition regarding St Bartholomew. Until the 16th century the majority of the Christian community was made up of St Thomas Christians, and they

are today divided into communities of Catholics, Orthodox, Church of the East, Mar Thoma and the Church of South India (formerly of Anglican churches).

Following the voyage of the Portuguese sailor Vasco da Gama to India in 1498, missionary activities by the Roman Catholic Church expanded the Christian community. The Roman Catholic mission's early success was ascribed to St Francis Xavier, who landed in Goa in 1542. The first Lutheran missionaries, B. Zeigenbalg and H. Plutschau, sent from Halle, Germany, under the patronage of King Frederick IV of Denmark, arrived at Tranquebar, on the south-eastern coast of India, in 1706, introducing Protestant Christianity to the sub-continent. William Carey, a Baptist missionary who came to India in 1793, further strengthened Christian mission in the Indian sub-continent. Indeed, the work he and his colleagues carried out from Serampore, near Calcutta, and his global vision for a Christian outreach gained him the title "the father of modern missions". Subsequently, missionaries from nearly every Christian tradition have worked in the region and many continue to do so today.

The introduction of Christianity to the sub-continent resulted in a number of social and cultural interactions and confrontations between the people of the region and those coming from outside. The missionaries' establishment of schools on the Western model, hospitals and other social and charitable institutions, with support from churches abroad or colonial powers, created a social ferment that led to many changes in society. The traffic, however, was not always one-way: challenges from the local cultures and religions led missionaries and local Christians alike to rethink the Christianity that had been brought from the West. Within the Indian Christian community a number of individuals and groups made attempts to indigenize Christianity. Most of the attempts to start indigenous churches were short-lived due to opposition from the missions and lack of local support.

Some Protestant denominations have come together as united churches after years of negotiations motivated primarily by the vast challenge for evangelization in the region: the Church of South India, inaugu-

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rated in 1947, incorporates former Anglicans, Congregationalists, Methodists and Reformed/Presbyterians in South India and the Jaffna area of Sri Lanka; the Church of North India (1970) incorporates Anglicans, Baptists, Brethren, Congregationalists, Disciples of Christ, Methodists and Presbyterians; the Church of Pakistan (1970) incorporates Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists and Presbyterians; the Church of Bangladesh, which was a part of the Church of Pakistan, became autonomous after the formation of Bangladesh in 1972. The representatives of the Church of North India, the Church of South India and the Mar Thoma Syrian Church have worked together in a joint council to promote greater unity in the hope of one day forming a united all-India church. In evaluating the achievements of these united churches, a major question is whether they have become truly indigenous Christian expressions or have remained at the level of successful local attempts to form an interdenominational unity. They have retained their relation to the Christian World Communions\* according to the denominational heritages incorporated into them.

Christians in South Asia have been active participants in national councils of churches, the Christian Conference of Asia, the World Council of Churches and the various Christian World Communions. In so doing, they have made significant contributions to regional and local discussions of church unity, faith and order, contextual theology and interfaith relations. Outstanding world ecumenical leaders from South Asia have included V.S. Azariah, D.T. Niles, Sarah Chakko, P.D. Devanandan, Samuel Parmar, M.M. Thomas, Paulos Mar Gregorios, J.R. Chandran and S.J. Samartha.

Politically, all the countries in the region except Bhutan and Nepal share a common colonial past under different European powers. The independence enjoyed by these countries during the past half century has resulted in many socio-economic and political reforms. Economically, however, South Asia remains one of the poorest areas in the world, and the situation of millions of people there has been aggravated by the present trend of globalization and the free market economy. The division of the population between the small percentage who are eco-

nomically very well off and the vast majority of the poor and marginalized has shattered some of the dreams that prevailed during the struggle for independence in the 20th century.

## BANGLADESH

Formerly known as East Pakistan, Bangladesh came into existence in 1971 when it broke away from West Pakistan after the civil war. It is the world's most densely populated and one of its poorest nations. Islam was declared the state religion in 1988; and in the mid-1994 threats against the Bangladeshi woman author Taslima Nasrin, following a *fatwa* (religious edict) issued by Islamic clerics, were widely covered in the international media. According to political observers, while 85% of the population is Muslim, Islamic radicals command no more than about 10% of popular support. There are small Hindu and Buddhist minorities, and Christians make up only 0.3% of the population. The activities of the churches, the Bangladesh national council of churches and the national Christian fellowship of Bangladesh (which brings together several Protestant churches and a number of mission bodies and agencies) in the larger society focus on education, health, relief and rehabilitation responding both to the frequent natural disasters and more general socio-economic needs.

## BHUTAN

Bhutan is a landlocked Himalayan kingdom located between India and Tibet, governed by a constitutional monarchy. The official religion is a Tibetan form of Buddhism known as Lamaism. The small number of Christians in Bhutan, mainly from India, are involved in education, health and development programmes. Evangelistic work and proselytism are prohibited in Bhutan.

## INDIA

Since becoming independent in 1947, India has succeeded in maintaining what is recognized as the world's largest democracy. After centuries of mission work, the Christian community today makes up a little less than 3% of the population. Despite a good record of Christian unity and collaboration, especially in the first half of the 20th cen-

tury, loyalties to much of the inherited ecclesiastical characteristics and theologies still present a considerable obstacle to achieving the goal of an authentic indigenous church. However, there are vibrant efforts to articulate and promote theologies from hitherto marginalized and oppressed communities, including Dalit theology, Adivasi/tribal theologies, women's theology and eco-feminist theology, and many of these achievements have involved interdenominational and in some cases inter-religious cooperation and collaboration. Impressive contributions in worship and liturgical materials, Christian art and church architecture have reached beyond the local context to enrich the Asian and global communities of Christians as well. It should be noted that these innovative achievements of Christianity in India are paralleled in other Christian communities of the subcontinent.

Among many socio-economic and political issues facing India, the growing strength of Hindu fundamentalism has become a major current concern for Christians and others in India. The dismantling of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya by Hindu militants in 1992, which received worldwide attention, is a concrete example of this force. Christians were among those who spoke out in public solidarity with the Muslims in this case. Some states, despite the constitutional guarantees of religious freedom and liberty, have enacted legislation prohibiting proselytism; and the late 1990s saw an alarming upsurge of inter-religious violence in some parts of the country. This new situation gives an added impetus to ongoing inter-religious dialogues, bringing in the dimension of peace and reconciliation as an important ingredient alongside philosophical and doctrinal debates.

**MALDIVES**

This country is an archipelago, consisting of about 1200 small coral islands (of which about 220 are inhabited) in the Indian Ocean some 600 kms southwest of India and Sri Lanka. Because these islands are low-lying, the Maldives is one of the small island nations to draw international and ecumenical attention in recent years because of the serious potential threats posed to their very existence by rising sea levels associated with global climate change.

Local tradition holds that in the mid-12th century the ruler, who was a Buddhist, and the people were converted to Islam. The Maldives came under Portuguese rule from 1558 to 1573, was a protectorate of the Dutch in the 17th century and of the British from 1887 until achieving full political independence in 1965. In spite of these contacts with European colonial powers, the Christian impact on the community is very minimal. Almost the entire population are adherents of the state religion, Islam, with a few hundred expatriate Christians.

**NEPAL**

Nepal is the world's only Hindu kingdom and most of its people are adherents of Hinduism. The Christian mission begun in the early 1700s by Capuchin fathers from Italy came to an abrupt halt in the 1760s when the founder of modern Nepal, Prithivi Narayan Shah, expelled the missionaries and the small Christian community. Until 1951 state policy firmly excluded all outside contacts, due to fear of both European colonialism and Indian influence. While this halted Christian activities, people in the border areas were evangelized, especially when they went to India for work or trade. The revolution which established constitutional monarchy and democratic government in 1950-51 created openings for Christian presence in Nepal, particularly in the areas of education, health and community development.

A significant feature of this involvement has been the collaborative nature of work carried out through the ecumenical United Mission to Nepal since 1954, a coordinated effort of several churches, mission agencies and groups. Obligated by the situation in the country, it has sought to avoid introducing denominational Christianity with external missionary leadership and to promote a self-supporting, self-propagating and self-governing Christian community. However, further democratization and greater openness since 1990 have brought an influx of mission personnel, money and material aid from outside, independent of the United Mission and creating unhealthy dependence and the establishment of several new Christian groups and denominations.

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## PAKISTAN

In 1947 Pakistan came into being as a result of the partition of what had been British-occupied India into two independent nation states. Pakistan was founded as a separate nation for Muslims and today 97% of its population are Muslim. The mission work by Nestorian Christians in the 8th century and by Jesuits in the late 16th century did not have much impact, and the majority of Christians in Pakistan come from the region of Punjab. Their conversion to Christianity was the result of "mass movements" in the 19th and the early 20th centuries.

The country's decision to become an Islamic republic (1956), nationalization of private and Christian schools and colleges (1972-74), and the introduction of separate electorates (1985) have made the situation difficult for Christians (about 2%) and for other minority religious communities in Pakistan. The Islamization programme of President Zia ul-Haq (1977-88) including the introduction of sharia laws, placed the religious minorities and women in a difficult situation. A blasphemy law enacted in 1995 allows the death penalty for anyone who makes derogatory remarks about the prophet Muhammad, and a number of Christians, including children, have been victims of this. Despite external pressure, the law could not be repealed because of pressure from the Islamic militant lobby.

Nevertheless, Christians in Pakistan have continued to play a significant role in education, health and community development, human rights, and in working towards greater inter-religious understanding. At the height of the conflict in Afghanistan in the 1980s, Pakistan was burdened with 3 million refugees some of whom are still living there. The churches responded to the needs of the refugees through ecumenical cooperation and collaboration.

## SRI LANKA

This island nation in the Indian Ocean gained its independence from British rule in 1948, changing its name from Ceylon to Sri Lanka in 1972. Of its multi-ethnic population, about 74% are Sinhalese, with Tamils (18%) forming the second largest community. The Buddhist population (68%) is pre-

dominantly Sinhalese; Hindus (13%) and Christians (8%) are mostly Tamils. This religious division contributes in some ways to the ongoing ethnic tension in the island, which has escalated since 1983. The attempt by the majority to build a nation on the Sinhalese Buddhist culture is resented by the Tamils as discriminatory. Nearly 25 years of civil war have brought great suffering to the nation as a whole, most acutely to those living in the Jaffna peninsula.

During successive colonial periods, European powers introduced the denominations predominant in their own countries to Sri Lanka: the Portuguese, Roman Catholics; the Dutch, Reformed; and the British, Anglicans and Methodists. Christians and churches in this struggling situation have sought to promote healing and restoration through programmes of relief and rehabilitation, movements for interethnic and inter-racial harmony, peace and justice, inter-religious dialogues, advocacy and action for justice and greater understanding, and ecumenical solidarity in seeking to persuade politicians to find just and democratic solutions for the country's plight.

See also **Christian Conference of Asia**.

H.S. WILSON

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## ASIA: SOUTHEAST

IN ECUMENICAL usage, Southeast Asia includes the countries of the Indo-Chinese peninsula (Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam), Myanmar (Burma), Indonesia, the Philippines and Hong Kong. All except

Thailand came under Western colonial domination between the 16th and the 20th centuries, in most cases providing easy access for Christian missions and ensuring the churches they planted both social prestige and power for the duration of the colonial era. Yet in most Southeast Asian countries Christian missions were not able to influence seriously their vast populations, probably because other religions brought in earlier from outside, primarily Buddhism and Islam, have penetrated so deeply into the cultural psyche of these peoples. Culture\* and religion\* have blended together in a way that has resisted massive conversions; and Christianity often came to this part of the world ensconced in an eschatological worldview and a pietistic-moralistic ethos that obscured the meaning of the gospel. On the other hand, there are many stories of love and sacrifice on the part of Christian missionaries, which allowed the gospel to find powerful expression within Southeast Asian culture.

The Philippines is an exception to this general description, as it had never come under the full sway of any other major religions and its spiritual culture thus offered no resistance to Christianity. When the Philippines finally launched a revolution against Spain, its revolutionary leaders were sophisticated enough to distinguish between the gospel and those who sought to abuse it.

Numerically, therefore, Christianity is a minority religion in Southeast Asia. The only country where Christianity is predominant is indeed the Philippines, where about 85% of the population is Christian. Indonesia has the largest Muslim population of any country in the world, though Christianity exerts an influence disproportionate to its numbers, perhaps because there was a highly educated group of Christians in influential positions when the country wrested independence from the Dutch. Malaysia is an Islamic state which prohibits Malaysians from converting to Christianity. Myanmar and Thailand are overwhelmingly Buddhist countries and pose no restrictions on evangelism politically and socially, although their peculiarly tolerant spirit resists the conversion\* experience. Singapore has many faiths – Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Shintoism – and religion is tol-

erated as long as it remains privatized. Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia are predominantly Buddhist societies with some Christian presence.

After the second world war, a strong pressure for self-determination swept through Asia. Sensing that the Asian peoples would no longer tolerate foreign domination, the European powers granted their colonies political independence, but only after ensuring that they would enjoy favourable terms with them in trade relations. These economic arrangements, and the imposition of Western democratic structures that were not sufficiently rooted in the countries' cultures or traditional power structures, created complex socio-political problems. Much of the countries of Southeast Asia have had difficulty achieving economic stability because they have remained dependent on the former imperial powers. The colonial masters had established an elite who saw that they could achieve enormous wealth and power by serving the interests of their former masters rather than those of their own people. This spawned great socio-political problems, widened the gap between rich and poor, and unwittingly provoked radical movements that favoured communism.

In the late 1960s, Southeast Asia, like other under-developed areas, plunged into national development programmes which often favoured the dependent-economy syndrome fostered by the powerful countries of the West. The creation in 1967 of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to promote a united effort for economic growth, development, peace and security helped several countries in the region to enjoy substantial growth in the 1980s and 1990s. A few were able to pull themselves out of poverty – notably Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Taiwan – but millions of Southeast Asian people were pushed down deeper into it by the development process. Efforts among some restive Southeast Asian populations to dismantle socio-political structures subservient to the West risked drawing them into the East-West ideological conflict until the break-up of communist systems in the Soviet Union and Eastern and Central Europe. The end of the cold war intensified the efforts of economic glob-

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alization in the region, bringing with it both positive and negative results.

The young and small Christian churches which live and witness in this cultural and socio-political context have themselves not been exempt from ideological polarization. Some churches claim an apolitical stance in the social and political maelstrom, a few self-consciously position themselves within the ideological conflict, others see their mission simply as rendering service to the poor\* and remaining in solidarity with them. In this situation, the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) has played a theologically avant-garde role. It sees its mission as the inculturation of the gospel in Asian cultures, engagement in interfaith dialogue,\* holistic proclamation of the gospel, solidarity with the poor in their struggle for justice and human dignity, and the search for the unity\* of the church through acts of diakonia\* and a deeper understanding of its various symbols. It has taken the lead in doing contextual theology in Asia, developing new forms of worship and spirituality, grappling with the complex realities of poverty, injustice and religiosity, and developing an Asian identity for the church.

The CCA was expelled from Singapore in 1988 because the government interpreted its acts of solidarity with the poor as a threat to national security. Other Southeast Asian countries, though not as politically unreceptive as Singapore, are also marked by ideological conflicts where one side or the other may find certain ecumenical activities and engagements uncongenial.

Globalization has brought its challenges. The financial crisis of 1997 plunged the entire region in a turmoil from which it has yet fully to recover. The country most affected has been Indonesia, where the social and political costs are tearing communities apart. The debt once-thriving economies like those of Thailand and Indonesia have incurred through IMF rescue packages will take many years to repay.

Militarily, Southeast Asia remains a potential flash-point. In the wake of the cold-war period, new intrastate and interstate disputes and tensions have emerged, e.g. China's rising prosperity and growing military muscle, and the future military role of Japan, particularly after the signing of the revised US-Japan defence agreement.

The region is also having to deal with religious activism, intolerance and violence. Religion has recently come to play a dominant role in civil and political life, challenging the secular and pluralist basis of the state. Christians, in a minority except in the Philippines, are sensitive to these developments, particularly in relation to the church's mission. The CCA's mission conference in 2000 recognized these concerns and the fact that witnessing to the faith in a pluralist context is a major challenge for the churches of the region.

The independence of East Timor involved the staff of the Communion of Churches in Indonesia in providing pastoral care to the people when East Timor came under attack from local militias who had the backing of the Indonesian armed forces.

In early 1999, violence between Christians and Muslims broke out in the Malukas, leaving hundreds of people dead and churches, mosques and property destroyed. Church leaders have been part of several government and private initiatives of inter-religious dialogue to restore peace and normalcy between the two communities.

In the southern Philippines the Estrada government hard-line position against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front raised fears that political conflict in Mindanao may disintegrate into yet another Christian-Muslim confrontation. With the change of regime, peace has been restored, with the strong support of the churches.

The Council of Churches in Malaysia, representing the minority Christian community, has regularly participated in inter-religious dialogue, as well as dialogue with the government on issues relating to the rights of the religious minorities.

Thus the peoples of Southeast Asia are still struggling for genuinely democratic societies. An urgent ecumenical task is finding a theological as well as political vision that can transcend ideological tensions and participate in the Asian task of breaking Western economic, political and cultural domination by creating a church that is Asian.

See also **Christian Conference of Asia.**

LEVI V. ORACIÓN, H.S. WILSON  
and CLEMENT JOHN

■ *Changing Global Realities and the Future of Asian Peoples: Proceedings of the 1993 ARENA Workshop*, Manila, ARENA, 1994 ■ V. Fabella ed., *Asia's Struggle for Full Humanity*, New York, Orbis, 1980 ■ *Far Eastern Economic Review* ■ *Religions and Ideologies in the Asian Struggle, Assembly Proceedings*, Asia Regional Fellowship, 1987 ■ *WCC Updates on Country Situations*.

## ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

FOUNDED IN Hot Springs, Arkansas, USA, in April 1914, the Assemblies of God (AofG) is probably the largest of the classical Pentecostal denominations with nearly 28 million members and adherents in 1996. Pentecostals\* generally trace their origins to the work of Charles Fox Parham (1901-1906) and William Joseph Seymour and the Apostolic Faith Mission at 312 Azusa Street in Los Angeles (1906-1909). Parham viewed himself as an "apostle of unity" and Seymour proclaimed that one of the goals of the Apostolic Faith Mission was "Christian unity everywhere".

At its organizational meeting, the AofG stated through its general council that it had no intention of ever becoming "a human organization that legislates or forms laws and articles of faith and has unscriptural jurisdiction over its members and creates unscriptural lines of fellowship and disfellowship". Such actions were "contrary to Christ's prayer in St John 17, and Paul's teaching in Eph. 4:1-16". However, in 1916 the AofG adopted a statement of fundamental truths which clearly located it within the historic Trinitarian Christian faith. Emphasis would be placed on evangelism and mission: the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. The AofG, like other Pentecostal groups, viewed itself as part of a greater restoration in which God was actively participating, and therefore as standing at the threshold of eternity.

In keeping with its missionary concerns, the AofG joined the Foreign Missions Conference of North America (FMCNA) in 1920, thereby becoming also members of the International Missionary Council (IMC)\* in 1921.

In 1941, the AofG became a founding member of the National Association of

Evangelicals (NAE) in the United States. Membership in the NAE precluded membership in the National Council of Churches (NCCCUSA) when it was formed in 1950, but the AofG continued to work with a variety of programmes in the NCC, including Church World Service. After the second world war the AofG, through its European field secretary, also worked closely with the offices of the WCC even before the first assembly (1948).

With the rise of the cold war, many Pentecostals, fundamentalists\* and Evangelicals\* came to link efforts towards visible Christian unity with communism as signs of apostasy and of the imminent return of the Lord. While the AofG maintained relations with both the NCC and the WCC, it did so largely through its Division of Foreign Missions (DFM) and did not keep its larger constituency fully informed – a pragmatic approach that would work only as long as it was not discovered. And while the DFM was working closely with the larger ecumenical community, the AofG's weekly *Pentecostal Evangel* was moving the denomination towards Evangelicalism; a steady flow of articles and news items from the NAE spoke of the ecumenical movement in increasingly suspicious terms.

In 1961 fundamentalist preacher Carl McIntire accused the AofG and its superintendent Thomas F. Zimmerman of duplicity and compromise with the ecumenical movement. Zimmerman, at that time president of the Pentecostal World Conference\* (PWC) and of the NAE, was further embarrassed by the very visible itinerant ministry of an AofG minister, South African David Du Plessis, who was actively involved with a burgeoning charismatic movement\* within the historic churches and publicly endorsed the ecumenical movement as a work of the Holy Spirit. In response, the AofG broke all ties with ecumenical partners, it defrocked Du Plessis and enacted a bylaw which "disapproves of ministers or churches participating in any of the modern ecumenical organizations... in such a manner as to promote the ecumenical movement".

By 1965 the AofG had chosen a narrowly defined form of ecumenism: identifying with other Pentecostals in the PWC, with US Evangelicals through the NAE, joining

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with other white US Pentecostals to form the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America (1948-94) and subsequently with African-American Pentecostals in the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America (1994- ). All these groups held the primary conviction that Christian unity is “spiritual”, though each has appealed to John 17:21 and argued for visible unity as part of its *raison d’être*. Issues of class, culture, training, doctrine and priorities still separate the AofG from many other Christians; in the NAE, however, they now constitute about 65% of the membership.

Despite this history, a number of AofG scholars and ministers are quietly rebuilding bridges to the larger ecumenical world. Much of the initiative has taken place under the auspices of the Society for Pentecostal Studies. While AofG members must participate in all ecumenical functions as individuals, they now take part regularly in the international Pentecostal-Roman Catholic dialogue,\* the international Pentecostal-Reformed dialogue,\* the NCC-Pentecostal dialogue in the US, various consultations of the NCC and the WCC, and in a dialogue with Roman Catholics in Springfield, Missouri, where the denomination is headquartered.

AofG members have served on the commissions on Faith and Order of the NCC since 1983 and of the WCC since 1991, and have represented Pentecostal interests among the secretaries of Christian World Communions\* since 1993. The AofG has also been represented at the North American Academy of Ecumenists\* since 1989.

In 1996, the AofG in Korea joined the National Council of Churches in Korea. Whether this bold and controversial move will encourage other national bodies to follow suit remains to be seen. Many within the AofG still suspect that anything suggesting movement towards some form of global Christian unity is a humanly contrived plan based on the lowest common denominator which will ultimately be used by some anti-Christian figure. But the rise of the charismatic renewal and the changes brought about by Vatican II\* have opened others in the AofG to the possibilities which present themselves. Many AofG leaders are listening.

CECIL M. ROBECK, JR

■ “The Assemblies of God and Ecumenical Cooperation: 1920-1965”, in W.M. & R.P. Menzies eds, *Pentecostalism in Context*, Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1997 ■ E.L. Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, Urbana IL, Univ. of Illinois Press, 1993 ■ David Du Plessis, *A Man Called Mr Pentecost*, Plainfield NJ, Logos International, 1977 ■ C.M. Robeck, Jr, “A Pentecostal Looks at the World Council of Churches”, *ER*, 47, 1995 ■ J.L. Sandidge, *Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue (1977-1982)*, Frankfurt, Lang, 1987.

## ASSOCIATION OF INTERCHURCH FAMILIES

FOUNDED IN England in 1968 in order to strengthen marriage and family life and promote Christian unity, the Association of Interchurch Families (AIF) offers a forum in which parents, children and young adults in interchurch families can share their experience and learn from one another. Most partners belong to different denominations – most often a Roman Catholic and a Christian of another communion.

The AIF provides a support network and an information service for couples, clergy and relatives, and gives interchurch families a voice in the churches by articulating their experience in all its diversity, focusing attention on their particular needs for pastoral care and affirming their gifts and their potential as a catalyst for wider church unity. All its activities are undergirded by prayer, worship and an interchurch marital and family spirituality.

AIF is pastorally concerned for mixed marriages in which denominational differences have been a factor in weakening the Christian commitment of one or both partners. Interchurch couples can be found at every point on an ecumenical scale which runs from competition, through co-existence, to cooperation, to commitment on the way to full communion. Most AIF members probably fall into the categories of cooperation or commitment. Partners at the “competition” stage often feel that their differences are too painful and potentially destructive to their marriage to risk open discussion of religious affiliation; those at the “co-existence” stage may be seeing the church as a sort of “club”, each with its own static life-style and rules, thus giving

them little incentive to work for church unity.\*

As the smallest local ecumenical partnerships,\* who “live in their marriage the hopes and the difficulties of the path to Christian unity” (Pope John Paul II, York, 1982), interchurch families raise by their very existence ecumenical questions for the churches. On admission to the eucharist in the Roman Catholic Church, the 1993 *Ecumenical Directory*\* opened up new possibilities for mixed marriages where the partners share the sacraments of baptism and marriage. Some AIF young people have asked for joint celebration of confirmation and respect from their churches for their sense of “double belonging”.

The AIF London office responds to many enquiries, and a network of local contacts throughout England offers couples information and support, raises awareness of interchurch family issues and works with local ecumenical officers and church marriage and family life officers. Since 1968 an annual weekend conference and day conferences have been organized. In some areas groups of interchurch couples meet regularly or occasionally for mutual support. AIF publishes *Interchurch Families* twice a year and a range of educational materials on such subjects as marriage, baptism, confirmation, sharing communion, funerals and church membership.

AIF also works with sister associations in Ireland (North and South), Switzerland, Scandinavia, Germany, the US, Canada and Australia, and it has contacts with interchurch families in other parts of the world. Since 1980 an English-speaking international conference has been held every two years; and in 1998 a global conference in Geneva brought together French-speaking *foyers mixtes* and English-speaking interchurch families.

See also **marriage, mixed**.

RUTH REARDON

■ *Churches Together in Marriage: Pastoral Care of Interchurch Families*, London, CTE, 1994 ■ J. Coventry, *Mixed Marriages between Christians*, London, CTS, 1985 ■ G. Kilcourse, *Double Belonging*, New York, Paulist, 1992.

## ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST

THE OFFICIAL name of this church is the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East (ACE). “Assyrian” indicates that its liturgical and theological language is the east Syrian of Nisibis; “Church of the East” denotes its non-Graeco-Roman cultural identity and its political allegiances (it was originally the church of the Persian Sassanid empire, constantly at war with the Roman empire). While other Christians have often called it Nestorian, the ACE itself has never liked being designated by the name of the patriarch of Constantinople whose Christology, condemned at the council of Ephesus (431), it nevertheless received.

The ACE’s geographical position helps to explain its distancing itself from the churches of the Roman empire. In 410 it established a structure with a *catholicos*, or supreme head; in 424 it prohibited appeals to the Western churches; in 484 it received the Antiochene Christology, thereby breaking communion with those churches. All these acts betokened its loyalty to a ruling power by which it was nevertheless persecuted.

Although the Assyrian Church never enjoyed the support of a state, its missionary outreach was exceptional. By the 3rd century it was already present in south India; by 635 it had penetrated as far as Tibet and even China. At its apotheosis in the 13th century, at the time of the Mongol patriarch Yahballaha III, it had 250 dioceses from Cyprus to Manchuria and from Turkestan to Kerala and Java. But a combination of circumstances in the 14th century – a change of dynasty in China, and above all the conversion of the Mongols to Islam and Tamerlane’s savage persecution – led to the near annihilation of this church, which sought refuge in Hakkari (Kurdistan). In the 16th century, a group of its members attached themselves to Rome, giving birth to the Chaldean Church, while in India the faithful were largely Latinized (synod of Diamper). When they regained their autonomy, they attached themselves to the west Syrian Church, which belonged to an opposing Christological tradition.

The tragedy has continued in the 20th century. The 1914-18 war decimated the membership. Following difficulties in Iraq in

1933, Patriarch Shimun XXIII went into exile in the USA. A reform of the liturgical calendar in 1964 provoked a lasting schism, with two opposing leaders, Mar Addai (Baghdad) and Mar Dinkha (Iranian, resident in Chicago) gathering the majority of members. The church now has a membership of between 150,000 and 200,000, more than half of whom have left the Middle East.

The ACE joined the WCC in 1950 and sent observers to Vatican II. It has been a member of the Middle East Council of Churches\* since 1995. The Christological declaration signed by Mar Dinkha and John Paul II (1994), followed by the setting up of a commission for dialogue between the two churches, shows that, though alone in its confession, the ACE is moving to break its isolation. The discussions with its partners will concern its shorter canon of scripture (which does not include 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude and the Book of Revelation), the absence of icons, its rejection of original sin, and the number of the sacraments. The Orthodox churches do not agree with its practice of allowing marriage after ordination.

In protest against the hereditary succession to the patriarchate (which was passed down from uncle to nephew – a system which lasted up to and including Mar Shimun XXIII), one part of the Assyrian Church attached itself to Rome in 1552, taking the name Chaldean Church. The main centre of its 400,000 members is Iraq, with lesser centres in Iran and Turkey, but there has been large-scale emigration to the West.

See also **Assyrian Church of the East-Roman Catholic dialogue.**

HERVÉ LEGRAND

■ P.G. Badger, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals*, London, 1852 (1960) ■ R. Le Coz, *Histoire de l'Eglise d'Orient: Chrétiens d'Irak, d'Iran et de Turquie*, Paris, Cerf, 1995 ■ R.G. Roberson, *The Eastern Christian Churches*, 5th ed., Rome, Orientalia Christiana, 1995 ■ E. Tisserant, *Eastern Christianity in India: A History of the Syro-Malabar Church from the Earliest Time to the Present Day*, London, Longmans Green, 1957 ■ E. Tisserant, *Eglise nestorienne*, D. Th.C. XI-1, 157-323 (bibliography), 1931 ■ *Syriac Dialogue, First Non-official Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition*, Vienna, Pro Oriente, 1994.

## ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST-ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUE

THE ASSYRIAN Church of the East\* is the modern continuation of the ancient church of the Persian empire which fell out of communion with the rest of the Christian world in the 5th century when, for political as well as theological reasons, it officially adopted Nestorian Christology. Thus it accepts only the first two ecumenical councils.\* There were only sporadic contacts with Rome until the 13th century. In the 16th century a large section of the Assyrian Church of the East sought union with Rome and eventually formed what is now known as the Chaldean Catholic Church (see **Eastern Catholic churches**). Today the non-Catholic Assyrians are not in communion with any other church.

After many centuries of isolation, however, relations with the Catholic Church began to improve dramatically in the 1980s. The present patriarch, Mar Dinkha IV, visited Pope John Paul II in Rome in 1984 and participated in the day of prayer for peace at Assisi in 1986. In 1994 Mar Dinkha and Pope John Paul II signed a common declaration in the Vatican. The text affirms that Catholics and Assyrians are “united today in the confession of the same faith in the Son of God” and envisages broad pastoral cooperation between the two churches, especially in the areas of catechesis and the formation of future priests. The pope and the patriarch also established a mixed committee for theological dialogue and charged it with overcoming the obstacles that still prevent full communion.

The dialogue has been meeting annually since 1995. The first phase of its work, which concentrated on sacramental theology, concluded with the October 2000 meeting in Arezzo, Italy, and the approval of a common text, *Common Statement on Sacramental Life*. At the same meeting the commission began the dialogue's second phase, which was to focus on the constitution of the church and other ecclesiological questions.

The rapprochement between the two churches has found concrete expression in increased contacts and cooperation between the Assyrian Church of the East and its

Catholic counterpart, the Chaldean Catholic Church. Mar Dinkha IV and Chaldean Patriarch Raphael Bidawid met in Detroit in November 1996 and issued a joint patriarchal statement pledging to work for the reunification of their churches by forming a joint commission for unity that was to elaborate a common catechism, oversee the foundation of a seminary in the US for both churches and develop common pastoral programmes. On 15 August 1997, the members of the holy synods of the two churches signed a joint synodal decree for promoting unity which re-stated the areas of pastoral cooperation envisaged in the joint patriarchal decree, recognized that Assyrians and Chaldeans should come to accept their diverse practices as legitimate, formally implemented the establishment of an Assyrian-Chaldean Joint Commission for Unity, and declared that each side recognized the apostolic succession, sacraments and Christian witness of the other. The text also spelled out the central concerns of both sides in the dialogue. It says that while both churches wanted to preserve the Aramaic language and culture, the Assyrians were intent on preserving their freedom and self-governance, while the Chaldeans affirmed that the preservation of full communion with Rome was among its basic principles.

RONALD G. ROBERSON

- S.H. Moffet, *History of Christianity in Asia*, vol. 1: "Beginnings to 1500", San Francisco, Harper, 1992 ■ *Syriac Dialogue: Non-Official Consultations on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition*, Vienna, Pro Oriente, vol. 1, 1994, vol. 2, 1997 ■ J.-P. Valognes, *Vie et mort des Chrétiens d'Orient: des origines à nos jours*, Paris, Fayard, 1994.

## ASYLUM

IN CURRENT usage, "asylum" (from the Greek *asylon*, place of refuge) refers primarily to the provision of protection to refugees. Lack of legal protection is a basic problem facing refugees who have fled their countries and can no longer count on their own governments to protect them.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights confers on individuals a right "to seek and enjoy" asylum. But in spite of other

international instruments (the 1951 convention relating to the status of refugees, the 1967 declaration on territorial asylum), the right of asylum is not recognized by international law as an individual human right. The right to grant or to refuse asylum is the prerogative of each state.

Historically, asylum has had the meaning of sanctuary. In early civilizations, the tradition of religious protection was well known; temples and altars under the protection of a deity could provide refuge. The Israelites were told to create six cities of refuge where a person committing an unintentional homicide could escape blood vengeance (Num. 35:9-15; Deut. 4:41-43, 19:4-13). In the Christian church of the 4th century, bishops often provided sanctuary, a privilege that continued to exist, though in ever more restricted forms, until the establishment of national states in the 16th century.

Since the early 1980s, asylum has become an increasingly contentious political issue, particularly for governments of industrialized countries. The number of persons seeking asylum in Europe and North America increased dramatically, reflecting the fact that it was becoming more difficult for refugees to find protection in the countries to which they initially fled. With growing access to global means of transportation, many asylum-seekers began turning up at Northern borders and airports in search of security, provoking governments to impose new restrictions to limit the numbers admitted.

By the mid-1980s, governments were implementing so-called deterrence policies to prevent asylum-seekers from reaching their borders: visa restrictions on people travelling from conflict-ridden countries, fines on airlines transporting people whose documents were not in order and, in the case of the USA, the use of military ships to intercept boatloads of would-be refugees and return them to their country of origin. Northern governments developed agreements among themselves about the treatment of asylum-seekers; in most cases, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was marginal to these intergovernmental consultations and agreements. The number of asylum-seekers reaching Northern countries had declined by the early 1990s, but the example set by industrialized countries was

followed by governments of countries with far fewer resources and far larger numbers of refugees. By the late 1990s, governments around the world were replacing permanent asylum with temporary protection – allowing some refugees to stay until the violence which provoked their flight diminished. European governments admitted Bosnians on these terms; similarly, African countries began urging Rwandan refugees to return home as soon as a new government was in place following the 1994 genocide.

Throughout this period, asylum issues have been high on the agenda of the ecumenical movement. Participants in a major ecumenical consultation on asylum in Zurich in May 1986 struggled to find appropriate church responses to refugees with inadequate legal protection. Subsequently, national and regional ecumenical bodies grappled with asylum questions in their regions, setting up working groups and task forces. In December 1995, a global ecumenical consultation in Addis Ababa called on churches to stand up against the restrictionist asylum policies of their governments.

The WCC, in its 1995 policy statement on refugees and in its call for churches to express solidarity with uprooted people in 1997, took a leading role in lifting up the rights of asylum-seekers to tell their stories.

At the grassroots level, churches were challenged to respond to the needs of refugees whose claims for asylum had been denied by their governments. In the United States, the sanctuary\* movement emerged in the early 1980s to shelter Central American refugees who were not granted asylum by the US government. By providing shelter and protection, churches and congregations not only accepted responsibility for the immediate legal and physical needs of individual refugees, but challenged the premises of US foreign policy. Several years later, individual European congregations began sheltering asylum-seekers who faced deportation from their countries. This sanctuary or church asylum movement continues to the present time in some European countries.

Since offering sanctuary to asylum-seekers is a form of civil disobedience, bringing the risk of fines and imprisonment, the sanctuary movement stirred up extensive debates

in the churches on the legal, political and theological issues involved.

The erosion of asylum in Northern countries is a sign of the weakening of the international system created to respond to refugees. Ironically, it is the same European and North American governments who took the lead in creating this international system – buttressed by international conventions, national legislation and a United Nations agency – who are now implementing measures which may ensure its demise.

ELIZABETH G. FERRIS

## ATHANASIAN CREED

THIS TEXT, also known as *Quicumque Vult*, from its Latin opening words, is an outline of Trinitarian and Christological theology (including the filioque\*) which is more a didactic poem than a creed. Its preface and conclusion state that belief in the truths it asserts is necessary for salvation,\* and the text includes a series of anathemas.\*

The Athanasian Creed has no connection with Athanasius of Alexandria. It is a product of the Western church, indebted to the thought of Ambrose, Augustine and Vincent of Lérins, and was probably composed in southern Gaul or Spain. Scholarship in the early 20th century argued for a date between 381 and 428; subsequent authorities, influenced by J.N.D. Kelly, place it later, probably in the late 5th or 6th century. The 7th-century synod of Autun referred to it as “the faith of St Athanasius”. By the next century it was accepted in the liturgical books of the Western church, and by the 13th century it was valued as the third *symbol*. The Eastern churches seem to have become acquainted with it during the filioque controversies.

In the Carolingian period the Athanasian Creed entered the breviary and from there passed into the Anglican tradition for feast days. In the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England it is placed before the litany; in that of the Episcopal Church in the USA it is among the “historical documents”. Lutherans retained it as a statement of faith in the Book of Concord of 1580, and it appears in the 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship. But it never assumed much importance in other churches of the continental Reformation.

mation. It has appeared, without the filioque clause, in Greek and Russian Orthodox service books since the 17th century.

The Athanasian Creed is neither a doxological creed nor a narrative confession of faith. It is an intellectual and theological exposition. The unpopularity of its anathemas have led to attempts to remove it from the official books of some churches, and its theological and liturgical role in the churches today is minor. It is not regarded as an ecumenical resource, as is the Nicene Creed\* of 381.

WILLIAM G. RUSCH

■ A.E. Burn, "The Authorship of the *Quicumque Vult*", *JTS*, 27, 1925-26 ■ J.N.D. Kelly, *The Athanasian Creed*, London, Black, 1964.

## ATHEISM

THE GREEK WORD *atheos* (without God) is found in the Bible only in Eph. 2:12, where it is used to describe the darkness in which gentile Christians lived before their conversion. In general the Greeks used "atheist", often polemically, to describe a person who denied the recognized gods or otherwise deviated from prevailing religious customs. Thus not only Epicurus, a materialist, but also Socrates, a thinker with a philosophical faith, and Jews and Christians could be regarded as *atheoi* by their pious contemporaries.

In the modern sense of a general denial of God or godlessness, the term first crops up in European thought in the 16th and 17th centuries. Several different senses can be identified: *theoretical* atheism, arising out of an irreligious world-view (e.g. among the materialistic thinkers of the French Enlightenment or in the German League of Monists and other free-thinking circles); unformulated *practical* atheism, as an abandonment of any activity related to God (though without necessarily denying God in theory); *programmatic* atheism, a struggle against religion considered as alienation and demeaning (Feuerbach, Nietzsche); *political* atheism, to liberate humanity from exploitation by throne and altar (Marx, Lenin) and later to control citizens in totalitarian fashion by eliminating the "uncertainty factor 'God'"

(Stalinism and neo-Stalinism); *psychologically motivated* atheism, which sees religion as an illusion in which the "oldest, strongest and most imperious desires of humanity" (Freud) are projected; *existential* atheism, due to the experience of suffering or the will for unlimited freedom (Camus, Sartre); and finally, as an extreme form of atheism, the nameless and featureless secular approach which dismisses the quest for meaning. There is also the *theological* concept of atheism which distances itself critically from traditional theism in order to be able to "believe in God atheistically" (the "God is dead" school).

In its many guises, atheism today must be taken seriously as both a challenge to and partner of theology and the church. This is something relatively new. The assumption that humanity has an almost natural piety can be seen in the Bible, where the real challenge to Israelite and NT faith was the "gentile" belief in *gods*, not the absence of a God or gods. In church history up to modern times, this view prevailed, with the atheist being considered as a curious exception. But over the last few centuries, especially in industrial societies, the process of secularization\* has led to secularism and the entrenchment of this world within its own bounds on the basis of the "dogma of immanence". On this view our cosmos and our history have no transcendence; and for more and more people atheism seems a more natural option than religion.

A distinction should be made between an atheism that is "methodological" and one that is part of a world-view. It is one thing to consider that God\* never appears within his creation\* as a tangible object of scientific study and that we therefore should carry on as if God did not exist; it is another to turn this principle into a philosophical dogma and advocate a "scientific atheism" as a philosophical system or basic existential attitude.

The engagement of Christian theology and the church with atheism has often taken place in a way that lacks relevance and contradicts the spirit of the gospel. Without recourse to any careful distinctions, the word has been applied as a term of abuse to describe and censure not merely explicit denial of God but any deviation from established

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doctrine. Arguments against atheism have been buttressed with repression, including political and physical means. Such responses ignore the fact that atheism arises not always as a purely arbitrary act but also in response to shortcomings in church theory and practice.

This is why ecumenical thinking today is striving for an attitude to atheism which is sensitive to different nuances. Although Vatican II,\* in harmony with previous encyclicals, still condemns atheism because it “casts man down from the noble state to which he is born” (*Gaudium et Spes* 21), it reveals itself as self-critical in regard to how atheism comes about, and open to the need that “all men, those who believe as well as those who do not, should help to establish right order in this world where we all live together”. And the Faith and Order study document *Confessing the One Faith* (1991), recognizing the complexity of the challenges from atheism in its various forms, calls on Christians to “scrutinize the adequacy of their conceptions of God and of God’s relation to the world” (para. 23).

Thus in its encounter with atheism the oikoumene today is moving “from anathema to dialogue”. Here experiences from Eastern Europe are instructive and encouraging. The question of God and attempts to give a credible answer to it have in no way been superseded and settled in an ideologically and programmatically atheistic society. In the course of the Marxist-Christian dialogue,\* a good number of atheists recognized that “God is not completely dead” (Vítězslav Gardavský) and Christians came to see that the gospel holds good for atheists too.

See also **faith**.

JAN MILIC LOCHMAN

■ R.B. Cunningham, *The Christian Faith and Its Rivals*, Nashville, Broadman, 1988 ■ V. Gardavský, *Gott ist nicht ganz tot* (ET *God Is Not Yet Dead*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1973) ■ J.L. Hromádka, *Die marxistische Religionskritik und der christliche Glaube* (ET *The Christian Faith and the Marxist Criticism of Religion*, Edinburgh, St Andrew, 1970) ■ H. Küng, *Existiert Gott?* (ET *Does God Exist? An Answer for Today*, Garden City NY, Doubleday, 1980) ■ F. Mauthner, *Der Atheismus und*

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## ATHENAGORAS I (Aristokles Pyrou)

B. 25 March 1886, Tsaraplana (northwest Greece, then under Turkish domination); d. 6 July 1972, Istanbul. Athenagoras was ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople (1949-72) and leading figure in the contemporary development of the Orthodox church and the ecumenical movement.

After studies in Halki, Pyrou became a monk and deacon, adopting the name of the 2nd-century apologist Athenagoras, who sought the Logos in the wisdom and poetry of the “heathen”. In Macedonia during the Balkan wars (1912-13) and the first world war he came face to face with human diversity, acquired a knowledge of Islam, and learned first-hand about atrocities and revolutions. After serving as secretary to the holy synod, he became metropolitan of Corfu in 1923. When Mussolini occupied the island, he intervened as “ethnarch” (defender of the community), and when Asiatic Greece collapsed under the Turks, he saw to it that the refugees had food, care and work.

In 1931 Athenagoras was named archbishop of the Greek church in America, then torn by political dissensions imported from Greece and swollen in numbers by refugees from Asia Minor. He instituted biennial meetings of clergy and laity (the latter in the majority) in order to define the main directions of pastoral work. A friend of Presidents Roosevelt and Truman, he supported their social policy, and when he was elected ecumenical patriarch in 1949, the US looked to him to foster Graeco-Turkish reconciliation in the face of communism. Six years later he was placed in a disappointing and dangerous situation when Turkish nationalists launched pogroms against the Greek Orthodox in Cyprus.

Athenagoras determined to “set aside all the cares of the world” to serve Christian unity by gathering together all the Orthodox churches in conciliar fashion. He secured the position of the Greek church in the WCC despite continuous obstacles and supported



WCC membership for Eastern European Orthodox churches, ratified at New Delhi (1961).

Convinced that dialogue between Orthodoxy and the Christian West must also include the Roman Catholic Church, Athenagoras devoted himself to transforming relations that had long been marked by distrust and ignorance. Learning of Pope Paul VI's pilgrimage to Jerusalem in December 1963, Athenagoras proposed that leaders of *all* confessions gather there "to ask in common and fervent prayer... on our knees, with tears in our eyes and in a spirit of unity... that for the glory of the holy name of Christ and for the well-being of all humanity the way may be opened to the complete restoration of Christian unity".

Although the time was not ripe for such a meeting, the pope did agree to meet the patriarch, and on 5 and 6 January 1964 they exchanged blessings and the kiss of peace after reading Jesus' prayer in John 17. Thus began a "loving dialogue" between Rome and Constantinople and a genuine friendship between the two men, recorded in their posthumously published letters and declarations (see *Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue*). On 7 December 1965, during the Second Vatican Council, in which Orthodox observers took part, the anathemas\* of 1054, which had symbolized the separation

of Eastern and Western Christendom, were abrogated. In July 1967 Paul VI went to Istanbul and in a gesture of reparation knelt at the very place in St Sophia where the Roman delegates had brought the anathema.

At the same time the patriarch undertook to undo the estrangement among the Orthodox churches brought about by the system of "autocephalous" churches and aggravated by religious nationalism. After a 1950 encyclical failed to revitalize Constantinople's disputed rights as the primatial see, he began patiently and realistically to work out the idea of primacy as a sacrificial offer of service. He proposed (but never imposed) initiatives, travels and meetings (including pan-Orthodox conferences in the 1960s) which finally led to a consensus not so much primatial as a display of a universality and communion.

In October 1967 Athenagoras made a successful journey to bring together and consult with the Balkan daughter churches of Constantinople. Amidst enormous popular enthusiasm in Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia, he preached the union of Orthodoxy in the service of Christian unity. Although the Soviet government compelled the Moscow patriarchate to sidestep the coming of Athenagoras, he nevertheless consulted it. With the agreement of all the canonical Orthodox churches, he then undertook to go to Western Europe in October-November 1967 as a "pilgrim for unity".

He began with Paul VI in Rome, where he celebrated a service of peace and forgiveness, venerated the tombs of Peter and Paul and received young people in an unforgettable service at St Paul beyond the Walls. Next he went to the ecumenical centre in Geneva, where he described Western Christianity as a fragmented whole which might be helped to reconstitute itself through a disinterested and peace-making Orthodox presence. Finally he was welcomed in London by the Anglican archbishop of Canterbury Michael Ramsey.

Athenagoras's vision was of an evangelical, eucharistic and conciliar church in which the various confessions would meet as "sister churches"\* on the basis of the apostolic faith "in faithfulness to the traditions of the fathers and the inspiration of the Spirit", and around an axis of universal agreement,

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a renewed Roman primacy,\* a “presidency of love” no longer above the church but in the centre of its fellowship and in its service. He distrusted abstract theological speculation designed to prove oneself right by discrediting others. Above all he wanted to translate ideas into the language of experience, holiness and service.

A preoccupation of Athenagoras was re-establishing eucharistic fellowship, which he saw not only as a confirmation of a re-established unity of the faith\* but also as an anticipation of that unity, through the force of love, so that differences could be investigated, not simply by looking forward to the eucharist,\* but under its light (see **communion, intercommunion**).

In June 1968 a pan-Orthodox conference at Chambésy near Geneva (where Athenagoras was determined to set up an Orthodox centre, a place where there was freedom and ecumenical contacts) resolved to call a council for *aggiornamento* (updating), which would be prepared by a whole series of conferences. For Athenagoras the realist, this apprenticeship to conciliarity\* mattered more than the council itself.

The patriarch’s last years were difficult. Hardening of Soviet policy after the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia brought intense conflicts between Moscow and Constantinople, paralyzing the preconciliar process. The crisis of faith that shook the Western churches and a corresponding increase in fundamentalism in Orthodoxy, in which the most moderate theologians could not accept the patriarch’s views on intercommunion, increasingly isolated him.

Athenagoras then tried to begin a dialogue in depth with Islam, as well as encouraging the reconciliation of Chalcedonian and pre-Chalcedonian Orthodox (see **Oriental Orthodox-Orthodox dialogue**) and outlining a deep and simple spirituality for people of today. He emphasized Christianity not as law but as creative inspiration (“knowing how to live”), the fellowship or communion of individuals and the miracle of living creatures, and the humble illumination of everyday life through the presence-in-absence of the unknown who has become our secret Friend and through the church, witnessing and praying for all and influencing the development of the universe and humanity

through the attractive force of Christ’s resurrection.

OLIVIER CLÉMENT

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## AUSTRALIA

THE CHRISTIAN churches came to Australia with European settlement in 1788 – first the Church of England, then, as Irish settlers began to arrive, the Roman Catholic Church (the first public mass was celebrated in 1820), then, as other settlers came from England and Scotland, other churches and denominational structures.

Early church history in Australia was characterized by competitiveness rather than cooperation. Strong antagonism between Protestants and Roman Catholics was reinforced by nationalist divisions among Irish, English and Scottish settlers, arguments over privileges relating to land grants and education, and class divisions. There were also tensions within churches – between low- and high-church Anglicans, between the Presbyterian churches from England and those from Scotland, between Wesleyan and Free Methodists. The early 19th century brought more denominations: the Baptist and Lutheran churches, the Society of Friends and the Churches of Christ. The Salvation Army entered Australia in 1880. A Greek Orthodox Church was established in 1897. As frontier townships grew throughout the country, churches vied with each other to establish parishes, build churches and attract members.

In the second half of the 19th century, three colonial councils of churches were formed, in New South Wales, Victoria and

South Australia, reflecting a felt need for a united church front against gambling, alcohol and the decline in church attendance, and for the strict observance of Sunday, the recognition of God in the draft constitution and the inclusion of the Bible in the curricula of government schools.

The Australian Student Christian Union (ASCU) was formed in 1896. Linked to the World Student Christian Federation, it gave students an experience of belonging to international and interdenominational Christian communities. The YWCA and YMCA were significant, too, in fostering an ecumenical climate around this time. International ecumenical events also influenced early Australian ecumenism. After several Australians attended the first world missionary conference (Edinburgh 1910), united missionary councils were formed in New South Wales and Victoria, later replaced by the National Missionary Council of Australia.

In 1946, representatives from the Anglican, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian churches, the Churches of Christ, the Salvation Army and the Society of Friends held the inaugural meeting of the WCC (Australian section). After the Amsterdam assembly in 1948, the Australian Council for the WCC was formed, and in 1960 it became the Australian Council of Churches (ACC).

Work among refugees and migrants was a major role of the ACC from its inception. Besides helping with the re-settlement of thousands of people, the ACC influenced government policies and carried out church and community education programmes on these issues.

The waves of migration to Australia brought a growth in the number of Orthodox churches. The Greek Orthodox Church became a member of the council in 1958; seven other churches of the Orthodox traditions joined later.

The first national church conference, in Melbourne in 1960, brought together delegates and observers from 14 denominations and led to the formation of Australian Frontier, in which people from various walks of life and organizations worked together on problematic areas in society. The national conference also led to the formation of an ecumenical chaplaincy agency in the indus-

trial work-place. Also in the 1960s, the ACC's Church and Life movement offered Christians in more than 2000 congregations their first in-depth encounter with Christians of other denominations in their local areas, stimulating local ecumenical cooperation.

Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational churches began discussing church union in 1901, but it would be 70 years before a revised basis of union was presented to the negotiating churches. The Uniting Church in Australia was inaugurated in 1977. Earlier, in 1966, two Australian Lutheran churches were re-united.

The Second Vatican Council\* led to new links between the ACC and the RCC. A joint working group was formed in 1967 and over the next seven years studied such issues as baptism (1968), eucharist (1969), ministry (1970), Christian marriage (1971), authorities in moral behaviour (1972), and the person in church and society (1974). A 1976 statement on "Common Witness and Evangelism" was widely distributed. At the same time, cooperation was developing on social issues and in the area of aid and development. The ACC and RCC jointly sponsored a national conference on world development and the responsibility of the Australian churches in 1970, followed in 1972 by a national study programme involving thousands of Christians.

From its inception the ACC member churches saw it as a vehicle for their common prophetic witness. In the early years this focused on subjects ranging from the white Australia policy and unemployment to the introduction of television and the visit of Elvis Presley. By the late 1960s, Australia's involvement in the Vietnam war and compulsory national service was proving controversial for the churches. In 1968 the ACC issued a well-researched and highly respected report on "Conscientious Objection to Military Service".

The integration of the National Missionary Council into the ACC in 1965 heightened attention to the welfare of Aboriginal Australians and their struggle for land rights (see **land**), a concern which has remained at the forefront since then. A commission on Aboriginal development was established in 1970, and in the following years lengthy submissions on Aboriginal affairs and land

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rights were made to the government. In 1981 the ACC invited the WCC's Programme to Combat Racism\* to send a delegation to Australia, and its comprehensive and challenging report had a good impact on the churches, community and governments.

The ACC also provided a platform for others whose voices are not normally heard. At a migrant women's speak-out in 1982, some 150 migrant women were able to communicate in their own languages. In 1986 hearings on peace and justice in nine centres around Australia enabled many groups to testify to their own experiences of injustice and concerns for peace. The ACC's commission on the status of women has done important work on the feminization of poverty and domestic violence.\*

The WCC's seventh assembly in Canberra in 1991 was an occasion for all major Christian denominations to work together in its preparations and the assembly provided an impetus for ecumenical renewal in many local parishes and nationally.

In 1994 the ACC was replaced by a new national body, the National Council of Churches in Australia, which includes the Roman Catholic Church in its membership.

Australia has had difficulties in finding its place in the international arena. It represents the North in the South; it is both colonized and colonizer; it is geographically in the Pacific, but culturally not of the Pacific. Yet there is a growing awareness of its place in the Asia-Pacific region. The ACC was a founding member of the East Asia Christian Conference, later the Christian Conference of Asia.\* Similarly, it helped to bring together the churches in the Pacific to form the Pacific Conference of Churches,\* where it has observer status.

A significant area of ecumenical advance in Australia has been theological education. Colleges of divinity at major universities involve RC as well as Anglican, Orthodox and Protestant churches. United faculties take responsibility for ministerial training. There is ecumenical cooperation in religious education in schools and in the churches.

Much interchurch activity occurs through ministers' fraternals, industrial and hospital chaplaincies. Para-church groups, the charismatic movement and social action bring people together across denominational

boundaries. Traditional ecumenical events such as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity\* and the World Day of Prayer\* are celebrated. The publishing of an Australian hymnbook in 1977 was an important cultural and ecumenical development.

Churches which were largely Anglo-Celtic in formation and membership are being challenged in new ways by the multicultural nature of Australian society. New religious movements among Aboriginal Christians may prove to be another significant challenge to denominational isolationism.

In recent years the ecumenical movement in Australia is more visible in local groups united across ideological lines – such as movements for social justice, indigenous peoples' rights, environmental concerns – than in formal church structures.

JEAN SKUSE

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## AUTHORITY

THE WORD "authority" comes from Latin *augere*, cognate with Greek *auxanein*, "to cause to grow, to increase, to enlarge". This underlying sense of growth points to a dynamism in authority that produces, promotes and completes the bond which unites people (G. Fessard, *Autorité et bien commun*, 1969): if authority is needed and exercised among human beings, it is because they do not at once realize and achieve what they are to become on the personal and social plane. Each human being's desire is universal, which inevitably poses the problem of the progress of each with the co-existence of all. No social life can be established or maintained without some form of authority. The origins of societies of very different kinds show that at the basis of all authority lies a de facto power, employed either for the better (the "charism" of the born leader, the natural ancestor of the "saint"\*) or for the worse (the brutality of the gang leader, the

tyranny of violence), which always has a tendency to turn into de jure power. Institutional structures develop and regulate the common will to live. Paradoxically, the goal of authority is its own disappearance; the authority of parents and educators ceases when the child in its turn has become a free and responsible person. In the case of a society, the common good is never perceived or achieved by all so fully that authority can cease. The goal remains asymptotic. As long as it has not been reached, authority appears as the necessary mediator of the common good of the group.

In a Christian perspective, the ultimate ground of all authority is the sovereignty of God (Rom. 13:1), who wills the good of his creatures. God, however, also wills their salvation,\* i.e. that humanity grow in life towards eschatological fulfilment. God therefore sent his Son in a humanity like ours in order to manifest and exercise his saving authority in human terms, in a visible and historical way. Of his own free choice, Jesus falls in with the anthropological laws that govern the genesis of all authority.

### THE BASIS OF AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH

Jesus appears as a charismatic leader who makes an unheard-of claim to authority (Matt. 7:29; Mark 1:22,27; Luke 4:32), sets his own word above that of Moses (Matt. 5:21-48, 19:8-9), claims authority to forgive sins (Matt. 9:1-8; Luke 7:48-49), commands with power unclean spirits, the sea and the winds (Luke 4:36; Matt. 8:27), calls on people to leave everything and follow him (Matt. 4:18-22, 9:9) and claims a unique relation with God, whom he declares to be his own Father (Matt. 11:27; Luke 10:22), designating himself as the Son. That authority is questioned by his contemporaries (Matt. 21:23-24 par.), but it compels recognition from those who follow him and is acknowledged as rightful authority in the light of Jesus' death and resurrection.\* The risen Jesus can then send his disciples on mission\* in the name of the total authority that has been given him in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18). Johannine reflection sees Jesus as having received from the Father authority to execute judgment (John 5:27) and power to give life (John 17:2). Jesus' authority is exercised for the

sake of the growth of the kingdom, the common good of humanity of which it is the channel. The Revelation to John celebrates the Son as the Lamb sacrificed and victorious, on whom all authority and power has been conferred (Rev. 5:12).

Jesus gathered around him a community of disciples. After the ordeal of his passion, that community re-assembles through faith\* in his resurrection and the strength of the Spirit received at Pentecost.\* In the primitive church every baptized person has the responsibility, and as it were the authority, to bear witness to the truth of the message and to serve in the name of Christ both inside and outside the community. Within that communal group, the special authority of the twelve chosen by the Lord and bearing witness to his resurrection is confirmed. They have received the official mission to proclaim the gospel to every creature. The group of apostles is joined by Paul in virtue of the singular grace\* he received of seeing the risen Christ. The authority of the Twelve, of the apostles and ministers who assist them in their task, is lived in an atmosphere of close fellowship with the community. According to Jesus' words, it is an authority of service (Mark 10:43-45), which must not follow the model of the political structure of secular society (Luke 22:25-26). This authority is based on the bond of the apostles with Jesus (in this sense it is a de jure authority); in its turn it is the basis of a ministry which consists in preaching the word, prayer and worship, and maintenance of the church community in a fellowship of faith and love. Paul claims this authority for himself (2 Cor. 13:10); it includes if necessary the duty of reproof (Titus 2:15). In another order of ideas, Paul commends obedience to the civil authorities because they are established by God (Rom. 13:1-3).

All Christian churches consequently acknowledge the authority and sovereignty of Christ over his church in the power of his Spirit. That authority is that of the gospel, which Origen identified with Christ himself and which is a power of salvation for the believer. It is attested in scripture, the authentic formulation of the word of God,\* which demands both from the church as a gathered community and from every Christian the adherence of faith and obedience. Any author-

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ity exercised in the church can only be in the service of that faith and obedience.

### DISPUTE ABOUT AUTHORITY

The question of authority was one of the earliest matters of dispute between the churches. This is not surprising, for separations always involve questioning the legitimacy of the authority of the existing church. Between East and West the dispute was more about the way authority functions in the church (more synodical, collegial, communal and respectful of local freedoms in the East; more centralized, personalized and “authoritarian” in the West).

In the 16th century the conflict about authority assumed strictly doctrinal significance, connected with the deep ecclesiological divergence between certain confessions and with different conceptions of the nature of the ordained ministry (see **ministry in the church**). In the name of justification\* by faith and the incapacity of human beings to cooperate in any way in their salvation, the reformers – the Lutherans in particular – acknowledged the necessity of human authority for the good order of the church,\* the correct proclamation of the gospel and the right administration of the sacraments,\* but they did not accept that in these domains the church is the administrator of an authority derived from God himself, for the sake of the salvation of human beings.

The Roman Catholic Church (RCC) and the Orthodox churches (though authority assumes a different form with them) hold that this kind of authority is given to them by the will of Christ. So great was divergence on this issue in the West that the response on the RC side to the challenge of that authority was a stiffening and strengthening of the authority principle, together with increasing Roman centralization. By the late 19th century, the RCC could be described as a religion of authority in contrast to the Reformation churches, understood as religions of the Spirit, of conscience\* and liberty.\*

This divergence finds concrete expression in the understanding of the structure of the church, especially in the role assigned to the episcopal ministry as the ministry of “superintendence” and pre-eminently the ministry of authority in the church. The diver-

gence extends to all the chief areas of this ministry: proclamation of the word, sacraments, government and maintenance in communion.\*

For the RCC the ministry of the word includes not only the task of preaching but also the authority to interpret the scriptures correctly, in order to maintain the community in the truth of faith. The ministry therefore constitutes a magisterium (see **teaching authority**), which is exercised in regard to the scriptures, without standing above them. This magisterium pertains to the bishops in communion with the pope, acting either separately or assembled in a council. When an irrevocable and solemn decision is taken by a council, this is considered to be infallible (i.e. free from error, see **infallibility/indefectibility**), for the council is an organ of expression for the infallibility of the whole church, that which rests on the “supernatural sense of the faith which characterizes the people as a whole... from the bishops down to the last member of the laity” (*Lumen Gentium* 12). The First Vatican Council defined that the pope, as bishop of Rome, in virtue of his responsibility to maintain unanimity in faith among the churches, can on certain precise conditions himself commit the infallibility of the whole church.

The Orthodox churches share the ideas of episcopal magisterium and of infallibility (or, more exactly, inerrancy) but are loath to separate this exercise of authority from the “general consciousness” of the church (the *synaisthesis*, the Greek equivalent of the Latin *sensus fidelium*; see **consensus fidelium**), the primordial seat of Christian authority. For this reason the Orthodox link the infallibility of councils more with their reception\* – it is discerned after the event and cannot be guaranteed beforehand. The Reformation churches generally reject the idea of an ecclesial magisterium in the name of the principle that scripture is its own interpreter and always produces anew its own correct interpretation. Doctrinal authority in the church is simply human and is judged by its fidelity to “the sovereign authority of the holy scriptures”.

The RCC claims for the ministers of the word and the sacraments an authority of a sacramental nature (often denoted by what has now become an ambiguous term,

“power”), received by ordination,\* which places them in the apostolic succession (see **apostolicity**). Ordained ministers thus act in the name of Christ and of the church, for the sacraments are acts of Christ, celebrated in the church by the power of the Spirit who is invoked. The Orthodox churches share this fundamental conviction. For the Reformation churches, the authority of ministers belongs above all in the place of ecclesial investiture, for the ultimate basis of all ministry is, most often, baptism.\*

Finally, the RCC holds that its ministers have received an authority of jurisdiction (referred to in Matt. 16:18 and 18:18) over the members of the Christian people, which is exercised in the order of faith and life, in the service of their salvation. That authority is likewise necessary to the maintenance of communion among local and particular churches. That is why the councils of Florence (1439) and Vatican I\* declared that the primacy\* of the bishop of Rome confers on him a power of universal jurisdiction over pastors and faithful. The Orthodox churches, which share an analogous conception of jurisdiction, have historically always rejected this Catholic doctrine of the Roman primacy as extraneous to their tradition and to the practice of earlier centuries. The Reformation churches remain alien to the idea of jurisdiction, which attributed to the church an instrumental role in the domain of salvation.

While the Anglican communion has always sought to be a *via media*, its “comprehensiveness” in fact covers a very complex situation, which includes both “high church” (close to the Roman Catholic conception) and “evangelical” (close to Reformation ecclesiology) trends.

## ECUMENICAL UNDERSTANDING OF AUTHORITY

Contemporary ecumenical discussions have devoted considerable attention to the question of authority in the church, examining it mainly in relation to the theme of ministries, which still constitutes a key obstacle to ecumenical progress. Before summarizing results, the chief dialogues and relevant documents may be listed.

*International dialogues.* To be mentioned here are the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC)

“Authority in the Church I” (Venice 1976), “Authority in the Church I: Elucidation” (Windsor 1981), “Authority in the Church II” (Windsor 1981), “The Gift of Authority: Authority in the Church III” (Palazzola 1998); the Lutheran-Roman Catholic International Commission, “The Ministry in the Church” (1981, esp. sec. 3); the International Commission between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, “The Presence of Christ in Church and World” (1977, esp. sec. 2, “Doctrinal Authority in the Church”); the Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue, in its reports of Denver (1971, paras 99-118), Dublin (1976, paras 106-107), Honolulu (1981, paras 35-38), Nairobi (1986, paras 61-75), Singapore (1991, paras 53-98), Rio de Janeiro (1996, paras 53-72), and Brighton (2001, under the title “Speaking the Truth in Love: Teaching Authority among Catholics and Methodists”); the Anglican-Lutheran dialogue, Pullach (1972, paras 17-50); the Anglican-Orthodox dialogue, Moscow (1976, paras 1-18) and Dublin (1984, paras 21-30, 47-52, 90-92, 104-106); and Faith and Order, BEM (Lima 1982, esp. M15-16,19-25). The Roman Catholic-Orthodox International Commission is expected to tackle the question of authority in the church.

*National dialogues.* Here we may mention from the USA volumes 5 and 6 of *Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue* (P.C. Empie et al., eds): *Papal Primacy and the Universal Church* (1974) and *Teaching Authority and Infallibility in the Church* (1978). The French Groupe des Dombes\* has produced “Episcopal Ministry” (1976, esp. n.32-49) and “The Ministry of Communion in the Universal Church” (1985) in *Pour la communion des Eglises: L'apport du Groupe des Dombes 1937-1987* (1988).

The immense advances achieved in regard to the nature, basis and meaning of ministry and ministries in the structure of the church also represent progress on the question of authority, in particular as regards ordination, apostolic succession of ministry treated within the apostolicity of the whole church, the ecclesiological reference of the episcopal ministry, its symbolic function in the service of Christ's action for his church, and the traditional significance

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of the threefold ministry.\* Openness to the idea of the sacramentality of the church, admittedly qualified and still hesitant, nevertheless allows hope for overcoming the fundamental difficulty concerning the nature of the instrumentality of the church in relation to salvation.

Another area of progress is that of dialogue on scripture\* and Tradition (see **apostolic Tradition, canon, Tradition and traditions**), scripture and magisterium.\* The whole state of the question has been completely transformed here since it has come to be recognized, on the one hand, that the composition of the New Testament belongs to apostolic church Tradition and the constitution of the canon to post-apostolic church Tradition and, on the other hand, that Tradition essentially consists in the transmission of the message of scripture and does not constitute another source alongside it. Thus Pope John Paul II, in his ecumenical encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*\* (1995), could formulate the framework for further study as “the relationship between sacred scripture, as the highest authority in matters of faith, and sacred Tradition, as indispensable to the interpretation of the word of God”. Convergence is also emerging in regard to recognition of the authority of the creeds\* and councils\* of the so-called undivided church. As regards the magisterium proper, a conciliatory formula might be along the following lines: whereas the Reformation churches have one-sidedly maintained the church’s sole obedience to scripture, the RCC emphasis on the authority of the magisterium has been no less one-sided – to the extent that it seems to consider the magisterium as self-sufficient. A dialectic approach capable of integrating the two points of view would be to recognize that the authority of the church is a secondary norm (*norma normata*), bound by obedience to the primary norm of scripture (*norma normans*), but is no less truly a norm which, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, provides in its most solemn pronouncements a guarantee of fidelity to scripture.

The dialogue which has advanced furthest towards agreement on the problem of authority is certainly the ARCIC. Its first Venice document (1976) starts from the Christian authority which is at work in the church through the action of the Holy Spirit.

It underlines the importance of the authority of holiness, and then acknowledges the authority attached to the episcopate of the ordained ministry, which is exercised conjointly with the community in a “permanent process of discernment and response”. It considers the authority which serves communion between churches in conciliar relations and even tackles the question of primate, regional and universal authority (Roman primacy). It also deals with authority in matters of faith, a point at which it gives an important place to the doctrine of reception. The Windsor document (1981) studies four particularly thorny topics: the interpretation of the Petrine passages in scripture, divine right, jurisdiction and infallibility. Almost two decades later, in “The Gift of Authority”, the renewed commission considered that it had attained a sufficiently common view on the question of the bishop of Rome’s universal primacy for it to propose the exercise and acceptance of such a pastoral and doctrinal ministry, so understood, even before the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches were in full communion.

The exercise of authority in the church also assumes concrete form which varies with cultures and historical epochs and which always to some extent reflects ways in which authority is exercised in civil society. This non-theological factor, extremely important as regards the image the churches present to one another and to the world, must also be subject to conversion. Each tradition has a tendency particularly to emphasize one of the three aspects – personal, collegial and communal – whose complementarity was recognized at the 1927 Faith and Order conference in Lausanne (cf. BEM, M26 and comm.). In a movement of ecumenical conversion, each confession owes it to itself to restore to a due place in its life and organization the aspect or aspects that it has a tendency to obscure.

See also **church discipline, church order, ecumenical councils, kingdom of God.**

BERNARD SESBOÛÉ

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### AZARIAH, VEDANAYAGAM SAMUEL

B. 17 Aug. 1874, Tinnevely, South India; d. Jan. 1945, Dornakal. Azariah, a champion of ecumenism among the younger churches, served as YMCA secretary for a period. He was one of the founders of the Indian Missionary Society of Tinnevely in 1903, and later went as a missionary to work in the territories of the Nizam of Hyderabad, today part of the state of Andhra Pradesh. In a provocative address at Edinburgh 1910, he strongly criticized the unequal partnership between Western missionaries and their in-

digenous colleagues. He was consecrated bishop of Dornakal in 1912, the first Indian to become a bishop of the Anglican church. During the period of his services, the diocese registered phenomenal growth in numbers and activities. He was chairman of the National Christian Council of India, an influential participant in the International Missionary Council, and one of the leaders in the movement which issued in the Church of South India in 1947. He was present at Lausanne 1927, Oxford 1937, and Tambaram 1938. Azariah was an evangelist, a man of prayer, a tireless teacher, and an able administrator.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

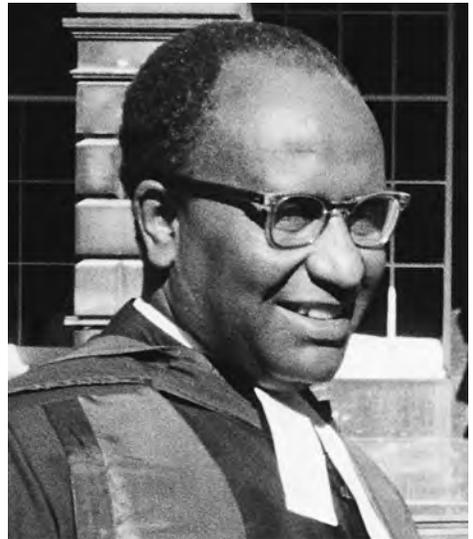
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## **BAËTA, CHRISTIAN GONCALVES KWAMI**

B. 23 May 1908, Keta, Ghana; d. 29 Dec. 1994, Accra. Vice-chairman of the International Missionary Council\* in 1958, then its last chairman, Baëta superintended the merger of the IMC and the WCC in 1961. He served on the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, and on the WCC central and executive committees, 1961-68. After his ordination in 1936, Baëta became synod clerk of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, 1945-49. He was also chairman of the Ghana Christian Council and of the Ghana church union negotiations committee. A member of the legislative council of the Gold Coast, 1946-50, he later served on the constitutional assembly which prepared the way for return to



civilian rule in 1969 after the overthrow of Nkrumah.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## BAM, BRIGALIA HLOPHE

B. 21 April 1933, Tsola, South Africa. Bam is chairperson of the National Electoral Commission of South Africa. She was executive secretary of the WCC Women's Sub-unit, 1967-80, and staff moderator of Unit III (Education and Renewal). After her term with the WCC, she served on the staff of the World YWCA, before becoming deputy general secretary of the South African Council of Churches. She studied social work at Johannesburg and sociology at the University of Chicago. Her long career in the church began as programme secretary of the World Affiliated YWCA in South Africa, 1958-67, and this was followed by membership of the All Africa Conference of Churches\* general and executive committees, 1963-68. She served in NGO conferences on the UN decade for women as resource person and speaker, and has organized several international and national ecumenical conferences.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

## BAPTISM

TOGETHER with faith\* in Christ, baptism administered in the name of the Holy Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – is regarded by almost all Christian communions as the basis of the Christian life and membership of the one church\* of Christ. Unity\* in baptism should thus be for all such disciples of the Lord Jesus the mark by which they recognize each other as members of the Body of Christ. The importance attached by Christians and their churches to baptism – reflected in the 1982 Lima text (*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry\**) and the responses to it – derives from the teaching of the New Testament and the practice of the first Christian community.

## THE EVIDENCE OF THE NT AND THE FIRST CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

We may consider here four different aspects of early Christian baptism.

*Significance.* Together with the proclamation of the gospel, with which it is closely linked, the act of baptism is presented in the NT as an essential mission,\* entrusted by the risen Christ to his disciples so that all human beings might share in the salvation\* he came to bring (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 10:47-48; Rom. 6:3-6). In John's gospel, the Lord affirms the necessity of baptism for entry into the kingdom of God:\* "No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit" (John 3:5). As at the baptism of Jesus (Mark 1:9-11 and par.), so too the baptism received by the disciples from the Lord closely connects the rite with the Holy Spirit\* (Mark 1:8 and par.; Acts 2:38) and implies faith, which is itself a gift of the Holy Spirit (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:37 [Western text]; Rom. 6:8). Through the Spirit, the baptized person becomes a son or daughter in the Son, an adopted child of the heavenly Father (Rom. 8:15-17; Gal. 4:5-7; Eph. 1:5), a child of God (John 1:12). Buried with Christ in baptism, the baptized person has died to sin,\* partakes of the life and resurrection of the Lord (Rom. 6:3-11; Col. 2:12) and, with other baptized persons, becomes a member of Christ's Body (1 Cor. 12:12-13). For the baptized, this means a new birth (John 3:5). This rite of baptism is a mystery or sacrament\* because it was instituted by the Lord as a visible and effective sign of the regeneration of those receiving it and of their incorporation in the church as the Body of Christ. The responses to BEM show the churches to be largely agreed on this as the meaning of baptism.

*The baptismal rite.* Baptism is a washing with water accompanied by a word (cf. Eph. 5:26). This "word" can be understood as a confession of faith in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (see **Trinity**), mentioned in all baptismal rituals back to Matt. 28:19 (cf. *Didache* 7.1). Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan. During the first centuries the Christian tradition retained the practice of baptizing in running water, usually channelled into a pool or basin known from earliest times as a baptistery. In any case, the

rite had to be performed with water, even still water, as became customary in most churches very early on (already accepted in the *Didache* 7.2). BEM declares that “baptism is administered with water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit” (B17).

*Gift of the Spirit.* The gift of the Spirit which accompanies the baptismal rite seems to have been mentioned variously from very early times, as attested in the Acts of the Apostles. The apostles Peter and John come to Samaria so that the Spirit might “come” on those evangelized and baptized by Philip (Acts 8:16-17). In the case of the Ethiopian eunuch (8:29-38), however, and above all of Saul (9:18-19), the Spirit appears to have been given prior to baptism. During the “Caesarean Pentecost”, Peter baptizes Cornelius and his household because they have just received the Holy Spirit (10:45-48, 11:15-17). This variety ultimately lies behind the observation in BEM that “Christians differ in their understanding as to where the sign of the gift of the Spirit is to be found” (B14).

*Communion.* The NT provides no clear evidence of newly baptized persons participating immediately in the eucharistic celebration after receiving the baptism with which the gift of the Spirit is linked (cf. 1 Pet. 2:2-3), but all the baptismal orders of the patristic church attest the participation of newly baptized persons or neophytes in the eucharist\* following their baptism (esp. in the case of the paschal vigil). As full members of the church, the Body of Christ, they partook of the Lord’s supper along with their brothers and sisters (cf. John 6:53). Linked in this way with the gift of the Spirit and the eucharistic meal, baptism constituted a single if complex unity regarded as “initiation” into the mysteries. In several places BEM hints at the restoration of that unity where it has been lost (e.g. B14 comm., E19 comm.).

## BAPTISMAL CUSTOMS

Historically, the church has exhibited both uniformity and diversity in its practice of baptism.

*The ancient custom.* The first detailed rite of Christian initiation is found in the document identified with the *Apostolic Tra-*

*dition* of Hippolytus of Rome (c. A.D. 217), which reports customs which were certainly earlier: a catechumenate including instruction, scrutinies, prayers and exorcisms; then the baptism of infants and adults, almost certainly in the night between Saturday and Easter Sunday. This rite began with the signation of the candidates and prayer over the water, over the oil of thanksgiving and over the oil of exorcism. The candidates renounced Satan and were anointed with the oil of exorcism. They were dipped three times in the water with the confession of faith (see **common confession, creeds**) in the form of questions and responses. After the water baptism there was a first anointing of the newly baptized ones with the “oil of thanksgiving” by a presbyter. Then the bishop laid hands on them to “make them worthy of being filled with the Holy Spirit” and again anointed them with the oil of thanksgiving. He then marked them with the sign of the cross and gave them the kiss of peace, after which they joined in the eucharistic celebration with all the faithful and received the communion in the body and blood of Christ.

*The anointings.* When and how the practice of ritual anointing was introduced into the baptismal rite is uncertain (see **chrismation**). There is not much evidence for it in the NT (perhaps 1 John 2:20,27; 2 Cor. 1:22; also Mark 14:3-8 and par., 16:1 and par.), but theologically it rests on the Christian’s participation in the anointing of Jesus the Messiah or Christ (cf. Isa. 61:1-2 = Luke 4:18-19; 2 Cor. 2:15); moreover it was the custom in antiquity for baths to be preceded by anointings with oil for detergent purposes and to be followed by anointings with aromatic and invigorative oils. These were given a spiritual significance in Christian practice.

*Diversity of customs.* The sequence of rites in Hippolytus appears to have influenced the baptismal practices of most of the churches in subsequent centuries, even though the twofold post-baptismal anointing is attested in the Roman tradition only. The early Syrian tradition, however, conferred the gift of the Spirit before the water baptism and for long knew nothing of any post-baptismal anointing with the “oil of thanksgiving”, called *chrism* or *myron*, i.e. aromatic oil. The same was the case in Con-

stantinople down to the mid-5th century, as John Chrysostom and Proclus (d.446) testify. It also appears that a laying on of hands as sign of the gift of the Holy Spirit was not universal. The spread of the custom of post-baptismal chrismation in connection with the gift of the Holy Spirit appears to have been linked to the conflict with Messalianism and also to the use of chrismation in the reconciliation of heretics. Moreover, the diffusion throughout the Christian world of the mystagogic baptismal homilies and catecheses of such well-known bishops as Basil, Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose of Milan, John Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia helped to produce not only a more uniform theology but also a more uniform symbolism and practice of baptism.

*Generalization of baptism and divergent customs.* With the mass entry of pagans into the church from the 4th century onwards, a difference between East and West emerged, which was re-inforced by the reaction against Pelagianism. It was not always possible for the bishop to preside at baptism. Moreover, baptism came to be administered systematically to newborn infants. In the churches of the East, the post-baptismal anointing conferring the gift of the Holy Spirit was performed by the priest immediately after the baptism but with *myron* consecrated by the bishop. In the churches of the West, Rome, under Innocent I (401-416), reserved this gift of the Holy Spirit to the imposition of hands and the anointing performed by the bishop, while the priest continued to perform an initial anointing with chrism. In the West, therefore, the gift of the Spirit conferred by the bishop was deferred to a later date, eventually making it possible for persons baptized in infancy later to renew, in the presence of the bishop and the church, the profession of faith that had been made on their behalf in baptism. Because of the dominical precept concerning the necessity of eucharistic communion for participation in eternal life (St Augustine, Innocent I), communion came to be given prior to the gift of the Spirit by the bishop. It was, however, only in fairly recent times that this custom of eucharistic communion prior to the gift of the Spirit conferred by the bishop became general in certain countries. Despite usages to the contrary, the Roman

Catholic Church has retained in principle the sacramental sequence of baptism, anointing for the gift of the Holy Spirit and eucharistic communion, as do the Orthodox and pre-Chalcedonian churches, and it is always in this sequence that it now administers them in the case of adult baptism.

*Chrismation and confirmation.\** Essentially, the gift of the Spirit is linked to Christian baptism. In the "Catholic" churches, however, a specific rite marks this gift: the imposition of hands and/or anointing with chrism or *myron*. The different practices followed by churches in East and West in the administration of infant baptism have led to different theological emphases. The churches of the East have kept the celebration of baptism, confirmation/chrismation and eucharistic communion as an indivisible whole even for infants. Their emphasis has thus been not so much on the personal commitment of faith which is in principle presupposed in these sacraments but rather on the single whole they together constitute. On the other hand, the churches of the West, because of reserving confirmation/chrismation for the bishop, have usually allocated the rites of baptism, confirmation and communion to different times in a person's life and have come since the middle ages to attach considerable importance to the Christian's ratification of the commitment of faith made for him or her in infant baptism. The churches of the Reformation, abolishing the rite of anointing, have retained the personal commitment of Christians which "confirms" the promise made by other Christians for them in infant baptism. Among the Protestant churches, the heirs to the Anabaptist or Baptist traditions of the 16th century are unable to attach any significance to the baptism of an infant too young to make a personal commitment of faith and are themselves willing to baptize only at a later age, while "(re-)baptizing" those who have received infant baptism.

#### **THEOLOGICAL ISSUES UNDERLYING DIFFERENT BAPTISMAL PRACTICES**

*Baptism conferred outside the full communion of the church.* A controversy over this arose in the 3rd century between Rome and the churches of Africa led by Cyprian of Carthage (d.258). According to the Roman

position (and its later refinements), if baptism is correctly administered – with water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and with the intention of doing what the church does – the personal status of the ministrant is of only secondary importance. Baptism administered outside the institutional bounds of the church can therefore be recognized as valid and even to some degree efficacious. Taking its cue from this theology, the Roman Catholic Church, along with many churches of the East, accepts the baptism of Christians of other churches, recognizing it as an important element in the ecclesial communion\* which continues to unite Christians in some measure, despite their divisions. The Second Vatican Council\* strongly emphasized this position (*Unitatis Redintegratio* 3-4, 22-23; *Lumen Gentium* 15).

But Cyprian and the bishops of Roman Africa affirmed that outside the church there can be no gift of the Holy Spirit or any sacrament. Almost all churches have in one way or another abandoned the rigidity of this position. From the position of Basil of Caesarea (d.379), who regarded the baptism given by certain Christians outside the great church as a special case, all the Orthodox churches have inherited an attitude towards the baptism of other churches which is often reserved. Some Orthodox churches recognize this baptism only “by economy”,\* i.e. while seldom administering baptism to such Christians requesting admission to the Orthodox church, they refrain from official comment on the value of baptism conferred outside the Orthodox communion. Despite this, all the Orthodox churches now recognize that the practice of baptism with water in the name of the Blessed Trinity by other churches is a decisive factor for recognizing them as true Christian brothers and sisters and cooperating with them in the quest for the visible unity of all Christ’s disciples.

*The ministrant of baptism.* For the vast majority of churches, the ministrant of baptism should be an ordained minister or at least a baptized Christian. The Roman Catholic Church holds that, in an emergency, any human being (*quicumque homo*) can administer baptism, even one who is not baptized or even a Christian. The Orthodox churches do not accept this position.

*Participation in the eucharist.* If the baptism administered by other churches is in some way recognized, how can Christians from these same churches not be allowed to partake of the eucharist – which is the completion of baptismal initiation and does not as such require an act of faith different from that of baptism? The reply offered is that as the visible expression in worship of the fullness of the community’s faith, the eucharist can be shared only by those who are fully and visibly integrated into this community by complete communion in faith, sacraments and discipline.

*The restriction of baptism to adults only.* Discussion of this issue has made little progress on the theoretical side since the 16th century. Recent meetings between Mennonites and Lutherans in France have shown that the principles remain unchanged on both sides, though regret over the harshness of past condemnations (see the Augsburg confession, arts 9,12,14,16-17) and the desire for dialogue is expressed on both sides. The increasing frequency of adult baptism in all churches may eventually help to resolve this question. BEM seeks to make the most of existing agreements by affirming that “baptism is both God’s gift and our human response to that gift... Both the baptism of believers and the baptism of infants take place in the church as the community of faith” (B8 and 12).

*“Baptism of the Spirit.”* While Pentecostals see this as the foundation of the Christian life, it poses problems for other Christian communions. Useful clarifications have been achieved, but without settling all the basic questions.

## THE ECUMENICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COMMON BAPTISM

Under the combined pressure of the Orthodox churches and then of the Roman Catholic Church and the Second Vatican Council, the WCC’s Faith and Order commission attached increasing importance in the 1950s and 1960s to a common recognition of baptism by all the churches. Recognition of value to all correctly administered baptisms in other Christian communions amounts already to recognition of a measure of ecclesiality in the community administering such baptisms; it means recognizing a

fundamental community of faith in Christ as unique Lord and Saviour, in the Trinity of the Father who sent his Son for the salvation of the world and bestowed the Holy Spirit, who enables us to call on the Father. It is also recognition of a certain degree of communion in the one Body of Christ, the church. Many of the dialogues between the Christian communions have dealt specifically with the question of baptism. In 1987 the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches produced a document devoted solely to this theme: "Faith, Sacraments and the Unity of the Church".

The challenge of the tension-laden words of BEM remains: "The inability of the churches mutually to recognize their various practices of baptism as sharing in the one baptism, and their actual dividedness in spite of mutual baptismal recognition, have given dramatic visibility to the broken witness of the church... The need to recover baptismal unity is at the heart of the ecumenical task" (B6 comm.). "When baptismal unity is realized in one holy, catholic, apostolic church, a genuine Christian witness can be made to the healing and reconciling love of God. Therefore, our one baptism into Christ constitutes a call to the churches to overcome their divisions and visibly manifest their fellowship" (B6). These themes have been taken up again by a Lutheran Strasbourg Institute symposium in 1996 ("Baptism and the Unity of the Church"), and by a Faith and Order study beginning in 1994 on the role of worship in the search for unity.

EMMANUEL LANNE

■ *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, WCC, 1982 ■ T.F. Best & D. Heller eds, *Becoming a Christian: The Ecumenical Implications of Our Common Baptism*, WCC, 1999 ■ A. de Halleux, "Foi, baptême et unité", *IR*, 61, 1988 ■ E. Lanne, "La contribution du Cardinal Béa à la question du baptême", in *Simposio Card. Agostino Bea (16-19 dicembre 1981)*, Rome, 1983 ■ M. Lienhard, "Von der Konfrontation zum Dialog: Die lutherischen Kirchen und die Täufer im 16. Jahrhundert und heute", in *Einheit der Kirche: Neue Entwicklungen und Perspektiven*, G. Gassmann ed., Frankfurt, Lembeck, 1988 ■ Louisville Consultation on Baptism, *Review and Expositor*, 77, 1, 1980 ■ M. Root & R. Saarinen eds, *Baptism and the Unity of the Church*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans,

1998 ■ G. Sava-Popu, *Le baptême dans la tradition orthodoxe et ses implications œcuméniques*, Fribourg, Editions universitaires, 1994 ■ M. Thurian & G. Wainwright, *Baptism and Eucharist: Ecumenical Convergence in Celebration*, WCC, 1983 ■ G. Wainwright, *Christian Initiation*, London, Lutterworth, 1969.

### BAPTISM, EUCHARIST AND MINISTRY (the "Lima text")

MEETING in Lima, Peru, in January 1982, the WCC Faith and Order\* commission gave final form to a text entitled *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (BEM), which would in the succeeding years attract attention unprecedented in the history of the modern ecumenical movement, bearing out the conviction of the commission that it had recognized and formulated "a remarkable degree of agreement" in three areas of considerable controversy among the churches.

The meaning of baptism\* was expounded as "participation in Christ's death and resurrection", "conversion, pardoning and cleansing", "the gift of the Spirit", "incorporation into the body of Christ" and "the sign of the kingdom". On knotty problems concerning the relation of faith,\* water baptism and the Spirit, the Lima text declared that "baptism is both God's gift and our human response to that gift... The necessity of faith for the reception of the salvation embodied and set forth in baptism is acknowledged by all churches"; it emphasized that "both the baptism of believers and the baptism of infants take place in the church as the community of faith"; and, while noting that "Christians differ in their understanding as to where the sign of the gift of the Spirit is to be found", it claimed general agreement that "Christian baptism is in water and the Holy Spirit".

The eucharist,\* or Lord's supper, is seen as "a gift from the Lord", and it is said that every Christian receives the "gift of salvation through communion in the body and blood of Christ". The "meaning of the eucharist" is expounded according to a Trinitarian and credal pattern as "thanksgiving to the Father", "anamnesis or memorial of Christ", "invocation of the Spirit", "communion of the faithful" and "meal of the kingdom". The text speaks of "Christ's real, living and

active presence in the eucharist”, which is “the living and effective sign of Christ’s sacrifice, accomplished once and for all on the cross and still operative on behalf of all humankind”.

The section on ministry\* begins with “the calling of the whole people of God” and locates the ordained ministry within that context. The ordained ministry is seen as a reminder “of the dependence of the church on Jesus Christ, who is the source of its mission and the foundation of its unity”. As an element within the broader reality of an “apostolic Tradition” that is transmitted in many ways, the “episcopal succession” is proposed as “a sign, though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the church”; and it is claimed that “the threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter and deacon may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it”.

### THE PREPARATORY HISTORY

The Lima text grew out of a long history of study and dialogue. The milestones of that history were four world conferences (Lausanne 1927, Edinburgh 1937, Lund 1952, Montreal 1963) and ten plenary meetings of the commission on F&O (from Chichester 1949 to Lima 1982, by way of Bristol 1967 and Accra 1974, which marked important stages in the development of BEM). There was an increasingly universal church representation in the process, with steadily growing involvement of Orthodox and, after the Second Vatican Council, of Roman Catholic theologians.

The history of BEM can be divided into two periods, each with a different style of working. The first period, from Lausanne to Bristol, developed in two stages: the period of *doctrinal comparisons* among churches intent on defining their own identity (from Lausanne to Lund) and that of common effort to *build on* the biblical and Christological bases (from Lund to Montreal). With a prelude at Aarhus (1964), which took up the themes of eucharist and ministry in the light of Montreal, the second period really got under way at Bristol, which resumed work on the relation between scripture and Tradition, and took up again the systematic study of the eucharist, but above all recognized that a sort of “ecumenical tradition” had evolved

in the course of the various world conferences and plenary commission meetings of F&O. This tradition can be identified in the various final reports adopted by the delegates of the different churches (see **Tradition and traditions**).

Baptism and the eucharist were the subject of theological discussions from the very outset of the ecumenical movement. No important F&O conference ever took place without at least some reference to these two sacraments.\* A common understanding of baptism was a major preoccupation between Lund and Montreal, which favourably received the results of the study carried out during those years as presented in the report “One Lord, One Baptism” (1961).

The study on baptism was resumed in 1967 at Bristol. A short analytical study produced by a consultation in early 1968 was commented on by a large number of regional groups; and a second international consultation two years later at Revnice, Czechoslovakia, discussed certain problems in greater detail. The findings of all this work were assembled in the report “Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist”, submitted to the commission on F&O in Louvain (1971).

The special study of the eucharist had begun somewhat earlier. A series of consultations led to the report “The Holy Eucharist”, discussed in Bristol. At the request of the WCC’s fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968), efforts were focused on the question of intercommunion.\* A consultation held in Geneva in 1969 produced the report entitled “Beyond Intercommunion”.

In the course of this work a proposal was made to compile two documents bringing together the agreements on baptism and the eucharist achieved in the ecumenical movement. In September 1971 the WCC executive committee decided to send two texts received by the commission on F&O at Louvain – “Ecumenical Agreement on Baptism” and “The Eucharist in Ecumenical Thought” – to all member churches for reactions and comments. In the light of the responses from the churches, the texts were then amended and again submitted to the F&O commission in Accra in 1974.

The study on ministry undertaken in response to the discussion at Montreal pro-

gressed in several stages. A first report, "The Ordained Ministry", was presented to the commission in Louvain. Judging that substantial progress had been made, the commission asked that the work be continued, and an international consultation in Marseilles in 1972 produced a text that was distributed to a large number of groups and theologians for reactions. In the light of their responses, the text was revised once more before being submitted to the F&O commission in Accra. The WCC central committee decided that the three texts should be published and communicated to the member churches.

The first drafts, drawn up by Max Thurian from 1967 onwards to serve as a basis in this search for convergences, consisted essentially in quotations from the official reports, organized around an intelligible theological structure. First came the text on the eucharist (1967), then the one on baptism (1968) and finally that on ministry (1972). A large number of theologians invited by Lukas Vischer, then director of the F&O secretariat, held a series of meetings to discuss these themes and to correct and complete the embryo BEM texts. After Accra (1974), the document was sent to the churches for their reactions. The evaluation of the amendments proposed by the churches (150 letters were received in Geneva) enabled a smaller steering group to bring the BEM text closer to the final form that it would receive at Lima in 1982.

The members of the BEM steering group were Vitaly Borovoy (Orthodox), Nils Ehrenström (Lutheran), Bert Hoedemaker (Reformed), Anton Houtepen (Roman Catholic), Max Thurian (Taizé), Emilianos Timiadis (Orthodox), Lukas Vischer (Reformed), Geoffrey Wainwright (Methodist). A number of experts were also involved in the work of the steering group, among them Nikos Nissiotis and John Zizioulas (Orthodox), Emmanuel Lanne and Jean Tillard (Roman Catholic), Günther Gassmann and Harding Meyer (Lutheran), and Günter Wagner (Baptist).

### THE NATURE OF THE BEM PROCESS

The ecclesiological conviction underlying the composition of BEM is that when the churches, through their representatives, are gathered together by the WCC, they are no

less churches than when making their decisions individually. Indeed, when a church is validly represented at a responsible ecumenical gathering, its tradition and witness are enriched by the contribution of the other churches gathered there. The sharing of the truth in love illumines and reveals the fundamental nature of each. This ecumenical action of the Spirit in the churches has forged what may justifiably be called an ecumenical tradition. This ecumenical tradition, guided by the Holy Spirit, is the fruit of a common "reading" by the various churches of holy scripture and of the great Tradition interpreting God's word, with a view to re-discovering the visible unity\* willed by Christ.

It is important to be clear about the authority of the Lima text. It is intended as a theological service to the churches in ecumenical dialogue. It is in no way a complete dogmatic statement claiming to resolve the doctrinal differences that have developed between the churches in the course of history. The churches remain entirely free to accept, correct or reject the text.

In the interests of an objective and generous reception\* of the document by the churches, it may be useful to mention a few ways of receiving it which would be neither too immediately critical nor too hastily authoritarian. With other texts on the same subjects, but with its special character as a broad-based ecumenical document, it could be a useful instrument in *catechesis*.\* It could help pastors to give believers a sound basis for their faith. For the re-building of Christian unity it is indispensable that the people of God should hold a strong, simple faith. This document is a valuable expression of ecumenism at this level. A second area where the Lima text can be extremely useful is *theological education* for the training of the church's future ministers. Besides providing a sound basis for theological reflection, the document can also help to promote a healthy ecumenical attitude. It may also inspire *liturgical reform*\* in the churches, where new worship texts may have to be composed. Finally, it can serve as a basis for reflection by local groups engaging in ecumenical dialogue, especially those for *confessionally mixed households*. Thus, without being imposed dogmatically, the

Lima text may be received in a live way by the churches as a means of strengthening the common faith of Christian believers.

### THE RESPONSES OF THE CHURCHES

By the middle of 1990, BEM had been translated and published in 35 languages, and the F&O secretariat had received responses from 190 churches, including the Roman Catholic Church, as well as from several councils of churches and numerous groups of theologians. The churches were asked to say how far they could "recognize in this text the faith of the church through the ages", what consequences they could draw from it for their relations particularly with other churches that "also recognize the text as an expression of the apostolic faith", what guidance they could take from the text for their life and witness, and what suggestions they could make for incorporation of BEM material into the ongoing project of F&O, "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today". An examination of the responses, published in the six-volume series *Churches Respond to BEM*, gives an indication of the degree of convergence in the faith and the steps still needed to arrive at full visible unity.

At its plenary meeting in Budapest in August 1989, the F&O commission prepared a brief message to the churches to accompany a full report on the BEM process and responses. This 1990 report contains an analytical description of the churches' responses to each section of BEM, proposes some initial clarifications called for in the responses, and sketches possibilities for further work on three more general issues frequently raised by the churches: the relation of scripture and Tradition, the nature of sacrament and sacramentality (including the relation of word and sacrament) and the need for common perspectives on ecclesiology. These themes have been treated at and beyond the fifth world conference on Faith and Order at Santiago de Compostela in 1993. Meanwhile many bilateral dialogues make positive use of BEM itself.

See also **apostolic Tradition, chrismation, church, communion, confirmation, Faith and Order, Lima liturgy.**

MAX THURIAN

■ *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, WCC, 1982 ■ *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry 1982-1990: Report on the Process and Responses*, WCC, 1990 ■ *One Baptism, One Eucharist and a Mutually Recognized Ministry*, WCC, 1975, text of Accra ■ M. Thurian ed., *Churches Respond to BEM*, 6 vols, WCC, 1986-88 ■ M. Thurian ed., *Ecumenical Perspectives on BEM*, WCC, 1983 ■ M. Thurian & G. Wainwright eds, *Baptism and Eucharist: Ecumenical Convergence in Celebration*, WCC, 1984 ■ G. Wainwright, "The Lima Text in the History of Faith and Order", *Studia Liturgica*, 16, 1986.

### BAPTIST-LUTHERAN DIALOGUE

BAPTISTS and Lutherans both trace their origins to the 16th-century Reformation. Baptist roots are located in the Anabaptist wing of this movement. Anabaptists, who rejected infant baptism\* and stressed conscious conversion\* before baptism by immersion, were denounced and persecuted by the followers of Luther, Zwingli and Calvin. More recent Baptist origins lie in the 17th-century English separatist movement and in the work of John Smyth, who taught the baptism of adult believers as the basis of the gathered church.

Lutheran beginnings are found in the teachings of Martin Luther and of the Lutheran confessions, as brought together in the Book of Concord (1580). Lutherans stressed as the chief article of the Christian faith justification\* by grace\* through faith,\* and rejected the view that faith can be a prior condition for baptism.

After the Reformation, there were few formal relations between Baptist and Lutheran churches. However, in the 20th century many Baptist and Lutheran churches joined the WCC and regional and national councils of churches, and encountered each other in the ecumenical movement.

The first international theological conversation between representatives of the Lutheran World Federation\* and the Baptist World Alliance\* began in 1986. Its aim was to clarify differences, convergences and agreements in thought and practice. Baptists were concerned about condemnations of their positions and practices in the Lutheran confessions; Lutherans, about Baptist reluctance to recognize infant bap-

tism. The second meeting, in 1987, took up faith, discipleship and baptism. In 1988 the next session discussed the nature of the church. The fourth, and final, meeting in 1989 prepared a statement on authority for preaching and teaching, and on the condemnations.

National Baptist-Lutheran dialogues took place in the USA (1979-81), the Federal Republic of Germany (1980-81), and the German Democratic Republic (1982-83). All have focused on the theology of baptism and the condemnations. Recurring problems were the relation between belief and baptism, believer's baptism and infant baptism, and the understanding of church and sacraments.

Significant differences remain between the Baptist and Lutheran traditions, but the international and national discussions have resulted in greater understanding. The participants have been able to recognize each other's churches as true churches that live from the gospel.

WILLIAM G. RUSCH

- "Lutheran-Baptist Dialogue", *American Baptist Quarterly*, 1, 1982
- "A Message to Our Churches" (international report 1990), in *GinA-II*
- G. Rothermundt, "Ein Dialog beginnt: Die baptistisch-lutherischen Gespräche seit 1979", *ÖR*, 36, 3, 1987
- "Schlussbericht des Gesprächs zwischen dem Bund Evangelisch-Freikirchlicher Gemeinden in Deutschland und der Vereinigten Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche Deutschlands", *Texte aus der VELKD*, 17, 1981.

## BAPTIST-ORTHODOX RELATIONS

BAPTIST relations and contacts with the Orthodox church began in the 1860s and 1870s in Russia. During this period various religious groups influenced the Russian Baptist movement. The German Mennonites\* emphasized Bible study during their worship hours (*Stunden*), as did the Molokans, a group similar to the Quakers.\* With the concurrence of the Orthodox church, the British and Foreign Bible Society received permission to distribute scriptures, which resulted in the formation of Bible study groups in homes, and many people deserted the church in favour of these hours of Bible study. The influence of these

groups, centred on the study of scripture, eventually led a group of young believers to form the first Russian Baptist Union in 1884. The Czarist secret police persecuted the groups, but this made them grow even more. Baptist leaders were imprisoned and their "leaders were exiled to Siberia and the Caucasus like common criminals", according to Baptist historian R.A. Torbet. Similar stories of early Baptist contact with the Orthodox came from Romania, the Ukraine and Bulgaria.

After the victory of Lenin and the Communist Party in 1917, Orthodox and Baptists suddenly found themselves imprisoned and suffering together. A certain understanding and cooperation developed during the period of communist persecution. However, in 1989 when the Berlin wall fell and freedom came to the former Orthodox countries of Eastern Europe, the relationship of Baptists and Orthodox reverted to an almost Czarist-like period of hostility. Hundreds of para-church evangelistic organizations based in Western countries entered the former communist countries. Although most of these groups were not related to the historic Baptist movement, they were described as sectarian proselytizers and "Baptistic". This resulted in further tension between Baptists and Orthodox, particularly in Bulgaria, Romania, Russia and the Ukraine.

Baptist leaders in these countries sought for dialogue and conversations with Orthodox leaders. Out of concern for Christian understanding, the Baptist World Alliance (BWA)\* was asked to initiate official conversations with the Orthodox churches, through the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In 1994 a BWA delegation travelled to Istanbul and was received graciously by the synodical committee on inter-Christian affairs. Pre-conversations continue to be held, and it is hoped that these will eventually lead to full conversations. Discussions at Regents College, Oxford, in 1997 centred on the question of whether evangelism and missions are part of the "nature" of the church or "task" of the church.

Although ecclesiologically divided, Baptists and Orthodox theologians share a common faith in the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As one Baptist leader said, "What the Baptists like about the Orthodox

is that they are *orthodox!*" Both Orthodox and Baptist leaders pray that theological conversations will issue in a better understanding and mutual appreciation of each other's traditions and faith in Christ.

DENTON LOTZ

■ R.A. Torbet, *A History of the Baptists*, rev. ed., Philadelphia, Judson, 1973.

## BAPTIST-REFORMED DIALOGUE

THE BAPTIST WORLD ALLIANCE\* and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches\* sponsored a dialogue from 1973 to 1977. Prepared through official contacts in the preceding years, it was grounded in a centuries-long relationship.

The Swiss reformers rejected and persecuted the Anabaptist movement, so called by its opponents because the practice of baptizing believers on profession of faith was, from the Reformed point of view, doing "over again" (*ana-*) what had been done once for all in infant baptism.\* While the Baptist churches today trace their direct origins not to the Swiss movement (now represented by the Mennonites\*) but to independent churches in England, both the Swiss and English groups were convinced that infant baptism, whatever its intention, was quite other than New Testament baptism.

Yet the Baptists and one type of Reformed Christians – the Congregationalists\* – were drawn together by suffering common persecution as radicals. They saw themselves as seeking to renew the local church,\* on a NT model, as the place of Christ's rule over his people. In England John Bunyan pleaded that differences over baptismal teaching and practice ought not to divide Christians.

A review of these two interacting tendencies in church history was a main theme of the Baptist-Reformed dialogue. One of its recommendations was for dual practice, by which Christian parents could choose either to present their children for infant baptism or to seek a service of thanksgiving and dedication to their parental task, leaving to the children the decision to request baptism when they were able to do so on their own profession of faith.\* Such a dual practice was already followed in some Reformed and United churches.

In 1982 a short consultation evaluated the responses of the churches to the report of this dialogue. Responses differed concerning the recommendation for a dual practice. Some saw it as a positive step in mutual recognition of well-grounded convictions, a recognition that each practice is supported by the evidence of some strands of scripture and tradition. Others considered it an uneasy compromise.

Despite this continuing disagreement, the dialogue has emphasized a common inheritance which owes much to the Calvinist understanding of systematic theology; it also shares an insistence on lay participation in church government and a resistance to focusing authority in the church in a personal episcopate (see **church order**).

The Baptist-Reformed dialogue has a particular place in the whole spectrum of bilateral dialogues\* because it is a dialogue of the "radical" Reformation with the "classic" Reformation. Reformed churches – and, more recently, Baptist churches – have engaged in dialogue with those who stand, in the range of traditions, more on the wing of clerical authority and who emphasize the sacramental (Anglicans, Lutherans, Orthodox and Roman Catholics). The Baptist-Reformed dialogue has ensured both that the common radicalism of these churches has not been forgotten in the wider debate and that Reformed churches do not face only in one direction in their search for visible unity.\*

MARTIN H. CRESSEY

■ *Baptists and Reformed in Dialogue*, Studies for the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 4, Geneva, WARC, 1984 ■ L.A. Creedy, "Baptism in Church Union Negotiations", *MS*, 9, 2-3, 1970-71.

## BAPTIST-ROMAN CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL CONVERSATIONS

THE FIRST international Baptist-Roman Catholic conversations took place 1984-88, co-sponsored by the Commission on Baptist Doctrine and Interchurch Cooperation of the Baptist World Alliance\* and the Vatican Secretariat (now Pontifical Council) for Promoting Christian Unity.\* The overall theme was "Christian Witness in Today's World".

Goals included mutual understanding of convergences and divergences between Baptists and Catholics, establishment of relations and communication for mutual and self-understanding, identification of possibilities and difficulties for common witness, and addressing existing prejudices.

Previous Baptist-Catholic contacts included collaboration on social issues and encounters of theologians in Faith and Order settings. In the USA the Bishops Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs co-sponsored dialogue with the American Baptist Churches between 1967 and 1970 and took part in organizing conversations between Southern Baptist and Catholic scholars beginning in 1978. More recently, a Catholic fraternal delegate has been invited to the quinquennial Baptist world congress, and a Baptist fraternal delegate has participated in assemblies of the synod of bishops in Rome.

In the international conversations, the overall theme and the first session on "Evangelism/Evangelization: The Mission of the Church" (West Berlin 1984) set a missiological direction for subsequent sessions on Christology, conversion/discipleship (Los Angeles 1985), the church (New York 1986), religious freedom, evangelism vs proselytism (Rome 1987). The final report of this series, developed at Atlanta, Georgia, USA (1988), gives a "common statement" which placed the findings in the context of fostering common witness.\*

Setting a firm Christological foundation, the report states that "our common witness" rests on shared faith\* in the centrality of Christ as revelation\* of God and sole mediator between God and humankind. This common faith, proclaimed in the New Testament and expressed in the first four ecumenical councils,\* should be the basis for discussion of remaining differences. On conversion and discipleship, the report notes that the mystery of Christ can ultimately be grasped only in faith and in the practice of Christian discipleship through faith and love.

Regarding the church,\* these conversations, like other dialogues, explored the biblical notion of koinonia\* and found "koinonia of the Spirit" (Phil. 2:1) a helpful description of a common understanding of

the church. For Baptists, koinonia is expressed principally in local congregations gathered voluntarily under the lordship of Christ (see local church). They avoid structures which threaten individual freedom and local autonomy. For Roman Catholics, the koinonia which the Spirit effects in the local congregation is simultaneously koinonia with other local churches in the one universal church, expressed in spiritual and institutional bonds. These differences and the relationship of Spirit to structures need further discussion (see church order).

Concerning witness in the world, both Baptists and Catholics respond to the great commission (Matt. 28:16-20) through evangelism\* or evangelization. Baptists prefer the term "evangelism" and emphasize free personal response of individuals to the gospel. Catholics apply the term "evangelization" to the "first proclamation" of the gospel to non-believers and in the wider sense to the renewal of humanity, witness and related factors. Study is needed to clarify the use of these terms, to help promote further common witness.

In a penitential spirit both Catholics and Baptists confess that competition and bitterness among missionaries have been stumbling blocks for those to whom the gospel is proclaimed. Distinguishing evangelism/evangelization from proselytism,\* they confess that both have been guilty of proselytism in its negative sense and lament that division and strife between Christians "can be such a scandal that non-believers may not be attracted to the gospel". Both need greater vigilance in respecting religious liberty.\*

Reactions to this first series led Baptist officials to conclude that a further round of formal conversations would not be immediately opportune, but joint discussions on specific issues concerning Roman Catholic-Baptist relationships resumed in 2000-2001.

JOHN A. RADANO

■ C. Ghidelli, "Ecumenismo in crisi? Una testimonianza", *Rivista del Clero Italiano*, Dec. 1988 ■ J. Radano, "Contatti e conversazioni tra l'Alleanza Battista Mondiale e il Pontificio Consiglio per la Promozione dell'Unità dei Cristiani", *Corso breve di ecumenismo*, Rome, Centro Pro Unione, 1995 ■ *Review and Expositor*, 79, 2, 1982 ■ *Southwestern Journal of Theol-*

ogy, 28, 2, 1986 ■ “Summons to Witness to Christ in Today’s World: A Report on the Baptist-RC International Conversations, 1984-88”, *IS*, 72, 1990 ■ “To Understand Each Other: Roman Catholics and Southern Baptists”, *The Theological Educator*, 39, 1989.

## BAPTIST WORLD ALLIANCE

THE BAPTIST World Alliance (BWA), the worldwide fellowship of Baptist believers, was formed in London in 1905, growing out of the desire for greater denominational unity that emerged from the missionary movement at the end of the 19th century.

Although originally seen only as a movement for fellowship, since 1945 the BWA has adopted a number of programmes whereby Baptists can support one another. Composed of 188 member bodies, called conventions or unions, Baptists work in more than 160 countries. There are 42 million baptized believers in BWA member bodies, with a community of at least 100 million.

The purpose of the BWA is set out in the preamble to its constitution, which states that it “exists as an expression of the essential oneness of Baptist people in the Lord Jesus Christ, to impart inspiration to the fellowship, and to provide channels for sharing concerns and skills in witness and ministry. This Alliance recognizes the traditional autonomy and independence of churches and general bodies.”

Five divisions carry out the work of the BWA: Baptist world aid, communications, evangelism and education, study and research, promotion and development. Three departments carry on significant work for men, women and youth.

The BWA has six regional fellowships of Baptist conventions: All-African Baptist Fellowship, Asian Baptist Federation, Caribbean Baptist Fellowship, European Baptist Federation, North American Baptist Fellowship, and Union of Baptists of Latin America. Each regional fellowship relates to the BWA through a regional secretary who lives in the area.

Every five years the BWA sponsors a Baptist world congress, attended by thousands from all continents. These congresses set the theme and programmes of the al-

liance for the next five years. Every Baptist member body can send council members, who have equal voice and vote.

DENTON LOTZ

■ E.G. Hinson, “The BWA: Its Identity and Ecumenical Involvement”, *ER*, 46, 4, 1994.

## BAPTISTS

THE MODERN Baptist movement began in 17th-century England. Separatists, unable to “purify” the Church of England, broke from the puritans and advocated separation from the state church (see **church and state**). Among them were those who became convinced that infant baptism\* was contrary to scripture. In 1607, to avoid persecution, a group led by John Smyth and Thomas Helwys left Gainsborough, England, for Holland, where freedom of religion was flourishing. There, after further study of scripture, the whole congregation rejected their infant baptism and were baptized as believers in 1608. In 1611 Helwys and ten others returned to London to establish the first Baptist church on English soil.

During their stay in Holland these early Baptist believers had contact with the Mennonites,\* who had also become convinced of the scriptural basis for believers’ baptism. The Mennonites and others were called Anabaptists, because they were accused of re-baptism – a charge they rejected because they did not consider infant baptism to be scriptural baptism. Thus, although not directly related to the Anabaptists, Baptists count this 17th-century movement as part of their spiritual history, and the rise of the Baptist movement must be seen in this context. With the rediscovery of the Bible through the Reformation, many former Catholic priests became even more radical than Luther in calling for reform. Seeing the danger of the union of church and state, they called for separation not only from the church but also from the state. Many, such as Balthasar Hubmaier, Felix Manz and Conrad Grebel of Switzerland, were persecuted, and some were killed for their convictions. Other representatives of this Nonconformist tradition of opposition to state control and infant baptism include the Walden-

sians of Italy, who trace their origins back to the 12th century.

Out of this small group of English Baptists, who were part of a spiritual movement for renewal, separation of church and state, believers' baptism, and a purified, conscious adult commitment to personal belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, a worldwide movement has developed. Today there are 42 million Baptist believers in 160 countries; if one includes children and the larger community of worshippers, they would number at least 65 million more, making the Baptists one of the largest Protestant groups in the world.

### BAPTIST BELIEFS

In common with Christians around the world, Baptists hold the apostolic faith as expressed in the Apostles' Creed.\* Although Baptists have many "confessions of faith", they hesitate to sign or quote a creed\* because of their great concern for the freedom of the individual. The Baptist beliefs listed here are shared by many other churches; it is the combination of them which is distinctively Baptist.

*Religious freedom for all.* In 1612 Helwys wrote that the king of England "is but an earthly king...: for men's religion to God is betwixt God and themselves; the king shall not answer for it, neither may the king be judge between God and man. Let them be heretics, Turks, Jews or whatsoever, it appertains not to the earthly power to punish them in the least measure." Baptists defend religious freedom and liberty for all people in every country. The American Baptist Roger Williams wrote in the 1650s: "Man hath no power to make laws to bind conscience." Having suffered much religious persecution, Baptists are anxious to defend the rights of all peoples and religions.

*Separation of church and state.* A natural corollary of religious freedom is the separation of church and state. A.C. Underwood notes that the Anabaptists, in urging complete separation of church and state, "denied the right of the state to compel belief or regulate religion and therefore exercised their own discipline over their members, by the democratic action of each congregation, and excommunicated all who were guilty of grave moral offences". This doctrine is one

of the great contributions of this tradition to church unity\* and thus to the ecumenical movement; without it, governments would become entangled in trying to control efforts towards church unity.

*Open communion.* Many of the more credal churches do not invite Christians of other traditions to their celebrations of the Lord's supper (see **communion, eucharist, intercommunion**); for Baptists the only requirement is personal faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. In 1673 the English Baptist John Bunyan wrote: "The church of Christ hath no warrant to keep out of the communion the Christian that is discovered to be a visible saint of the word, the Christian that walketh according to his own light with God."

*Emphasis on the local congregation of believers.* One cannot speak of a single national or world Baptist church. There are thousands of Baptist congregations around the world which are gathered into conventions or unions of Baptist churches. It is the Baptist belief that the local congregation is the Body of Christ in that area, but it does not reserve the right to call itself the church of any region or country, or of the world (see **local church**). Nevertheless, individual Baptist congregations form district associations, state and national conventions to enhance their missionary endeavours. The Baptist World Alliance\* (BWA) is the world expression which unites Baptists in 160 countries for fellowship and witness.

Morgan Patterson has summarized the "Baptist way" in ten points: (1) the essence of the Christian faith is spiritual, personal and voluntary; (2) the scriptures are uniquely inspired and authoritative; (3) the church is composed of committed believers; (4) salvation is provided by the grace of God and is available to everyone through repentance and faith; (5) all believers are priests, with no intermediary other than Christ himself; (6) the scriptures command the observance of two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's supper, which are understood to be basically symbolic in meaning; (7) baptism is properly performed by the biblical mode of immersion; (8) the authority for the administration of the church is in the hands of the congregation; (9) religious freedom should be given to all to enable each person to respond to the

leadership of the Holy Spirit; (10) the separation of church and state best guarantees liberty of conscience for every citizen.

Significant Baptists who have worked for church unity include John Bunyan, the author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, who did not want any bar to participation in the Lord's supper. William Carey, who went to India in 1793, has been called the father of modern missions and (by Ernest Payne) the father of the ecumenical movement. As early as 1810, Carey urged an ecumenical meeting representing all Christians, although it was not until a hundred years later, at Edinburgh in 1910, that this "pleasant dream" was realized. In more recent times, Billy Graham has represented the strong Baptist concern for world evangelization; all of his meetings are interdenominational and demonstrate a strong expression of evangelical ecumenism. Martin Luther King, Jr, carried on the strong tradition of Walter Rauschenbusch and the social gospel. Baptists believe that the Christian mission includes a call for justice and human rights for all. Numerous other outstanding Baptists who have contributed to the world missionary movement and wider witness of the Christian church could be mentioned: Johann Oncken, John Clifford, Adoniram Judson, Lottie Moon, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Lott Carey, J.H. Shakespeare, Ernest Payne and Jimmy Carter.

### BAPTISTS AND UNITY

While eager to cooperate with other Christians in mission\* and evangelism,\* Baptists' congregational polity makes them wary of structural integration (see **church order**). Some Baptists are critical of the World Council of Churches as "too political". Nevertheless, more than 20 Baptist conventions or unions are members of the WCC. While this represents only a small percentage of the 188 Baptist groups in the BWA, these 16 bodies account for about 45% of the 42 million Baptists in the world. Baptists in the WCC feel a responsibility for keeping alive the missionary concern out of which the WCC grew. It should be noted that only about 8000 of the 45,000 Protestant missionaries from the USA come from WCC member churches; many of the rest come from Baptist backgrounds.

An early theme of the ecumenical movement was "mission and unity". Baptists represent this strain within the ecumenical movement, whether expressed in the WCC or in the evangelical ecumenical movement of the Lausanne congress (see **Lausanne covenant**). Recent emphases on "mission and doctrine" sound divisive to Baptist ears. Where there is need for cooperation for evangelism and mission, Baptists will be involved. Where there is a call for structural unity or doctrinal unity, Baptists, mindful of their heritage, will be hesitant to join.

DENTON LOTZ

- W.H. Brackney, *The Baptists*, Westport CT, Greenwood, 1988
- H.L. McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, Nashville TN, Broadman, 1987
- R.A. Torbet, *A History of the Baptists*, rev. ed., Philadelphia, Judson, 1973.

### BAROT, MADELEINE

B. 4 July 1909, Chateauroux, France; d. 28 Dec. 1995, Paris. Barot was a leading figure in the ecumenical youth, student and women's movements, as well as in the French Protestant aid organization CIMADE,\* especially in its work with internees during the second world war.

Born into a Protestant family, Barot became deeply involved in the Student Christian Movement while at the University of Paris. Studies in history and library science did not dampen her enthusiasm, which was always characterized by ecumenical concern and the desire to anchor Christian witness firmly in reality.

Appointed archivist at the French School in Rome in 1935, she witnessed first-hand the advance of fascism and Nazism in Europe. During these years, under the influence of the Confessing Church\* in Germany, the World Student Christian Federation\* was playing a significant role in equipping an entire generation, including Barot, to respond to the Nazi occupation of France.

At this time Protestants from Alsace and Lorraine were being evacuated to the south of France, away from the German frontier. When the joint committee of French Protestant youth movements was challenged by Suzanne de Diétrich to come to the aid of these people, the inter-movement committee



for aid to evacuees, CIMADE\* (Comité intermouvement auprès des évacués), was born. Barot was named its general secretary in May 1940 on her return from Italy, which had joined the war on the side of Germany. The appalling condition of foreigners marshalled in camps and their fear of being handed over to the Nazis was just becoming known. Barot immediately installed a CIMADE team in the vast internment camp at Gurs, near the Pyrenees, convinced that one ought to live alongside those whom one is seeking to help.

As the number of CIMADE teams working under Barot grew, they sought to support internees not only materially but also spiritually and culturally. When the deportation of political activists, gypsies and, above all, massive numbers of Jews began in 1942, CIMADE joined the resistance and worked clandestinely to help many to escape across the borders into Spain and Switzerland (in the latter case in close liaison with the WCC in process of formation and its general secretary, W.A. Visser 't Hooft). Many parishes answered CIMADE's appeal, hiding Jews on the run.

In 1945, after the liberation, two tasks confronted CIMADE and the churches in an exhausted France: reconstruction, with the resettlement of displaced persons, and reconciliation with the Germans. Evaluating its own role under the new circumstances, CIMADE emphasized relations with foreigners, uprooted people and refugees, as well as ecumenism, organizing encounters of Protestants, Catholics and Orthodox. Barot, how-

ever, was convinced that by remaining independent of the churches, CIMADE and similar movements could take greater risks and initiatives. At the world Christian youth conference in Oslo in 1947, Barot (who had chaired a section of a similar conference in Amsterdam in 1939) stressed how much young people in the post-war situation were looking for a new, more community-focused life-style for the Christian world.

Like many others during the war, Barot had shown that women are able to take on very significant responsibilities. At a time when the need for renewal of the church was evident, the post-war years clearly raised the issue of the place of women; in that connection Barot was called to the WCC's department on the Cooperation of Men and Women in Church and Society, which she directed from 1953 until 1966. Unafraid to face the many delicate discussions to which underlying theological differences gave rise during those years – particularly the question of the place of women in the ordained ministry – Barot also devoted much of her time to promoting the preparation of women for various ecumenical responsibilities.

Later she was appointed to the WCC's department on development education. The influence of the world conference on "Church and Society" (Geneva 1966) and the changes in perspective it produced, together with the dynamic unleashed in the Roman Catholic Church by the Second Vatican Council, led to the establishment of the joint body SODEPAX,\* in which Barot also played an enthusiastic part.

Her years in Geneva enriched a wide-ranging network of contacts throughout the world, and after her retirement in France, she placed this at the disposal of the French Protestant Federation, the ecumenical anti-torture organization ACAT and, once again, CIMADE.

ANDRÉ JACQUES

■ A. Jacques, *Madeleine Barot*, WCC, 1991.

## BARROW, NITA

B. 15.11.1916, Barbados; d. 19 Dec. 1995, Barbados. Barrow was a president of the WCC, 1983-91. Associate director of the



WCC Christian Medical Commission in 1971, she became its director, 1975-81. Her responsibilities included advising church-affiliated health institutions throughout the world on all developments in health care. She was among the first to study and work with alternative forms of health care for the underprivileged. Barrow graduated from the University of Toronto School of Nursing and from Columbia University, New York. She served as president both of the YWCA and of the International Council for Adult Education, and was permanent representative and ambassador of Barbados at the United Nations. At the close of her career, she was governor-general of Barbados. In 1985 she served as convener of the forum in Nairobi which marked the close of the United Nations Decade for Women.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

## BARTH, KARL

B. 10 May 1886, Basel, Switzerland; d. 10 Dec. 1968, Basel. As a leading theologian, Barth had a decisive influence on the course of Protestantism in the 20th century, but remained a critical challenger of the ecumenical movement. He believed that authentic unity of the church would come about only if the church dared to be itself and to leave behind all self-righteous manifestations of power. Although from the early 1930s onwards he became a friend to W.A. Visser 't

Hooft, Pierre Maury and other ecumenical leaders, he was disappointed not to see a clear repudiation of natural theology in the Life and Work\* movement, an attitude of uncompromising support for the Confessing Church\* in Germany struggling against National Socialism, and an ecumenical reception of the Barmen declaration. He addressed Amsterdam 1948, inverting the theme to "God's Design and Man's Disorder", and participated in the meetings of the Committee of 25, which worked on the theme "Christ – the Hope of the World" for the Evanston assembly in 1954. Long critical also of the Roman Catholic Church, he showed an openness towards the movement of *aggiornamento* within Vatican II, warning the churches of the Reformation not to lag behind in their efforts towards renewal (see his *Ad Limina Apostolorum*, 1967). He lifted the dialogue between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism to a higher level. At the time of Uppsala 1968, Barth addressed a local congregation in Basel and asserted: "Anyone who says 'Yes' to Christ must say 'No' to the division of the churches."

Before he became professor of theology at Basel (1935-62), Barth was professor at Göttingen (1921), Münster (1925) and Bonn (1930). No other Protestant theologian of this century has produced so many works which were translated into so many languages. His *Commentary on Romans* (1919)



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led later to the development of dialectical theology. The formulation of confessional theology in the Barmen declaration was largely Barth's work. Between 1932 and 1967 he wrote the 13 volumes of his *Church Dogmatics*. His message was that God's sole revelation\* is in Jesus Christ\* and that the word of God is his one and only means of communication with human beings. Since humanity is utterly dependent on divine grace,\* all its boasted cultural achievements are rooted in sin.\*

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ E. Busch, *Karl Barths Lebenslauf* (ET *Karl Barth*, Philadelphia, Fortress, 1976) ■ W.A. Visser 't Hooft, "Karl Barth and the Ecumenical Movement", *ER*, 32, 2, 1980 ■ Hans Markus Wildi, comp., *Bibliographie Karl Barth*, Zurich, Theologischer Verlag, 2 vols, 1984, 1992.

## BARTHOLOMEW (Dimitrios Arhondonis)

B. 29 Feb. 1940, Imvros, Turkey. Bartholomew was enthroned as 270th ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople on 2 Nov. 1991.

Arhondonis was given his ecclesiastical name of Bartholomew on the day of his ordination as deacon, shortly before graduating from the theological school of Halki in 1961 with honours. After further years of study in Rome, Bossey and Munich, he returned to Halki as assistant dean. Shortly after his ordination to the priesthood in 1969, Patriarch Dimitrios named him director to the private patriarchal office, then metropolitan of the ancient see of Philadelphia in Asia Minor. He served on the holy and sacred synod and in the private patriarchal office until acceding to the position of metropolitan of Chalcedon in 1990.

A member of the WCC's Faith and Order commission for 15 years, Bartholomew was a delegate to the Uppsala, Vancouver and Canberra assemblies of the WCC: at Canberra he was elected a member of the central and executive committees, posts he resigned on becoming patriarch. In 1990 he presided over the preparatory inter-Orthodox committee for the holy and great synod, which discussed the Orthodox diaspora. And after his accession to the position of patriarch, he convened the pri-

mates of the autocephalous Eastern Orthodox churches to the Phanar in March 1992: the gathering issued a statement covering a variety of issues, and was the first of a series – two others were held in 1995 and 2000.

Bartholomew has a particular interest in the environment: he gave the keynote address at the International Summit on Religions and Conservation in Japan in 1995, organized in cooperation with the European Union the second international symposium on the Black Sea in 1997, and has overseen several international environmental seminars on the island of Halki. He issues an annual encyclical on the environment every 1 Sept., which was designated by the 1992 summit as a day of prayer for the "preservation of God's creation".

In the aftermath of the destruction of the World Trade Center in New York City on 11 Sept. 2001, Bartholomew, in cooperation with the European Community, convened an international gathering on the peaceful coexistence and collaboration of the three monotheistic religions, which took place in Brussels.

YORGO LEMOPOULOS

## BEA, AUGUSTIN

B. 28 May 1881, Riedböhringen, Baden, Germany; d. 16 Nov. 1968, Rome. Bea was the first president of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity,\* 1960-68, and quickly became a confidant of Pope John XXIII. At the Second Vatican Council\* he presided over the drafting of the documents on ecumenism, religious freedom and the relationship of the church to non-Christian religions, and co-presided over the drafting of the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation.

Educated in the Netherlands, Austria and Germany, Bea was ordained a priest in 1912. After studying classical and Oriental philology under Protestant scholars in Berlin, he taught Old Testament biblical exegesis in the German seminary in Valkenburg, the Netherlands (1917-21), before being called to Rome to supervise Jesuits who specialized in philosophy and theology, and to teach biblical theology and exegesis at the Pontifical Biblical Institute (1924-59); he was its rector, 1930-49. Already in 1935, Pope Pius XI approved Bea's participation in

a congress of Protestant Old Testament scholars (Göttingen).

In the Roman curia\* Bea was an active consultant to the holy office (now the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith) and to the biblical commission, and was president of the commission revising the Latin psalter. He was the confessor of Pius XII from 1945 to the pope's death in 1958. The pope chose Bea also to be the principal drafter of the encyclical on the promotion of biblical studies (*Divino Afflante Spiritu*, 1943) — the pre-Vatican Council II magna carta of biblical renewal.

The Jesuit Bea was strict in following a personal discipline of prayer, study and writing, and of ascetic living and diet. As SPCU president, he combined dove-like simplicity and serpentine wisdom in patiently working with his fellow Roman curialists, including those who opposed his vision, and in meeting ecumenical figures. Shy in temperament and ever a listener before his short, wise response, he calmly led the small SPCU staff through its nervous, unseasoned beginnings before Vatican II, during the council and its later implementations. Together with W.A. Visser 't Hooft, he received the peace prize of the Frankfurt Book Fair in 1966.

TOM STRANSKY



■ A. Bea, *The Unity of Christians*, London, Chapman, 1963 ■ *Ecumenism in Focus*, London, Chapman, 1969 ■ S. Schmidt, *Agostino Bea: il cardinale dell'unità* (ET *Augustin Bea: The Cardinal of Unity*, New York, NY City Press, 1992).

## BEAUDUIN, LAMBERT

B. 5 Aug. 1873, Rosoux-les-Waremme, Belgium; d. 11 Jan. 1960, Chevetogne. Beauduin was a pioneer in the liturgical and ecumenical renewals of the Roman Catholic Church. After ordination in 1897, he joined a society of priests for the pastoral care of workers before becoming a Benedictine monk of Mont-César at Louvain (1906). A scholar and pastor, he was convinced that "the liturgy should be democratized", and in 1909 he launched annual liturgical weeks in Belgium under the theme *Ut Unum Sint*, "that they may be one" (John 17:21). Already Dom Lambert envisioned the unity of the members of the Body of Christ made visible in the eucharist celebration of the local church.

Appointed professor of ecclesiology at San Anselmo college (Benedictine) in Rome, he developed an interest in the liturgical and spiritual traditions of the Eastern churches. In 1924, Pius XI asked the Benedictine congregations to work for the reunion of the church of Rome and the churches of the East, and Dom Lambert returned to Belgium in early 1925 to found the "monastery" of union at Amay-sur-Meuse (moved to Chevetogne,\* 1929): "a welcoming station on the road to union, the Emmaus where together with a burning heart we can listen to the words of the Master".

Already in Rome Beauduin had heard about the conversations initiated in 1921 by Cardinal Mercier of Malines, Belgium, bringing together a small group of Anglicans and Catholics determined to break the impasse created by Leo XIII's 1898 condemnation of Anglican orders as "null and void". Beauduin, who had been Mercier's confidant in resistance to the German occupation during the first world war, was asked by the cardinal to write a memorandum for the 1925 conversations, which became the draft of the final report in 1926. The central idea was of the Anglican church "united but not ab-

sorbed". Could not the see of Canterbury become a patriarchate, which the church of Rome would recognize as having the special jurisdiction of England's primatial see? Once united to Rome, Canterbury would be granted rights similar to those already enjoyed by the Eastern Catholic churches,\* preserving "all her internal organization, all her historical traditions and her legitimate autonomy".



The confidential report received mixed responses from both Canterbury and Rome, but a complete negation from the two English cardinals, who were incensed by what they saw as meddling by the Belgian cardinal. When Mercier died in 1926, Beauduin lost his protector. Not long thereafter Pius XI issued the encyclical *Mortalium Animos*, on "true religious unity". For any non-RC church, the encyclical's strong accents on "return to Rome" meant precisely not union but "absorption" (see **RCC and pre-Vatican II ecumenism**).

Beauduin was one of the first Catholic theologians to acknowledge another church of the West as indeed bearing the marks of a church with its own autonomous traditions. For that conviction he suffered. In 1928 he was forced to resign as prior to Amay; three years later a Roman tribunal condemned him, and Cardinal Pacelli (later Pius XII) exiled "the monk of unity" to the abbey of Encalcat in southern France. He was permitted to return to Chevetogne only in 1951, at the age of 78.

As papal nuncio to Paris (1945-53), Angelo Roncalli (later John XXIII) became a friend of the "condemned monk", and in 1957 he acknowledged publicly that "the true method of working for the reunion of the churches is that of Dom Lambert". A letter from Pope John Paul II on the occasion of the 75th anniversary celebration of the Malines conversations in August 1996 cited the formula "the Anglican church united not absorbed" as "a fundamental principle of ecumenism". The inscription on the grave of the vindicated prophet in Chevetogne succinctly summarizes: *Vir Dei et Ecclesiae*, a man of God and of the church.

TOM STRANSKY

- L. Bouyer, *Dom Lambert Beauduin, un homme d'Eglise*, Tournai, Casterman, 1964
- "L'Eglise anglicane unie non absorbée et les Conversations de Malines", *IR*, 69, 1, 1996
- E. Lanne, "Dom Lambert Beauduin", in *Ecumenical Pilgrims*, I. Bria and D. Heller eds, WCC, 1995
- "Lord Halifax and Malines", special issue of *OC*, 20, 2, 1984
- S. Quitsland, *A Prophet Vindicated*, New York, Paulist, 1973.

## BELL, GEORGE KENNEDY ALLEN

B. 4 Feb. 1883, Norwich, England; d. 3 Oct. 1958, Canterbury. The first moderator of the WCC central committee and a leading British ecumenist from the 1920s through the 1950s, Bell has been called "the paradigm of creative dissent". The eldest of seven children, he was educated at Westminster School and Christ Church, Oxford. After study at Wells Theological College, under H.L. Goudge, he became a curate at Leeds parish church. In 1914 he became chaplain to Randall Davidson, archbishop of Canterbury, who believed ecclesiastical statesmanship to be "the art of the possible". Bell later wrote a magnificent life of Davidson (1935).

At the first post-war meeting of the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches,\* Bell came under the influence of Nathan Söderblom. He acted as a secretary at the Lambeth conference of 1920, was one of the initiators of the "Appeal" and thereafter edited the four volumes of *Documents on Christian Unity*, essential sources for the ecumenical historian. At 41, Bell became dean

of Canterbury, where he fostered the arts and the use of drama in Christian worship, including John Masefield's *Coming of Christ* and T.S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*. In 1929 he became bishop of Chichester.

Bell's ecumenical work blossomed in the area of Life and Work,\* with Stockholm 1925 as the conference which brought his skills to prominence. As a member of the commission on church and state (1935), he wrestled with what he thought to be the bankruptcy of social purpose in the church. His theological acumen revealed itself after Stockholm in organizing Anglo-German theological conferences at Canterbury (1927) and Eisenach (1928), which resulted in the symposium *Mysterium Christi* (1930). Concern for peace and arbitration were also characteristic of Bell at this time.

Hitler soon set Bell's agenda. Bell not only warned against the Nazis but forged links with Christians in Germany, especially the founders of the Confessing Church\* like Bonhoeffer, to whom he was a true spiritual father. Bell, as chairman of Life and Work, supported the Confessing Christians in forthright resolutions at Fanø in 1934. Refugees, especially the so-called non-Aryan Christians, other victims of Nazism and German internees in Britain were a ceaseless concern. The later Interchurch Aid and Refugee Service (now Christian Aid) owed much to Bell, who sponsored the Christian Council for Refugees in 1938.



The most dramatic episode in Bell's career was his meeting in Stockholm in May 1942 with Hans Schönfeld and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who convinced Bell of viable opposition to Hitler. Bell gave detailed information (a mark of the enormous trust put in him) to Anthony Eden, who did not act on it, but Eden had little room for manoeuvre and could not appear to be responding to "peace feelers". The resistance issued in the debacle of the Hitler "bomb plot" of 20 July 1944.

Bell never feared being in a minority. His keen sense of justice to non-Nazi Germans led to his speaking out in the House of Lords in 1944 in opposition to "area bombing" of German cities as incompatible with the doctrine of the just war. His aversion to mass destruction is supported by evidence that neither German industry nor morale was broken by bombing, but this was not clear at the time. Air Chief Marshall Harris thought he could win the war without an invasion of Europe. The loss of RAF personnel was heavy, as was the threat of the German V1 and V2 rockets. Bell appeared to some insensitive to the realities of total war. In this matter he was supported by A.C. Headlam, who had opposed him on Nazism and on proposals for a WCC. Many thought Bell should have succeeded William Temple as archbishop of Canterbury, but he was not a popular speaker and Temple clearly favoured Fisher.

Bell was prominent in the reconstruction of relationships with the German churches after the war and a witness with Gordon Rupp and W.A. Visser 't Hooft to the Stuttgart declaration\* of October 1945, when the Council of the German Evangelical Church spoke of "solidarity of guilt". In England Bell was secretary to the Anglican panel in conversations with the Free churches after Lambeth 1920, episcopal secretary at Lambeth 1930, a keen advocate of the South India scheme and joint chairman of the first round of negotiations between the Church of England and the Methodist Church (see *Anglican-Methodist relations*).

Few did more to facilitate the launching of the WCC. After being chairman of the central committee from 1948 to 1954, he was honorary president until his death. His last sermon was preached at the tenth an-

niversary of the Amsterdam conference. In 1958 he was awarded the order of merit of the Federal Republic of Germany but he died before receiving it.

Bell saw the church\* as the instrument of the kingdom,\* the “sustaining, correcting, befriending opposite of the world”. The statement of the Oxford conference of 1937 was very much Bell’s stance, moulded by his incarnational Anglicanism. The aims of the ecumenical movement were “to secure that the church declares and maintains its vital interest as the body of the incarnate Lord in the community itself, in public as in private conduct, in the social, national and international affairs of men”. *His Christianity and World Order* and *The Kingship of Christ* encapsulate his theological stance.

A fitting epitaph is the scene in April 1945, when Bonhoeffer, before execution, cried out: “Tell him [Bell] that for me this is not the end but the beginning... With him I believe in the principle of our universal Christian brotherhood, which rises above all national interests.”

JOHN MUNSEY TURNER

■ G. Bell, *Christian Unity: The Anglican Position*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1948 ■ *Christianity and World Order*, Harmondsworth, UK, Penguin, 1940 ■ *The Church and Humanity 1939-1946*, London, Longmans, 1946 ■ *Documents on Christian Unity*, 4 vols, London, Oxford UP, 1924-58 ■ *The Kingship of Christ: The Story of the WCC*, Harmondsworth, UK, Penguin, 1954 ■ R.C.D. Jasper, *George Bell, Bishop of Chichester*, London, Oxford UP, 1967 ■ K. Slack, *George Bell*, London, SCM Press, 1971 ■ W.A. Visser ‘t Hooft, “Bishop Bell’s Life-Work in the Ecumenical Movement”, *ER*, 11, 2, 1959 ■ P.K. Walker, *The Anglican Church Today: Rediscovering the Middle Way*, London, Mowbray, 1988.

## BENNETT, JOHN C.

B. 1902; d. 27 April 1995. Bennett was for 35 years a foremost contributor to ecumenical social ethics and a pioneer in the field. He studied theology and ethics at Oxford university, and his first role in the ecumenical movement was as secretary of the Oxford conference (1937) section on “Church, Community and State in Relation to the Economic Order”.

Drawn into the work of the newly established WCC in process of formation, Bennett was a member of the planning committee for the first assembly (Amsterdam 1948), with responsibility for the preparation of the assembly programme area on “The Church and the Disorder of Society”, chaired by Reinhold Niebuhr. He became the principal drafter of the assembly’s report on this theme. In 1949 he wrote a detailed statement on the meaning of the responsible society, a theme which was to be further developed at the WCC’s second assembly (Evanston 1954), where he was vice-chairman of the preparatory commission on social issues. In 1954 he was appointed vice-chairman of the newly created WCC department on Church and Society. In this role he helped guide the Church and Society study on the “Common Christian Responsibility towards Areas of Rapid Social Change” in Asia, Africa and Latin America, from 1956 to 1959.

In 1962 the central committee meeting in Paris agreed that a world conference on “Church and Society” be held in 1966. Bennett became one of the leaders of the planning group, editing the pre-conference study book on *Christian Social Ethics in a Changing World*: he perceived this assignment as an endeavour to hear new and creative theological thinkers on Christian social ethics. At the conference itself, he co-chaired the section on “Structures of International Cooper-



ation: Living Together in Peace in a Pluralistic World Society". The conference provoked controversy but the reports on it by Bennett and others at the Uppala assembly (1968) were received with appreciation. This was Bennett's last official action as a leader of the WCC programme on Church and Society.

For Bennett, one of the most important consultations of his ecumenical career, and one which deeply influenced his further thinking about the Christian witness in relation to developing countries, was that on the theology of development, convened by the WCC-Vatican exploratory group on Society, Development and Peace (SODEPAX\*) in 1971.

PAUL ABRECHT

■ J. Bennett, *Christian Ethics and Social Policy*, New York, Scribner, 1946 ■ *Christianity and Communism*, New York, Association Press, 1948 ■ *The Radical Imperative*, New York, Westminster, 1975 ■ J. Bennett and H. Seiffert, *US Foreign Policy and Christian Ethics*, 1977.

## BERDYAEV, NICOLAS

B. 6 March 1874, Kiev; d. 23 March 1948, Paris, France. Involved in the study programme of the Life and Work\* movement, in the Russian Student Christian Movement in exile and in the Oxford conference in 1937, Berdyaev attempted to persuade the educated class of his nation and abroad to give up its disregard of religion and to resume active participation in the life of the church. His numerous writings had a deep influence on Western Christianity and broadened the understanding of Orthodox thought and literature.

Originally a sceptic, of Marxist leanings, he found his way back to the Orthodox faith after the revolution of 1905. He was brought to trial by the church in 1914 for his non-conformist position in religious matters and he was saved from sentencing only by the onset of the Russian revolution. From 1922 onwards he lived as an émigré in Paris, where he interpreted the Christian religion in the light of modern intellectual interests, expounding a "spiritual Christianity" which has no need of doctrinal definitions. Often referred to as a "Christian existentialist", he was indebted for some of his ideas to Jacob Böhme, Immanuel Kant,

Friedrich Nietzsche and Fyodor Dostoevski.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ N. Berdyaev, *The Destiny of Man*, London, Bles, 1937 ■ *Freedom and the Spirit*, London, Centenary, 1935 ■ *The Meaning of History*, Cleveland OH, Meridian, 1962.

## BERKHOF, HENDRIKUS

B. 11 June 1914, Appeltern, Gelderland, Holland; d. 17 Dec. 1995. Berkhof was a member of the WCC central committee, 1954-75, and played a major part in the Faith and Order\* study on "God in Nature and History", 1963-68. He addressed the WCC's Uppsala assembly (1968) on "The Finality of Jesus Christ", another Faith and



Order study. He served as pastor in Lemele from 1938, and in Zeist from 1944, then joined the staff of the Institute "Church and World" at Driebergen in 1950. From Driebergen, he moved to become professor of dogmatics and biblical theology at the University of Leiden in 1960.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## BIBLE, ITS ROLE IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

A PARTICULAR type of Bible study has marked the ecumenical movement from its beginning. Its mood was expressed in a telegram sent by 500 Japanese students to a North American student conference in 1889, stating simply: "Make Jesus King!" This movement among students had started in Asian, North American and European student hostels, where young people from different churches gathered for prayer and Bible study, receiving a new vision of Christ's purpose for the oikoumene, the whole inhabited earth. Bible study not only served their own religious needs but led to Christian commitment, especially to missionary service abroad across cultural and denominational frontiers. In 1895 the telegram from Japan became a decisive factor in the creation of the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF),\* which in turn served the ecumenical movement in all continents as the training ground for future leaders.

### ECUMENICAL BIBLE STUDY

There are many ways of studying the Bible: listening to and praying the biblical message in the context of liturgical celebration, expository preaching on biblical passages, analyzing biblical texts scientifically, seeking guidance through personal biblical meditation, choosing proof-texts for supporting doctrinal or socio-political creeds. All these and other ways of using (and often, alas, misusing) the Bible can be found in the ecumenical movement.

No one has influenced the particular character of ecumenical Bible study more deeply than Suzanne de Diétrich. Her way of enabling successive generations of young people to study the scriptures – first with the WSCF, later at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey – made a strong impact on the movement from the 1930s to the 1960s.

*The Bible as primary norm.* At the second world conference on Faith and Order (Edinburgh 1937) the section on "The Church of Christ and the Word of God"

stated that the testimony given in holy scripture "affords the primary norm for the church's teaching, worship and life". This does not mean that all must have the same doctrinal understanding of biblical authority, but it does imply that all are ready to be guided, questioned and corrected by the biblical message in their various doctrinally and culturally conditioned situations. An anecdote from the WCC assembly in Amsterdam (1948) illustrates this priority vividly. When a participant insisted in one of the discussions that the Bible must be understood in the light of the later creeds, Karl Barth closed the book of confessional statements from which the speaker had argued and put his Greek New Testament on top of it. The Bible is the primary norm.

*The Bible was given to the churches so that they may discover their vocation in today's world.* Ecumenical Bible study is not an end in itself, nor can its impact and value be measured by the number of Bible quotations used in ecumenical texts. Rather, it is a continuing discipline and training for biblically informed thinking, acting and worshipping in the often unprecedented situations of today. When the Ecumenical Institute was inaugurated in 1946, W.A. Visser 't Hooft wrote: "The programme of the Institute has three basic subjects: the Bible, the world and the universal church." Bible study played an important role as gatherings at Bossey sought to discern the Christian vocation in the face of challenges arising from modern industrial society, new scientific discoveries or religious and cultural pluralism. Another effort to relate God's word to the modern world was the series of books *Word for the World*, commissioned by the Uppsala assembly in 1968. For each day of the year there is a biblical meditation on the left-hand page, while on the right appear questions raised and insights gained in the ecumenical movement. The authors represent all major Christian confessions and five continents.

*Ecumenical Bible study is an enterprise of the whole people of God.* All have something to contribute – those whose exegetical studies have given them a special knowledge of biblical texts in their original context and those whose involvement in today's struggles of faith has given them special insights into

the biblical message for the present-day context. The best setting for this is small groups, where all can participate fully and doubts or critical questions can be frankly raised. Such Bible study often leads to spontaneous worship and corporate involvement in biblically informed action. After the second world war, such participatory Bible study occurred in ecumenical work camps; more recently, many church base communities\* in Latin America and Europe have been involved in such Bible study. The life experience of their members, often in situations of oppression and struggle for liberation, becomes a commentary on the biblical stories.

*Seeking God's word together leads to conversion and commitment.* Common worship and biblical meditation during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity\* has led many Orthodox, Catholics and Protestants to a deeper commitment to local church unity. Bible study was a major motivation for missionary commitment in the former Student Volunteer Movement; it provides the same motivation today in the costly involvement of groups in urban-rural mission, in the struggle for safeguarding creation, in action groups for justice and peace, or in the struggle against racism and violence.

The biblical roots of the controversial WCC Programme to Combat Racism\* (PCR) are not often recognized. The original programme of the Uppsala assembly (1968) had not included a session on racism, but the assassination of Martin Luther King, who was to have preached at the opening worship, and events in Southern Africa led to the addition of a special session on racism just before a previously scheduled dance-drama on the prophet Amos. The combination of the testimonies in that session with the message of the prophet Amos put the assembly before an inescapable challenge. The decision to establish the PCR came in part out of that biblical summons; as one person testified, "The word of God *happened* to us!"

### COMMON BIBLICAL TEXTS, TRANSLATIONS AND STUDIES

Scholars from all Christian confessions have long worked together with Jewish scholars to reconstruct the most accurate possible original Hebrew and Greek texts of the

Bible. As more ancient manuscripts are discovered, this process continues, though its ecumenical significance is seldom recognized.

Bible societies,\* federated in the United Bible Societies (UBS), created in 1946, have pioneered in interconfessional cooperation (also with "evangelical" scholars) and trans-cultural work. The UBS was also the first international Christian organization to support a major project of the Amity Foundation in China: installation of a modern printing press in Nanjing, which since 1987 has been printing Bibles and educational material for the rapidly growing number of Christians in China.

After the Second Vatican Council cooperation between the UBS and the Roman Catholic Church increased. In 1968 the UBS and the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity jointly published "Guiding Principles for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible" (rev. ed. 1987). Bible translations published by the UBS are increasingly used by Catholics, and in the mid-1990s some 180 joint translations were in process.

Undoubtedly the most important of these common enterprises has been the *Traduction oecuménique de la Bible* (NT 1972; full Bible 1975). With the support of their respective church authorities, Protestant and Roman Catholic biblical scholars from the French-speaking world worked in interconfessional teams for translating, introducing and annotating all books of the Bible. To a lesser extent the Orthodox church and Orthodox biblical scholars also collaborated in this venture, which has given the French-speaking world a unique tool for ecumenical Bible study.

Such interconfessional Bible translation and annotation would be impossible without the growing collaboration among biblical scholars, who now not only work with the same biblical text but also use the same tools and methods of research.

### ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES

When the WCC was founded in 1948, Bible study had become such an integral part of ecumenical thinking, action and worship that it was not felt necessary to mention this in the WCC's constitution or

basis. In 1953 the Church of Norway, influenced by the Reformation's *sola scriptura*, proposed that "according to the scriptures" be added to the basis; and this suggestion was incorporated into the expanded version of the basis adopted at New Delhi in 1961. An explanatory note specified that this phrasing, "used by the apostle Paul on a number of occasions, has found a place in the ancient creeds and in later confessions and directs attention to the authority the scriptures possess for all Christians". Thus the norm is not one particular confessional understanding of biblical authority but the common ancient Christian acceptance of the Bible.

The basis of the Evangelical Alliance (1846), a Protestant pioneer movement for church unity, stated that members must maintain "the Divine Inspiration, Authority, and Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures" as well as "the Right and Duty of Private Judgment in the Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures". A much fuller authoritative statement on the role and interpretation of the Bible is the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation of the Second Vatican Council (1965), a document of deep ecumenical significance and the basis of the Pontifical Biblical Commission's 1993 statement on "The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church". While no similar authoritative statement exists for the whole of the ecumenical movement, this Roman Catholic document gives a survey of present methods and approaches for biblical interpretation with which many Protestant and Orthodox leaders of ecumenical Bible study could largely agree. It reflects not only recent Roman Catholic biblical scholarship but also a long ecumenical study process about the Bible.

The theme of the first major enquiry by the study department of the WCC (then still in process of formation), begun in 1946, was "From the Bible to the Modern World". The Wadham College statement on "Guiding Principles for the Interpretation of the Bible" (1949) strongly emphasized the unity of the Bible and reflected the biblical theology which characterized ecumenical discussions in the 1940s and 1950s. The commission on Faith and Order pursued this study and accepted in Montreal (1963) the report on

"Scripture, Tradition and traditions". The Tradition (capital *T*) of the gospel, testified in scripture, is distinguished from the various traditions (small *t*) which developed in the process of transmission. The report acknowledges that scripture itself is the result of this process of transmission, and it emphasizes the role which culture plays in the transmission of faith. This conclusion led to a study of and report on "The Significance of the Hermeneutical Problem for the Ecumenical Movement", presented to F&O in Bristol in 1967, which addresses the theological pluralism in the Bible, reflecting "the diversity of God's actions in different historical situations and the diversity of human response to God's actions".

The report on "The Authority of the Bible", accepted by F&O in Louvain in 1971, is the most substantial statement arising from this study process. It examines how biblical authority relates to the present human experience. The authority of the Bible is seen as derived from God's authority, a force leading people to faith. It has a dynamic, relational character and proves itself to be authoritative in the life of the church. Accordingly, the inspiration of scripture is not affirmed as a dogmatic presupposition but as a conclusion of the fact that through the Bible God's authority is experienced in a compelling way. The Louvain report also documents the continuing reflection about the diversity of biblical interpretations and comments about the right use of the Bible in the church.

The study process then led to an examination of "The Significance of the Old Testament in its Relation to the New" (Loccum 1978), where the unity of the Bible is again strongly affirmed, but not in the sense of just one, all-embracing biblical theology. The complementarity between the two Testaments and the specificity of each are analyzed. The report also lists a series of new questions needing further ecumenical exploration. One of these was taken up in a consultation on "The Authority of Scripture in the Light of the New Experiences of Women" (Amsterdam 1980). Another concentrated on biblical and early church perspectives on faith (Rome 1983). In the 1990s Faith and Order took up again the question of ecumenical hermeneutics, and an initial

study document, "A Treasure in Earthen Vessels", was published in 1998.

### THE BIBLE IN THE LIFE OF THE WCC

It would be presumptuous to claim that the whole life of the WCC is guided by God's word. While the early leaders of the Council had been part of the biblical renewal in the 1940s and 1950s and were strongly influenced by the remarkable ecumenical Bible studies at the world conferences of Christian youth in Amsterdam (1939) and Oslo (1947), ecumenical Bible study during the initial period of the WCC happened at Bossey, during ecumenical youth meetings and in lay training courses, but had no place in more official programmes, including the first two WCC assemblies. It must also be acknowledged that when the Bible is quoted in WCC documents, the danger of proof-texting is not always avoided. Nor have the insights gained in the above-mentioned study process on the authority and interpretation of the Bible become fully operative in the life of the WCC.

From the beginning, working relationships were established with the UBS. From 1951 to 1968 UBS study secretaries worked in Geneva under a joint committee with the WCC. A study on "The Place and Use of the Bible in the Life of the Churches" led to a joint UBS/WCC statement on "The Bible in the Ecumenical Movement", received at the Uppsala assembly. This collaboration with the UBS, financed by the Bible societies, could easily have become an alibi for the WCC to initiate no work for helping its member churches to live "according to the scriptures". However, an experiment with participatory Bible study on the main theme during the New Delhi assembly (1961) elicited such positive responses that succeeding assemblies reserved time for such corporate reflection on God's word.

In Uppsala (1968) participatory Bible studies were held both in the plenary and in the six sections of the assembly. In Nairobi (1975) assembly participants divided into numerous small groups for Bible study and discussion, a pattern followed in Vancouver (1983), Canberra (1991) and Harare (1998). WCC world mission conferences and many other meetings, small and large, also set aside substantial time for corporate Bible

study. Popular Bible study resources for use in local congregations were prepared on the themes of assemblies and conferences, and this material has been translated into or adapted in many language areas in different continents. The study material on "Images of Life" for the Vancouver assembly, published in more than 30 different language editions, included a set of photographs and artworks to stimulate reflection. The WCC Publications office has published a number of books to encourage ecumenical Bible study and biblical meditation.

The growing awareness of the role of the Bible in the ecumenical movement led in 1971 to the creation of a small Biblical Studies secretariat, which operated until 1990. Initially its function was mainly consultative, helping to strengthen the biblical orientation of various WCC programmes and pursuing studies on how various cultures influence the interpretative process. In response to increasing requests from member churches, national councils and theological education centres, the focus gradually shifted to the training of ecumenical Bible study enablers through national and regional residential courses, organized by the inviting bodies in all regions of the world. This training combined the teaching of biblical theology with exercises in a variety of Bible study methods: historical-literary analysis of texts; story-telling and drama; biblical meditation by using visual art, fantasy and mime; transforming biblical passages into songs, prayers and liturgical celebrations. What has been learned in different confessional and cultural milieus could thus be transmitted to Bible-study enablers around the world.

Much work is still to be done. The jubilee world assembly of the UBS in Mississauga, Canada (1996), called for the churches' stronger involvement in Bible study work in face of growing biblical illiteracy among many Christians and the spiritual thirst among many outside the Christian fold. Similarly the plenary assembly of the Catholic Biblical Federation in Hong Kong (1996) strongly emphasized the need for an increasing biblical-pastoral ministry. The WCC must strengthen work relationships with these two world organizations which serve the role of the Bible in the ecumenical

movement. The special contribution of Orthodox churches with regard to biblical interpretation and meditation needs to come more strongly to the fore. Insights gained in Bible studies in the context of women's experiences and of oppression and liberation in Christian base communities can complement those from academic historical and literary studies of the Bible.

Current key questions in the ecumenical discussion of the role and interpretation of the Bible are the following: In a world shaped by the communication revolution, how can the Bible be faithfully translated from the print medium to audiovisual and electronic media? What guidance can be gained from the Bible for the encounter of Christians with people of other living faiths? As theologies developed in different cultural situations meet and challenge each other, what is our common understanding of the relationship between the gospel and cultures? How can the criterion "according to the scriptures" become operative in situations where biblical interpretations based on different confessional backgrounds and on different cultural contexts confront and contradict each other? Can a new type of biblical theology be found which takes seriously both the diversity and the unity of biblical faith traditions and which could help the ecumenical movement in its search for a common vision?

See also **canon; exegesis, methods of; hermeneutics; New Testament and Christian unity; Old Testament and Christian unity; scriptures; Tradition and traditions.**

HANS-RUEDI WEBER

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## BIBLE SOCIETIES

BIBLE SOCIETIES are non-denominational organizations whose purpose is to translate, produce and distribute the Christian scriptures\* in languages that people can understand at prices they can afford. By 2000 there were 137 Bible Societies throughout the world, linked through membership of the United Bible Societies, which had distributed nearly 25 million Bibles, 23 million New Testaments, and 580 million booklets and leaflets with portions of scripture.

The modern Bible Society movement began in 1804 with the founding of the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS). By confining itself to the distribution of the Bible only, "without note or comment", it hoped to enlist the support of Christians of all denominations. It inspired the formation of supporting branches in the United Kingdom, and of affiliated or independent societies overseas. By 1820 there were societies in France, Germany, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, Russia, Switzerland, Greece, Malta, Canada, the USA, the West Indies, South Africa, India, Ceylon, Malaysia and Australia. Their members were drawn from Anglican, Lutheran and Reformed churches and in some countries also from the Orthodox churches (Greece, Russia) and the Roman Catholic Church (Malta, Russia, Germany). Bible editions were published in translations approved by the various churches and according to their respective canons.

This fully interconfessional phase was short-lived: pressure from Protestant supporters of the BFBS, especially in Scotland, forced it to abandon publication of the deuterocanonical (apocryphal) books in 1826. Not all societies, however, accepted this decision. At the same time, successive popes began to issue attacks on Bible Societies as instruments of Protestant proselytism\* and publishers of corrupted Bibles.

Although the societies continued to provide a field for joint work by Anglicans and Protestants, by the middle of the 19th century cooperation with Roman Catholics and Orthodox was extremely limited.

After the Apocrypha controversy the BFBS increasingly sent its own representatives to establish agencies overseas. The American Bible Society (ABS), founded in 1816, developed work in areas where US missionaries were serving, notably the Middle East, China, Japan and South America. In 1861 the Bible Societies in Scotland joined together to form the National Bible Society of Scotland and soon had agents in Africa and the Far East. The Netherlands Bible Society (NBS), founded in 1814, concentrated its overseas work mainly in Indonesia. The societies worked closely with Protestant missionaries and aided the development of Protestant churches, not only in non-Christian areas but also in traditionally Catholic and Orthodox countries.

After the first world war the societies began to look for ways of coordinating their work through "comity" agreements, through joint agencies in some areas and by setting up an international coordinating body, which finally came into existence as the United Bible Societies (UBS) in 1946. Since then, the larger societies have withdrawn from direct control of work in other countries and encouraged the development of autonomous national societies. The UBS provides information and technical assistance to all member societies and administers a world budget through which the richer societies support the less rich.

In 1804 it was reckoned that the Bible or some part of it had been translated into 67 languages. Largely through the work of the Bible Societies, that number rose to 200 by 1850, to 500 by 1900 and to 1000 by 1950. In the main the societies published translations made by missionaries and local Christians, sometimes giving translators financial assistance and specialist advice. The NBS was unique in sending out linguists to study indigenous languages and make Bible translations. The Württemberg Bible Society in Stuttgart (founded 1812) made a notable contribution through the publication of scholarly texts: *Eberhard Nestle's Greek New Testament* (1898, 27th ed., Barbara

and Kurt Aland et al., 1993), Gerhard Kittel's *Hebrew Old Testament* (1937, revised by Karl Elliger and Wilhelm Rudolph, 1977), Alfred Rahlfs's *Septuagint* (1935), and Robert Weber's *Vulgate* (1969, 4th ed., Bonifatius Fischer et al., 1994). The UBS called on an international group of scholars to produce a new edition of the Greek New Testament (1966, 4th ed. 1993) and handbooks giving exegetical and linguistic help to translators.

A movement of biblical renewal in the Roman Catholic Church was given an increased impetus by the Second Vatican Council, which stated that "easy access to sacred scripture should be provided for all the Christian faithful" (Constitution on Divine Revelation, 1965). In turn, the Bible Societies began to re-affirm their original desire to serve all the churches by providing the Bible in the form that each communion required. Restrictions barring the publication of the Apocrypha were removed by the ABS in 1964 and the BFBS in 1966. Some 685 UBS translation projects were under way in 2001. Also working in close liaison with the UBS is the Catholic Biblical Federation,\* which has cooperated in formulating a number of mutually agreed position papers, the most important of which is "Guidelines for Interconfessional Co-operation in Translating the Bible" (1968, updated in 1987).

An increasing number of Bible Societies have Roman Catholics on their boards and as staff members. Relations with the Orthodox churches are also close, with Orthodox staff and board membership in many countries. The Bible Societies, meeting in council in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in 1980, pledged their "openness to assist every Christian church with scripture publications that support, deepen and intensify the church's life and mission", thus echoing the vision of one of the first secretaries of the BFBS in 1818, of a Bible Society that "studies to unite the Christian world, by distributing among them, according to their respective versions, the common standard of their faith and their practice". Consistent with this goal, the UBS maintains a close working relationship with the WCC.

Bible translating and publishing agencies not linked to the UBS include the Gideons, the International Bible Society, Living Bibles International, the Scripture

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Gift Mission, the Trinitarian Bible Society, the Bible League and Wycliffe Bible Translators. Through the work of all these agencies, by 2001 some portion of the Bible had been published in 2261 languages and dialects.

KATHLEEN CANN

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### WCC LIBRARY

The WCC library in Geneva, established in 1946, has over 50,000 titles of strictly ecumenical literature; its total holdings are over 105,000 volumes. Since 1986 the library has provided a computer service to researchers.

The library also houses the archives of the 20th-century ecumenical movement: Faith and Order, since 1927; Life and Work, 1925-48; the International Missionary Council, 1910-61; the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches, 1906-48; the World Student Christian Federation, since 1920; the World Council of Christian Education and Sunday School Association, 1907-71;

the German church struggle and relations between Geneva and the Confessing Church in Germany, 1933-45; the world conferences of Christian youth, 1939-52; the World Council of Churches "in process of formation", 1938-48; the WCC since 1948, including (1) correspondence and files of the general secretariat; (2) complete files of the first eight assemblies; (3) records of the central and executive committee meetings; (4) documents of WCC divisions, departments and secretariats, and of WCC units and sub-units from 1971 onwards; the Joint Working Group and SODEPAX; national and regional conferences and councils of churches. The WCC archives contain some 3 million documents (A.J. van der Bent, "Historia Oecumenica", *The Ecumenical Review*, 35, 3, 1983). Students and scholars have direct access to most of the records: they can consult the WCC Library web page and the on-line catalogue of more than 65,000 entries.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT and PIERRE BEFFA

### BILHEIMER, ROBERT

B. 28 Sept. 1917, Denver CO, USA. Already as a theological student at Yale Divinity School, Bilheimer began his lifelong ecumenical ministry. He was administrative secretary of the newly founded World Student Service Fund (1940-44), and associate secretary of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions (1941-45). After his ordination in the Presbyterian church (1945), while the 30 year-old was national secretary of the interseminary movement, Wilhelm Visser 't Hooft enlisted him to be his administrative assistant for the final preparations of the WCC first general assembly (Amsterdam 1948), and later to be in Geneva WCC associate general secretary and director of the division of studies (1954-63). Bilheimer organized the second and third assemblies (Evanston 1954, New Delhi 1961). In 1960 he undertook the "mission of fellowship" to the WCC member churches in South Africa, culminating in the breakthrough Cottesloe\* consultation and statement. With his worldwide ecumenical experiences and network of friends, he became the director of the international

affairs programme of the National Council of Churches (USA), 1966-73.

His no-nonsense organization skills did not hinder his probing reflective mind or weaken his conviction that the ecumenical movement is primarily persons, not institutions, as evidenced in his personal account, *Breakthrough: The Emergence of the Ecumenical Tradition* (WCC/Eerdmans, 1989), and his editing of *Faith and Ferment: An Interdisciplinary Study of Christian Belief and Practices* (Minneapolis, Augsburg, 1983). As director of the Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research\* at Collegeville, Minnesota (1974-84), the seasoned Bilheimer was able to share himself and faith-gazes into the ecumenical future with hundreds of varied Christian scholars and teachers, clergy and lay leaders.

TOM STRANSKY

## BIO-ETHICS

THE SCOPE of bio-ethics includes all questions of right and wrong in decisions or behaviour arising in the scientific study and control of organic life. Biology, biochemistry and biotechnology are the life sciences within which bio-ethical questions arise. These have particular reference to medical practice: hence, biomedical ethics. But they refer also to modes of research in molecular genetics and the technical application of genetic knowledge to fields beyond medicine, such as agriculture, animals and pharmacology.

The beginning of the new era of bio-ethics can be dated to 1953 with the discovery of the structure and chemical codes of the deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) molecule. In 1973 researchers announced that the 3000 million units of the human DNA, comprising 100,000 genes, were susceptible to manipulation, or engineering, which changes the very nature of cells. Using much simpler organisms, such as bacteria, fruit flies or mice, researchers opened new possibilities for enhancing human health and economy. However, they also created difficult problems for theology, ethics, ecology and social policy.

For theology, new meaning is given to the doctrine of divine creation,\* both original and continuing. The wonder of life has

become ever more wonderful as scientists explain the genetic nature of all organisms, human and non-human, and their evolutionary relationships and continuities. The biological uniqueness and free will of humans, as traditionally viewed, are thus called into question. Ethical issues are introduced or intensified by modes of assisted reproduction, genetic screening, abortion,\* treatment or non-treatment of newborns, gene therapy and care of persons with disabilities. Ecological problems are caused by the ambiguities of value in engineering transgenic animals and plants, creating bacteria for specific purposes, and possibly disrupting the balances of ecosystems necessary to all life on earth. Social policies and laws are needed to assure that medical services of a genetic nature, along with all kinds of sophisticated devices and treatments, are accessible in a democratic way as economic resources permit; that human and animal subjects are protected; and that risks to human health and safety are minimized by regulation.

An ecumenical approach to bio-ethical issues will be shaped by a strong concern for the rights of women, oppressed minorities and impoverished people to participate in social and political decisions that affect their lives.

## THE WCC

The WCC began considering some of these developments with a consultation on human experimentation at Bossey in 1968. From 1970, the Sub-unit on Church and Society convened several conferences of scientists, theologians and policy-makers to discuss genetics and the quality of life. The findings of a consultation in Zurich in 1973 constituted the biological and bio-ethical agenda for the world conference on "Faith, Science and the Future" in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA, in 1979. Its report emphasized five points: (1) It warned against the ideology of eugenics based on false theories of biological inequities of human worth and implemented by coerced genetic selection. (2) While recommending genetic counselling for prospective parents and pre-natal diagnosis for pregnant women, it rejected "cost-benefit" reckoning as a determining factor for abortion. Here and elsewhere in

WCC discussions, abortion has been a very sensitive issue because of divided opinions over its moral legitimacy and its unique pertinence to women's rights. (3) The report accepted contraception and artificial insemination by the husband's sperm (AIH), but questioned the use of donated sperm or ova outside of the marital union (AID). (4) It accepted therapy for monogenic diseases by gene replacement in the body (somatic) cells of humans but rejected the modifying of sex (germ) cells in vitro. (5) Churches were urged to seek justice and equity in the allocation of all medical resources, especially those involving new genetic techniques.

The momentum from Cambridge led to a small consultation in the Netherlands in 1981 on "Ethical and Social Issues in Genetic Engineering and the Ownership of Life Forms". In a general context of concern for social and economic problems engendered by genetic science, the participants defended the integrity of human life and of the person against the reduction of human life to chemical-physical processes. Manipulations of germ-line cells, or the mixing of human and non-human DNA, could result in producing something less than human, they said. They advocated regulatory control of recombinant DNA technology at all institutional levels, especially when such would lead to monopolizing plant seeds, hybridizing human embryos for experimentation or preparing new organisms for biological warfare. Recommendations were made for continuing study of these issues both within the WCC and in cooperation with other churches and international organizations.

Some churches took up particular biotechnological issues during the 1980s, but limited resources prevented the WCC from carrying the international ecumenical discussion further until 1989, when the central committee referred a report on biotechnology to the churches and approved a set of recommendations. That report, setting the issues of biotechnology within the context of a theology of creation, treated six areas: human genetic engineering, reproductive technologies, intellectual property (patenting of life), environmental effects, military applications, and impact on the third world. Its recommendations called for prohibition of genetic testing for sex selection, commercialized child-bear-

ing and the commercial sale of ova, embryos and sperm, patenting of animal life-forms, and use of genetic engineering as part of biological or chemical warfare research. Warning of the dangers of the use of genetic testing for "involuntary social engineering", experiments involving the human germline, embryo research and release of genetically engineered organisms into the environment, the WCC also called for further reflection and international controls in these areas.

### THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Deep differences between the Roman Catholic and Protestant teachings on procreation have prevented fully ecumenical studies of bio-ethics, though individual Catholics have participated in WCC conferences and at least one bilateral dialogue (Reformed-RC\* 1976-79) has dealt with the difficult question of abortion. In 1989 a comprehensive statement on "Gott ist der Freund des Lebens" (God is the Friend of Life) was adopted in Germany by the Catholic Bishops Conference, the Council of Evangelical (Protestant) Churches, Greek Orthodox and other churches. In 1991 a dialogue on terminal care and death between the RCC and the United Methodist Church in the USA was completed.

Many consultations among Roman Catholics have resulted in formal pronouncements from the Vatican on bio-ethical issues. Pope John Paul II has spoken frequently about them. The Second Vatican Council\* declared a categorical prohibition of "murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia or wilful self-destruction" (*Gaudium et Spes* 27). The encyclical *Humanae Vitae* by Pope Paul VI (1968) clearly forbade contraception (see **birth control**). And a series of exhortations, declarations and instructions from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith specified inhibitions against abortion (1974), euthanasia (1980) and artificially assisted reproduction (1987). However, papal statements on biotechnology and genetic intervention have been negative only in respect to putting human subjects at undue risk.

The rigorous position held by the Roman Catholic teaching authority (the magisterium) maintains a consistent ethic of defending human life in all circumstances from conception until natural death. Eastern Or-

thodox and many Protestant communions share much but not all of Catholic teaching. However, some Vatican instructions on bio-ethics, despite their canonical authority, are known to be widely disputed and disobeyed by church members. Differences among Catholics of belief and practice regarding contraception and abortion are paralleled in other Christian communities. Although these differences are formidable, the motivation of Christian unity and common witness impels the quest for ecumenical understanding if not unanimity in these areas. In this context the study of the Joint Working Group between the RCC and the WCC on the church-dividing potential of ethical issues (1987-95), with its guidelines for dialogue in this area ("The Ecumenical Dialogue on Moral Issues"), and the WCC's own work on ecclesiology and ethics (1993-96) seek to point a way forward in developing ecumenical approaches to ethical issues such as those raised by bio-ethics.

### WORLD RESEARCH IN GENETICS

Over the next decade, research in molecular genetics accelerated, broadening the scope of biotechnology.

In 1997 a major scientific breakthrough in bio-ethics occurred when scientists in Edinburgh (Scotland, UK) were able to clone a sheep ("Dolly"). This development was indicative of the enormous advances made in the field of biotechnology in recent years and raises fundamental moral and theological questions, most especially, the acceptability of such cloning techniques in general, including their "cost" in failed experiments and their possible application to human cloning. These moral and theological questions also include the legitimacy of intervention in the "natural" genetic process through genetic engineering, the role of human beings as co-workers with a Creator God, the ethics of risk in relation to scientific and technological developments, and the inter-relationship between biotechnological intervention in human development and the theological understanding of the human being as "in the image of God". Here as in other areas of scientific and technological development, questions of a balance between innovation and development and public accountability and control are fundamental.

In the year 2000, the Human Genome Project made its ground-breaking announcement that it had completed the identification of the genetic sequences which determine fundamental human genetic characteristics. This scientific breakthrough will enable a range of future developments, including gene therapy, and pharmaceutical research and development. It will also raise acute ethical questions about the implications of human gene therapies, the patenting of the Human Genome itself and further research and development based upon it, and the potential social and ethical benefits and exploitation which could result from such research.

### ONGOING DEVELOPMENTS

In the US an ecumenical and interfaith coalition prompted the federal government to make a study of the possible dangers of genetic engineering. A letter to President Carter from officials of the National Council of Churches, the US Catholic Conference and the Jewish Synagogue Council resulted in the government's publication of *Splicing Life* (1982), which has become a standard of thinking on the subject. In 1986 the NCC adopted a lengthy policy statement on "Genetic Science for Human Benefit", which gives theological reasons for considering the promises as well as the dangers of biotechnology. A large group of Protestant evangelicals, known as the American Scientific Affiliation, is also committed to the study of bio-ethical problems.

Similarly, the Science, Religion and Technology project of the Church of Scotland (which has worked in ecumenical partnership with other churches in Scotland) has developed considerable expertise in bio-ethics.

Proliferation in many countries of centres for research and teaching in bio-ethics and medical ethics and the formation of ethics committees in hospitals have given a prominent role to persons having religious commitment and theological expertise in these discussions. The implicit ecumenism expressed in these institutions is also revealed in the rapidly growing number of books and journals devoted to ethics in the life sciences.

Any survey of the vast field of bio-ethics will soon be rendered obsolete by the accel-

erated findings of scientific research. Procedures and techniques for assisting procreation, treating diseases or extending longevity change from science fiction to fact within a decade, and soon these methods become routine: in vitro fertilization, cardiac surgery and organ transplants, pharmaceuticals, intensive care units and artificial organs for human bodies.

As biomedicine, biotechnology and bioethics assume increasing prominence in all countries, Christian churches and their members acting individually must interact with highly competent colleagues who hold humane ideals but may lack religious commitment. Often it is difficult if not impossible to separate religious from secular dimensions within these discussions. Regarding the major concerns and contributions of Christian faith in these scientific and technological developments, ecumenical discussions have revealed some general lines of agreement. One is an unyielding commitment to the enhancement of human life and the protection of the integrity and dignity of all persons. Beyond the humanistic motive for this is the ultimate belief in the divine creation of each human being in the image of God and in the divine purpose to redeem each one from sin\* and death through the saving work of Jesus Christ (see *salvation*). It is this faith, rather than a theory of vitalism or a philosophy of human rights, which is the Christian basis for maintaining the sanctity of human life.

Belief in the divine creation and redemption of human beings carries with it the mandate of responsibility to God for one's own life and for others' lives and for the created order itself. The WCC's emphasis on "the integrity of creation" is a reminder of human obligation before God. For Christians, then, bio-ethics implies a particular sense of fidelity to the perceived will of God, however debatable such perceptions may be.

The breadth and diversity of the ecumenical movement help to bring to the surface differing points of sensitivity about bioethical concerns. In the North, where technical development is advanced, ethical interest usually focuses on scientific laboratories and modern hospitals. For the majority of humankind, however, bio-ethical problems relate to much more basic areas of concern.

Questions of primary health care raise issues of "equal access" and "cost containment" for high-tech medicine which are unreal questions where sheer survival and the struggle for political and economic self-dependence are uppermost. Similarly, the potential for genetic engineering of staple crops, such as rice, could in theory offer the possibility of higher productivity and drought resistance. But for reasons relating to patenting and commercial interests, the cost of seed supplies (which would need replenishing annually) would be well beyond the means of small subsistence farmers in the poorest nations. Consequently, many ecumenical aid and development agencies have raised fundamental questions about the real applicability of this technology in meeting the food and agricultural needs of the poorest nations.

The universal church and the many churches of Jesus Christ have a special role in the human venture of finding healing and wholeness of life in freedom and fulfilment. All the emerging issues of bio-ethics are of concern to the whole Christian community.

See also *life and death*.

J. ROBERT NELSON

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## BIRTH CONTROL

THE TERM “birth control” is variously used to refer to population control, birth spacing, fertility regulation, family planning and contraception. In this article it is used to mean the avoidance of pregnancy by either “natural” or “artificial” measures.

### BIBLICAL BACKGROUND

The ability to love without producing children is a fundamental distinction between human beings and animals. Mutual attraction in human beings is triggered not by instinct but by a host of feelings and fantasies as well as family and social conventions. While there is some evidence from early civilizations of human beings seeking ways to make sexual love possible without the risk of conceiving an unwanted child, for thousands of years women and men accepted (and usually wanted) all the children nature gave them. Children were seen as blessing from God. The infant death rate was high, and many births were needed to ensure few survivors.

The Bible offers no explicit guidance in this area, but does have some significant suggestions by emphasizing that God is a God of life and that all things are bound together in this God (Deut. 30:19). From the time of the patriarchs, Israel – a small people, constantly threatened by its neighbours – wanted children at any price in order to retain the inheritance of the founding fathers and, some say, to see the promised Messiah. There was no greater spiritual misfortune or social shame than to be a childless widow or an infertile woman. Yet many biblical passages speak of love without speaking of children (e.g. Gen. 2:23-24; the prophet Hosea; Song of Songs; Eph. 5:21-33). With the New Testament and the coming of the Messiah, those who cannot have children are fully rehabilitated. Under the new covenant, children are blessing, a gift of God, but no longer a religious necessity.

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Natural family planning – observing the physical signs indicating a period of high fertility and abstaining from intercourse during that time – has been considered by the Roman Catholic Church as the only approved method of birth control. Although probably used in various ways for centuries, the scientific basis of this method was only described in 1972. Since then, many organizations related to the Catholic church have conducted programmes teaching this method to married couples and supporting them in its use. Studies by scientists around the world have proved that natural family planning can be effective and is attractive to many because it is without side-effects. Nevertheless, churches other than the Roman Catholic have not widely promoted this method.

The rapid development of generally safe and widely available methods of contraception has increased possibilities to liberate women and couples from conceiving unwanted children and the attendant anxiety. At first, churches, like many other religious groups, saw several risks in this: that of disobeying God, the actual giver of children, by artificially intervening in the divine mystery of procreation; that of selfishness, rejecting the prolific nature of life; and that of growing immorality as sexual relations became free of the danger of conception. Increasingly, it became evident that these opinions were at odds with the aspirations of couples (and above all women), scientific possibilities and social needs.

In 1992-93 a group of gynaecologists and midwives from developing countries organized a campaign asking people to write to the pope or Islamic religious leaders every time they saw a severe complication arising from the unavailability of contraceptives due to religious precepts. Their appeal for religious tolerance for contraception was published in medical journals; it is not known if the churches have reacted to it.

### BIRTH CONTROL AND THE CHURCHES

Since the 1930s church opinion on birth control has generally divided into

two groups, with Anglican and Protestant churches (except the most conservative) approving, supporting and favouring the use of contraceptives, and the official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church consistently opposing contraception by artificial means. The Orthodox churches tend to deal with this issue on a pastoral basis depending on the particular circumstances.

Pope Paul VI wrote in the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* that the church “teaches that each and every marriage act must remain open to the transmission of life” and pointed to possible negative moral consequences of artificial contraception – conjugal infidelity, corruption of youth and loss of respect for women. The encyclical has been vigorously debated in the Catholic church but remains the official teaching of the magisterium. Pope John Paul II’s encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* (1995) includes abortion and euthanasia among the phenomena that result in devaluation of human life and condemns them in the strongest terms. However, its discussion of contraception distinguishes between a “contraceptive mentality” and responsible parenthood. It endorses the “training of married couples in responsible procreation”, the use of natural methods of regulating fertility and the study and spread of these methods. Guidelines published by the Pontifical Council for the Family in 1997 reaffirm the Vatican’s total ban on contraception, but urge compassion towards married couples who use contraception, saying that “frequent relapse into sins of contraception does not in itself constitute a motive for denying absolution”.

Some methods used for birth control are also important in preventing sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS. The use of condoms for this purpose has been widely promoted, eliciting statements by some churches, especially Catholic, in which the use of contraceptive devices is rejected even if the primary purpose is not contraception.

Recently there have been reactions from churches to “emergency contraception”, a term which refers to several contraceptive methods that can be used to

prevent pregnancy after sexual intercourse has already taken place. These methods include special doses of normal birth control pills as well as insertion of an intrauterine device (IUD). They offer women an important chance to prevent pregnancy when a regular contraceptive method has failed, no method was used, or rape has been committed. The emergency contraceptive pills are not effective once pregnancy has begun; thus, medically speaking, they do not induce abortion. In 2000 medical boards in many countries announced plans to make the emergency contraceptive pills more easily available over the counter. Anglican church officials in the UK have denounced this plan, saying it will encourage sexual promiscuity; in Italy, the Vatican has insisted that this pill is abortive and has requested Catholic pharmacists to refuse to sell it.

#### THE CHURCHES AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

The relationship of birth control to population policy is extremely controversial. The WCC’s fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968) urged the churches to resolve their differences about certain methods of population control; and in its report to the world population conference in Bucharest in 1974, the Council stressed the churches’ role in promoting “the acceptance and practice” of responsible parenthood by both husbands and wives, noting that this includes the right of couples to “the means of family planning acceptable to them in conscience”.

The most recent international forum for the churches to express their views on these issues was the UN’s conference on population and development in Cairo in 1994. The Vatican, in its character as state, had a voice in the decision-making processes and worked with special vigour to oppose references to abortion in the proposed programme of action. Other churches and the WCC had to make their opinions known through participation in an NGO forum. In Cairo the WCC delegation drew attention to problematic issues regarding family planning programmes which are vertically imposed,

with statistical targets, or which promote contraceptive methods that pose threats to the integrity and health of women.

The variety of views among WCC member churches regarding fertility regulation was acknowledged; and while the use of abortion as a family planning method was rejected, it was stated that the unjust treatment and exploitation of women make legal recourse to safe, voluntary abortion a moral necessity. The WCC also emphasized the importance of a dialogue in a situation of growing polarization between Western industrialized nations and much of the rest of the world.

Many of these issues were discussed again during the fourth world conference on women (Beijing 1995). Its Platform for Action established a basis for a universal commitment – thus by churches as well – to address the difficulties women are facing, among them protection of human rights from the perspective of women and an emphasis on total health throughout the life-cycle of women.

### THE WAY FORWARD

A WCC discussion paper, “Churches, Population and Development: Cairo and Beyond”, was sent to member churches in 1996 to stimulate further reflection and discussion and to suggest some specific actions they might take. The chapter on sexual and reproductive rights speaks of the need for holistic approaches to teaching sexual ethics and family planning, education on issues of gender equity and equality, and counselling services to meet the needs of adolescents. The paper also suggests that churches should oppose policies of mass media that transmit values that demean women, emphasize sexual violence and denigrate the individual dignity of women, children and men.

Within the Catholic church there have also been suggestions for greater dialogue with the leaders of other Christian communities and world religions, based on a shared concern for the future life-styles of younger generations. Organizations such as Catholics for a Free Choice are active in the efforts of having birth control approved by the Catholic church. The guidelines for ecumenical dialogue on moral is-

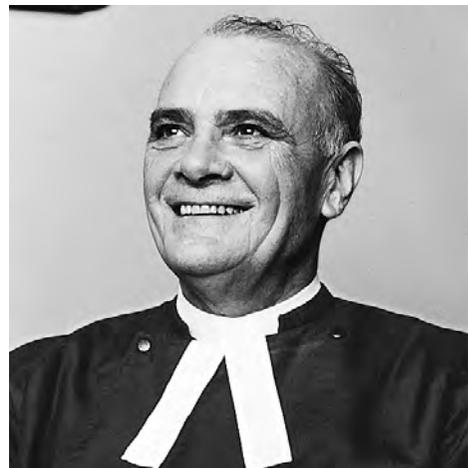
sues from the Joint Working Group\* between the RCC and the WCC recommend that “dialogue should replace diatribe”. Similar emphases emerge in the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission document on ethics.

Thus the policy bases for action by different churches and broad-based openness for ecumenical dialogue on these issues would seem to be established. While dialogue itself is an important form of action, the challenge now is to find concrete common projects for collaboration on the issue of birth control. One such project could be that natural family planning be seen as an important possibility in WCC member churches, drawing on the experiences of the Roman Catholic church in this area. Furthermore, the counselling of adolescents could be seen as a practical challenge important enough to unite the forces of different churches and “bring them closer to being fully church”.

ANDRÉ DUMAS and HELI BATHIJA

### BLAKE, EUGENE CARSON

B. 7 Nov. 1906, St Louis MO, USA; d. 13 July 1985, Stamford CT. Blake was general secretary of the WCC, 1966-72. In the years prior to this appointment he was a member of the central and executive committees, 1954-66; chairman of the WCC finance committee, 1954-61; and



chairman of the Division on Interchurch Aid, Refugee and World Service, 1961-66.

After studies at Princeton Theological Seminary, he taught at Forman Christian College, Lahore, India (now Pakistan), 1928-29. He then served as assistant pastor in New York City, 1932-35, and as pastor in Albany NY, 1935-40, and Pasadena CA, 1940-51. President of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCC), 1954-57, Blake continued as a member of its general board until 1966. He was stated clerk of the United Presbyterian Church in the USA (until 1958, the Presbyterian Church in the USA) and was a delegate to the WCC assemblies in 1954 and 1961, to the general councils of the World Presbyterian Alliance in 1948, 1954 and 1959, and to the Faith and Order conferences Lund 1952, Oberlin 1957 and Montreal 1963. His proposal in 1960 for church union, made in a sermon at Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, developed into the Consultation on Church Union.\*

Blake was an ardent advocate of the civil rights movement, particularly through his chairmanship of the NCCC's commission on religion and race, and in 1963 he was jailed for leading an anti-segregation demonstration. He spoke publicly against US involvement in the Vietnam war. He served on President Johnson's National Advisory Council for the War on Poverty, and was a trustee of various universities and institutes. In retirement Blake was active in several areas, including the work of Bread for the World, a US Christian anti-hunger lobby. He had remarkable administrative skills, which guided the WCC during the time when its structures required re-alignment and revision.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## BLISS, KATHLEEN

B. 25 July 1908, London; d. 13 Sept. 1989. Bliss was a main speaker at the



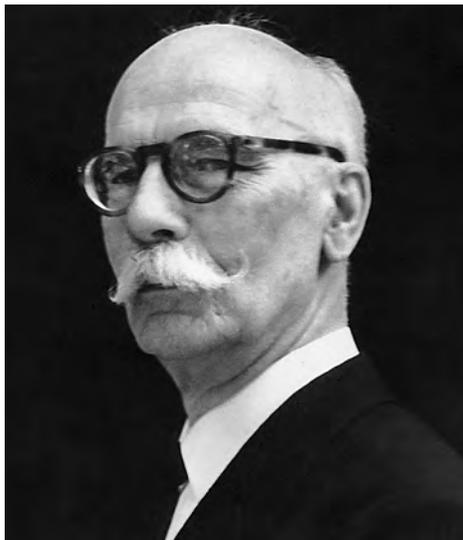
WCC's first assembly in Amsterdam in 1948, where she was chairperson of the committee on the laity. In a preliminary draft of the assembly message, she wrote, "We intend to stay together", a sentence widely quoted since then. She was a member of the central and executive committees, 1954-68, and was moderator of the Commission on Integration of the WCC and the World Council of Christian Education. She served on the British Council of Churches, 1942-67, and was general secretary of the Board of Education of the Church of England, 1957-66. Bliss studied theology at Cambridge and was lecturer in religious studies at the University of Sussex, 1966-73. She was the editor of *The Christian News-Letter*, 1945-49.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## BOEGNER, MARC

B. 21 Feb. 1881, Epinal, France; d. 19 Dec. 1970, Strasbourg, France. A member of the WCC provisional committee, 1938-48, Boegner became a president of the WCC, 1948-54. He was president



also of the Protestant Federation of France, 1928-61; the Reformed Church of France, 1938-50; the Comité inter-mouvements auprès des évacués (CIMADE\*), 1945-68; and the French Student Christian Movement, 1920-39. Participating in Oxford 1937 and Edinburgh 1937, he was one of the founders of the WCC. After studying law and theology, he was ordained in 1905; he began his career as a pastor at Aouste-sur-Sye, 1905-11, and went on to become professor at the College of the Evangelical Missionary Society, 1911-18; he was then pastor at Passy (Paris), 1918-54. During the second world war, he intervened with great courage on behalf of Jews and refugees. From 1962 he was a member of the French Academy. Boegner did a great deal to promote the ecumenical movement in France and abroad. He was an observer at the Second Vatican Council and in 1965 addressed the gathering in Geneva at which Cardinal Bea announced the creation of the Joint Working Group.\*

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## BONHOEFFER, DIETRICH

B. 4 Feb. 1906, Breslau, Prussia; d. 9 April 1945, Flossenbürg, Bavaria. Executed in the last days of the second world war in a vengeful act of cruelty by the Nazi regime, which he had contested since Hitler came to power in 1933, Bonhoeffer as a young man played a minor but significant part in the international relationships of German Protestants with the ecumenical organizations of the 1930s. After his death, however, the spiritual and theological inspiration of his last years, shining through his *Letters and Papers from Prison* and the biography by his close friend Eberhard Bethge, have proved to be of worldwide and lasting significance for many of the leaders and the issues in the continuing ecumenical movement.

Born into a large and influential family of intellectuals and professionals, Bonhoeffer was a successful theological student and quickly embarked on an academic career. Travels and study opportunities in Rome, Barcelona and New York opened him to other cultures, and the fire of Karl Barth's Christ-centred theology drew him into a passionate opposition to much in his own church, which flowered in a lifelong commitment to the Confessing Church.\* Appointed in 1931 as one of three part-time youth secretaries for the World Alliance for Promoting Interna-



tional Friendship through the Churches\* and for the Ecumenical Council for Life and Work,\* he spent 1933-35 as pastor of one of the German congregations in London, devoting most of his energy to the struggles of the early stages of the Confessing Church and coming to know Bishop George Bell of Chichester, for whose prophetic leadership against Nazism Bonhoeffer provided much of the material and inspiration.

From 1935 he was in charge of an unofficial, later illegal, theological seminary of the Confessing Church in Pomerania, whose innovations in spirituality and community living are reflected in *The Cost of Discipleship* and *Life Together*. When this activity was totally proscribed, American friends invited him in June 1939 to the USA, but he was at once unhappy there and returned to Germany in August of the same year in order to face the dark days ahead among his own people. Family members then invited him into the demanding double life of a secret agent in the counter-espionage service, where a plot against Hitler was being prepared. This enabled him to visit W.A. Visser 't Hooft and Hans Schönfeld in Geneva, as well as church leaders in occupied Norway, and to meet Bishop Bell in Stockholm to appeal for British support for the plotters. He was arrested in April 1943 and spent the remaining two years of his life outwitting interrogators, and impressing his warders and fellow prisoners with his humanity and Christianity.

Much in the subsequent fascination with his legacy has focused on many-layered phrases such as his advocacy of radically new Christian responses to "a world come of age" or his practice of a "secret discipline" of meditation and prayer. His friends witnessed to the growth in less than 40 years of a remarkably rich and mature Christian, able to face with open mind and heart even the deepest ambiguities of human existence.

MARTIN CONWAY

■ Eberhard Bethge, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Theologian, Christian and Contemporary*, London, Collins, 1970.

## BOROVY, VITALI

B. 18 Jan. 1916, Byelorussia. Representative of the Russian Orthodox Church at the WCC, 1962-66 and 1978-85, Borovoy was a member of the Faith and Order\* commission, then assistant director of the secretariat for F&O, 1966-72. He was an observer at the Second Vatican Council, 1962-65, a member of the Joint Working Group\* of the WCC and the RCC, 1965-72, and of the annual meeting of the Christian World Communions,\* 1962-85. Educated at Vilna Theological Seminary and Warsaw University, he was ordained in 1944 and became vice-dean of the Minsk Theological Seminary, 1944-54, professor of ancient church history at the Leningrad Theological Academy, 1954-62, and dean of the Moscow Patriarchal Cathedral and professor of Byzantine church history at the Moscow Theological Academy, 1973-78. From 1985 to 1995, he served as deputy chairman of the department for external church relations of the Moscow patriarchate, and professor of the history of the Western churches at the Moscow Theological Academy.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

## BOSSEY, ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE OF

BOSSEY refers to a place but also brings to mind people, namely the worldwide group of former participants in programmes of the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Institute. The place is a quiet estate some 20 kms from Geneva, with the necessary proximity to yet distance from the busy headquarters of international Christian organizations, United Nations agencies and Geneva university with which the institute is academically related. Course participants – laity and clergy, students and leaders in church and society from all over the world – leave Bossey committed to the ecumenical vision. They are involved in difficult frontier situations, and in leadership positions in churches and in civil society on all continents.

W.A. Visser 't Hooft, who initiated Bossey, said at its inauguration in 1946: "The Institute's programme has three main subjects: the Bible, the world, the

church universal.” In order to hold these vast focuses together and to initiate creative thinking and training, he called on Hendrik Kraemer and Suzanne de Diétrich as the first leadership team. In the post-war situation the programme concentrated on up to three-month courses for lay training and youth leaders. Alongside these shorter seminars on ethics were held for people from the same profession, e.g. teachers, medical doctors, trade-union leaders, social workers, artists, pastors. The study of different confessional families was also emphasized.

New demands of biblical faith and the changing situation in the world and the churches have led to several shifts in both the ways of ecumenical learning and the content of studies. Specialized one-week seminars now usually take up subjects of current ecumenical study and action projects. Since 1952 much time and energy has gone into the four-month session of the graduate school of ecumenical studies, which in 2000 became two sessions a year. Also in 2000, a master’s programme was begun in cooperation with the University of Geneva.

Each new director and team of resident teaching staff have contributed to the learning facilities and the range of explorations at Bossey. Thus in the 1960s and 1970s Eastern Orthodoxy and a strong interdisciplinary approach was emphasized under the leadership of the Greek Orthodox N.A. Nissiotis. When an Anglican from Kenya, J.S. Mbiti, became director, the accent shifted to intercultural meetings and the dialogue of theologies currently developing in different continents. The members of the present teaching team come from Africa, Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Pacific and the USA, and represent the Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions.

The primary learning experience at Bossey is the intensive community life where, in common worship, corporate and individual studies and many personal encounters, the participants teach one another. Often unconscious cultural and confessional presuppositions are questioned, and racial and sexist prejudices uncovered and struggled with. Deep convic-

tions of faith confront each other and are tested. Gradually, through pain and shared joys a temporary, limited learning community grows in the search for a fuller truth.

HANS-RUEDI WEBER

■ “Christianity and Culture” and “Ecumenical Learning”, *ER*, 39, 2, 1987, and 48, 4, 1996 ■ H.-R. Weber, *A Laboratory for Ecumenical Life: The Story of Bossey*, WCC, 1996.

## BRASH, ALAN ANDERSON

B. 5 June 1913, Lower Hutt, New Zealand; d. 24 Aug, 2002, Christchurch. Brash was deputy general secretary of the



WCC and moderator of Unit II, 1974-78. For two periods he was general secretary of the National Council of Churches in New Zealand (NCCNZ), 1947-52 and 1956-64, and its first regional secretary, 1979-84. His work as interchurch aid secretary for mission and service of the East Asia Christian Conference, 1957-68, led him to become interim Asia secretary of the WCC’s division of Interchurch Aid, Refugee and World Service in 1965. This was followed by the interim directorship

of the WCC's division of World Mission and Evangelism, 1966, and of the Inter-church Aid, Refugee and World Service, 1970-74, punctuated by a spell as director of Christian Aid, London, 1968-70. A delegate to Oxford 1937 and Edinburgh 1937, he has attended all WCC assemblies except Evanston 1954, publishing popular reports on Amsterdam 1948 and New Delhi 1961. Brash was moderator of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, 1978-79.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

### BRENT, CHARLES HENRY

B. 9 April 1862, Newcastle, Ontario, Canada; d. 27 March 1929, Lausanne, Switzerland. Brent studied at Trinity College, Toronto, and was ordained in 1887. A parish priest in Boston, 1888-91, he rose to become the Protestant Episcopal bishop of the Philippines in 1901, where he energetically combatted the opium traffic. His experience in this field led him naturally into the presidency of the opium conference at Shanghai, and in 1923 he represented the USA on the League of Nations Narcotics Committee. Elected bishop of Western New York in 1917, he was responsible for the Episcopal



churches in Europe, 1926-28. On returning from the world missionary conference at Edinburgh in 1910, he spoke at the general convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the need for unity, and of his own conviction that a "world conference on Faith and Order should be convened".

Throughout the rest of his life Brent exercised a profound influence on the Faith and Order\* movement, presiding the first world conference at Lausanne in 1927. At the same time, he participated in the world mission and Life and Work\* movements, and in the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches,\* travelling widely and addressing numerous gatherings. Brent was pre-eminently a man of prayer. His appreciation of traditions other than his own opened many doors of friendship to him.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ C.H. Brent, *The Mount of Vision*, London, Longmans, Green, 1918 ■ See *Things That Matter: The Best of the Writings of Bishop Brent*, New York, Harper, 1949 ■ A. Zabriskie, *Bishop Brent, Crusader for Christian Unity*, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1948.

### BRETHREN

THE BRETHREN came into being in the late summer of 1708 near Schwarzenau, Germany. Five men and three women, all religious refugees, were baptized in the river Eder. One of them, chosen by lot, baptized Alexander Mack, their leader and first minister; Mack then baptized the rest. All eight had been influenced by the radical German pietistic renewal as well as by descendants of the 16th-century Anabaptists, the Mennonites.\*

From the beginning, Brethren embodied a high doctrine of the church as a close-knit community whose life together is a means of grace,\* not a loose association of like-minded believers. Brethren members who are baptized are the church. Creeds, liturgies, official hierarchies and buildings do not "make" the church the church. Rather, the church is manifest when members come together for worship

or work dedicated to “the glory of God and our neighbours’ good”.

Brethren stress obedience to the teachings of Jesus and conformity to the life of early Christian communities. They practise adult baptism\* by immersion, celebrate the love feast (with foot-washing according to John 13, a common meal and the bread and cup), greet one another with the “holy kiss”, anoint for healing, reconcile conflict according to Matt. 18:15-17, and teach non-resistance.

Religious persecution and economic hardship in Germany were among the problems that pushed the Brethren across the Atlantic, the last group in 1729. They first settled in Pennsylvania, soon spread along the Atlantic seaboard, then moved westwards by the mid-19th century.

The late 19th century was a time of church schism\* and splintering that resulted in a number of Brethren bodies: the Old German Baptist Brethren, the Brethren Church, the Fellowship of Grace Brethren, the Dunkard Brethren, and the Church of the Brethren (the largest). In 1973 M.R. Zigler arranged a historic meeting of members of these bodies, “just to shake hands”. More meetings followed, giving rise to the comprehensive three-volume *Brethren Encyclopedia*.

Although the Brethren prospered and grew in their new country, they retained a certain isolation from US society. The revolutionary war deepened this isolation. Committed to non-resistance, the Brethren could not in good conscience either bear arms against the British or swear an oath of allegiance to the new government. They were thus accused of treason, severely fined and often brutally mistreated. During the civil war and the first world war, Brethren were fined and imprisoned for refusing to bear arms. Just before the second world war, the Church of the Brethren worked closely with Mennonites and Friends\* to provide a service programme for their young men as an alternative to military conscription.

The Church of the Brethren (COB) began an organized response to needy peoples when collections for famine relief in Armenia were taken up in 1917. During the 1930s, a number of service opportuni-

ties developed, such as the sending of relief workers to Spain during its civil war. A heifer project provides farm animals for places of need; it is now an ecumenical service programme.

A Brethren Service Committee (1939) focused during the second world war on civilian public service, a cooperative programme of the Brethren, Mennonites and Friends with the US government. This programme provided civilian work of national importance for conscientious objectors to war. Brethren facilities at New Windsor, Maryland, are an ecumenical service centre, with offices for Church World Service, Lutheran World Relief, Christian Rural Overseas Programme and Interchurch Medical Aid. Other Brethren-sponsored agencies also became ecumenical, and many Brethren joined ecumenical agencies as staff workers during the 1940s through the 1960s.

The Brethren have a strong missionary spirit, inspired especially by the great commission in Matt. 28:19-20. This spirit led to the development of home missions from the earliest beginnings; interest in missionary activity outside the USA developed in the mid-19th century, focusing on India, China, Nigeria, Puerto Rico, Ecuador, Indonesia and Sudan. In 1955 a new foreign mission policy refocused mission from “parenting” to “indigenization”, initiating the process of passing leadership into local hands. In 1978 a Latin American mission strategy, “misión mutua en las Américas”, emphasized ecumenical planning, solidarity with the oppressed and mutuality in mission.

Among the Brethren bodies, only the COB is involved in the conciliar expressions of the 20th-century ecumenical movement, joining the US Federal Council of Churches (now the National Council of Churches) in 1941 and the WCC in 1948. It has participated vigorously in the work of both these councils, always making a contribution to their leadership and finances out of proportion to its size.

COB membership has declined significantly during the past 30 years (to 136,000 in 2000), and the membership is ageing, with the median age now in the mid-50s. As its past and present have de-

pended on service rather than size, so does its future. For the enduring calling for Brethren as a servant people is to give birth to and let go of programmes for ministry and mission, so that the whole Body of Christ and all God's people may be blessed.

See also **historic peace churches**.

MELANIE A. MAY

■ D.F. Durnbaugh ed., *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, 3 vols, Philadelphia, Brethren Encl., 1983-84 ■ D.F. Durnbaugh, *Church of the Brethren: Yesterday and Today*, Elgin IL, Brethren, 1986.

## BUDDHIST-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

BUDDHIST-CHRISTIAN encounter, particularly through the monastic and the mystical, stretches back to the early years of Christianity. The form it has taken in more recent years – planned dialogue sessions and joint explorations into spiritual life and social action – must be seen in the wider context of interfaith dialogue (see **dialogue, interfaith**).

A great 20th-century pioneer of Buddhist-Christian relations was Thomas Merton, who sought an international and inter-religious monastic spiritual encounter, in line with the ancient tradition of dialogue through monasticism and mysticism. His death during the 1968 Bangkok meeting of “L'aide à l'implantation monastique” (AIM) served to stimulate further interest in this vision. In 1973, in Bangalore, AIM brought together Christian and non-Christian monks, one result of which was a series of East-West spiritual exchanges between Zen and Christian monks. In the 1980s and 1990s, inter-religious monastic dialogue, particularly between Buddhists and Christians, expanded further, within and across continents. A *Bulletin on Monastic Inter-religious Dialogue* is published regularly in Belgium.

Parallel to Thomas Merton, Christians were reaching out in new ways towards Buddhism in several Asian countries. In Japan, the Jesuits H.M. Enomiya Lassalle and J. Kachiri Kadowaki delved into the richness of Zen. The first of what became

annual Japanese Zen-Christian colloquia was held in 1967. In Sri Lanka, the Catholics Aloysius Pieris, Michael Rodrigo and Antony Fernando, Methodist Lynn de Silva and Anglican Yohan Devananda studied Buddhism under Buddhists in a search for new forms of Buddhist-Christian community living and dialogue. In Thailand, Sr Theodore Hahnenfeld and Fr Edmond Pezet were part of the same wave; similar ventures towards an in-depth “dialogue of life” can be cited in other countries. In the Seimeisan Centre for Prayer and Inter-religious Dialogue in Japan, a Christian community and a Buddhist temple united in 1987 into a single “religious juridical institution”.

As academic research into religious pluralism\* grew in the 1970s, new institutions were formed. Especially relevant to Buddhist-Christian encounter were the Ecumenical Institute for Study and Dialogue in Sri Lanka (formerly the Centre for Religion and Society) and the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture in Japan. The East-West religions project, started in 1980 by the University of Hawaii department of religion, with international and ecumenical dimensions, organized international Buddhist-Christian conferences on Buddhist-Christian renewal and the future of humanity (Honolulu 1980), paradigm shifts in Buddhism and Christianity: cultural systems and the self (Hawaii 1984), Buddhism and Christianity: towards the human future (Berkeley 1987). From them came some regional initiatives: a Japan chapter of the project (1982) which became the Japan Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies, and the North American Buddhist-Christian theological encounter group under Masao Abe and John Cobb (1983). Of particular importance was the 1987 conference, which drew 800 people from 19 countries and gave birth to the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies to facilitate worldwide encounter. About every four years it co-sponsors an international Buddhist-Christian conference. In 1996 the topic was “Socially Engaged Buddhism and Christianity”.

In Europe, an important international Buddhist-Christian dialogue was held in

Austria in 1981, convening Western theologians and their Asian Buddhist counterparts to discuss the theme of salvation, individual and social. Significant European centres include the Karma Ling Institute in France; De Tiltenberg in the Netherlands, which concentrates on Zen; Lassalle House at Bad Schönbrunn, Switzerland; and Voies de l'Orient, Belgium. In February 1996, the mission academy at the University of Hamburg hosted a meeting for European Christians involved in the study of Buddhism, resulting in the formation of a European network for Christian studies of Buddhism; in October 1997 this became the European Network of Buddhist-Christian Studies.

An important development in East Asia was the decision by institutions in eight countries to form a network of Christian organizations for inter-religious encounter: Inter-Religio. Included were the Tao Fong Shan Ecumenical Institute (Hong Kong), the Driyarkara Institute of Philosophy (Indonesia), the Institute for Oriental Religions (Japan) and the Inter-religious Commission for Development (Thailand). Buddhist-Christian dialogue is a central component in Inter-Religio's work.

Themes arising in Buddhist-Christian encounter include both philosophical and socio-political concerns. For example, topics discussed at the 1987 Berkeley conference included liberation theology\* and Buddhism, Korean minjung theology\* and Buddhism, religion and violence, agape and compassion, *sunyata* and *kenosis*, women in Buddhism and Christianity. Social engagement and peace-making featured in two 1988 conferences: "Wisdom and Compassion: The Message of Buddhism and Christianity for Our Times", at the Institute of Oriental Religions, Japan; "Buddhist and Christian in the Search for Peace and Justice", organized by the WCC in Seoul. The 1996 Chicago conference had working parties on a global ethic, politics and non-violence, environment and ecology, human rights and social justice. All these conferences have emphasized that personal and social transformation must go together, implying Buddhist-Christian action beyond the conference table in shared spirituality and struggle.

Conference topics within the European Network of Buddhist-Christian Studies have included "Buddhist Perceptions of Jesus" (1999) and "Christian Perceptions of the Buddha" (2001).

In many countries Buddhists and Christians are in fact involved together both in social action and the sharing of spirituality. Many informal Buddhist-Christian dialogue groups exist; and joint meditation retreats and reflection days take place at Buddhist and Christian centres. Buddhists and Christians have joined together in peace initiatives, for example, the annual inter-religious prayer for peace promoted by the Catholic community of Sant'Egidio.\*

Yet in some contexts mistrust still remains, especially where the legacy of colonialism and the missionary enterprise makes Buddhists suspicious of any Christian initiatives. A key maxim is that of Sri Lankan Michael Rodrigo, pioneer of Buddhist-Christian dialogue: "Only after a dialogue of life is there dialogue of prayer and then of religious experience."

ELIZABETH J. HARRIS

- *Buddhist-Christian Studies*, annual, East-West Religions Project, University of Hawaii
- *Bulletin of Monastic Inter-religious Dialogue*, publ. on behalf of Monastic Interreligious Dialogue Committees
- *Dialogue*, Ecumenical Institute for Study and Dialogue, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- *Inter-Religio Newsletter*, Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture, Tokyo, Japan
- D.W. Mitchell & J. Wiseman, *The Gethsemani Encounter: A Dialogue on the Spiritual Life by Buddhist and Christian Monastics*, New York, Continuum 2000
- R. Pannikar, *The Silence of God: The Answer of the Buddha*, Maryknoll NY, Orbis, 1989
- A. Pieris, *Fire and Water: Basic Issues in Asian Buddhism and Christianity*, Maryknoll NY, Orbis, 1996
- A. Pieris, *Love Meets Wisdom: A Christian Experience of Buddhism*, Maryknoll NY, Orbis, 1988
- *Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies Newsletter*, Dept of Philosophy, Purdue University, IN, USA.

## BÜHRIG, MARGA

B. 17 Oct. 1915, Berlin; d. 12 Feb. 2002, Binningen, Switzerland. A president of the WCC, 1983-91, Bührig was deeply in-



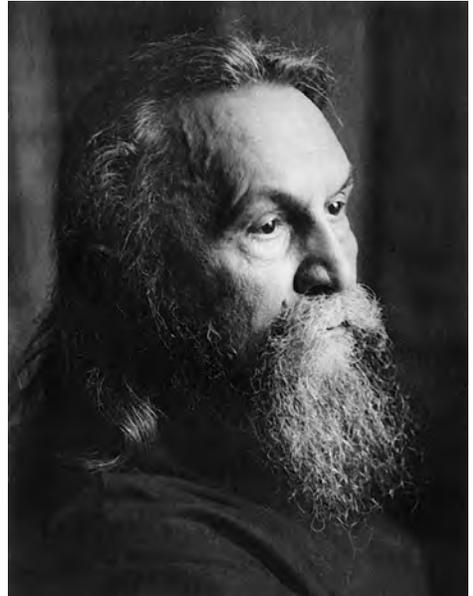
volved in its initiatives on “Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation”. In 1939 she received a doctorate in German literature and modern history from the University of Zurich, where she also studied theology. Since 1946 she was engaged in ecumenical women’s work in Switzerland and Germany, and since 1954 in the worldwide ecumenical movement through the WCC’s department for the Cooperation of Men and Women in Church, Family and Society. Co-president of the Women’s Ecumenical Liaison Group (WCC and Consilium de Laicis, Vatican), 1968-72, she directed Boldern Academy (near Zurich), 1971-81, and was president of the Ecumenical Association of Academies and Laity Centres in Europe, 1976-82. Bührig described the basic tenet of her life as being “to love life passionately and to seek justice passionately”. She never sought a public leadership role, and it went against the grain to be part of any power and authority structures.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

- M. Bührig, *Die Frau in der Schweiz*, Bern, Paul Haupt, 1969
- “Discrimination against Women”, in *Technology and Social Justice*, R.H. Preston ed., London, SCM Press, 1971
- *Spät habe ich gelernt, gerne Frau zu sein: Eine feministische Autobiographie*, Stuttgart, Kreuz, 1987.

## BULGAKOV, SERGIUS

B. 16 June 1871, Livny, Russia; d. 12 July 1944, Paris. Dean of the Russian Orthodox Theological Institute of St Sergius, Paris, 1925-44, Bulgakov had considerable intellectual influence in the West through his participation in the ecumenical movement, of which he was a warm but frequently a critical supporter. He was actively involved in the Anglo-Russian Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius (England). He strove to give a comprehensive interpretation of all the



main traditional Christian doctrines in the light of the doctrine of “sophia”, the holy wisdom. Since he viewed Mary as the most perfectly created image of the uncreated sophia, he criticized the Faith and Order conference at Lausanne in 1927 for neglecting the veneration of the mother of God. His teaching was condemned by the Moscow patriarchate in 1935, perhaps largely on political grounds.

Bulgakov wanted to enter the priesthood, but became a religious and philosophical sceptic under the influence of G.W.F. Hegel and was active in Marxist political movements. Disillusioned after the 1905 revolution, Bulgakov slowly retraced his steps to the church. In 1917 he

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was an active member of the All-Russian Church Council and was elected to the Supreme Church Board. In 1918 he was finally ordained to the priesthood. Expelled from Russia in 1923, he went to Prague where he became professor of political economy at the Russian Grad-

uate School of Law. He settled in Paris in 1925.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, London, Centenary, 1935 ■ *La sagesse de Dieu*, Lausanne, L'Age d'Homme, 1938.



## CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CHRIST

IN 1951 William R. Bright, 31, left the business world and founded Campus Crusade for Christ as an evangelical interdenominational organization at the University of California at Los Angeles. CCC soon expanded beyond universities to include work with high-school students, athletes, business and professional people, local churches, families, prisoners and others. Stressing discipleship and evangelism through one-on-one personal contact, CCC staff and programmes are found in more than 100 countries.

At the centre of CCC's identity is an evangelistic tool known as *The Four Spiritual Laws*, which explain in simple terms the gospel of Jesus Christ and the invitation to follow him as Lord and Saviour. Millions of copies of the 16-page wallet-size booklet

have circulated, and many Protestant congregations use their own version. In some areas such as Mexico and the Philippines, the Roman Catholic renewal movement has adapted and incorporated *The Four Spiritual Laws* in its Christian life programme.

Since 1979, for mass evangelization CCC has used the film *Jesus*, which follows the life of Christ according to Luke's gospel. Available in more than 600 languages, *Jesus* has been viewed by an estimated four billion people, with tens of millions indicating a decision to follow Jesus Christ.

ROBERT T. COOTE

## CANON

THE WORD "canon" derives from the Greek *kanōn*, a straight stick, measuring rod or

ruler (cf. Latin *regula*); hence, a standard or norm. At the end of the 2nd century, Irenaeus, Tertullian and others spoke of the “rule of faith” or “canon of truth”, meaning the heart of the gospel as expressed in summary forms similar to the creeds.\* From the 4th century onwards, conciliar decisions on doctrine and discipline were designated canons (see **ecumenical councils**). “Canon law” is the way most churches regulate their life (see **canon law, church discipline**); monastic rules may also be called canons. In the liturgy of the Roman (Catholic) church, the “canon” of the mass is a normative eucharistic prayer.

Ecumenically, “canon” is most widely used in connection with the scriptures of the church. Verbally, such usage goes back only to the 4th century, but the fact and idea of a “collection of authoritative writings” (intrinsic authority) or even an “authoritative collection of (such) writings” (extrinsically recognized authority) has been present to Christianity since its beginnings. To the scriptures of Israel – which it claimed for its own – the earliest church added writings that told the story of Jesus the Christ and recorded the preaching, teaching and life of the primitive Christian community. The question of *which* writings were to be properly so treated arose acutely in the mid-2nd century. The catholic “canon” established itself over against, on the one hand, the reductionism of Marcion (whose own canon comprised only a doctored Luke and a mutilated *corpus paulinum*) and, on the other hand, the pullulation of apocryphal gospels, acts and apocalypses that were largely Gnostic in character and, perhaps, the more recent oracles considered by the Montanists as further revelation. Positively put, the catholic canon consisted of those writings which had been accepted for reading in the worship of the church and, in the case of the “New Testament”, were held to be derived from an apostle or his surrogate (e.g. Mark writing for Peter, or Luke writing on the authority of Paul).

There was no conflict between such writings and authentic tradition. Indeed the scriptures\* were intrinsic to the tradition – a vehicle for transmitting the Christian message and faith. Preaching, catechesis, sacramental rites, episcopal teaching and the confessions of martyrs and everyday saints were

also instruments of the Tradition. But a special role and value attached to the scriptures – reflected in the care taken to protect them in times of persecution – as the permanent legacy of the original witnesses and of inspired writers who had been normatively guided by the same self-consistent Spirit as indwelt the believing community. According to an ecumenically influential formula of Oscar Cullmann: in establishing the principle of a canon, “the church, by an act of humility, submitted every later tradition that she would elaborate to the higher criterion of the apostolic tradition fixed in the holy scriptures” (*La tradition*, 1953). Thus the canonical scriptures of Old and New Testament constitute, for the continuing life of the church, the decisive written testimony to God’s history with Israel, the incarnation of the Son, and the mission of the Spirit. In times of doctrinal and ecclesiastical controversy, however, there has been conflict over their interpretation and over their operative relation to the other vehicles of tradition.

At the fourth world conference on Faith and Order (Montreal 1963), a remarkable convergence was registered between Protestants and Orthodox on Tradition (the “great Tradition”, which is to be distinguished from the particular ecclesiastical “traditions”, even if these are its channels) as the “*paradosis* of the *kerygma*”, the handing on of the message, “the Tradition of the gospel” – with the scriptures as a privileged and normative element within the Tradition. As “the Tradition in its written form”, the scriptures have “a special basic value” and serve as “an indispensable criterion” for distinguishing “faithful transmission” (Montreal 1963, paras 38-76). At the same time Vatican II, in line with the historical work of J.R. Geiselman on the limits of the formula of the council of Trent\* concerning “scriptures and (*et*) unwritten traditions”, rejected a draft text on “the two sources of revelation” and adopted instead the constitution *Dei Verbum*, which was much closer to Yves Congar’s systematic notion that the scriptures and the oral-practical tradition of the church are diverse and interactive modes of transmitting one and the same gospel.

Thus there has been growing ecumenical agreement on the *sufficiency* of the scriptures, even if varying emphases continue to

reflect historical controversies. The Protestant principle of *sola scriptura* was first erected against some practical and doctrinal traditions which were tolerated or even endorsed by the pastoral authorities of the medieval West but in the reformers' eyes contradicted the original gospel and faith. Understood absolutely, "scripture alone" implies that the Bible is self-interpreting, at least under the Holy Spirit's direct guidance; but in fact the "living voice of the gospel" (*viva vox evangelii*) is always mediated by preachers who actively expound – and therefore *interpret* – what they take to be the scriptural message within a variable cultural context. While continuing to insist on the primacy of the scriptures, ecumenically minded Protestants recognize that the church has willy-nilly a "teaching office" – and the issue is as to where such a magisterium is lodged (bishops, synods, professors, pope...). The Roman Catholic tradition has always recognized more openly the need for a teaching office and has been more willing to admit the fact of later "explication" or "development" of what was latently or germinally present in the apostolic faith recorded in the scriptures (not only as regards, say, the full formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity but also, controversially, the Marian dogmas and the "Petrine office" itself). On its side, however, Vatican II has insisted that the magisterium remains subservient to the apostolic witness (*Dei Verbum* 7-10).

While not all problems regarding the sufficiency of the scriptures in relation to Tradition have found an ecumenical solution, the more explosive question now may concern the *integrity* of the canonical scriptures. Although Christian churches differ somewhat over the extent of the OT (see **Old Testament and Christian unity**), they are officially just about unanimous over the composition of the NT, i.e. those 27 books whose precise listing is first found in Athanasius's festal letter for 367 (see **New Testament and Christian unity**). Nevertheless, three recurrent issues may prove disruptive.

One is the relation between the OT and the NT. If we adopt, say, the historical categories of "promise and fulfilment" or the theological categories of "law and gospel", the question in each case remains that of the kind and extent of continuities and disconti-

nities between the Testaments. Answers affect not only the relations between Christianity and Judaism but also wider matters in the understanding of the history and nature of salvation.\* These issues have been present since the beginning of Christianity and, after the rupture of church and synagogue, do not appear to have been directly church-divisive before the Reformation (and even in the 16th century the soteriological arguments were not primarily framed directly in terms of the relations between the Testaments). While these matters probably belong, among Christians today, to the realm of theological controversy rather than doctrinal conflict or institutional separation between the churches, the issue of the history and nature of salvation retains an explosive potential when what is at stake is the nature and practice of the Christian mission\* vis-a-vis (in different ways) Jews, people of other faiths or the irreligious.

Second, given the dimensions and the diversity of the Bible, it is not surprising that Christians have looked for a substantive "centre" of the scriptures. If with Luther one takes "that which advances Christ" (*was Christum treibt*) as an interpretative principle, few Christians will disagree. But (to stay with the example) when Lutherans further define "justification through faith alone" as the "canon within the canon", other Christians will put forward other candidates (e.g. the motifs of "covenant" or "liberation" or "kingdom of God"). In striking harmony with the ancient "rule of faith" or "canon of truth", the Faith and Order project "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today" took the Nicene Creed\* as its "theological basis and methodological tool" in seeking to present to our time and world a faith that is roundly and thoroughly biblical. The question remains whether different "interests" (justificationists, liberationists, pietists, liturgists, etc.) can be contained within this more complex hermeneutical grid, which is needed to catch the full range of the scriptural material and neglect or dismiss none.

A third issue affecting the integrity of the canon concerns the use of "historical criticism" in exegesis (see **exegesis, methods of**). Modern biblical scholarship has sought to "get behind" the inherited text to earlier

stages in the transmission of the material and even to “what really happened”. The historical-critical approach is legitimated by an incarnational faith that takes human history\* seriously. It does not of itself – despite its more sceptical practitioners – exclude the occurrence and perception of divine presence and action within that history. In fact it can help to make clear that the interpretation of events is part of history itself, so that words and deeds are “revelation”\* only when they are received as such; and thus the way is open for the Christian community to accept certain writings – precisely on account of their interpretation of events – as “correct records” of God’s operation in and through Christ. Historical research has proved valuable ecumenically, in that it has shown the scriptures to be a privileged part of such an earlier and continuing Tradition which perceives, receives and transmits the gospel of Jesus Christ (see Montreal 1963). Yet while historical exegesis may help to illuminate the earliest stages in that process, the faith cannot be made to depend upon particular scholarly reconstructions and speculations (hypotheses that enjoy varying degrees of probability) concerning what preceded and surrounded the scriptural writings. Otherwise there would be as many churches as there are scholars.

Spiritual and ecclesial dissatisfaction with the uncertainty and fluctuation in the “results” of modern NT scholarship has more recently prompted some within the academic profession of exegesis to adopt a more “canonical” hermeneutics. While *historical* investigations are not abandoned, greater attention is now focused in a more *literary* way upon the final text of scripture as the church has received it (with the question of manuscript and textual variants rightly seen as a relatively minor one for most substantial purposes). Abiding by the decisions of the church(es) concerning the extent of the canon, exegetes seek to understand and interpret a particular passage or book in light of its place and function within the Bible as a whole. The flat, univocal reading of the scriptures that characterizes fundamentalism can be avoided by a recognition of differences in literary genre (not everything is intended as “historical reporting”, and history itself, as we saw, is a complex notion) and by allowing some passages

to complement and even correct others (though the “canonical” school is less likely to scent “contradictions” within the scriptures than some historical critics or the most ardent advocates of a single “canon within the canon”). The way is still open, for example, for the careful detection of “trajectories” within the biblical material such as a mixed group of Protestant and Roman Catholic scholars in the United States found ecclesiastically promising in their work published as *Peter in the New Testament* (1973) and *Mary in the New Testament* (1978). Since the “canonical” method is in greater harmony with the way in which the scriptures have actually been read in the liturgical, homiletical and devotional life of the church, its practice also opens up the possibility of dialogue with past interpretations of the scriptures and thus a more integral relation between scripture and the continuing, enveloping Tradition. Herein resides perhaps its greatest ecumenical potential.

In the contemporary secular West, the whole notion of a literary, artistic, cultural canon – which was in any case a much looser notion than that of a scriptural canon within the church – has recently come under strain, even to the point of dissolution in the eyes of some. Excisions of the offending, the hegemony of a single and narrow hermeneutical principle, the addition of matter believed to have been neglected – all has been attempted without a communal consensus. Perhaps the nearest proposal for dealing with the scriptural canon in a similar way occurs in, say, the work of Rosemary Ruether: after rejecting any interpretation of the messiahship of Jesus that might offend a Jew (*Faith and Fratricide*, 1974, where 1 Cor. 1:23 goes unmentioned), Ruether proposes “whatever promotes the full humanity of women” as the criterion for taking or leaving scriptural material and looks to add from “pagan resources” what is otherwise missing (*Sexism and God-Talk*, 1983). Such proposals, however, present a wide variety of theological difficulties, and are thus unlikely to bring Christian unity closer.

See also **hermeneutics; inspiration; scripture; teaching authority; Tradition and traditions; unity; word of God.**

■ R.E. Brown, "The Gospel of Peter and Canonical Gospel Priority", *New Testament Studies*, 33, 1987 ■ H. von Campenhausen, *Die Entstehung der christlichen Bibel* (ET *The Formation of the Christian Bible*, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1972) ■ B.S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible*, Minneapolis, Fortress, 1993 ■ B.S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, Philadelphia, Fortress, 1979 ■ B.S. Childs, *The New Testament as Canon*, Philadelphia, Fortress, 1985 ■ E. Käsemann ed., *Das Neue Testament als Kanon*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970 ■ B.M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1987.

## CANON LAW

CANON LAW states the rules for institutional ecclesiology, which reconciles normative ecclesiological principles – taught as dogma\* – with the ecclesiological maxims that touch the lives of the people of God in practice. According to this approach, true ecumenism requires two encounters – one covering the behaviour of church members as Christians, and the other relating to the dogmaticians of the various churches. The history of these two encounters shows that the problem of the institutional church is structural and ecumenical: *If the gospel is to be preached and experienced, does it call for institutionalism in Christian life?* With this question in mind, we may look briefly at the main stages in the history of the German Lutheran churches as an example of the path taken by the Reformation churches in their institutional history.

In the socio-political situation of the time of the Reformation, it became urgently necessary to transfer episcopate (oversight, or the *ius episcopale*) to the temporal prince, both because of the radical Lutheran idea of original sin\* and because of the combination of the Thomist view of the non-sacramental nature of the episcopacy\* with Luther's advocacy of the priesthood of all believers. This established the fundamental principle that any legal organization is contrary to the essence of the church, which generally made itself felt in the five following stages of church-state relations: (1) between the 16th and mid-17th centuries, when the church

was governed by the sovereign princes of the territory (*Landesherrliches Kirchenregiment*, supreme ecclesiastical authority of the regional sovereign); (2) between the mid-17th century and 1848, when the church was organically incorporated in and served the state (*Staatskirchentum*, the system of the state church); (3) from 1848 until just before 1919, when the churches administered their own internal affairs and the state now had the right to inspect and supervise them only in matters of external order (*Staatskirchenhoheit*, the system of state church sovereign rights); (4) between 1919 and 1933, when the church made agreements with the state in the Weimar Republic (parallel to the Roman Catholic concordats), made possible by the constitutional process separating church and state; and (5) between 1933 and 1945, when the Protestant churches during the Third Reich contended with the implantation of Nazi ideology in a German national people's church which was to be the religious mainspring of the state (*Kirchenkampf*, struggle between church and state).

On the eve of the *Kirchenkampf* the tragedy of German Protestantism arose from its failure to create for itself a church law embodying the content of the Protestant faith, because it had always left its legal structure to the state. Since that time, German Protestantism has been re-discovering itself as its structures have come to be distinguished from those of the state. By comparison, it can be said (in J. Hoffmann's terms) that while the Roman Catholic Church is able to remain itself throughout the variety of its relations with the state (thanks to the institutional objectivization it worked out for itself through its canon law), the German Protestant churches are progressively discovering themselves in the actual evolution of these relations. The effort expended by Lutheran churches on re-integrating the institution of episcopacy in line with a practice like that of the RCC allows differences between the two to persist: Lutheran bishops are not legislators, they have no magisterium,\* they do not belong to a higher order than the pastor, and they are not directly installed as pastors.

In the Orthodox churches between 381 and 1453 the church was sometimes ab-

sorbed by the state (Emperor Leo VI, for instance, represented himself as an external bishop, convening and presiding at councils, promulgating decrees and appointing bishops and patriarchs); however, entrusting this function of supervising the church to the emperor did not plunge the system into Caesaro-papism. On the other hand, in the Russian church, Caesaro-papism found its best expression in the *Spiritual Regulation* of Peter the Great (1721), which subjected the church to the state and replaced the patriarchate of Moscow by a synod of which the czar was the supreme judge. By doing so, the czar destroyed the reality of the episcopate: the church was no longer governed only by the bishops, and the synod became a body with power *over* the church and no longer *within* the church. Church law and the church as an institution no longer had their sacramental source in the episcopal office but in the secular order of the state. In 1917 the Russian church was able to re-establish the patriarchate of Moscow, and in subsequently coping with the atheist state – and by analogy to the state principle of socialization – it gradually re-discovered the sacramental basis of canon law, first giving expression to this in the synod of 1961.

Today the Orthodox Church of Russia, while declaring the law of the state to be canonical, has re-affirmed the special nature of the law of communion\* (the law of grace as *koinonia*\*) over against the secular right of association. On the local level and in its relations with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, it tackles difficult questions similar to those experienced by the Eastern Catholic churches in their own context: What room must be made for political and national principles in the organization of the church? How are the rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to be defined in relation to those of the autocephalous sister church over its own members, especially in the diaspora? What is the specific nature of the unity of the Orthodox churches? Recent work done by the joint Roman Catholic-Orthodox theological commission has happily re-introduced the idea of the sacramental basis of church law, re-discovering in particular the sacramental character of episcopal jurisdiction and the Trinitarian eucharistic basis of the local church.\*

The theory underlying the Roman Catholic *Codex Juris Canonici* of 1917 regards the church as a specific type of “perfect” society, so intended and founded by Christ and requiring law\* by its very nature as a society.\* The church was thus seen in terms of means and ends, and the ecclesiology of the code expressly favoured an individualist idea of the Christian life and of salvation.\* In it Christians as individuals were confronted with a hierarchy that was regarded as extrinsic, and the fact that the church is a fellowship that is Trinitarian in its structure could not be institutionally expressed in the code; it forgot the law of grace.\*

Vatican II\* brought with it significant shifts. For the ecclesiology of the perfect society, essentially one of inequality, it substituted reciprocity in dignity and common action for the upbuilding of the Body of Christ among all members of the church. It re-discovered the sacramental basis of the episcopate – the basis for the power of order and of jurisdiction – and structurally it restored the importance of synodal practice at all levels of the church.

The code of canon law promulgated in 1983 is a compromise between that of 1917 and the contributions of Vatican II: in it the people of God is the fundamental visible reality of the church as *communio*, or fellowship, in which the members find themselves for the first time given rights and duties. Within certain limits the laity\* are called on to participate widely in ministries contributing to the achievement of the church’s mission.\* Synodal practice is implemented in new collegial structures, often of a consultative nature. Ecumenical concern has meant the opening up of various RC structures and institutions to the possibility of exchange and cooperation with equivalents from other churches. There is also the work pursued by the Joint Working Group between the RCC and the WCC.

To sum up generally: a fundamental ecumenical experience has been the re-discovery of canon law both as intrinsic to the Trinitarian *communio*, which gives the church a structure as a confessing church, and also as expressing itself in sacramental processes with an instituting function. Because institutional law gives expression to the statute or

law of grace, it is primary, whereas law as legislation setting up norms comes only second. The “inductive” type of approach makes the local church a primary element of the church, restores the process of “reception”\* of the laws to its rightful place and enables custom and jurisprudence to re-discover their legitimate creative capacity. This is an approach which cannot dispense with the gains from ecumenical exchanges among the people of God. If theologians and specialists in the social sciences are actively associated in working out church law, the various churches will then have more opportunities to develop an awareness both of the worldwide environment in which they live together and of the fundamental unity of their mission to proclaim the gospel at the dawn of the 21st century.

See also **church discipline**.

SAÏD ELIAS SAÏD

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## CAPITALISM

THE WORD “capital” is found in early economic thought as a description of one of the three principal factors of production, the other two being labour and land. It has generated two particular areas of debate: the economic return attributable to capital and the question of the ownership of capital.

In the neutral sense of the word, “capital” exists in all economic systems. However, the historical debate over economic return and ownership has led to the use of the word – and especially its derivative, “capitalism” – for those forms of economic systems in which most capital is privately owned, in which a return on capital (profit) for its

owners is accepted, and in which the pricing mechanism is widely used to balance supply and demand in the market (hence the term “market capitalism”). While there are many variants of the capitalist system, these characteristics broadly separate it from command economies, in which the distribution of income and allocation of resources is determined by a local or a central planning mechanism without significant recourse to the market mechanism.

The economic, social and environmental consequences of this system, both within market capitalist societies and outside them, have been a constant concern at successive assemblies of the WCC, as well as in various Church and Society conferences and in the ecumenical development\* debate beginning in the 1970s.

Although the emphases of the critique have changed over time, it has largely centred on three areas: (1) a view of the capitalist system as a whole in relation to the claims of systems based on alternative political precepts, such as communist/socialist systems; (2) an assessment of the workings of the capitalist system itself to see whether it creates injustices or impedes human development, whether its objectives are adequate and the means used to achieve them are fair, and whether its wider social consequences are acceptable; (3) a judgment of the capitalist system against the background of wider social, cultural and environmental issues, e.g. whether the system, which is largely determined by economic ideology, conflicts with wider social values; whether its operation is fair and just to the third world; whether its workings respect the environment; and finally, whether it is possible to formulate a new international economic order less open to criticism. As time passed, the third of these areas came to predominate.

The first assembly of the WCC (Amsterdam 1948) drew attention to the conflict between Christianity and capitalism. It argued that capitalism tended to subordinate what should be the primary task of any economy – meeting human needs – to the economic advantages of those who had most power over its institutions. It also argued that capitalism tended to produce inequalities and encouraged a practical form of materialism (particularly in Western countries, in spite of

their Christian background) by placing the greatest emphasis on success in making money. Finally, it drew attention to the way in which the people of capitalist systems suffered from such catastrophes as mass unemployment.\* The report concluded that, like communism, laissez-faire capitalism made promises that it could not keep, notably that if the emphasis is put on freedom, justice will follow as a byproduct of free enterprise.

The second assembly report (Evanston 1954) raised the question of the appropriateness of the capitalist system as a model for third-world development, but its main focus was on formulating a critique of the Western system itself. On the whole supportive of the system, it stressed that the church should be ready to welcome new initiatives in state control and industrial organization. The importance of efficient production and fair distribution was underlined, and the sins of waste and laziness were mentioned. The report criticized the existence of monopolies but recognized the contribution of the skilled executive and the virtues of responsible initiative and hard work. It also stressed the need to associate work with human dignity. Evanston warned against the accumulation of riches for their own sake, pressed for equity in distribution, underlined the need for the system to care for the disabled, urged more responsibility on the part of trade unions and drew attention to the need for those formulating national policies to be aware of the international consequences of their actions.

The third assembly (New Delhi 1961) stressed the need to see economic development as a process to create freedom (e.g. from hunger), but questioned whether freedom could be achieved in an economic model built around large-scale organizations. It warned against the danger of the Western capitalist systems creating the concept of an anonymous person and against the risks associated with technology (particularly in destroying freedom). Questioning the objectives of the present dynamic economies, New Delhi argued that the pursuit of maximum production for maximum consumption was no longer acceptable. Objectives based on that principle distorted and debased ethical values and created a society unable to cope with life other than that re-

volving around work. It also challenged the role of the welfare state in Western capitalist economies. Although recognizing that the welfare state had justifiably grown out of the failures of earlier capitalism, it questioned whether there was now too much security.

The fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968) took an optimistic view of capitalism in the sense of affirming the benefits offered by technology and economic growth but referred pessimistically to the failure of development programmes so far. It argued for an alternative framework based on the admission that the capitalist system had not yet come to terms with technology and had failed to construct workable transfer mechanisms for creating growth in the third world. The importance of the fourth assembly was in its special emphasis on the problems of development, as distinct from the problems inherent within the capitalist system itself.

The fifth assembly (Nairobi 1975) took as its main concern the way in which growth-oriented and affluent capitalist societies unduly dictated the fate of much of the rest of the world, largely by forcing it to adopt similar methods and objectives and similar ethical standards. It thus underlined again the failure of development policies and criticized capitalism for its bad effects in the third world, especially its built-in tendency to exploit others, leading to the uneven distribution of resources. While this exploitation had previously taken place through colonialism, the assembly said, it was now taking place through the operations of transnational corporations.\*

Regarding proposals for a new international economic order – an alternative ordering of both national and international economic structures and systems – Nairobi questioned whether such a new order could be introduced without radical change at national levels. It also referred to the argument for limits to growth and particularly emphasized the need to pursue the ideas of the “appropriate technology” movement. It also raised the issue of the stewardship of nature.\* (It must be remembered that this assembly took place in the aftermath of the 1973-74 oil price crisis.)

The standpoint from which the sixth assembly (Vancouver 1983) formulated its principal judgment of the capitalist system

was the need for the church to demonstrate a concern for the poor,\* to identify itself with the poor in setting its ecumenical priorities and to learn from the poor, particularly through a simpler life-style. The report set out four key criticisms of the present economic order: (1) calling the rich to repentance from slavery to possessions, (2) denouncing the concentration of goods in the hands of the few, (3) criticizing the arms race as a principal cause of the gap between rich and poor, and (4) commending the task of drawing value insights from poor communities.

The Vancouver report was also critical of technology,\* noting its potential to be socially and environmentally destructive and a means of domination. It also argued that new technologies tend to encourage consumerism, are applied apart from any overall planning, are used to support harsh economic policies and, more particularly, have raised important moral and ethical issues, particularly in the field of biotechnology.

Already in 1937 the Life and Work conference on "Church, Community and State" in Oxford listed key criticisms of capitalist countries. First, the capitalist ordering of economic life tends to enhance acquisitiveness and set up false standards of economic and social success. Second, capitalist countries create indefensible inequalities of opportunity for education, leisure and health. The existence of economic classes was seen as an intolerable obstacle to human fellowship. Third, the formation of centres of economic power which are not accountable to any organ of the community produces a tyranny over human lives. Fourth, the forms of employment available to many people (if there are any jobs at all) prevent them from finding a sense of Christian vocation\* in their daily lives.

The Church and Society conference (Geneva 1966) welcomed scientific and technological development as an expression of God's creative work by which men and women were helped to be free from unnecessary toil and poorer countries could be aided. But it criticized market capitalist economies for being unable to take adequate account of the long-range needs of society, grasp the advantage of large-scale rationalization, and regulate supply and demand

where the market was insensitive to price changes. The capitalist system relied too heavily on the market for income distribution; it was weak at dealing with the production and allocation of public goods. Other issues raised included the ethical problems of consumption, the problems of controlling incomes to avoid inflation, the adjustment of working patterns to meet changing technologies and the adverse consequences of affluent life-styles.

A substantial critique of the market capitalist system came from the Church and Society conference on "Faith, Science and the Future" (MIT, Cambridge, USA, 1979). It attacked the notion of positive economics: the attempt to explain economic behaviour on the basis of a limited number of economic considerations such as revealed choice by individual consumers, free markets in which these choices can be satisfied, and the maximization of profits as a primary tool for allocating resources efficiently. The critique argued that while positive economics recognized that goals were required for the system, it assumed either that these were externally given or that they were embodied in the choices of individuals in the market place. This is too narrow an analytical framework and focuses too much on the *individual* as the key agent. From a Christian point of view, a more adequate emphasis would be on the concept of *person* – the difference being the recognition in the Christian view of the individual's social responsibilities. Moreover, positive economics seemed to move inevitably towards emphasis on continuous growth, increased production and capital accumulation. A perspective from political economy, which offered a broader view of economics and linked economic analysis with wider social goals, was commended as a better basis of evaluation.

With the benefit of hindsight, it is evident that the emphases in each of the reports cited in this overview bear a close relationship to issues of wider public concern in the secular world at the time. For example, in the assembly reports of the 1960s the concern over the functioning of the welfare state and the stress on the importance of economic growth reflected the principal issues of debate in the period now commonly regarded as the heyday of post-war economic

growth and social democratic planning. In the 1970s, in reaction to the two oil crises, the ecumenical debates concentrated on the problems of finite and depleting resources and raising issues such as sustainability for the world economic and ecological systems. Increasingly, the reports reflected pessimism over the failure of the post-war development movement to evolve a method of closing the gap between the rich and poor countries of the world.

Along the same lines, ecumenical reflection on economics in the 1990s, evident in such WCC study documents as *Christian Faith and the World Economy Today* and *Sign of Peril, Test of Faith: Accelerated Climate Change*, can be seen as responses to the radical view of economics and society that has become commonplace in Western societies since 1980, advocating a return to pure laissez-faire economics and overtly commending a libertarian philosophy (whether secular or religious) underpinning the economic model – to the point of asserting that operating in the market is a moral activity and that market capitalism is a necessary basis of a democratic society. Theologically, the ecumenical critique has noted that this system is often presented as a total claim on human life and activity – a “religious” demand that verges on idolatry.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and its empire in the early 1990s seems to have justified the claim of capitalism to be the only possible alternative, while growing poverty\* and marginalization in an increasing number of countries raise serious questions about the ability of the system to respond adequately to human need.

The nature and scale of this revolution is reflected in the massive amount of literature written in response. Broadly, this has welcomed the fact that the value presumptions of economic theory are finally being admitted, while arguing that evidence from history and from other regions of the globe demonstrate that there is no unique ideological basis for economic activity. The point is also being made that, no matter how difficult it is, given the pervasive nature of economic activity, it is essential for society at large to lay down the conditions which economic activity must observe. It is for society to set the goals, to select the means, to concern itself

with the adverse consequences (such as global warming) and to choose good and reject bad ways of conducting business.

See also **economics; growth, limits to; property; socialism.**

OWEN NANKIVELL

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## CARIBBEAN

ECUMENICALLY, the term Caribbean is used for the region which includes the islands of the Caribbean sea and several countries in Central and South America which border on the Caribbean. While it is a region of considerable diversity, including linguistic, there is a common history of colonialism, neo-colonialism, imperialism, exploitation and conquest, as well as resistance, dignity and struggle for sovereignty.

The religious background of this region is varied. The indigenous people, most of whom have disappeared (except for those still resident in Dominica and to a lesser extent in Trinidad) because of the harsh treatments meted out to them, had their own religious practices which were discouraged by the settlers who came into the region. The slaves who were subsequently brought into the area from Africa also had their own religions, but many of these rites and practices were also repressed since they were considered by the “historic” churches to be demonic. The European colonizers imposed their Christocentric religions on both the indigenous people and the African slaves, so that outwardly Christianity became the religion of the newly settled colonies. Anglican-

ism and Catholicism were the major expressions of the faith.

Catholicism emerged where the French and the Spanish colonizers were predominant. This is reflected especially in the French Antilles, Cuba, Trinidad, St Lucia and Dominica. The Church of England gained prominence in the British Antilles. These historic patterns remain much the same today. Other major Christian groups which came into the region, notably the Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists and Moravians, came as missionary movements from the North.

After the period of slavery, the “indentured” workers brought from India, Java and China (the latter settled in Cuba) came with their own religions from their home countries. Therefore in countries such as Trinidad and Tobago, Surinam and Guyana, there are councils or inter-religious organizations which, from the point of view of the governments of the region, are even more important politically than the Christian councils themselves, since they represent the majority of the population.

In the initial period there was a certain ecumenical relationship among the churches as they worked for the common purpose of looking after the interests of the colonizers, providing education and other services required to maintain the status quo of stratified societies.

The present period in Caribbean religious and social history is marked by an emerging force which is changing the religious landscape of the region: Pentecostalism, one of the fastest growing religions in the region, which is drawing adherents from every sector of society. What was once seen as the poor people’s religion has quickly evolved into a sophisticated high-tech operation, with television and radio programmes covering the entire region. While much of it reflects North American influences, there is an attractiveness to the Pentecostal experience which is causing some concern to the more established churches in the Caribbean. Over the years many members of these churches have left and gone over to Pentecostalism.

The emergence of Pentecostalism in the Caribbean is creating its own pressure for the ecumenical movement in the region. For

the most part, these groups have stayed outside the movement, preferring to form their own alliances with denominations with which they have more common interests. In the very few instances where they have joined local ecumenical bodies, they have stayed very much on the fringes. The challenge facing the ecumenical movement in the Caribbean is to find a way of remaining open to these Pentecostal bodies so that they can be afforded the opportunity to be part of the movement, recognizing that their influence on the social, political and economic life of the region will be significant.

Among the challenges the ecumenical movement is facing in the Caribbean, heightened by the effects of globalization, are the financial dependence on countries outside the region, drug trafficking and addiction, AIDS, emigration, cuts in the national budgets for education and health, unemployment, less resources for dealing with natural and ecological disasters, alcoholism, family disintegration, increased foreign debt and a higher cost of living. The churches together are called to overcome these challenges, in the firm belief that “the right hand of God is writing in our land, writing with power and with love”.

See also **Caribbean Conference of Churches.**

MONRELLE WILLIAMS and CARLOS E. HAM

## CARIBBEAN CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES

THE CARIBBEAN Conference of Churches (CCC) – which grew out of two separate agencies, Christian Action for Development in the Caribbean (CADEC) and Action for the Renewal of the Churches (ARC) – was set up in Kingston, Jamaica, in November 1973, with delegates from 37 churches signing the inaugural document. It is one of three regional ecumenical bodies with Roman Catholic membership (the others are the Pacific and the Middle East). Under the new constitution adopted in Havana in 1997, councils of churches are now accepted as “fraternal members”.

The chief governing body is the general assembly, which meets every five years; in the interim, the Conference is run by a con-

tinuation committee. The general secretariat is located in Trinidad, the easternmost Caribbean island, and three sub-regional offices located in Jamaica, Antigua and Trinidad and Tobago have been responsible for administering a number of territories in their area. However, the 1997 assembly also decided that the CCC would have to downsize and it is envisaged that it will operate through councils of churches or other ecumenical bodies in the islands and territories throughout the region.

The CCC's role is to serve the churches in the cause of unity, renewal and joint action; to assist national and local Christian councils to promote consultation and common action; to provide and encourage programmes of study, research and experimentation, in order to help the churches understand the decisive action of God in Christ in terms of their culture, experience and needs; to enable exchange of information and insights between member churches and national and local Christian councils; and to promote collaboration with agencies of the WCC, the Roman Catholic Church and other bodies.

Two media channels, *Contact*, a monthly newspaper, and "Caribbean", a radio broadcast which reached over 14 regional stations, formerly disseminated information in the region; they have now been replaced by *Christian Action*, a quarterly newsletter.

A documentation centre with nearly 1000 volumes on topics such as appropriate development, technology, tourism, church and society, women, youth, religion, government and politics, provides research services and is open to students.

Since the CCC comprises 34 member churches in 37 countries and functions in four major language areas, the issue of education is crucial. A textbook on Christian education called *Fashion Me a People* was designed for use in the churches and, where possible, in the public education system at primary and secondary levels.

The CCC endeavours to analyze the problems of poverty and under-development in the region, identify the contributing factors, assess the capacity of communities to provide solutions from their own resources, and help with funding and training where necessary.

The preamble to the constitution states: "We are... deeply concerned to promote the

human liberation of our people, and are committed to the achievement of social justice and the dignity of all persons in our society. We desire to build up together our life in Christ and to share our experience for the mutual strengthening of the kingdom of God in the world." To achieve these objectives, apart from encouraging participation in joint worship and theological endeavour, the CCC through its agencies conducts national surveys, arranges consultations, collaborates with governmental and non-governmental organizations, and develops awareness through television, radio and education programmes.

In 1983 the mandate was formulated to include the "promotion of ecumenism and social change in obedience to Jesus Christ and in solidarity with the poor".

In collaboration with the United Nations Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), the Caribbean Conference has recently launched a Drug Demand Reduction Programme, aimed at greater awareness of the adverse effects of substance abuse and more responsible choices in this regard. It is also involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS, especially among young people, through educational consultations and seminars and the training of counsellors. It is a member of the Caribbean Community's (CARICOM) HIV/AIDS task force. Two other current programmes are uprooted peoples/Targeted Assistance for Montserratian Evacuees in the Caribbean (TAMEC), and disaster management.

The CCC has taken many initiatives in the areas of theology and Christian education, holistic development, youth and women's concerns, family life, human rights and communications. All stem from the assumption that, despite the divisiveness of a long colonial heritage, there is an authentic, unifying Caribbean identity through which Caribbean people must articulate their understanding of God's will for them and make their response to it.

See also **Caribbean**.

GERARD GRANADOS

## CARITAS INTERNATIONALIS

A CONFEDERATION of 120 national organizations, the primary mission of Caritas Inter-

nationalis (CI) is to assist the Roman Catholic Church as a whole to incarnate charity and justice in the world. This action ranges from emergency aid to long-range development, from health and social services for individuals to community organization, from rural outreach to urban centres, from social rehabilitation to prevention, planning and legislative advocacy.

Each national Caritas organization is autonomous; and in many countries the national organization is subdivided into diocesan- and parish-based organizations that work in close collaboration with the local bishops. The national Caritas organizations in turn receive their mandate from the national episcopal conferences. At the same time, Caritas collaborates closely on all levels with religious communities, Catholic lay movements, and others who sponsor similar socio-pastoral services in the community.

The general secretariat, headquartered in the Vatican, has three principal functions: spreading information within and outside the Caritas network, in order to deepen commitment and improve actions in charity and justice; coordination among CI members, especially in emergency projects; international representation of CI members and their joint interests before intergovernmental and other international religious and social service organizations (e.g. UNESCO, Food and Agriculture Organization, Council of Europe); and being strong advocates for the poor with these organizations.

Since Vatican II,\* CI has promoted ecumenical collaboration. It was a founding member of the Churches' Drought Action in Africa and a member of the International Ecumenical Consultation Committee for Refugees. On the national and local levels, Caritas organizations often work together with other church partners to provide for essential needs, promote integral human development and advocate on behalf of the voiceless and disenfranchised.

DUNCAN MACLAREN

## CASTE

CASTE is a social grouping peculiar to Indian society. *Varna* and *jati* are two Sanskrit terms for this phenomenon, both translated

in English as "caste". *Varna* (lit. "colour") refers to the classic fourfold division of the traditional society into Brahmins (priests), Kshatriyas (rulers and warriors), Vaisyas (merchants and peasants) and Sudras (workers and servants). This pattern, present in all the descriptions of the caste system, does not fully explain the existence of many thousands of small groups, or *jatis* (from Sanskrit root *jata*, meaning "born"), each with its own assigned position in relation to the rest of the groups.

The origin of caste is unknown, and the ambiguity of the term makes understanding the system and phenomenon difficult. A close link between caste and occupational differentiation is quite obvious. Each sub-grouping is assigned a particular job in the village. Inextricably bound up with the system of caste are the concepts of ritual purity and pollution. Some jobs are considered "impure", e.g. scavenging, handling dead animals and working with leather. The sub-castes engaged in these are considered impure and consequently contact with them is thought to pollute a higher-caste person. However, caste is not just based on occupation; and it is more complex than distinctions of race or class, though it shares some of the features of both.

Religion provided some legitimation to the caste system. Mythologies picture the origin of humankind in terms in which caste differentiations are implicit. Rigid prescriptions about food, dress, behaviour, occupation and social distance for each caste were enforced in the name of religion, and ritual fortified and perpetuated these divisions. The doctrines of karma and rebirth, linking faithful performance of one's caste duty in this life to the possibility of upward mobility in successive births, has tempered the severity of the caste system and in a sense justified caste practices in the popular Hindu mind.

Caste is thus a hierarchical system legitimated by tradition and religion, but in effect it functions as a social mechanism by which the dominant groups maintain their power and authority in the village. A harsh concomitant of this system is the marginalization of a section of the population as "casteless" – the "untouchables" who have been exploited for ages in Indian society. Although the inhuman aspects of the caste sys-

tem are undeniable, in traditional society it did provide a sense of security and a source of a stable order.

From the time of India's independence, its leaders have introduced many legislative, administrative and social measures to end discrimination based on caste. Modern education, secular jobs and migration to urban centres have weakened the caste system in recent times. Dining together and other forms of social intercourse between castes are now fairly common, although intercaste marriages are still relatively rare and violence by upper castes against lower castes is not uncommon. Caste consciousness and caste as an identity principle continue to be strong among Indian people. Caste is a nexus of associative relationships which are reshaped by cultural, religious, psychological and economic factors, and there is no sector of life in India, private or public, that it does not permeate.

Caste has become one of the main organizing principles for the collective struggle of people for their rights. Considerations of caste have a great deal of influence in politics, and caste itself is being politicized. In a democracy, where numbers count, smaller sub-castes are merged into larger units and act as pressure groups. While the higher castes organize to consolidate their power, the lower castes and untouchables use their caste base for militant struggles for justice.

Gandhi used the term *harijan* (lit. "people of God") for untouchables and lower-caste people, but many of them reject it, calling themselves *dalit*. Dalit Christians have developed their own liberation theology – *dalit* theology – and have been organizing themselves to secure greater recognition in church and society. One of the incentives for converting to Christianity, Islam or, to a lesser extent, Buddhism has been the desire to escape caste-based discriminations. However, the caste ethos is so pervasive that it has made inroads into other religions, including Islam and Christianity. All the main religious divisions of India have in some way been affected by status evaluation based on the pollution concept. In the state of Kerala, for instance, separate churches have been formed for converts to Christianity from lower castes. Obviously, such divisions have an adverse effect on the fellowship in the church.

Studies on caste and its manifestations in the church and in society at large by the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society (Bangalore) have revealed several new trends in caste relationships as a result of the system's adaptability and demonstrated the deep influence of caste on the life of the churches in many parts of India. WCC studies on racial and ethnic relations in the 1960s did not deal with the issue of caste. In the 1970s, with the launching of the Programme to Combat Racism,\* some interest was shown in the issue, but it was not followed up. The sixth assembly (Vancouver 1983) mentioned caste as part of the "web of oppression and injustice", along with racism, sexism and class domination, in addressing the issue of "Struggling for Justice and Human Dignity". Subsequently, the Council played an active role in supporting the development of a solidarity movement among dalits in India, and in seeking to draw the attention of the churches internationally to this issue.

K.C. ABRAHAM

■ M.G. Castairs, *The Twice Born*, London, Hogarth, 1968 ■ C. von Fürer-Haimendorf ed., *Caste and Kin in Nepal, India and Ceylon*, Bombay, Asia Publ., 1966 ■ J. Maliekal, *Caste in India Today*, Madras, Centre for Social Action, 1980.

## CASTRO, EMILIO

B. 2 May 1927, Montevideo, Uruguay. Following a period as director of the WCC's commission on World Mission and Evangelism, 1973-83, Castro became WCC general secretary, 1985-92. He studied at Union Theological Seminary, Buenos Aires, 1944-50, and was ordained in the Evangelical Methodist Church of Uruguay in 1948. Under a WCC scholarship, he pursued post-graduate work in Basel in 1953-54 under the guidance of Karl Barth. Returning to Latin America, he was pastor of Methodist churches in La Paz, Bolivia, 1954-56, and in Montevideo, Uruguay, 1957-65. His church and ecumenical activities have been numerous: in Latin America, he has served as professor of contemporary theological thought at the Mennonite Seminary, Montevideo, 1959-64; chairman of the Fellowship of

Christians and Jews, Uruguay, 1962-66; coordinator of the Commission for Evangelical Unity in Latin America (UNELAM), 1965-72; executive secretary of the South American Association of Theological Schools, 1966-69; and president of the Evangelical Methodist Church of Uruguay, 1970-72. Elsewhere, his ecumenical responsibilities have been with the Christian Peace Conference as vice-president, 1964-68, and as member of its working committee, 1968-69; and with the Agency for Christian Literature Development as chairman, 1970-72. He received a doctoral degree from the University of Lausanne in 1984. His attendance at many conferences has included the WCC assemblies of 1961 and 1968, the Life and Mission conference of the World Student Christian Federation in Strasbourg, and the 1966 Church and Society conference in Geneva.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ E. Castro, *Amidst Revolution* (Belfast, Christian Journals, 1975) ■ *Freedom in Mission. The Perspective of the Kingdom of God: An Ecumenical Inquiry*, WCC, 1985 ■ *When We Pray Together*, WCC, 1989.

## CATECHESIS

CATECHESIS, used in the New Testament only in its verbal form, refers to oral teaching about the faith.\* Later, it came to be applied to the specific teaching given to those preparing for baptism\* (catechumens) or recently admitted into membership of the church.\* Catechesis included the essential elements of the doctrine, liturgy and life of the church: the Apostles' Creed,\* the commandments, the sacraments\* and prayers (esp. the Lord's prayer). As the practice of infant baptism became more common, the institution of catechesis disappeared, but slowly a special instruction for children developed. This led in turn to the codification of such instruction in books known as catechisms,\* especially at the time of the Reformation, e.g. Luther's small catechism (1529), the Heidelberg catechism (1563), and the catechism of the council of Trent (1566). Within Orthodoxy there was *The Orthodox Confession of the Catholic and Apostolic Eastern Church* (mid-17th century). While some

of these catechisms are still in use today, many churches have felt the need for modern catechisms that would meet more directly the needs and questions of both children and adults.

Catechesis can be a means of perpetuating the division among the churches but can also contribute to the growth of their unity\* and communion.\* The synod of bishops (Rome 1977) on catechesis in our time insisted that catechesis must create and foster a true desire for unity and facilitate involvement in the ecumenical movement. Such catechesis would enable people "to understand better those Christians who belong to other churches or ecclesial communities while also preparing them for dialogue and fraternal relations with them". Or it could involve a teaching which emphasizes agreements and common witness,\* rather than particular denominational understandings of faith.

Several churches now have such common catechetical programmes for Sunday and day schools which aim to bring to the fore agreements and not disagreements, common witness and not divided witness. Distinctions are being made strictly for interpreting church history rather than for characterizing the present situation. This common catechetical material is not always a sign of growing mutual understanding, acknowledgment and collaboration of churches which have been separated for centuries; rather, it is in some cases a response to pressure from a government or society for a common Christian witness\* (e.g. in Kenya and Ghana). Others are unofficial statements of faith in catechetical form like the *Common Catechism: A Christian Book of Faith* (1975), by Roman Catholics and Protestants. How far the agreement reached in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* will have consequences for the teaching of the churches and for their catechesis of baptism or eucharist is still uncertain.

ULRICH BECKER

■ *Apostolic Exhortation Catechesi Tradendae of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to the Episcopate, the Clergy and the Faithful of the Entire Catholic Church on "Catechesis in Our Time"*, Rome, 1979 ■ U. Becker, "Catechetical Implications", in *Ecumenical Perspectives on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, M.

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## CATECHISM

IN THE FIRST centuries of the church, the term "catechism" referred to the process or method of instruction for catechumens on their way to baptism;\* later it was extended to encompass religious instruction in general, making the term largely co-extensive with "catechesis".\* In the 16th century, however, "catechism" became identified almost exclusively with manuals of instruction in the basics of the Christian faith. In book form, the catechism became the primary instrument of religious education. Short catechetical summaries of faith are as old as the church, and some manuals were certainly used for catechizing in the middle ages, but not until the time of the Reformation (and the invention of the printing press) did catechisms proper flourish.

## HISTORY, NATURE, USE

Attempts at manuals for instruction prior to Luther include the *Children's Questions* of the Bohemian Brethren (1502) and the *Catechismus* of Andreas Althamer (1528), the first book actually to carry the title "Catechism". But it was the two classic catechisms of Luther (small catechism, 1529; large catechism, 1530) which opened the floodgates for the proliferation of these catechetical manuals. The context of Luther's catechisms was clearly homiletical: they grew out of his preaching and were supposed to be used for and in connection with the sermon. These two catechisms themselves became the basis of many others. Reformed catechisms followed soon after, among them those of Martin Bucer (1537), John Calvin (1537, 1541-42), and Heinrich Bullinger (1561).

As the number of catechisms grew, their subject matter also expanded. The traditional core material of the catechisms consists of the creed, the ten commandments,

the Lord's prayer and teachings on the sacraments (and, for the Roman Catholic tradition, the Hail Mary) – core elements of the church's doctrine, worship and life. Catechisms, however, rapidly became more and more detailed: Bullinger's Reformed catechism of 1561 contained nearly 300 questions, Joseph Deharbe's famous *Catholic Catechism* of 1847 had 750. Catechisms typically presented their material in question-and-answer form, with the student expected to memorize the answers.

Catechisms could thus serve both as a book of instruction for the catechized and as a manual for the catechist. Some Reformation catechisms were also clearly designed as confessions of faith and doctrinal statements and as such became part of the confessional documents (*Bekenntnisschriften*) of a particular tradition, as is the case with the Heidelberg catechism of 1563, Luther's two catechisms, which were included in the Book of Concord (1580), and the two catechisms compiled by the Westminster assembly (1643-53) (the shorter has been in regular use among Presbyterian, Congregationalist and Baptist churches). The Anglican Book of Common Prayer included a catechism before the confirmation service; it was used in the preparation for confirmation.

Roman Catholic catechisms flourished in the 16th century in response to the challenges of the Reformation. Those of Peter Canisius and Robert Bellarmine enjoyed a wide reception; and in 1566 the *Catechismus Romanus*, written under order from the council of Trent,\* was published as a teaching instrument for parish priests.

As the number of catechisms grew and their subject matter expanded, apologetics began to play an increasingly important part. Catechisms became more and more consciously confessional, spelling out in detail the particular identity of one ecclesial tradition over against others. Often, catechisms came to be simplified compendia of scholastic theology. The emphasis lay clearly on intellectual adherence to a set of doctrinal propositions. (That catechisms were used not only for religious instruction can be seen by the fact that some of them contained alphabet primers or Latin grammars.) Yet despite the "confessionalism" of most catechisms, some ecumenical borrow-

ing did take place: the Jesuit Edmond Auger, for example, consciously modelled his 1563 catechism on Calvin's catechetical work.

With Christianity's entry into non-Western countries, European catechisms were often simply transplanted directly. In some cases, translations into indigenous languages came within the first generation of mission work: in 1582-83 the third council of Lima provided for the translation of a catechism into the indigenous languages of Quechua and Aymara. In the early period of Jesuit missionary outreach in Japan, adaptations in content and language style to the Japanese culture were attempted – while at the same time a Latin guidebook for catechists was published under the title *Catechismus Christianae Fidei in Quo Secta Japonenses Confutantur*. Catechisms were never without culturally conditioned presuppositions (and weaknesses): in the USA, the Anglican "catechism to be used by the teachers in the religious instruction of persons of colour" from 1837 taught slaves very clearly that their state was ordained by God and that they should be content in it.

Both in Europe and the New World, catechisms were the prime instrument of religious education for nearly 400 years. With the introduction of compulsory education in the 18th and 19th centuries, the main use of catechisms came to be for religious education in schools; the method of learning remained that of memorizing and reciting the text. The Eastern churches generally remained without catechisms, except under Western influence (see e.g. the catechism of Metropolitan Platon of Moscow, d.1812).

### CURRENT SITUATION

The 20th-century rethinking of catechesis and renewal in catechetical methods led to a new approach and orientation in the nature and use of catechisms. The traditional scholastic compendium gave way to a veritable flood of new catechisms which take account of the anthropological foundations and cultural context of faith as well as the biblical-narrative core of the *depositum fidei* and the liturgical life of the church. Most have moved away from the standard question-and-answer format to a more narrati-

val, participatory and situation-oriented approach. Current catechisms typically adapt their structure, content and pedagogical techniques to the age group they are addressing and its psychological make-up. Catechisms for children, for example, generally use very simple language and a variety of images, stories and songs.

A clear innovation was the publication of the so-called Dutch catechism in 1966. This Roman Catholic catechism for adults is structured around two foci: the concrete situations and questions of life, and the witness of faith. This dialogical approach of relating human experience and the good news seems to have found acceptance in many catechisms over a broad range of ecclesial traditions. The German *Evangelischer Gemeindekatechismus* (1979; US ed., *Evangelical Catechism*, 1982) begins with human experience, then moves to information, reflection, discussion and personal appropriation. It includes pictures, meditative texts, prayers and songs from a variety of ecclesial, geographical and cultural backgrounds. *Vamos Caminando* (the English sub-title calls it "A Peruvian Catechism") is even more situation-oriented. With a clear view towards liberating conscientization, it starts with reflections on the daily life of *campesinos* in the northern Andes and evidences great appreciation for the local cultural context and its importance in the growth of faith. In this respect, it is typical of new catechisms in non-Western contexts, which are more often governed by basic life themes than by doctrinal concerns. There are, however, also catechisms which move in a more conservative direction: the 1986 catechism of the British Methodist church, for example, maintains the traditional question-and-answer format. The new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1993) takes its structure from the traditional division into doctrine, sacraments and commandments; it is intended as a reference book for national and diocesan catechisms.

An ecumenical Protestant-Catholic catechetical venture, edited by J. Feiner and L. Vischer, was published in 1973 under the title *Neues Glaubensbuch*, but catechisms on the whole have not been an area of extensive ecumenical initiative. With the growth of ecumenical commitment, however, polemics

against other churches have been eliminated from most catechisms. Apologetic emphases have also given way to a renewed concentration on the basics of Christian doctrine, worship and life. (There are, of course, exceptions; e.g. the recent edition of A. Makrakis's *The Sacred and Holy Catechesis of the Orthodox Church as Taught by the Holy Spirit and His Solemn Instruments from the Day of Pentecost to the Last Ecumenical Council*, 1885, 2nd ed. 1969.)

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS

A concrete outcome of the Faith and Order convergence document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* and the study "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today" could perhaps be something like a "Basic Ecumenical Catechism", which could serve as a model and reference book for denominational catechisms. A number of fundamental questions related to the very nature of catechisms would need to be faced in undertaking such a venture, however. Catechisms are instruments for the transmission and explication of the faith. For most ecclesial traditions, they do not belong to the symbols of faith themselves. Moreover, they clearly presuppose a book culture. Thus in primarily oral cultures, with clearly established patterns of oral teaching, they may not be the most helpful tool for the faithful transmission of the gospel. Furthermore, in a *post*-book culture, as is beginning to appear in certain sub-cultures of the West, a catechism may not be a helpful tool either – for very different reasons. The fundamental question facing the churches is: What will best serve the transmission of the faith in the diversity of the one-church-to-be in the ages to come?

TERESA BERGER

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### CATHOLIC BIBLICAL FEDERATION

THE CATHOLIC Biblical Federation (CBF) is a world fellowship of administratively distinct international and local Roman Catholic organizations committed to biblical-pastoral ministry. The CBF is responsible to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity\* (formerly SPCU).

Because the Second Vatican Council\* had required that "easy access to sacred scripture be provided for all the Christian faithful" (*Dei Verbum* 22), Cardinal Augustin Bea, SPCU president, set up an SPCU office for common Bible work. In 1968 he convened a meeting of representatives of Catholic biblical associations, episcopal biblical commissions and religious publishing houses; on their urging, the SPCU, under its new president Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, founded in 1969 the World Catholic Federation for the Biblical Apostolate. In 1990 its name was changed to Catholic Biblical Federation.

In supporting the work of Catholic organizations for biblical-pastoral ministry, the CBF promotes translations and distribution of the scriptures; use, understanding and study of the Bible among clergy and laity; and pastoral care solidly founded on the scriptures. It also organizes, assists and maintains coordination centres for biblical-pastoral ministry and interdiocesan and international sharing of biblical courses, study materials and lectures. It cooperates in matters of mutual concern with the United Bible Societies and with organizations of other churches (see **Bible Societies**).

The CBF has two membership categories: full members are organizations officially entrusted by bishops conferences; associate members are other Catholic organizations in the biblical-pastoral ministry. Headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany, the CBF has 90 full members and 215 associate members in 126 countries. Its quarterly *Bulletin Dei Verbum* appears in English, French, German and Spanish. Its fifth ple-

nary assembly was held in 1996 in Hong Kong.

CLARA MARÍA DÍAZ

■ *Dei Verbum*, 30th ann., nos 52-53, 1999.

## CATHOLIC CONFERENCE FOR ECUMENICAL QUESTIONS

IN APPLICATION of the 1949 letter of the Holy Office *Ecclesiae Catholicae*, which permitted Catholic experts, with the approval of their local bishop, to participate in discussions “on faith and morals”, Johannes Willebrands and Frans Thijssen travelled through Europe to enlist RC theologians, historians, biblical scholars, liturgists and missiologists in taking seriously Protestant and Orthodox ecumenical efforts, especially WCC faith and order issues. With the approval of Rome, they founded the Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Questions (CCEQ) – at that time, Europe’s only transnational organization of Catholic scholars.

With a fluctuating list of 70-80 scholars, the CCEQ held nine study meetings in the 1950s and early 1960s: in Fribourg (Switzerland, 1952), Utrecht (1953), Mainz (1954), Paris (1955), Chevotogne (1957), Paderborn (1959), Gazzada (1960), Strasbourg (1961) and Gazzada (1963). Between meetings, an executive committee coordinated relations with the WCC and the different Vatican authorities. The president was Cardinal Willebrands, and his contact person in the Vatican, designated by Pius XII, was the Jesuit Augustin Bea.

The WCC’s general secretary, W.A. Visser ‘t Hooft, met often in confidence with his fellow Dutchman Willebrands. The WCC was able to turn to the CCEQ for advice, reports and studies. For example, the CCEQ prepared documents on the major themes of the Evanston (1954) and New Delhi (1961) WCC assemblies.

From this network of scholars came the original staff of Pope John XXIII’s Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, with Willebrands as the secretary, and most of its first body of consultants. Many CCEQ members were among the key drafters of several Vatican II documents, e.g. Yves Congar, Charles Moeller, Gustave Thils, Jérôme

Hamer, Balthasar Fischer, Karl Rahner, Johannes Feiner, Maurice Bévenot, Pierre Duprey and Emmanuel Lanne.

TOM STRANSKY

■ “1951-1963, Johannes Willebrands and the CCEQ”, *IS*, 101, 1999.

## CATHOLICITY

LIKE THE TERM “Christianity”, “catholicity” is still an “essentially contested concept”. It has been claimed exclusively by Roman Catholics, some of whom have believed in the past that *Roman* was a fifth “mark” of the church in addition to the four traditional ones, i.e. one, holy, catholic and apostolic; Cardinal Bellarmine (1542-1621) thought the term “catholic” had been a synonym for “Roman” since at least the 12th century. On the other hand, Luther wanted to replace “catholic” with “Christian” in the translations of the classical Christian creeds,\* as if the word had been spoiled by Rome’s departure from classical catholicity in introducing innovations not legitimated by the scriptures. The quality of catholicity has also been claimed by Anglo-Catholics as well as the advocates of Reformed Catholicity (e.g. in the Netherlands Reformed Church in the 1950s). Protestant advocates of Reformed Catholicity have been criticized as “Romanizers”; while puritans, evangelicals and liberals alike have argued that Roman “catholicity” is “a legalistic religion in which divine authority was falsely claimed for human ecclesiastical regulations”. Eastern Orthodoxy tends to understand the concept of catholicity in terms of the “fullness” of life received by way of the apostolic and patristic church. At the first assembly of the WCC in 1948, fundamental differences were noted between member churches which were “Catholic” and those which were “Protestant”: the former emphasized “the visible continuity of the church in the apostolic succession of the episcopate”, the latter “the initiative of the word of God\* and the response of faith,\* focused on the doctrine of justification\* *sola fide* (by faith alone)”.

To remove “catholicity” from the sphere of ecclesiastical politics and theological dispute which has been its main context for

about 1000 years, it is necessary to understand more precisely how this concept has been used in the past and to see how it is being re-defined and re-applied in the ecumenical process today.

### HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT

The adjective “catholic” is derived from the Greek adverbial phrase *kath’ holou*: “in general”, “universal”, “on the whole”, as opposed to what is particular, individual or partial. It also denotes “completeness” (the sense preferred by the Orthodox churches). Other than in Acts 4:18 (where it appears in the negative expression “not to speak *at all*”), the term is not used in the New Testament: hence the reluctance of Christians who reject non-biblical doctrines and non-biblical concepts to use it in practice. For most Christians, however, its use is legitimated by its occurrence in the Apostles’ Creed\* and the so-called Nicene Creed.\*

As early as the 2nd century the term was used to distinguish between the catholic epistles (which were addressed to the *whole* of the church) and letters written to individuals or to local churches. The catholic church was also conceived to be co-extensive with the whole of the world (the *oikoumene*): “the whole catholic church throughout the inhabited world” (*Martyrdom of Polycarp* 8.1). “Catholicity” almost always carried with it a qualitative meaning, and a normative sense attaches to it: “Wherever Christ Jesus is, there is the catholic church” (Ignatius, *Letter to the Smyrnaeans* 8.2). As early as about 150 it meant truly orthodox with respect to doctrines and beliefs. “Catholic” now denoted the one true church, as opposed to all other heretical or schismatic bodies (see **heresy**, **schism**). This notion was further strengthened during the conflicts with the Gnostics and Donatists.

All these nuances can be found together as early as 350, e.g. in the catechetical lectures of Cyril of Jerusalem: “The church is called catholic because it is spread throughout the world, from end to end of the earth; also because it teaches universally and completely all the doctrines which man should know concerning things visible and invisible, heavenly and earthly; and also because it subjects to right worship all mankind, rulers and ruled, lettered and unlettered; further

because it treats and heals universally every sort of sin committed by soul and body, and possesses in itself every conceivable virtue, whether in deeds, words or in spiritual gifts of every kind” (lecture 18).

Universal extension, soundness of doctrine, adaptation to the needs of all sorts and conditions of men and women, together with moral and spiritual perfection – all are combined here to demonstrate what the complex concept of catholicity entails. A similar statement is found in the *Commonitorium* of Vincent of Lérins (before 450): “Within the catholic church itself the greatest care must be taken that we hold that which has been believed everywhere, always and by all. For this is truly and properly catholic, as the very force and effect of the word declares, which includes all things with practical universality. But this will be found precisely in this way, if we follow that which is universal, that which is ancient and that about which there is consent.”

Here, the notion of development of doctrine (which Newman subsequently applied to legitimate later Roman Catholic doctrinal innovations) is not entirely excluded, because there must also be progress in understanding, in knowledge, in wisdom. In the middle ages, however, there was little development with respect to the notion of catholicity, as these comments of Thomas Aquinas on the Apostles’ Creed demonstrate: “The church is catholic, i.e. universal, first with respect to place, because it is everywhere in the world... Secondly, the church is universal with respect to the state of men, because no one is rejected, whether master or slave, male or female... Thirdly, it is universal with respect to time. For some have said that the church should last until a certain time, but this is false, because the church began from the time of Abel and will last until the end of the world... [But] after the close of the age it will remain in heaven.”

However, Roman Catholics began to emphasize that “whoever does not agree with the Roman church is not to be considered Catholic” (a proposition stated explicitly by Pope Gregory VII in 1075). This position later allowed “Protestant” and “Catholic” to develop into antitheses when Protestants no longer agreed with Catholics, especially in Protestant circles which believed Roman

Catholicism to be the cult of the antichrist\* and in Reformed churches which abandoned such traditional structures as episcopacy.\* The Orthodox churches also contested communion\* with Rome as a criterion of catholicity, although some became "Uniate churches" by accepting the universal jurisdiction of the pope. Anglicans and some Lutherans, however, continued to accept the classical catholicity of the early church, while insisting that the Reformation was also necessary. Thus Melanchthon's *De Ap- pellatione Ecclesiae Catholicae*: "It is one thing to be called Catholic, something else to be really Catholic. Those are truly called Catholic who embrace the doctrine of the truly Catholic Church, i.e. that which is supported by the witness of all time, of all ages, which believes what the prophets and apostles taught, and which does not tolerate factions, heresies and heretical assemblies. We must all be Catholic, i.e. embrace this word which the rightly thinking church holds, separate from, and untangled with, sects warring against that Word."

Despite the schisms between East and West, Rome and the Reformation, a number of moderates in most Protestant groups and in the mainstream of Counter-Reformation Catholicism continually strove to reunite the divided churches by retrieving the classical understanding of catholicity before agreement with the see of Rome developed into a criterion of genuine catholicity and before Christianity was equated with the position adopted by the Roman Catholic Church (RCC). A statement of the irenic position is found in an Anglican report on "Catholicity" (1947): "In our divided Christendom we do not believe that any existing institution or group of institutions gives a full and balanced representation of the true and primitive catholicity. It is the recovery of the principles of that catholicity which is our quest."

But it was quite impossible to reunite divided churches as long as the RCC insisted that full communion with an unreformed papacy and agreement with the whole of Roman Catholic teaching were acid tests of genuine catholicity. For example, when Anglo-Catholics such as Edward Pusey began to advocate a dialogue with Rome, the holy office issued the following declaration in 1864: "No other church is Catholic except

that which is built on the one individual Peter, and which grows up into one body closely joined and knitted together in the unity of faith and love." The response of the RCC to the ecumenical appeals by the patriarch of Constantinople and by the Anglican bishops in 1920, to the first meeting of Life and Work in 1925 and of Faith and Order in 1927, and to the semi-official Anglican-Roman Catholic conversations at Malines, in Belgium, in the early 1920s was negative (as is shown by the encyclical *Mortalium Animos* of 6 Jan. 1928). Nevertheless, at least some Roman Catholics were already willing to enter into a dialogue with non-Catholics in order to reunite divided churches. The main question was: When could such unofficial and semi-official contacts become official? And when would the RCC itself respond positively to the ecumenical imperative? This was eventually a two-sided process, because many Protestants remained unwilling to engage in ecumenical dialogue with the RCC before it had given clear indications that it was also willing to reform itself. This did not happen until the Second Vatican Council.\*

In 1928 Karl Barth published an essay on "Roman Catholicism: A Question to the Protestant Church", in which he argued that Protestantism must allow itself to be critically questioned by Roman Catholicism. Barth believed that Roman Catholics, unlike liberal Protestants, had not abandoned the substance of the Christian faith. If forced to choose between Friedrich Schleiermacher, Albrecht Ritschl and Ernst Troeltsch on the one hand and Roman Catholicism on the other, Barth would choose the latter. Nevertheless, Roman Catholicism had failed to make the church subservient to the word of God. Like Protestant modernism, Roman Catholicism had ultimately made the church dependent upon itself. Paul Tillich would argue that "the Protestant principle" must ultimately be united with "Catholic substance". On the Roman Catholic side, moreover, Louis Bouyer argued in the late 1950s that the positive principles of the Reformation (such as the primacy of divine grace, the justifying power of faith, the unique mediation of Christ in the process of salvation\* and the total sovereignty of God) could indeed be interpreted in a Catholic sense.

## CATHOLICITY IN CONCILIAR AND POST-CONCILIAR ECUMENISM

The Second Vatican Council nuanced the Counter-Reformation understanding of Catholicism in a remarkable way. In *Lumen Gentium* (8) catholicity is no longer assumed to be Roman Catholicism pure and simple, but is treated primarily as an attribute of the church of Christ, which *subsists in* the RCC. The fullness of catholicity can be obtained only in full communion with Rome. But this does not imply that churches not in communion with Rome have not preserved at least some of the essential qualities of catholicity.

The Vatican II Decree on Ecumenism\* states explicitly that essential features of Catholicism have been preserved in churches such as the Anglican communion and Orthodoxy (13,18). The entire heritage of the Orthodox churches "belongs to the full catholic and apostolic character of the church". It is also admitted that divisions in the church "prevent the church from effecting the fullness of catholicity", which makes it difficult for the church to express its "full catholicity". Furthermore, the manifold variety of local churches "with one aspiration" (i.e. which share the same purpose) constitutes evidence for the catholicity of the undivided church. Legitimate differences no longer impede full catholic unity: indeed, they actually "enrich and strengthen it" (13, 23). On this basis, A. Dulles has stated that Vatican II conceives catholicity in the mode of "reconciled diversity".\* The main question now is whether practice will eventually confirm the theory.

In 1968 an 18-member joint theological commission, half Roman Catholics, half representatives of the WCC, produced a document on "Catholicity and Apostolicity". Its most important emphases are on pneumatology and Christology. The church attains catholicity to the extent that it expresses the truth and charity of Christ and the Holy Spirit. The full manifestation of catholicity, moreover, will not occur until the return of Christ in glory, which also adds an important eschatological dimension to the notion of catholicity. Four aberrations were signalled: the restriction of communion to certain races, nations or social classes; the formation of sects or parties within the body of

the church; denominational pride to the detriment of others; and the misuse of the concept of catholicity in order to legitimate doctrines and practices which are not congruent with the Christian identity.

This is consistent with the report presented to the WCC's fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968) on "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church". The gulf between Catholic and Protestant is now much less apparent than it was in 1948 at Amsterdam. Catholicity is defined as "the quality by which the church expresses the fullness, the integrity, and the totality of life in Christ". It is argued that catholicity cannot be separated from the notions of unity, holiness and apostolicity. There must also be a balance between continuity and renewal. Finally, in the ecumenical process, the church of Christ might achieve an even broader catholicity. "The purpose of Christ is to bring people of all times, of all races, of all places, of all conditions, into an organic and living unity in Christ by the Holy Spirit under the universal fatherhood of God. This unity is not solely external; it has a deeper, internal dimension, which is also expressed by the term 'catholicity'. Catholicity reaches its completion when what God has already begun in history is finally disclosed and fulfilled."

No one suggests, though, that Christians should simply wait passively until the second coming or until the end of time in order to create the right kind of catholicity in this world of space and time.

See also **apostolicity, church, unity.**

PETER STAPLES

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## CENTRAL AMERICA

FOR YEARS ecumenism in Central America has not been a living experience, largely due to

the type of Protestantism found there and the political convulsions that have racked the region since the 1960s. The last two decades have been marked by armed conflicts in pursuit of a just, alternative model of society, and militarization in the region has reached new heights. Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala have been the scene of cruel struggles, which have been played out between the dynamic of hope and the reality of death and destruction.

A conservative ideological background in both society and church has blocked the acceptance of the presuppositions of the various ecumenically oriented movements, especially as the avant-garde organizations clearly question the social and ecclesiastical status quo. Because the conservatives, especially with the support of North American Protestantism, are more concerned with perpetuating their own institutions than with church cooperation, any ecumenical endeavour is considered dangerous, and the very word "ecumenical" is taboo.

The political situation and the struggles for change and social transformation have brought to light two attitudes among Christians in the region: involvement in the struggles and a clear option for change on the one hand, and absolute rejection of such efforts on the other. Ecumenical experiences in the region live with the same tension and consequently ecumenism is not among the priorities on any church agenda.

Three attitudes towards the ecumenical movement are discernible. First is outright opposition because the WCC is perceived as doctrinally deviant and politically leftist. This may be the majority position. A second attitude is openness to ecumenical issues, while carefully avoiding involvement in ecumenical activities or even using the word "ecumenical". This is the stance of the evangelical and socially "progressive" churches which are trying to protect those small spaces for cooperation and unity that have been won with considerable effort. Meanwhile, they are attempting to re-educate their congregations towards a better understanding of Christian unity: an excellent example of this effort is a pamphlet published by the Baptist Association of El Salvador. A third attitude is that of the official representatives and staff of regional

and national ecumenical organizations: they proceed with their business with little concern for what the very conservative churches think about them.

The anti-ecumenical attitudes of the Protestant missions are in part in reaction to the historic churches. They were also influenced by their experiences of mission fields such as Asia and Africa. The decision of the Edinburgh conference of 1910 to exclude Latin America from the legitimate fields for Protestant mission was in variance with the vision of the evangelical and revivalist churches in the USA. To further their missionary strategy towards Latin America, these churches worked towards greater cooperation among themselves, and their efforts culminated in the Panama congress of 1916. However, actions did not match the rhetoric. The extreme individualism (and messianic self-awareness) of 19th-century US Protestant missions worked rather towards intensifying the differences. With few exceptions, their doctrinal tenets caused them to disparage the Catholic church for obscurantism and thus to paint the region in sombre colours: Latin America was a land of darkness and its people ignorant; what these countries needed was "the light of the Protestant gospel".

### CATHOLIC-PROTESTANT DIALOGUE

If by ecumenism we mean a meeting of minds between the various confessions, then ecumenicity is non-existent in Central America. It has taken place neither at the ecclesiastical level nor by the initiative of the national evangelical alliances. Both the Catholic and the Protestant hierarchies have proceeded with their separate agendas, maintaining an ideological intolerance that has excluded the possibility of any kind of intrafaith dialogue.\* The Roman Catholic Church, because of historical precedence, claims the right to control the religious needs of the people. Protestant churches consider themselves sent by God to re-evangelize the people with a purer and more practical gospel. These conflicting starting points account for Roman Catholic attempts to destroy the early Protestant movement in Central America, as well as for the pugnacious attitude of many Protestant missionaries.

The late 1960s and early 1970s saw various short-lived ecumenical and evangelical cooperative movements. On the ecumenical side, the best known was the Unión Evangélica Latinoamericana (UNELAM), whose first secretary was Emilio Castro. It was the fore-runner of the Latin American Council of Churches\* (CLAI). The most successful evangelical movement was the Evangelism in Depth programme of the Latin American Mission, with headquarters in Costa Rica. For periods of about a year in each case, virtually every Protestant church and agency in Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Honduras worked together in a concerted programme of "saturation evangelism". From there the programme moved to several South American countries and to other parts of the world. However, there was never a willingness by the participating churches to engage in dialogue with the Catholic church.

After a period of stand-off since Vatican II,\* relations with the Catholic church have worsened in recent years. For the most part, non-dialogue continues to be the rule in an era when Catholicism is losing ground and Protestant churches and groups are growing. This same phenomenon, however, has contributed to polarization within Protestantism itself.

Pentecostalism is present in a variety of forms in Central America. Its rapid growth has highlighted a number of questions, both for the historical Protestant churches and for the Roman Catholic Church. The Pentecostal phenomenon is another of the ecumenical challenges in the region; these churches have made an important contribution to the ecumenical movement in some countries (see *Pentecostals*).

Not everything has been negative. Outstanding Catholic and Protestant leaders have taken the risk of stepping across the boundaries of prejudice to engage in dialogue. Two early exponents of ecumenical dialogue were R. Kenneth Strachan, general secretary of the Latin American Mission and founder of Evangelism in Depth, and Augusto Cotto, a Baptist pastor in El Salvador. In 1964 Strachan discussed mission and evangelism with the staff of the WCC and its Commission on World Mission and Evangelism in the pages of the *International Review*

of *Mission*. He also met with Catholics in a televised debate on Vatican II. More recently, other noteworthy Central American Protestants have taken similar risks. Outstanding in the Catholic church was Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero. He did not hesitate to engage in dialogue with Baptists, Lutherans and other Protestants who shared his concerns over the political crisis in El Salvador.

Some efforts at intra-Protestant dialogue have been encouraged by the Confraternidad Evangélica Latinoamericana (CONELA) as well as by CLAI.

While efforts to involve the Central American churches in an ecumenical dialogue have not been successful, the work done by CLAI nevertheless deserves to be mentioned, notably its contribution to peace and to the development of Central American ministries. Outstanding here is a movement called Pastores y Pastoras Mesoamericanos, which seeks to encourage the churches to include on their agenda concrete action for reconciliation, women's participation, ecumenical dialogue, liturgical renewal, and so on.

At the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, peace processes began in some countries in the region, first El Salvador and Nicaragua and subsequently Guatemala. This period saw an increase in interdenominational activities which, though not calling themselves ecumenical, did contribute in various ways to the life of the region. Numerous pastoral letters were sent, the divorce between faith and politics was largely overcome, and Protestants began to play a greater part in political life.

## UNITY AMID TRAGEDY

The ecumenical spirit has sprung to life in Central America, paradoxically, in the midst of death. It is significant that the human suffering caused by natural disasters (hurricanes and earthquakes) has given rise to signs of true ecumenicity. While some of this response has been ephemeral, much has endured in every Central American country.

The region is highly vulnerable, and the handling of emergencies has been a recurring theme on the ecumenical agenda in recent years. The churches are usually the first port of refuge in cases of disaster so that training

in preparedness for emergencies is important. During the 1990s considerable efforts were made, on a more or less ecumenical basis, for reconstruction in Central America, needed on many fronts: the effects of war, natural disasters, infrastructures and mental health. Institutions which may be mentioned are CEPAD in Nicaragua, set up after the earthquake in Managua in 1972, and CEDEN in Honduras, put in place after hurricane Fifi in 1974.

Ecumenical agencies that have been influential in South America have generally not been too significant in Central America. One reason may be that their agenda is too far ahead of the churches. These movements are largely directed from outside, and local participation in their activities, for the most part, does not represent church bodies. It may be too early to evaluate the impact of home-grown ecumenical agencies. Several, however, are worthy of mention. The Junta Evangélica de Servicio Social, long since suppressed by the army, was founded in Guatemala by lay theologian Julia Esquivel. The ex-Seminario Bíblico Latinoamericano, now Universidad Bíblica Latinoamericana, and the Departamento Ecueménico de Investigaciones, both of Costa Rica, the Centro Inter-Eclesial de Estudios Teológicos y Sociales in Nicaragua, with emphasis on theological education and development, the Comisión Cristiana de Desarrollo in Honduras, and the Conference of Evangelical Churches of Guatemala are only a few of the many ecumenical agencies in the region.

Especially worth noting is the formation of the Comunidad Cristiana Mesoamericana (CCM), which groups together the ecumenical bodies in the region to plan and reflect on mission in the present context, and in the light of the issues of concern to peoples of the region: peace, reconciliation, the new role of civil society, Christian solidarity and hope.

The ecumenical movement in Central America has taken shape in the midst of many constraints, and it faces many challenges: the environmental crisis, poverty, citizenship, violence, gender equity, democratization in the church, training of church leaders and management. The emphasis that CLAI and the WCC are placing on the need for local churches to play a more visible

role in action for solidarity and commitment in their particular place is important. We are called to set aside our theological differences and prejudices and bear faithful witness to the gospel.

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## CENTRE SAINT-IRÉNÉE

THE CENTRE Saint-Irénée (CSI) is an interconfessional association, founded in Lyons, France, in 1953, for the reconciliation of Christians and the promotion of the ecumenical movement. The centre organizes correspondence courses in ecumenical formation of clergy and laity on historical, theological and biblical subjects; pastoral care of couples in mixed marriages\* (interchurch families) in French-speaking countries, through catechesis, weekend retreats and group sessions; and ecumenical tours (in more than 60 countries), through which clergy and laity can experience the life of the local churches. CSI has two publications: *Foyer mixte* ministers to interchurch couples, Catholic-Protestant and Orthodox-Catholic; *Chrétiens en marche* circulates in 40 countries. The Centre maintains a library in Lyons, open to the public, with more than 25,000 books and 1000 periodicals.

RENÉ BEAUPÈRE

## CENTRO PRO UNIONE

THE CENTRO Pro Unione (CPU), located in the heart of Rome, was founded by the Fran-

ciscan Friars of the Atonement as an ecumenical research and action centre. Its purpose is to offer space for dialogue, study, research and formation in ecumenism.

In 1948 the Friars began collaboration with the Jesuit Charles Boyer, founder of the Unitas Association, and in 1950 with the (Dutch) Ladies of Bethany at Foyer Unitas, in welcoming (non-Catholic) Christians who were pilgrims in Rome for the Holy Year. In 1956 the League of Prayer "Pro Unione" was inaugurated to promote prayer for Christian unity; Paul Wattson, who initiated the Church Unity Octave in 1908, was the founder of the Atonement Friars (see *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*).

During the Second Vatican Council\* the CPU was the privileged location for conferences, press briefings and the weekly discussions between the Anglican, Protestant and Orthodox delegated observers and Catholic experts (*periti*) organized by the Secretariat (now Pontifical Council) for Promoting Christian Unity.\*

The CPU organizes an annual lecture series, a summer course on the ecumenical and inter-religious movements and scientific research projects. Pro Unione ecumenical gatherings welcome people from other Christian traditions. The semi-annual *Centro Pro Unione Bulletin* contains a multilingual bibliography on interchurch and inter-confessional dialogues, both national and international, as well as the texts of conferences given at the CPU.

The CPU has over 18,000 books and pamphlets, 300 periodicals (catalogued online through URBE, the Roman Union of Ecclesiastical Libraries), and 25,400 records relating to theological dialogues. It maintains a web site that contains the texts of agreed statements from bilateral dialogues.

Since its foundation the CPU has welcomed over 16,000 students and scholars to its facilities.

JAMES F. PUGLISI

## CHAKKO, SARAH

B. 13 Feb. 1905, Trichur, South India; d. 25 Jan. 1954, Lucknow, North India. Chakko was an ecumenical youth and student movement leader, first chair of the WCC's com-



mission on the Life and Work of Women in the Church, and first woman on the WCC presidium (1951-54).

Born into a Syrian Orthodox family, Chakko studied history at Queen Mary's, a government women's college in Madras, taught for two years in a London Missionary Society high school, then earned a master's degree at Presidency College in Madras and was appointed to teach at Isabella Thoburn College, an ecumenical school under US Methodist auspices in Lucknow. In 1937 she undertook further study in the US at the University of Chicago and the University of Michigan. She was named principal of Isabella Thoburn in 1945.

Active in the Student Christian Movement of India, Burma and Ceylon, she attended student conferences in Java in 1933 and in San Francisco in 1936, and was part of an Indian SCM team that visited university students in China in 1946. She also served on the national committee of the YWCA of India, Burma and Ceylon and was a vice-president of the World YWCA.\*

When Methodist bishop G. Bromley Oxnam asked Chakko to be a delegate to the WCC's first assembly in Amsterdam, she wrote back to say that she was not a Methodist (although she worshipped in a Methodist church in Lucknow). When he

told her she was being invited to represent not the Methodists but the “younger churches”, she reminded him that the church to which she belonged was some 1600 years old. After Amsterdam – where she presented the report of the study committee on women – she took a leave of absence from her academic duties and during 1950 and 1951 worked full-time on behalf of the WCC’s new commission on the Life and Work of Women in the Church, arranging meetings and discussion groups and travelling widely through North America, Europe and the Middle East.

Though her health was impaired, she continued after her return to Lucknow in 1951 to attend and address international conferences and to make official visits to churches abroad, always encouraging a wider ministry for women. That same year when T.C. Chao resigned as president of the WCC, she was asked to succeed him, “in recognition of her exceptional service to the whole ecumenical movement”. It thus followed that the January 1953 WCC central committee was invited to hold its pre-Evanston assembly meeting at Isabella Thoburn College.

Named as a Syrian Orthodox delegate to the second assembly (Evanston 1954), she took an active part in its preparations. However, at the end of January 1954, as she sat down to rest during a basketball game with some students, she died of a heart attack. Tributes from around the world bore testimony to the impact of her short life.

SUSANNAH HARRIS-WILSON

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**CHALCEDON**

THE CHRISTOLOGICAL heritage which the 5th century received from the 4th century was not completely thought through. The problem was to interpret more precisely the basically common belief in the incarnation\* of God in Jesus Christ, after Arianism had been conquered (the true divinity of the Son was

proclaimed at Nicea in 325) and Apollinarianism overcome (according to the council of Constantinople in 381, Jesus Christ is fully human, with body and intellectual soul). Of the two main Christological schools, one was particularly careful to ensure the unity of God and human being in Christ (esp. in Alexandria, but also partially in Syria); the other emphasized the unity of divinity and humanity and the distinction between the two (thus Gregory of Nazianzus and the Antiochenes, such as Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia).

A special problem was posed by the expression and use of the principal concepts *hypostasis* and *physis*, or “person” and “nature”. In 428-29 this resulted in the first major Christological crisis in the Eastern church. Nestorius wanted to emphasize that the two natures in Christ are unmixed, but this view was interpreted by Alexandria as a doctrine of two hypostases, or two persons. Through the intermediary of Apollinarians, Cyril of Alexandria received texts which circulated under the name of 4th-century fathers (e.g. Pope Julian, Pope Felix, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Athanasius) which included the characteristic formula of the Apollinarians: “the one nature (*mia physis*) of the incarnate God-Word”. He took over this *mia physis* formula as the criterion of orthodox Christology in the struggle against Nestorius.

Although Nestorius was condemned at the council of Ephesus in 431 for rejecting the council of Nicea and confessing the doctrine of two persons, he also tried in different conceptual language (though in an infelicitous manner) to express his loyalty to Nicea and to the true unity of divinity and humanity in Christ. The Antiochenes were especially scandalized by the anathemas of Cyril (see the third letter to Nestorius), in which they saw the doctrine of heretical monophysitism.

A second major crisis of Christology was brought about by Eutyches, who misinterpreted the *mia physis* formula of Cyril by saying that while Jesus Christ is consubstantial with the Father because of his divinity, he is not consubstantial with us because in him there is only one *physis*. At a synod convened in 448 by Patriarch Flavian of Constantinople, Eutyches was condemned.

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The reaction came at the second council of Ephesus (449), under the leadership of Patriarch Dioscorus I of Alexandria, which condemned and deposed Flavian and Theodoret of Cyrus and rehabilitated Eutyches. Now the schism was imminent. From the Roman side, Pope Leo had written his famous tome to Flavian in 448, which caused particular offence because of the formula *agit enim utraque forma* ("each nature works what is proper to itself").

### THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON (451)

In 450 Emperor Theodosius II, who favoured Patriarch Dioscorus, died. His place was taken by Emperor Marcian, who in 451 convened in Chalcedon, near Constantinople, the largest synod of the ancient church (there are about 450 signatures to the definition of faith).

*Divisive elements in the definition of Chalcedon.* Besides the deposition of Patriarch Dioscorus, the main scandal to the Alexandrian school was (1) the composition of a new formula of faith, which was seen as contradicting the prohibition of this by the council of Ephesus in 431; (2) the acceptance of the formula "one *hypostasis* in two natures" and the rejection of the Cyrillian-Alexandrian expression "from two natures"; and (3) the use of divisive terminology: whereas Alexandria adhered to the synonymous use of the terms *physis* and *hypostasis* for the teaching of the incarnation, Chalcedon, with Antioch, Constantinople and Rome, accepted the distinction of the two concepts in this area of incarnation just as in the doctrine of the Trinity. There was no attempt to analyze the concepts.

*Unifying elements.* (1) The Chalcedonian definition is based on those of Nicea (325) and of Constantinople (381), which have formed the most widely accepted doctrinal bond among Christian churches.

(2) Chalcedon acknowledged and used Cyril's Letter of Union (*Laetentur*) of 433, together with the symbol composed in 431 by the Antiochenes and later supplemented, although Cyril had modified the latter in a theologically significant way in his explanation of it (Grillmeier, I, [rev. ed.], 499-500). Such acknowledgments continued to keep the peace of 433 between Cyril and the Antiochenes.

(3) General agreement was accorded to Cyril's formula: "one and the same [Son and Lord Jesus Christ], perfect in divinity, the same also perfect in humanity, truly God and truly human, the same with a rational soul and body, consubstantial with the Father as to his divinity, the same consubstantial with us as to his humanity; like us in all things except for sin". The characterization of the unity by the four expressions "without confusion, without change, without division, without separation" also found general agreement.

(4) The chief expression which continued to offend the monophysites – "one *hypostasis* (person) in two natures" – was in fact demonstrably gained through a close interpretation of the main statements of Cyril by Basil of Seleucia (so André de Halleux). Basically a synthesis of Cyril, Antioch and Leo I was arrived at, but this was unfortunately not recognized at the time.

### AFTER CHALCEDON

In the 5th and 6th centuries, the adherents of the *mia physis* formula, especially after its impressive interpretation and passionate defence by Severus of Antioch, bitterly opposed Chalcedon. Attempts at reconciliation, like the Henoticon of Emperor Zeno (482), failed. Under the Emperors Justin and Justinian a Chalcedonian revival took place, partially affected by violence. But the attempts at reconciliation through dialogue (with Severians in 532, with Nestorians in 561-62) also miscarried, just as the second council of Constantinople (553) could not win over the anti-Chalcedonians. Alexandria remained anti-Chalcedonian, despite imperial attempts to install Melkite patriarchs. The Syrians developed their own (Jacobite) hierarchy. Incapacity for dialogue and the lack of a method for analyzing different systems of language led to consolidation of the misunderstandings and hardening of the fronts.

Since 1971 ecumenical consultations between theologians of the non-Chalcedonian Oriental Orthodox churches and the Roman Catholic Church have been held by the Pro Oriente\* foundation in Vienna. In 1974 the official joint commission of the Catholic church and the non-Chalcedonian

Coptic Orthodox Church began its work. The main points of agreement are summarized in the declaration on Christology of this commission during its meeting in Vienna in 1976 and partly reflected in the general formula on Christology, signed on 12 February 1988 by Pope Shenouda III and Pro-nuncio Moretti at the St Anba Bishoy monastery (see **Oriental Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue**). Following unofficial preparatory conversations since 1964, an official joint commission for theological dialogue between Orthodox and the non-Chalcedonian Oriental Orthodox churches met successfully in 1985, 1989, 1990 and 1993 (see **Oriental Orthodox-Orthodox dialogue**).

A dialogue with the Assyrian Church of the East was started by Pro Oriente in 1994 and is ongoing. An important Common Christological Declaration between the Roman Catholic and the Assyrian Church of the East\* was signed on 11 November 1994 in Rome by Pope John Paul II and Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV (see **Assyrian Church of the East-Roman Catholic dialogue**).

ALOYS GRILLMEIER  
and THERESIA HAINTHALER

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## CHAMBÉSY

THE ORTHODOX centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, located at Chambésy, near Geneva, was founded in 1966 on the initiative of Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras and by decision of the holy synod. Originally housed in an old mansion overlooking the lake of Geneva, it moved in 1975 to new premises equipped with modern conference facilities.

The focal point of the centre's liturgical and spiritual life is the patriarchal church of St Paul, which hosts the Greek Orthodox parish of Geneva; other chapels are used by Arabic-, Romanian- and French-speaking communities.

The centre's constitutional purpose is to strengthen inter-Orthodox unity, promote Orthodox theology, worship and spirituality, facilitate ecumenical dialogue and cooperation, and foster interfaith understanding. Among its regular programmes are annual post-graduate seminars dealing with contemporary theological and socio-ethical issues. Their findings are published in the series *Etudes théologiques de Chambésy*.

Also located in Chambésy is the secretariat in charge of the preparation of the holy and great council of the Orthodox church. Chambésy has hosted eight pan-Orthodox pre-conciliar conferences, as well as numerous meetings and consultations related to the bilateral dialogues of the Orthodox church with the Roman Catholic Church, Old Catholic Church, Oriental Orthodox churches, Lutheran World Federation and World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

During the academic year 1997-98 a post-graduate Orthodox theological institute was inaugurated at Chambésy, associated with the theological faculty of the University of Fribourg and in cooperation with the autonomous theological faculty of the University of Geneva.

GEORGES TSETISIS

## CHANDRAN, JOSHUA RUSSELL

B. 6 May 1918, Kadamankuly, South India; d. 27 Sept. 2000. Vice-moderator of the WCC central committee, 1966-68, Chandran played a key role in opening the way for new voices from third-world churches to be heard at the WCC's fourth assembly in Uppsala in 1968.

As president of the Asian chapter of the Christian Peace Conference, he was the representative of the Church of South India (CSI) at many ecumenical meetings. He was convener of the union negotiations committee of the CSI, and his long membership of the WCC's Faith and Order commission en-



abled him to bring the Indian experience to other churches engaged in union negotiations. He was also secretary of the Joint Council of the Church of North India, the Church of South India and the Mar Thoma church, and founder-president of the Christian Union of India.

Joining the United Theological College (UTC) in Bangalore in 1950, he became its first Indian principal in 1954. Later his teaching took him to professorships at Union Theological Seminary, 1964-65; at Louisville Theological Seminary, Kentucky; at Episcopal Theological Seminary, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1972; and at Pacific Theological College, Suva, Fiji, after retiring from the UTC. He served as president of the Senate of Serampore College, 1968-71, and also of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians.\* His studies were in India, Oxford (England), Union Theological Seminary, New York, and the Chicago University Divinity School.

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## CHARISM(ATA)

A CHARISM is a manifestation of divine grace, a gift bestowed irrespective of merit or spiritual maturity, an endowment sometimes called a “gift of the Spirit” granted by the Triune God to individuals to enhance the life, worship and service of the people of God.\* Those who receive such charismata are sometimes called charismatics. Modern social theory uses the term “charisma” to describe a quality of personality which enables an individual to attract the confidence of others and become a leader or authority figure.

The Greek term for “grace” (*charis*) lies behind the late and rarely used diminutive *charisma* (pl. *charismata*). *Charisma* appears in the LXX as a variant reading only at Sir. 7:33 and 38:30, and at Ps. 30:20 (Theodotion). While it is used by a few other writers, among them Philo, its meaning is most heavily influenced by New Testament usage. Except for 1 Pet. 4:10, it appears only in the Pauline corpus (16 times). Post-NT secular usage typically conveys the meaning of “favour” or “benefit”.

In Rom. 6:23, Paul uses the term broadly to describe the generous gift of eternal life granted by God in Jesus Christ (cf. 5:15-16). Rom. 11:29 describes the benefits of God’s covenant with Israel in terms of charismata. The *locus classicus* in the NT is 1 Cor. 12:4-11, occurring within Paul’s longer discussion (chs 12-14) of *pneumatika* (“spirituals” or “spiritual things”, hence “spiritual gifts”). In one sense, *charismata* is used synonymously with *pneumatika*, although the nuance conveyed by each term points in opposite directions. *Pneumatika* was a Corinthian term for phenomena such as speaking in tongues, words of knowledge and prophecy, by which “spirituality” was measured. The ability to speak in tongues had limited value in the community (1 Cor. 14:4-19), knowledge could lead to inflated egos (1 Cor. 8:1) and even prophecy needed to be tested (1 Cor. 14:29-32, 37-38; 1 Thess. 5:19-22). Paul’s designation of these same phenomena as *charismata* points not to the alleged spirituality of those exercising these gifts but rather towards the graciousness of the Triune God who supplies them “to each one individually as he wills”.

Within 1 Cor. 12 at least three lists of charisms may be found (vv.8-10,28,29-30); Rom. 12:6-8 provides yet another. The overlaps between these lists and Eph. 4:11 suggests that in Pauline thought *dōrea* and *dōma* are also synonymous with *charismata*.

The variations in number and sequence in these lists suggest that there is no normative catalogue and no attempt to communicate the relative value other than what is explicitly stated in the biblical text. The use of *charisma* in 1 Pet. 4:10 is consistent with Pauline usage, although the examples given suggest categories (speaking and serving) rather than specific charisms. Indeed, 1 Cor. 12:8-10 lists several “speaking” gifts (utterances of wisdom, utterances of knowledge, prophecy, tongues, interpretation of tongues). On the other hand, Rom. 12:7-8 appears to emphasize various “serving” *charismata* (service, contribution, giving of aid, acts of mercy). Other *charismata* include faith healings, miracles, the ability to distinguish or discern spirits (1 Cor. 12:8-10), apostles, teachers, helpers, administrators (1 Cor. 12:28), and exhortation (Rom. 12:8). Paul viewed celibacy as a *charism* (1 Cor. 7:7-8) and pointed towards martyrdom (1 Cor. 13:3) as a *charism*, a perspective cherished by Christians persecuted in the patristic period.

The range of *charismata* may be extended if one considers the empowering role of the Spirit within the whole of scripture. Hence, Bezalel’s craft (Ex. 31:3, 35:31-33), Samson’s ability to judge (Judg. 15:14-15; cf. 3:10, 6:34, 11:29), being able to provide counsel (Isa. 11:2), even certain musical abilities (evidenced by the close relationship between musicians and prophetic guilds in Israel) may qualify as charisms.

It is significant that all Pauline discussions of *charismata* are within the context of the metaphor of the church as the Body of Christ (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-31; Eph. 4:4-16). The *charismata* are understood as graciously bestowed on individuals (indicative of diversity), given according to God’s sovereign will, but intended to meet the needs of the one Body (indicative of unity\*). The tension between unity and diversity is mediated by love (1 Cor. 13), and the purpose for which these charisms are given is the common good (1 Cor. 12:7), care for one another (vv.25-26), upbuilding and encour-

agement and consolation (1 Cor. 14:3) and edification (v.5). Gifts are also viewed as being given to the church in the form of persons (e.g. apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers; Eph. 4:11-14), so that the saints may be equipped for the work of ministry. The proper exercise of all Spirit-bestowed charisms is ultimately intended to bring glory to God through Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 4:10-11).

The appearance of certain *charismata* within the history of the church has been both divisive and unifying. Debates have raged about whether certain gifts continue or have ceased to appear within the church (Augustine, Benjamin Warfield), what constitutes decent and orderly use of certain gifts (contexts seem to vary), how gifts are to be discerned by the community of faith (the role of experience is rationality), the relationship between nature and grace\* in the appearance of these gifts (Aquinas; natural endowments and talents vs spontaneous interventions), the legitimate limits of experience (fanaticism or fervency vs rigidity) and the limits of authority (clergy vs laity) in the use of these gifts. But *charismata* have contributed greatly to grassroots ecumenism.

In the late 19th century, restorationist tendencies, which longed for a return of the church to its NT glory, a quest for the “apostolic faith” including its experiences and charisms, the divine healing movement and a shift by many from post- to pre-millennial eschatology contributed to a growing mood of expectancy regarding the appearance or re-appearance of more spectacular charisms. Out of this grew the Pentecostal movement, derogatorily nicknamed the “tongues” movement because of its emphasis upon the ability to speak in tongues as evidential of Spirit baptism.

Since the 1960s the charismatic renewal within the historic churches, East and West, has called the attention of the whole church to the range of *charismata*. The appearance of such phenomena as prophecy, healing and speaking in tongues within the historic churches has enabled previously sectarian Pentecostals\* to look more favourably on the historic churches and to recognize more openly the role of the Spirit in the whole church through less spectacular gifts. In

turn, many in the historic churches who have experienced some of the more spectacular charismata now look more favourably on the newer Pentecostal churches. Continued discussion between these groups is bound to enhance hopes for greater unity within the whole church.

See also **charismatic movement**, **Holy Spirit**, **millennialism**, **ministry in the church**.

CECIL M. ROBECK, Jr

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## CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

THE EXPRESSION "charismatic movement" (or "charismatic renewal") refers to the movement of persons and groups who confess the availability of a personal Pentecostal experience of the Holy Spirit,\* often accompanied by speaking in tongues and the appropriation of the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Cor. 12:8-10 (see **charism(ata)**). Participants commonly see the charismatic movement as a "second wave" of the Spirit, extending the first wave of the Pentecostal movement (see **Pentecostals**) but differing in refusing to organize into separate Pentecostal denominations and in being generally less dogmatic in formulating the core experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

As with all grassroots eruptions, the boundaries of the charismatic movement are difficult to delimit precisely. Originally the term was used (by J. Stone and H. Bredesen in 1963) for Pentecostal experiences and phenomena occurring within the historic denominations. But by 1975 newly emerging groups of Christians in North America and Great Britain, outside the historic churches, were claiming the same spiritual experience but were clearly not Pentecostals. These so-

called non-denominational groupings generally understood themselves as part of the worldwide charismatic movement.

By the 1990s, the charismatic churches and networks outside the historic churches formed the largest and fastest-growing segment of the movement. These independent groupings have been the most affected by new trends: theologies of restoration, the "signs and wonders" message of John Wimber, a prophetic current, and more recently the so-called "Toronto blessing". Much of this has tended to diminish the emphasis on "baptism in the Spirit", in turn facilitating a greater penetration of evangelical milieus by charismatic emphases and practices. Peter Wagner has labelled as "the third wave" this current among Evangelicals which welcomes charismatic gifts and the supernatural without accepting Pentecostal doctrine.

While the African Instituted (Independent) Churches\* arising during the 20th century exhibit important phenomenological and spiritual similarities with the Pentecostal and charismatic movements, they are not normally considered part of the charismatic movement, whose African expressions have less positive attitudes towards traditional African religion than the AICs.

## CHARACTERISTICS

The charismatic movement is characterized by vibrant praise, new power to minister and witness, contemporary hearing of the Lord, revived interest in eschatology and a conviction of the giftedness of each Christian. Charismatic worship praises God, with an emphasis on the lordship of Jesus, in songs, choruses and simultaneous vocal praise. Its impact on the wider church can be seen in increased emphasis on congregational praise and a vast dissemination of new songs of varied quality.

The charismatic movement is experienced as new power for the Body of Christ. Believers yield themselves to the risen Christ in being baptized in the Spirit. As a result, they experience new power in the preaching of the word, in evangelism, in intercession and in deliverance from evil. Charismatics emphasize the God-given equipping of the local church, the spiritual gifts of 1 Cor. 12:8-10, the ministries of Eph. 4:11 and the whole armour of God in Eph. 6:10-20.

Participants claim the abilities to hear the Lord and to speak his contemporary word in prophecy and other utterances. This revelatory work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian remains one of the less-examined aspects of the charismatic movement (see **revelation**).

The spread of the charismatic movement regularly gives rise to a heightened "end-times" consciousness. Occasionally this takes the form of predictions of an imminent end; more commonly, it leads to a re-discovery of the prayer "Maranatha, come, Lord Jesus".

Whether accepting or rejecting ordained ministry, the fundamentally egalitarian emphasis of the charismatic movement on the spiritual gifts of every participant challenges received patterns of clericalism, both Catholic and Protestant.

### ECUMENICAL DIMENSIONS

The charismatic movement can be seen as re-capturing on a larger scale the ecumenical elements present in some parts of the original Pentecostal movement but later eclipsed. In this perspective, the Holy Spirit was poured out to revive all the (Protestant) churches. In the 1930s this original vision was revived in France through the ministry of Louis Dallière, a Reformed pastor in the Ardèche and founder of the *Union de prière* (1946).

In the 1950s, sporadic outbreaks of Pentecostal phenomena occurred outside the Pentecostal denominations: in circles praying for revival (Anglicans and Methodists in the UK), among those seeking a deeper spiritual life (Baptists in Brazil), in circles re-discovering divine healing (Episcopalians in the USA, Reformed in the Netherlands, Anglicans in the UK), and in milieus promoting a less cerebral view of the human person (Camps Farthest Out, USA). Only in the 1960s did these preliminary strands coalesce into one recognizable movement. Its inter-church character attracted attention.

In this process, significant roles were played by David Du Plessis of South Africa (Pentecostal), Dennis Bennett of the USA (Episcopalian) and Michael Harper of the UK (Anglican, now Antiochene Orthodox). For many grassroots Christians, participation in charismatic prayer meetings was their

first experience of fellowship across church boundaries.

As the charismatic movement spread across the churches, its early informal structures were ecumenical. The Dutch quarterly *Vuur* (1957) had an editorial board from several church traditions; the US quarterly *Trinity* (1961-66), with a strong Episcopalian base, served charismatics from many Protestant churches. The Fountain Trust (1964-80), established by Harper to serve the charismatic movement in all churches in the UK, became a model for charismatic service agencies in Australia (Temple Trust) and New Zealand (Christian Advance Ministries).

The advent of Roman Catholic charismatic renewal in 1967 was dramatic evidence of the movement's ecumenical character and potential. More than others, Catholics interpreted their Pentecostal experience in ecumenical terms, seeing it as a providential result of the renewal thrust and ecumenical openings of the Second Vatican Council.\* Particularly in North America, this inaugurated a phase of expanding denominational conferences with an ecumenical dimension.

Continental ecumenical gatherings for leaders in the charismatic movement began in 1972 in both Europe and Latin America. The European charismatic leaders conference merged in 1988 with the leaders' groups, formed by Harper, to organize the "Acts 1986" ecumenical conference in Birmingham, England.

The charismatic movement among Catholics spurred the rise of many new communities, mostly led by laypeople. Several were ecumenical in their composition and vision: the Word of God community (Ann Arbor, USA), the People of Praise community (South Bend and Minneapolis, USA), the Chemin neuf community (Lyons, France), the Alleluia community (Augusta, USA). These communities, called covenant communities in the USA, included married and single people, ordained and unordained, in a shared lifestyle based on the shared experience of new life in the Holy Spirit. Few of these communities have been able to sustain their Protestant membership and their ecumenical vigour.

The rapid spread of Catholic charismatic renewal led many in other traditions to inte-

grate the movement into church life. The 1970s saw a proliferation of denominational service agencies in North America, a process followed worldwide by Catholics in the 1970s and in the 1980s by Anglicans and Protestants in Britain and Scandinavia. Ireland was the only country to establish an ecumenical national service committee, though this was later abandoned in the face of Catholic pressures.

The increased orientation of the mainline charismatic movement towards church renewal\* has not notably accelerated positive responses from denominational authorities. Catholic episcopal conferences have been among the most positive, recognizing the charismatic movement among other organized movements and encouraging clergy participation and discernment. Many Protestant churches have been slower in welcoming the charismatic movement, though gradually it is finding acceptance in many countries. Official church reactions up to 1980 have been gathered in Kilian McDonnell's three volumes.

Catholic hierarchies in countries of the South have sometimes imposed tighter organization on the charismatic movement. In Latin America this reaction is associated with fear and distrust of Protestant charismatics and Pentecostals, in Africa with concern about losses to AICs with charismatic characteristics. Denominational tendencies in North America and Europe have caused some diminution in ecumenical thrust and fellowship, but the charismatic movement's original ecumenical vision continues to inspire many, as shown in the mammoth gatherings at Kansas City (1977), Strasbourg (1982) and New Orleans (1987), and the important Brighton conference on world evangelization (1991). The Alpha course from London, England, has given a strong impulse to interchurch cooperation since 1994.

## POINTS OF CONTENTION

Like all spontaneous movements which appeal to the initiative and freedom of the Spirit, the charismatic movement has had its tensions, divisions and conflict. Five issues arise most frequently:

*Baptism in the Spirit.* While charismatics commonly posit this foundational experi-

ence as a "second blessing" after primary Christian initiation, Catholics and Protestants interpret it in different ways. Evangelicals commonly differentiate it from conversion-regeneration, though charismatics with a Calvinist theology are most opposed to a distinct post-conversion reception of the Holy Spirit. Catholics often explain baptism in the Spirit as a coming to conscious experience of those graces which sacramental baptism\* has already conferred. Neither interpretation sufficiently recognizes the role of preaching a fuller message in Spirit baptism. Most charismatics do not accept the majority-Pentecostal doctrine of "initial evidence", i.e. that baptism in the Spirit must be attested by the physical sign of speaking in other tongues. However, many charismatics do expect glossolalia to accompany baptism in the Spirit, a feature that has caused concern to some church authorities.

*Spiritual power versus holiness.* Most charismatics understand baptism in the Spirit as power for ministry and service. However, some (Bethany Fellowship in Minneapolis, the Mary Sisters in Darmstadt) see this grace primarily in terms of new depth of relationship with the persons of the Trinity,\* from which new power flows. This discussion echoes earlier debates within the Holiness and Pentecostal movements and is likely to intensify in the wake of serious scandals among prominent independent leaders.

*Discipleship and apostleship.* As in the Pentecostal movement, the charismatic movement has seen an association between the rediscovery of the spiritual gifts of 1 Cor. 12:8-10 and the ministry gifts of Eph. 4:11. Some circles, mostly non-denominational, believe God is restoring the proper order of the church under apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. There is a tension between those who espouse this view of restoration and those who operate within traditional patterns of ministry and teaching. Many charismatic congregations have adopted pluralist patterns of church leadership, with teams of elders, a development which has led some British Baptist congregations, among others, out of their parent denominations. Other networks emphasize church authority, teaching that each Christian must be "discipled" by accepting the di-

rective authority of a pastor for all major life-decisions. A number of Protestant charismatics have vehemently opposed the discipleship teaching, associated in the 1970s with Christian Growth Ministries (Fort Lauderdale, Florida) and *New Wine* magazine, and with Juan Carlos Ortiz from Argentina, as a betrayal of cherished Reformation principles.

*Scripture and prophecy.* The claim that God speaks also today as in New Testament times has caused controversy, particularly among those concerned to uphold the unique authority of holy scripture. The initial evangelical unease about the charismatic movement was rooted more in this fear of exalting contemporary experience above scripture than in difficulties with a “second-blessing”. This unease often diminishes as charismatic congregations and groups demonstrate their biblical loyalty. The theological issues raised here about the relationship between biblical and post-biblical times are similar to the long-standing debates concerning scripture and Tradition.

*Personal and social transformation.* The charismatic movement has re-inforced emphasis on personal conversion, and charismatics have often been uneasy with emphases which focus on structural reform. Some charismatic leaders recognize the need to overcome any charity-justice dichotomy, an ideal recommended in *Charismatic Renewal and Social Action*, by Cardinal Suenens and Dom Helder Camara (1980).

PETER HOCKEN

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## CHEVETOGNE

THE BENEDICTINE monastery of the Holy Cross in Belgium has been committed since its foundation in 1925 to the healing of Christian divisions, especially the schisms\* between the church of Rome and the churches of the East. In 1924 Pope Pius XI requested the Benedictine congregations to foster this aim through prayer and studies. In response Dom Lambert Beauduin (1873-1960) founded a new priory at Amay-sur-Meuse; in 1939 the “monks of unity” moved to their present site at Chevetogne.

Dom Beauduin himself faced extensive ecclesiastical opposition because of the monastery’s approach and methods. In 1928 he resigned as prior, and in 1930 he went into virtual exile in southern France until he was permitted to return to Chevetogne in 1951. The monastery itself survived, including its quarterly *Irenikon* (1926), the first Catholic review devoted to ecumenism.

Among the more notable of the Chevetogne monks have been Clement Lialine (1901-58), who gave attention to the WCC in its formation stages and had friendly contacts with W.A. Visser ‘t Hooft and other early WCC leaders; Olivier Rousseau (1898-1984), who re-inforced the institutional and spiritual structures at Amay-Chevetogne to withstand the accusations against the monastery; Pierre Dumont (1901-70), specialist in Greek Orthodoxy; Emmanuel Lanne, a drafter of the Second Vatican Council’s Decree on Ecumenism\* and the first Roman Catholic vice-moderator of the WCC Faith and Order\* commission.

The monastery has two groups of monks, one of the Latin rite and the other of the Byzantine (Greek and Slavonic). They celebrate the daily liturgies in the two churches of the monastery simultaneously. Since 1943 Chevetogne has sponsored conferences on critical ecumenical themes, with internationally known specialists. The monastery has a hostel for guests, a library of over 100,000 volumes and a publishing house for works on history, ecclesiology,

liturgy and spirituality. The monks are also responsible for directing the pontifical Greek college in Rome.

TOM STRANSKY

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## CHILDREN

THE CHURCH has from its very beginning concerned itself with children, including them in its ministry and its service through such activities as infant baptism, children's communion, children's catechism, Sunday school, religious instruction and confirmation classes. Churches have taken responsibility for nurture, guidance and welfare of children, not leaving these only to parents and society. Churches and missionary societies were often the first to care for orphans and abandoned and disabled children and to set up institutions for them: orphanages, schools, homes, centres, nurseries and hospitals.

When women and men opened schools on Sunday in the latter half of the 18th century in Britain, they were primarily motivated by a concern for destitute and illiterate children who were victims of the industrial revolution. This in turn stimulated the provision of day school education for all children, so that Sunday schools could concentrate more and more on competent Christian education. In the 19th century what had begun in Britain became a worldwide movement, leading in 1907 to the formation of the World Sunday School Association. In 1947 the association changed its name to the World Council of Christian Education\* (WCCE).

Ecumenically the church's concern for children was lodged in the WCCE. Although the agenda of some pioneering ecumenical conferences included "education in relation to the Christianization of national life" (Edinburgh 1910) and "church, community and state in relation to education" (Oxford 1937), the child as such was not a focus in these discussions. Within the WCC, it was only with the integration of WCCE in 1972

that the long tradition and experience of work with children was taken up. Recognition of and participation in the International Year of the Child (1979) presented a timely opportunity for the ecumenical movement to make visible its concern for the child today and to give priority to this, "for the suffering of children today is such as to provoke our anger, and the love of our Lord Jesus for the little ones such as to provoke our penitent compassion" (WCC report on the International Year of the Child).

Ecumenical efforts to explore a new theological understanding of childhood were initiated by the British Council of Churches' 1976 report on *The Child in the Church*. A new role for the child within the community of faith was the focus of a conference in Evian, France, on "Children as Active Partners in the Congregation", jointly organized in 1980 by the WCC and the Lutheran World Federation. Jesus' words about the child (Mark 9:33-37 par. and 10:13-16 par.) speak not of the child's transformation to adulthood but the adult's transformation to childhood. Theological re-evaluation of the category of the child as a significant factor in understanding the Christian way of existence has drawn new attention to children's particular ways of living and believing and to their fundamental needs and interests.

This has led many churches to re-appraise their work with children and to change traditional patterns of church and congregational life, envisaging a community of faith in which adults and children, old and young, share experiences and learn from one another. At the sixth assembly of the WCC (Vancouver 1983), children from all over the world were present at the Bible studies, the worship services (leading some of them), a peace-and-justice event and an international day camp. At the eighth assembly (Harare 1998), one of the forums was on the dignity of children, and children from Zimbabwe took an active part in performing art offerings; several padares featured child rights, child abuse and exploitation, children and worship, and the hopes of children.

Any re-appraisal of church and ecumenical work with children must bear in mind the twofold task of ministry with children (child's nurture in faith, etc.) and

advocacy for children (political, international, legal, etc.). The story of the trials and sorrows affecting children in today's world is endless; already in May 1974 UNICEF declared a "world emergency for children".

International understanding of children changed dramatically after the signing and ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1999. As a consequence, children are now recognized as having their own inherent rights to basic needs. This offers a small lifeline to children who are the victims of war, physical or sexual abuse and any other form of violence. The Convention also affirms the right of children to participate fully in the decision-making processes which affect them. Some churches have made strong efforts to ensure that the voice of children is now properly heard.

For the churches in the ecumenical movement there are many opportunities for fulfilling their commitment to God's promise to children, by engaging themselves or joining with others in advocating the needs and the rights of children in churches, homes, societies, as well as in schools and other learning environments.

ULRICH BECKER

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## CHRISMATION

CHRISMATION is the anointing or sealing in the post-baptismal rites of the Eastern and Oriental churches, in which the presider (usu-

ally a priest, but sometimes a bishop) anoints the newly baptized on the forehead, eyes, nostrils, ears and mouth (and in some rites on as many as 36 places) with consecrated chrism.

Originally, the rite was probably pre-baptismal and eschatological in character, drawing on the images of the seal on the foreheads of the redeemed in Revelation (7:2-8, 9:4, 14:1, 22:4) and the first-fruits of salvation\* (2 Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:13-14, 4:30). By the end of the 3rd century, the chrismation was post-baptismal and more pneumatic. As baptismal rites developed, there was an increasing tendency to identify one particular moment in the liturgy as the point at which the Holy Spirit\* is given rather than the more ancient understanding, acknowledging the activity of the Holy Spirit throughout the rite. The chrismation occupies this place in Eastern and Oriental baptismal liturgies.

While apologists for the Eastern and Oriental rites have often suggested that chrismation is the equivalent of confirmation in the Roman rite, it would be more accurate to say that it parallels the first post-baptismal anointing of that rite, and that the Eastern and Oriental churches do not have a liturgical equivalent to confirmation. Nevertheless, a significant number of Eastern and Western churches consider the two to be equivalent, which influences their practice in the reception of converts.

See also **baptism, confirmation**.

DAVID R. HOLETON

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## CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE OF ASIA

THE CHRISTIAN Conference of Asia (CCA), founded as the East Asia Christian Conference (EACC), was the first institutionalized expression of regional ecumenism. Its origins may be traced back to the meeting of the International Missionary Council\* (IMC) at Tambaram in 1938, though Asian delegates to earlier world meetings had already expressed the need for their churches to work towards greater unity in life, part-

nership in mission and autonomy in administration. Tambaram was the first world ecumenical meeting at which Asian participants formed the majority, and some of them called on the IMC to set up an Asian office.

In 1945 the IMC committee in Geneva considered a proposal from the Chinese and Indian national councils urging the formation of an East Asia regional committee, in order "(1) to promote and give expression to the spirit of Christian unity among the churches of East Asia; (2) to promote fellowship and mutual helpfulness among Christians in East Asia through conferences, exchange of delegations and such other measures as may be agreed upon; (3) to promote a sense of the responsibility of the churches in East Asia for the Christian witness and for the building up of the churches in this area; (4) to deepen the unity of the churches in East Asia with the world church; (5) to bring to the life of the world church the distinctive contribution of the churches in East Asia".

The joint committee of the IMC and the WCC decided in 1947 to set up an East Asia regional office, and the first meeting of Asian church leaders was held in Bangkok in 1949, with the theme "The Christian Prospect in Eastern Asia". In 1951 Raja B. Manikam of India was appointed East Asia secretary. A joint consultation of the Asia Council on Ecumenical Mission, the IMC and the WCC in 1956 resolved to convene a meeting of representatives of Asian churches and national councils so that they could decide for themselves what form regional ecumenism should take in Asia.

Prapat, Indonesia, was the venue of that meeting, held in 1957. Its theme was "The Common Evangelical Task of the Churches in East Asia". A core staff team – D.T. Niles from Ceylon, U Kyaw Than from Burma and Alan Brash from New Zealand – was appointed to organize the new ecumenical body. The Prapat meeting is now generally considered as the first EACC assembly, although the inaugural (now reckoned as the second) assembly was held only in 1959, at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Present at that meeting were representatives from 34 churches and 14 Christian councils from Asian countries and from Australia and New Zealand.

At the fifth assembly in Singapore in 1973, a new phase in the life of the regional body opened. It received a new name: Christian Conference of Asia. It was given a new structure and a new team to head its general secretariat. It saw the beginning of a more centralized administrative set-up. The CCA had previously maintained a small office in Bangkok, with quite a few of its large staff, many of them part-time, working out of their home countries; now the number was considerably reduced, and most moved to Singapore, where the CCA was based until December 1987, when it was "dissolved" by the Singapore government and the expatriate staff "expelled" from the country. The government – whose action was roundly condemned by churches and other ecumenical bodies – claimed that the CCA had breached its undertaking "not to indulge in any political activity or allow its funds to be used for political purposes". Thus, the CCA decentralized again, working from offices in Osaka (Japan), Hong Kong, Manila and Chiang Mai (Thailand). In June 1993, the CCA staff gathered again, this time in the CCA's newly acquired property in Hong Kong. The CCA centre is not only a place where programme staff can work together but also where Asian churches can come for fellowship and reflection on their missionary vocation.

Following the mandate of the Tomohon assembly in June 2000, and in response to challenging realities, the CCA felt the need to re-structure by bringing its programme desks into three programme areas – justice, international affairs, development and service (JIADS); ecumenical formation, gender justice, youth formation (EFGJYF); and faith, mission and unity (FMU) – and the general secretariat.

The CCA constituency which includes 100 churches and 15 national councils, is spread over a vast area from Japan in the north to Pakistan in the west and New Zealand in the southeast. According to its constitution, the CCA is "an organ of continuing cooperation among the churches and national Christian bodies in Asia within the framework of the wider ecumenical movement". Its functions are set forth as follows: (1) to develop effective Christian response to the challenges of the changing societies of

Asia; (2) to explore opportunities and promote joint action for the fulfilment of the mission of God in Asia and throughout the world; (3) to encourage Asian contributions to Christian thought, worship and action throughout the world; (4) to develop mutual awareness, fellowship and sharing among the churches in the region and relationships with other regional conferences and the WCC; (5) to promote common study and action in such fields as evangelism, service, social and human development and international relations; and (6) to stimulate initiatives and experiments in dynamic Christian living and action.

The chief communication organ of the CCA is the monthly magazine *CCA News*. The annual observance of the Sunday before Pentecost\* as Asia Sunday recalls the inauguration of the CCA on the eve of Pentecost in 1959 and celebrates the relatively new sense of solidarity among the churches in Asia.

Those who worked for the creation of a regional ecumenical body in the early years had three main motives. First, they hoped that Asian Christians would develop closer and more regular contacts with one another. Second, they wanted the churches to develop contextual theologies and ways of witness which would address the fast-changing social, religious and political situations of their nations and remain in dialogue with one another. Third, they wanted Asian churches to involve themselves more effectively in ecumenical thinking and action at the global level.

The first of these hopes has been realized. Asian Christians now meet in Asia, and not only in London, New York and Geneva. The increasing cooperation between the federation of Asian bishops conferences and the CCA augurs well for the future. In the area of contextual theology and witness too there have been significant gains, though the churches, as churches, have not always appropriated the new insights. A number of the study centres and people's movements that emerged during the last few decades have close links with the CCA, and they have been addressing the two basic realities of Asian existence – endemic material poverty and pervasive religious and ideological pluralism. Finally, ecumenical interaction be-

tween the regional and the global levels has been limited. Nor is there much evidence of dialogue among the various regions. That dialogue is crucial for the future of the ecumenical movement.

See articles on **Asia**.

TOSH ARAI and T.K. THOMAS

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## CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

THE CREATION, production and distribution of literature has been a concern of the churches since the early 18th century. The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) was founded by members of the Church of England in 1698, and in the Nonconformist tradition the founder of Methodism, John Wesley, was himself writing and disseminating tracts as early as 1745.

In May 1799 after the annual meeting of the recently formed (1795) London Missionary Society, the Religious Tract Society (RTS) was born. In 1804, much the same group formed the British and Foreign Bible Society, for printing and distributing the Bible in Britain and abroad (see **Bible societies**).

The RTS was from the start essentially ecumenical, representing the main Protestant churches, Nonconformist and Anglican, in Britain. Over the next 150 years it published in over 200 languages, distributing millions of magazines to soldiers, sailors and prisoners of war. In the mid-19th century, 33 million tracts were being produced each year. Besides producing literature, the RTS gave financial support to similar work abroad; and by 1815 its grants went to organizations in countries as widely spread as Iceland, Gibraltar, Uruguay, Russia and South Africa.

A number of missionaries in Africa and Asia were instrumental in writing and disseminating Christian literature, initially using colporteurs, later the book bicycle and more recently the bookmobile. Such missionaries did much to spread literacy and in some cases developed written forms of local languages. By encouraging and assisting local writing and publishing, they made a lasting contribution to the language, literature,

journalism, education and politics of their host countries.

The second half of the 19th century saw the creation of Christian literature societies in India, Africa and China, which amalgamated with the RTS in 1935 to form the United Society for Christian Literature (USCL). In 1932 the RTS adopted the imprint of Lutterworth Press, through which the USCL continued publishing general and religious books until 1984 when the press was sold.

Frank Laubach pioneered literacy programmes in the Philippines in the 1920s and 1930s, and in Latin America in the 1940s. In 1942 the Committee for Christian Literature of the Foreign Missions Conference in North America joined with Laubach's World Literacy Committee to become the Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature (Lit-Lit). Supported by 45 denominational boards in the USA and Canada, Lit-Lit provided capital for publishing programmes and training in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America.

In Europe, the Bethel Consultation on Christian Literature agreed in 1962 to form a Supporting Literature Agencies Consultation (SLAC), to draw together European and North American agencies. Exploratory conferences in Asia and Africa were followed by a report to the WCC's Commission on World Mission and Evangelism in Mexico in 1963. Two years later the Christian Literature Fund (CLF) was launched, sponsored by the WCC, with an international ecumenical committee. It worked closely with SLAC. In 1970, CLF became the Agency for Christian Literature Development (ACLD); then in 1975 it merged with the World Association for Christian Communication\* (WACC), becoming its print development unit.

In Britain the Christian Literature Council of the Conference of British Mission Societies (CBMS) supported publishing, printing and bookselling enterprises abroad. In 1964 Donald Coggan, then archbishop of York, challenged the churches to work together to combat the spiritual and intellectual hunger prevalent in many countries of the world. Out of this grew the Feed the Minds campaign, in which CBMS, SPCK, USCL and the Bible Society collaborated.

When this campaign concluded in 1967, USCL, SPCK and CBMS remained together under the umbrella of Feed the Minds. They were joined by SLAC to form the Joint Action for Christian Literature Overseas (JACLO) until 1983, when the mainstream British churches, the missionary societies and USCL joined to take forward the work and name of Feed the Minds. USCL, SPCK and WACC are all member bodies of Feed the Minds, along with the denominational and ecumenical missionary societies and institutions concerned with supporting indigenous and contextual literature.

ALWYN MARRIAGE

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## CHRISTIAN PEACE CONFERENCE

THE CHRISTIAN Peace Conference (CPC) was formed in the late 1950s to provide a platform where Eastern European churches, church groups and individuals could come together to address urgent global political issues, especially the ever-present threat of nuclear catastrophe, as Christians and not just as loyal citizens of their countries. The Bandung (Indonesia) conference (1955) of nations which considered themselves non-aligned within the blocs dominated by the USA and the USSR and the aborted 1956 uprising in Hungary underscored the extent to which Europe was in the grip of the cold war.\* The organized ecumenical movement was largely dominated by political and social ideas coming from the West.

In the autumn of 1957 two Protestant theological faculties in Czechoslovakia (Prague and Bratislava) came together to discuss a plan of convening the first CPC meeting in June 1958. The leading personalities were Josef Hromádka and Bohuslav Pospisil (both related to the Comenius theological

faculty in Prague). Inspiring them was the original idea of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who as early as 1934 had called for such a peace council. From the outset it was made clear that the CPC would not compete with the WCC but would complement its activities. The concept found a positive echo among Western church people and theologians, although the Westerners involved in the early years did not match the Eastern leaders in rank and influence.

The first three CPC meetings in 1958-60 and the first All Christian Peace Assembly in 1961 concentrated on the division between East and West and on issues stemming from the cold war. The 1961 assembly brought together 600 participants from 42 countries, including three delegates from the People's Republic of China who spoke bitterly of the *pax Russo-Americana*. The term "peace" was discredited because it was ideologically loaded. However, theologians such as Hans Joachim Iwand, Heinrich Vogel, Helmut Gollwitzer and Ernst Wolf understood that the question of peace in the presence of nuclear arms had acquired a new quality and had become a relevant theological issue. The basic focus in the initial stage was the struggle against atomic catastrophe, the ban of nuclear weapons and the effort to ease the cold war. Later the scope included the study of justice, freedom, new developing countries, the German question, disarmament and the peace service of youth. Unsuccessful efforts were made to secure the cooperation of the Roman Catholic Church.

The second assembly (1964) represented a major breakthrough. The participants from Latin America, Africa and Asia directed the CPC thinking towards third-world issues and shaped the CPC into a truly worldwide movement. The urgent needs of developing countries, the question of revolution and the growing unrest among students and young people became an integral part of the CPC agenda. The term "theology of revolution" was first coined in the CPC youth commission; and the CPC contributed substantially to the 1966 Geneva WCC conference on Church and Society.

The third assembly (1968) was marked by developments in Czechoslovakia. The Communist Party under Alexander Dubcek was developing a programme for "socialism

with a human face". The abrupt end to this innovative experiment with the invasion by five socialist states on 21 August 1968 had far-reaching consequences for the CPC. Its president, Hromádka, wrote a memorandum which condemned the action of the five countries. The delegates from the Soviet Union produced a counter-memorandum. The stormy session of the CPC working committee in Massy (early October 1968) initiated a protracted crisis which led to dismissal of the general secretary, Jaroslav Ondra. A few weeks later, Hromádka also resigned. An effort by some CPC representatives to silence the dissenting voices led to another crisis, symbolized by the walkout of a number of Western and third-world participants in early 1970. So the CPC was dangerously weakened, and in some countries it never recovered from the events of 1968-69. The 1971 assembly was designed to overcome the crisis and to elect new governing bodies, eliminating the dissenters.

During the 1970s, the CPC was able to start important regional work in Asia (1975), in Africa (1977) and Latin America (1978); in addition, the work of women's groups made a notable contribution to the feminist cause. The CPC work would not have been possible without the participation and financial support of the churches in Central and Eastern Europe, especially the Russian Orthodox Church. But the location of its headquarters and leadership in Prague made the CPC vulnerable to massive interference by communist governments in its inner life. The CPC sometimes defended the policies of one power bloc, and the theological work so important in the initial stage became sterile or even neglected.

The 1978 and 1985 assemblies brought together many Christians from around the world (including China, Vietnam and North Korea). Despite its often one-sided statements, the CPC contributed to creating the atmosphere in which Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation\* (JPIC) emerged as a major ecumenical theme in the 1980s.

The radical changes in 1989-90 and the demise of communism called into question the CPC's *raison d'être*. The legacy of its first president, Hromádka, was a challenge and called the CPC to repentance. For some time there was hope that, despite its limited re-

sources, the CPC could make a meaningful contribution to addressing the critical issues facing churches and ecumenical organizations at the beginning of a new millennium: global economic justice, human responsibility for all creation, true partnership of women and men in church and society, disarmament, the ongoing struggle against racism and xenophobia. Unfortunately, this expectation did not materialize. Some activities in connection with the CPC may continue in Latin America and other continents. However, a small international office in Prague was closed early in 2001.

MILAN OPO ĚENSKÝ

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## CHRISTIAN WORLD COMMUNIONS

SINCE THE SECOND half of the 19th century, churches which recognize a common history and confessional tradition though located in various countries have formed international associations or organizations, with varying aims: breaking down walls of national isolation, supporting the weaker churches, healing theological frictions or racial divisions: e.g. the Lambeth conference of bishops of the Anglican communion\* (1867), the Alliance of Reformed Churches throughout the World holding the Presbyterian System (1875), the World Methodist Council\* (1881), the Old Catholic Union of Utrecht (1889), the International Congregational Council (1891), the Baptist World Alliance\* (1905), the World Convention of Churches of Christ (1930), the Friends' World Committee for Consultation\* (1937), the Lutheran World Federation\* (1947, though consultations began in 1923). Since 1979 the designation of these as "world confessional families" has given way to the current term Christian World Communions (CWCs).

It is important not to identify CWCs with these structured expressions, nor to

generalize about them without taking account of their widely varying sizes and self-understandings. For example, the large Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, based in the USA with vigorous extensions in other continents, is not a member of the LWF. The BWA would collapse if it were to see itself as an instrument to bring about "the Baptist church". The Anglicans, Roman Catholics and Orthodox do not see themselves as members of "confessional denominations". The LWF and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches both have their central offices in the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, but the staff and budget of the former is several times larger than the latter, even though the total membership of their member churches is comparable. And for explicit ecumenical activities, the largest staff and budget is that of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity\* in the Roman curia.\*

No label fits exactly the cluster of CWCs, nor would any of them press for more than a general description of the grouping as such. This hesitation for detailed self-description became more pronounced in 1957 when the general secretaries of some of these bodies began informal annual meetings. They were later joined by representatives from the Eastern Orthodox\* Ecumenical Patriarchate (Constantinople) and the Moscow Patriarchate, from Oriental Orthodox churches,\* and from the Roman Catholic Church\* (through the Council for Christian Unity), as well as representatives from the Seventh-Day Adventist\* General Conference, the Salvation Army,\* the World Evangelical Fellowship,\* the Pentecostal World Conference\* and the WCC.\* This loosely structured group, calling itself the Conference of Secretaries of Christian World communions (CS/CWC), still meets informally every year but issues no joint statements or press releases.

Each of the CWCs sees itself as promoting closer fellowship, not only among its own members but also among other Christians and communions who participate in the one ecumenical movement. But tensions have arisen. In the 1960 and 1970s, critics questioned the seriousness of the CWCs' ecumenical commitment. The East Asia Christian Conference assemblies of 1961 and

1964 denied that the Anglican and Protestant CWCs could fulfill any positive ecumenical function. The context was the formation of united and uniting churches\* and the hindrance that some CWCs could be to the community of the church “in each place” seeking full fellowship with other local churches (see unity of “all in each place”). Some united churches, such as the Church of North India and the Uniting Church in Australia, intentionally maintain relationships with the CWCs with which their founding members were affiliated; others have deliberately cut off confessional ties.

So questions press. Is a “distinct” confessional tradition necessarily “divisive” within the ecumenical movement? Does confessional identity mean immutability in the self-understanding of a church and deny the self-critique of its tradition? Does “identity” not presuppose and include authentic change through purification?

A second context for tensions originated in the proliferation of international bilateral dialogues after the Second Vatican Council,\* either with or without the Roman Catholic Church as a partner. Are these bilaterals competitive with or even counterproductive to the multilateral dialogues which take place in the context of Faith and Order? The WCC’s fifth assembly (Nairobi 1975) suggested that there be mutual agreement on “the unity we seek” and “the witness we bear in the world”, and that a structural way be found to coordinate the evolving results of the bilaterals and the WCC’s multilaterals. The CS/CWC now organizes periodic forums to analyze bilateral conversations and compare their results with the F&O studies. The fourth forum (1985) compared the WCC’s baptism, eucharist and ministry statement (BEM\*) with the same three subjects in bilaterals; the fifth (1990) focused on the understanding (coherence or divergence) of the church; the sixth (1994) on the dialogues and their reception in the churches; the seventh (1997) on the emerging visions of unity; the eighth (2001) on the implications of regional agreements for international bilaterals.

The WCC’s eighth assembly (Harare 1998) judged that “a duplication of programmes and projects within the WCC and CWCs cannot be justified”, and called for an increase in the “level of mutual sharing”.

The assembly had investigated the possible direct involvement of CWCs in the WCC’s decision-making bodies, but it saw that “the present juridical and constitutional framework in which these ecumenical organizations operate prevents such direct roles”.

See also **dialogue, bilateral; dialogue, multilateral.**

TOM STRANSKY

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## CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS is the annual celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. This feast of the nativity is kept by almost all churches on 25 December. Its celebration in some Orthodox churches 13 days later than elsewhere is due to the current gap between the Julian or old-style calendar and the Gregorian calendar followed in other churches and in the civil sphere (see **church calendar**).

The origins of the feast and its date are contested among historians. While there is some evidence that Christ’s birth (and baptism) were earlier celebrated on 6 January (a date still kept for the feast among the Armenians), the date of 25 December for the nativity is attested from the 4th century (first in Rome, for the year 336). Two types of theory, not mutually exclusive, have been advanced for the fixing of this date. One is based on the supposed date of Christ’s passion on 25 March; if the earthly life of the Incarnate Son was to last a number of complete years, his conception must have occurred on 25 March and thus his birth on 25 December. The other assumes a Christian take-over of a pagan festival of the winter solstice, with Christ as “Sun of Righteous-

ness" replacing the "Unconquered Sun", the name used in the solar celebration instituted by the Roman emperor Aurelian in 274. Although Origen had earlier dismissed the keeping of birthdays as a pagan affair, 4th-century Christians may in this case have been led by their own reflection on the mystery of the incarnation,\* rather than simply imitating their pagan neighbours.

January 6 was left as the feast of the Epiphany, or "manifestation". In the Eastern churches, this is the feast of Christ's baptism, at which he was manifested as the Son of God (Matt. 3:13-17 and par.). In the West, the Epiphany is kept as the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles, in the persons of the wise men or "three kings" (Matt. 2:1-12). Further liturgical associations of the feast bring in the wedding at Cana, where Christ's turning of the water into wine was the first of his signs to manifest his glory (John 2:1-11).

Historically, Christmas (and its "twelve days") has been a popular feast around which many folk customs have grown up. Today it is perhaps the most widely observed holiday in the world, kept also by many who are not Christian. Seasonal sentiments of "peace on earth" are expressed (cf. Luke 2:14). Gifts are exchanged (cf. John 3:16).

The year 2000 was promoted as the focus of a jubilee celebration of Christ's nativity (see, e.g., Pope John Paul II's apostolic letter of 1994, *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*).

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT

■ H. Förster, *Die Feier der Geburt Christi in der Alten Kirche*, Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2000 ■ R. Hutton, *The Stations of the Sun: A History of the Ritual Year in Britain*, Oxford, Oxford UP, 1996 ■ S.K. Roll, *Towards the Origins of Christmas*, Kampen, Kok Pharos, 1995.

## CHURCH

AT A LUCID moment in the difficult study on "The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community", it was recognized in the WCC Faith and Order\* commission that "in a divided Christianity, the existing churches" have "varying understandings of the nature, identity and boundaries of the church. The churches' differences come to expression in several ways: their perceptions

of the character of the church as both the body and bride of Christ and a historic reality; the role they attribute to the institutional element that is necessary for any form of ecclesial life; the place they accord to the church in the saving activity of God; the sense in which the church itself may be said to be sacramental in character; the weight they attach to ecclesiology in their doctrinal schemes. Most concretely, the existing churches differ as to the persons and communities which are to be reckoned as belonging to the church" (*Faith and Renewal: Stavanger 1985*, 194-95).

It is in fact fairly easy for the churches to agree in describing *what the church is* and stating *what the church is for*: it is "people of God", "Body of Christ", "community of the Holy Spirit", privileged with anticipating God's kingdom in its worship (*leitourgia*) and meanwhile charged with proclaiming the gospel to the world (*martyria*, witness) and serving the needy among humankind (*diakonia*). A text of this kind, entitled "The Calling of the Whole People of God", is found in the first five paragraphs of the ministry section of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry\** (1982) and has met with great approval in the responses of the churches to the Lima document. But when the church shifts from being the subject of the sentence to the predicate, it is much more difficult for the churches to agree in identifying *who are the church*. Different views on the identity of the church – on where the church is concretely to be found – are linked to differences as to its unity\* and mission\* – and therefore after all also to its nature (what the church is) and its relationship to the world and the human community in which it is placed (what the church is for).

## A HISTORICAL AND SYSTEMATIC TYPOLOGY OF ECCLESIOLOGIES

Looking at the history and present state of Christianity, it is possible to detect some eight different intuitions or perceptions as to the identity, nature, unity and mission of the church. These arose in a rough historical sequence, although each has interacted with its predecessors and successors, and all are present today, although often in mixed form. The following are ways in which the fellowship of the church – the sacrament\* of

whose beginning is baptism\* and the sacrament of whose continuance is eucharistic communion (see **communion, eucharist**) – has been defined and located.

1. In the view associated with Cyprian of Carthage (d.258), there is only one church, the “ark of salvation”, and its institutional and spiritual boundaries coincide. Any who fall away, whether into heresy\* (failure of faith) or schism\* (failure of love), lack the Holy Spirit\* and drop into an ecclesiological void. The sacraments of the delinquent party are counterfeits; and when individuals are converted to the catholic church, they receive baptism (not re-baptism, since what they received in the other body was not in fact baptism at all).

The Orthodox and the stricter type of Baptists remain closest to this view. In the Anglican-Orthodox dialogue,\* the Orthodox maintained that their church “is the one true church of Christ, which as his body is not and cannot be divided” (Dublin 1984, 9). The strength of this view in its pristine form resides in its witness to the ontological realism of God’s self-gift to “the one undivided historical church”: “We are not merely moving towards unity, but rather our very existence derives from the inseparable union between the three persons of the Holy Trinity given to us as a historical event on the day of Pentecost” (Nikos Nissiotis). Its difficulty, especially apparent in an ecumenical age, lies in giving an account of the *prima facie* presence of faith\* beyond the bounds of one’s own community. In an exercise of “economy”,\* the Orthodox have not always required baptism of those coming to them from at least certain other would-be Christian communities, while insisting that this is not a general recognition of the baptisms performed there in the absence of conversion to Orthodoxy.

2. According to a view indebted to Augustine (d.430), outside baptisms may be valid (at least in the sense that a convert will not be re-baptized, on the grounds that, whoever baptizes, “it is Christ who baptizes”), but they will not be “fruitful” before conversion to the true church. This view has the advantage of acknowledging Christ’s sovereignty over his sacraments, while retaining the importance of the ecclesial connection for their benefits; but it involves the

problem of a gap, both notional and temporal, between “validity” and “efficacy”. Historically, the Augustinian position is characteristic of Rome. The council of Trent\* anathematized any who should deny that baptism performed in water in the name of the Trinity\* with the intention of doing what the church does was true baptism; but in cases where the persons baptized belonged to communities holding beliefs judged contrary to Roman doctrine, such baptisms could hardly be more than merely valid, since their efficacy for salvation would be immediately cut off by the anathemas\* attaching to heresies and schism.

3. A view that elements of the faith persisted, even savingly, outside one’s own community eventually led some to the detection of “traces of the church” (*vestigia ecclesiae*) beyond their own institution. The classic Protestant reformers, and particularly perhaps Calvin (no doubt on a predestinarian base), were willing to recognize that there were Christians present within the unreformed Roman communion, which has not been left entirely without the means of grace (*Institutes* 4.2.11-12). Despite the bull *Unam Sanctam* of 1302, in which Pope Boniface VIII declared in face of “the Greeks” as well as of political resistance in the West that “it is altogether necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman pontiff”, the Roman church maintained an intermittent dialogue with the “Eastern churches” (with the ecclesial designation apparently acquiring increased substance from Leo XIII onwards, until indeed the designation by Paul VI of Constantinople as a “sister church” appears to transcend the *vestigia ecclesiae* model).

Eventually, and clearly from the 19th century onwards, Rome from its standpoint counted Protestants among the “separated brethren”, with an increasing emphasis on the family ties that still joined them to Rome across the division. Vatican II\* declared that, by virtue of their baptism and the faith in Christ thereby signified, such individuals enjoy “a certain, though imperfect, communion” with the Roman Catholic Church (*Unitatis Redintegratio* 3). Even their communities that stem from the Reformation are “not devoid of meaning and value in the mystery of salvation” (*ibid.*; cf. 19-23). The scriptures

and the rites, as well as the faith, hope and love, that are found outside the Roman Catholic Church, belong by rights, however, to the “one church of Christ”, which, according to *Lumen Gentium* 8, “subsists in” the Roman Catholic Church. The interpretation of Vatican II’s *subsistit in* is controversial even among Roman Catholic theologians; but it is in any case clear that other Christians and their communities have difficulty with the notion that they need the mediation of the Roman Catholic Church in order to be (part of) the church of Christ, and consequently with any interpretation of Vatican II’s idea that elements of the faith outside Roman bounds properly “lead back” to the unity *with* the RCC in terms of a restored unity *in* the RCC.

4. While the Protestant reformers did not abandon the institutional aspect of the church, a stronger emphasis was placed, particularly perhaps on the Lutheran side, upon the church as “event”. When the Augsburg confession declares in article 7 that “the church is a gathering of believers in which the gospel is purely preached and the sacraments are administered according to the gospel”, the direction of thought among Lutheran interpreters is less likely to be that of the church celebrating the word and the sacraments than that of word and sacraments constituting the congregation. This more punctiliar or episodic view of the church has the advantages of dynamism and of allowing for repeated correction of the church by God; but it has difficulty in concretizing a pastoral and teaching office for the sake of the continuity or identity of the believing fellowship in time and space.

5. A “branch theory” of the church has been most characteristic of Anglicanism. It may be as early as the prayer of Bishop Lancelot Andrewes (1555-1626) for “the church catholic: Eastern, Western, British”. Certainly the 19th-century Oxford movement and its aftermath thought in terms of the Greek, Latin and Anglican churches (see William Palmer’s *Treatise on the Church of Christ*, 1838). This model retains or revives something of the “substantialist” or “institutionalist” aspects of the Cyprianic. But it differs in holding that schism is, even if only temporarily, “internal” to the church. It may, in the end, prove to be the way by

which at least the two “sister churches” of Rome and Constantinople find reconciliation between themselves.

6. Protestant pietism of the 17th and 18th centuries was the seedbed for a more subjective ecclesiology. Christianity appears as a religion of the heart, in which fellowship consists in a warm personal relationship with Christ and with the brothers and sisters. The church consists of “true believers everywhere”, and even though outward circumstances and differences over non-essentials may, as Wesley put it in his sermon on a “Catholic Spirit”, “prevent an entire external union”, they do not preclude a “union in affection”. This view is characteristic of many who in recent times have been called Evangelicals. It may serve as a valuable reminder that institutional unity without spiritual unity would be a mere facade; its weakness is that it tends to acquiesce too easily in visible *disunity*.

Avery Dulles has wondered whether the one-sided emphasis on the church as a “spiritual community” does not underlie “the repeated statements in WCC literature that the aim of the ecumenical movement is to manifest, rather than to bring about, the oneness of Christ’s church” (*Theological Studies*, 1972). Certainly the New Delhi 1961 description of the unity which is both God’s will and gift, for which we must both work and pray, speaks of its “being made visible as...” Yet this very formulation makes clear that classical ecumenism is not content with a merely “invisibilist” unity.

7. The great rise of Protestant missions in the 18th and 19th centuries brought an evangelistic model of the church into prominence. A sacramental symptom is the practice of what Methodists in particular, in an exaggeration of Wesley’s notion of the Lord’s supper as a “converting ordinance”, call “open communion”. In the 1950s and 1960s, this vision acquired a renewed eschatological intensity in the advocacy by the Dutch missiologist J.C. Hoekendijk of a sacramental banquet totally “open to the world”: “Communion as an eschatological sacrament is the representation of the kingdom in the *world*; it is impossible to lock up the kingdom in the church, it is equally impossible to make this sacrament of the kingdom a purely churchly event.” The attrac-

tiveness of this ecclesiology resides in its perception of the inviting character of the gospel and the welcoming nature of the church. The danger is that, since by receiving communion one becomes henceforth part of the proclaiming community, the identity of that body and its message may be obscured or lost through the immediate aggregation of persons who do not yet have the depth of understanding and commitment signified by baptism and the profession of faith.

8. With the Life and Work\* movement, the last ecclesiological vision to be listed believes that “service unites”. This pragmatic or “secular” (Avery Dulles) approach finds Christian unity pre-eminently expressed in a diaconal ministry amid the needy of the world. Collaborators for justice\* and peace\* may celebrate their fellowship, as happened in places in the 1960s, with a holy meal on the march or on the barricades. The sacrament here helps to keep the Christological inspiration present to the participants and should in turn bring home to all Christians the social and ethical implications of their faith. The main problem with this view is that it minimizes the doctrinal and institutional components of Christianity.

### SHIFTS IN ECCLESIOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

Only when the institutions claiming to be church are deliberately aware, by virtue of this or a similar typology, of the diversity in their starting points is it possible to go beyond bland re-affirmations concerning the church as “people of God”, “Body of Christ” and “community of the Holy Spirit” that leave intact the problem of a divided Christianity. In the light of an awareness of their own starting points and those of the others, however, the churches are enabled to examine afresh the scriptural and traditional images with a view to re-discovering the nature, tasks and concrete location of the church. As part of a joint hermeneutical endeavour, conducted with a readiness for self-criticism and a willingness to look at others sympathetically, the churches now need to ask again where the agreed “marks of the church” are concretely to be found. Are they recognizable in my own community? In which other communities are they recognizable? What do these discernments mean for the restoration of fellowship, communion and unity?

Ecclesiology in fact became a key topic in both bilateral and multilateral dialogues and relationships in the 1980s. It is often said that the world conference on F&O at Lund in 1952 marked the end of “comparative ecclesiology” and the transition to a method whereby all ecumenical partners would focus together upon the Christological, Trinitarian, salvation-historical centre and source of the church. This concentration was valuable. But the convergences it produced – as most notably in the Lima text on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* – then make it necessary, precisely in so far as they appear to bring the possibility of unity closer, to integrate again, now in a more hopeful light, the questions raised by comparative ecclesiology. If so many of the churches’ responses to BEM asked after its ecclesiological implications, it was on account of not only its presuppositions but also its possible consequences. The preface to BEM itself put to the churches the question of “the consequences your church can draw from this text for its relations and dialogues with other churches, particularly with those churches which also recognize the text as an expression of the apostolic faith”. Concurrently, the international bilateral dialogues\* among Christian World Communions\* have recognized that as progress is registered towards agreement in the faith, so the presently divided communities, as carriers of that faith, are by that very fact coming *ecclesially* closer to one another and so need a doctrine of the church that holds open the prospect of mutual recognition and eventually unity.

### ECCLESIOLOGY IN THE BILATERAL DIALOGUES

One of the first bilateral dialogues to give explicit attention to ecclesiology was the Old Catholic-Orthodox dialogue\* (Chambésy 1977, Bonn 1979, Zagorsk 1981). In a section on “the boundaries of the church” (Bonn, 27-31), each party affirms, despite their present lack of communion with each other, that “from the day it was founded right down to our own days, the true church, the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church, has gone on existing without any discontinuity wherever the true faith, worship and order of the undivided church are preserved unimpaired” (29). To

take account, no doubt, at least of their own situation vis-a-vis each other, the mixed commission tentatively asserts that “since it is impossible to set limits to God’s power..., it can be considered as not excluded that the divine omnipotence and grace are present and operative wherever the departure from the fullness of truth in the one church is not complete and does not go to the lengths of a complete estrangement from the truth” (30).

The Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue\* began with a treatment of “The Mystery of the Church and of the Eucharist in the Light of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity” (Munich 1982): “The church exists in history as a local church... in a given place” (2.1), but it is already “eschatological” (2.2). There is a “Jerusalem from on high”, which “comes down from God”; a “communion which is at the foundation of the community itself”, so that “the church comes into being by a free gift, that of the new creation” (2.1). The church “manifests itself when it is assembled”, most fully in the eucharist (2.1). The eucharist includes “the proclamation of the word to the assembly, and the response of faith given by all” (2.2). “Each eucharistic assembly is truly the holy church of God, the Body of Christ, in communion with the first community of the disciples and with all who throughout the world celebrate and have celebrated the memorial of the Lord” (3.1). There are two conditions for a local church\* to be “truly within the ecclesial communion”: first and fundamentally, “the identity of the mystery of the church lived by the local church with the mystery of the church lived by the primitive church”; and then, “mutual recognition today between this local church and the other churches... Each should recognize in the others through local particularities the identity of the mystery of the church.” This mutual recognition depends on “communion in the same kerygma, and so in the same faith”, and on “the will for communion in love and in service, not only in words but in deeds” (3.3).

Subsequent stages of the Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue on faith, sacraments and order (Bari 1987; Uusi Valamo 1988) worked towards achieving the conditions of such mutual recognition among the local churches of their respective communions. Then, however, geopolitical developments in-

tervened to force the dialogue to concentrate on the very concrete ecclesiological questions raised by the re-emergence of the Eastern Catholic churches\* in the former Soviet empire. A document produced at Balamand, Lebanon, in 1993 rejected Uniatism\* as a “method of union of the past”. If unity is to be “re-established” between the “sister churches of East and West” (and division between them is “contrary to the nature of the church”), it will be by way of a “common quest for a full accord on the content of the faith and its implications” (6; 14; 15) through a theological dialogue in a context of love, trust and practical respect; it will entail the renunciation of mutually exclusive claims to be the sole locus of salvation (10; 13).

In 2000, independently of each other, authoritative sources among Catholics and Orthodox reiterated the basic ecclesiological positions of their respective churches. In the declaration *Dominus Iesus*, the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith reasserted that the one church of Christ “subsists in” the Roman Catholic Church, while churches that have “apostolic succession and a valid eucharist” but are not in perfect communion with the Roman Catholic Church are considered to be “true particular churches”, in which the church of Christ is “present and operative”; other “ecclesial communities”, without “the valid episcopate and the genuine and integral substance of the eucharist”, “are not churches in the proper sense”, although the baptized in them “are in a certain communion, albeit imperfect, with the church”. In setting out “Basic Principles of the Attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church towards the Other Christian Confessions”, the bishops’ council of the Moscow patriarchate reaffirmed that “the Orthodox church is the true church in which the holy Tradition and the fullness of God’s saving grace are preserved intact”; however, “a divided Christendom” still contains “certain characteristics which make it one: the word of God, faith in Christ as God and Saviour come in the flesh, and sincere devotion”, so that “there remains a certain incomplete fellowship which serves as the pledge of a return to unity in the church, to catholic fullness and oneness”.

In the 1984 Dublin statement between Orthodox and Anglicans on “the mystery of

the church”, the Orthodox affirmed their own identity with the one true church of Christ; but “at the same time they see Anglicans as brothers and sisters in Christ who are seeking with them the union of all Christians in the one church” (9). The two parties “are not agreed on the account to be given of the sinfulness and division which is to be observed in the life of Christian communities. For Anglicans, because the church under Christ is the community where God’s grace is at work, healing and transforming sinful men and women, and because grace in the church is mediated through those who are themselves undergoing such transformation, the struggle between grace and sin is to be seen as characteristic of, rather than accidental to, the church on earth” (99); consequently, “we disagree in our view of the relationship between the church’s basic unity and the present state of division between Christians. The Anglican members see our divisions as existing within the church, while the Orthodox members believe that the Orthodox church is the one true church of Christ, which as his Body is not and cannot be divided” (100).

In the Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue,\* ARCIC I in the introduction to its *Final Report* (1982) revealed that the implicit leitmotif in its earlier texts on eucharist, ministry and authority had been “the concept of *koinonia* (communion)” in its Trinitarian, Christological and ecclesiological aspects: “*Koinonia* with one another is entailed by our *koinonia* with God in Christ. This is the mystery of the church” (intro., 5). This then set the context for the first statement of ARCIC II, on “Salvation and the Church” (Llandaff 1986). Ecclesologically, the most lapidary formulation in that text is the declaration that “the church is called to be, and by the power of the Spirit actually is, a *sign, steward* and *instrument* of God’s design. For this reason it can be described as *sacrament* of God’s saving work” (29). This is, first, an attempt to deal with the tension which ARCIC I’s co-chairmen had already recognized in 1976 between the ideal and the actual, a tension which affects the ecclesial life of both churches as well as the relations between them. The Llandaff text writes further to this point: “The credibility of the church’s witness is undermined by the sin of

its members, the shortcomings of its human institutions, and not least by the scandal of division. The church is in constant need of repentance and renewal so that it can be more clearly seen for what it is: the one, holy body of Christ. Nevertheless the gospel contains the promise that despite all failures the church will be used by God in the achievement of his purpose: to draw humanity into communion with himself and with one another, so as to share his life, the life of the Holy Trinity” (29).

Second, the language of the Llandaff text about the church as “sign, steward and instrument” (29) – “of what it has received” (27) – is an attempt to overcome the historic Reformation controversy concerning “the role of the church in the process of salvation”: “As well as believing that Catholics did not acknowledge the true authority of scripture over the church, Protestants also felt that Catholic teaching and practice had interpreted the mediatorial role of the church in such a way as to derogate from the place of Christ as ‘sole mediator between God and man’ (1 Tim. 2:5). Catholics believed that Protestants were abandoning or at least devaluing the church’s ministry and sacraments, which were divinely appointed means of grace; also that they were rejecting its divinely given authority as guardian and interpreter of the revealed word of God” (7). Now the church is jointly affirmed to be both “evangelized and evangelizing, reconciled and reconciling, gathered together and gathering others” (28).

In viewing “The Church as Communion” (1991), ARCIC II spoke of it (without article) as “sacrament of the merciful grace of God for all humankind” (5). The “constitutive elements essential for the full visible communion of the church” comprised “the confession of the one apostolic faith”, “one baptism”, “one celebration of the eucharist”, “shared commitment to the mission entrusted by Christ to his church”, “shared concern” and “mutual forbearance”, “acceptance of the same basic moral values”, and “a ministry of oversight, the fullness of which is entrusted to the episcopate” (44-45). In “Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church” (1994), the commission questioned whether the existence of divergent “practical and pastoral

judgment” on such ethical issues as divorce,\* contraception, abortion\* and homosexuality\* was “itself sufficient to justify a continuing breach in communion”, since (in the commission’s opinion) these differences occurred within “the same controlling vision of the nature and destiny of humanity” (1).

Ecclesiology is now recognized to be the “lodestone” (André Birmelé) of the international Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue,\* which had in fact begun with “The Gospel and the Church” (Malta 1972). As interpreted in Birmelé’s very detailed study of the continuing dialogue (1986), there still remained “a basic difference” concerning “the nature of the instrumentality of the church in the transmission of salvation” (which ARCIC identified as a Reformation controversy). According to Birmelé, this difference remains divisive because it is not fully covered by “the even more fundamental... broad consensus” on the gospel and salvation in Jesus Christ: the problem is that ecclesiology is, in the Catholic view, integral to a sufficiently complete agreement on the matter in hand, whereas Lutheranism permits a variety of ecclesiologies, since the doctrine of the church is not itself a (primary) part of the gospel.

By the time of its 1994 report, “Church and Justification”, the Lutheran-Roman Catholic international commission believed that sufficient agreement existed on the doctrine of justification for justification to be used as a common critical principle throughout the realm of ecclesiology, for “all church doctrine, order and practice” (168). But significant differences were seen to remain when it came to the application of this criterion in such questions as the “institutional continuity of the church” (174-81), “ordained ministry as an institution in the church” (182-204), authoritative “church doctrine and the teaching function of the ministry” (205-22), “church jurisdiction and the jurisdictional function of the ministry” (223-41), with all these matters reaching their sharpest focus in the question as to whether “the episcopal office” in “historic... and apostolic succession” is to be judged “necessary” and “indispensable” (Catholic) or “important”, “meaningful” and “thus desirable” (Lutheran) in the service of the church and the gospel of salvation (193-

204). For Lutherans, insistence on the necessity and indispensability of the episcopate endangers the “unconditional” gospel; for Catholics, the lack of the episcopate jeopardizes the churchly function of mediating the apostolic gospel. All these ecclesiological questions remained to be dealt with after the signing in 1999 of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification between the Lutheran World Federation and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, wherein the two parties declared that the mutual anathemas of the 16th century did not strike the current teaching of Catholics and Lutherans as represented in the document itself.

In the Lutheran-Methodist dialogue,\* the Lutheran World Federation and the World Methodist Council were able to reach a mutually satisfying agreement on “The Church: Community of Grace” (1984). The leading statement is this: “The church is the community of Jesus Christ called into being by the Holy Spirit. Those who respond in faith to the gospel of Christ, proclaimed in word and sacrament, are brought into a new relationship with God and with one another” (28). The joint commission recommended that the member churches “take steps to declare and establish full fellowship of word and sacrament” (91), while admitting the need for further study on “forms of unity” (88).

Concurrently, the World Methodist Council conducted the ecclesiological phase of its dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church (see **Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue**) under the rubric of *koinonia*: “Because God so loved the world, he sent his Son and the Holy Spirit to draw us into *communion* with himself. This *sharing* in God’s life, which resulted from the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit, found expression in a visible *community* of Christ’s disciples, the church” (Nairobi 1986, 1). Both the Singapore report of 1991 (“The Apostolic Tradition”) and the Rio de Janeiro report of 1996 (“The Word of Life”) were governed by that statement. Under its aegis the two sides sought to discern, from their respective standpoints, as common as possible a pattern of the Christian faith, worship, life, community and mission, while foreseeing that “when the time comes that Methodists

and Catholics declare their readiness for that 'full communion in faith, mission and sacramental life' towards which they are working, the mutual recognition of ministry will be achieved not only by their having reached doctrinal consensus but will also depend upon a fresh creative act of reconciliation which acknowledges the manifold yet unified activity of the Holy Spirit throughout the ages. It will involve a joint act of obedience to the sovereign word of God" (Singapore, 94). Teaching authority\* was the aspect of ecclesiology discussed in the Brighton report of 2001 ("Speaking the Truth in Love").

Meanwhile, in the Anglican-Methodist dialogue,\* the international commission in its report "Sharing in the Apostolic Communion" (1996) recommended to its principals – the World Methodist Council and the Lambeth conference – that they make a mutual declaration, to be liturgically celebrated, that both Anglican and Methodist churches "belong to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church of Jesus Christ" and "share in the common confession and heritage of the apostolic faith", and that canonical provisions be prepared for growth into a "fuller communion" that will include "agreement in core doctrines" (judged by the commission to exist at present), "common baptism" and "mutual recognition of members", "a eucharistic communion going beyond mutual hospitality", "mutual recognition and interchangeability of ministries and rites", "the fellowship of help, encouragement and prayer for one another", "collaboration in evangelism, mission and service", and "national, regional and local structures of common decision-making" (7; 95). While the World Methodist Council approved the report in 1996, the Lambeth conference of 1998 called for more work at regional level before any global steps towards not just the "acknowledgment" but the apostolic "recognition" of Methodist churches, reconciliation and unity.

Dialogues involving the World Alliance of Reformed Churches have emphasized the location and role of the church in the world. This was already the case of the first Reformed-Roman Catholic dialogue,\* "The Presence of Christ in Church and World" (1970-77), and it continued in "Church as

Community of Common Witness to the Kingdom of God" (from 1999). In the Anglican-Reformed dialogue,\* the international commission's report on "God's Reign and Our Unity" (1984) saw the church as "a pilgrim people called to a journey whose goal is nothing less than God's blessed kingdom embracing all nations and all creation, a sign, instrument and foretaste of God's purpose 'to sum up all things with Christ as head' (Eph. 1:10). It is only in this missionary and eschatological perspective that the question of unity is rightly seen" (14): "The church is thus a provisional embodiment of God's final purpose for all human beings and for all creation. It is an embodiment because it is a body of actual men and women chosen by God to share through the Spirit in the life of Christ and so in his ministry in the world. It is provisional in a double sense: only part of the human family has been brought into its life, and those who have been so brought are only partly conformed to God's purpose. If they were fully conformed, they would be fully reconciled to one another. The quest for unity is one aspect of the church's acting out of her unceasing prayer: 'Your kingdom come'" (30).

The "theological conversations sponsored by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Baptist World Alliance" (1973-77) showed an awareness that the issue of the nature and conditions of baptism is "central to the ecclesiological question, confronting the whole ecumenical movement, on the nature and understanding of the church" (intro.). "The Reformed tradition", which includes the baptism of infants, "emphasizes the community of salvation and thus the thought of the church as also a mixed body (*corpus permixtum*, see Matt. 13:24-30, 47-50)... The Baptist tradition emphasizes the aspect of mission and the thought of the church as 'gathered believers' committed to the task of proclaiming the gospel to each individual (see Matt. 28:16-20)" (8). The place and role of the church in the world are clearly at issue again here. Baptists and Reformed were able to note some practical convergences between them, e.g. the "dual practice" in some Reformed churches whereby "believer's baptism is as legitimate as infant baptism", and "the important fact that many Baptist churches ad-

mit other Christians, baptized as infants, to the Lord's supper on the basis of their personal faith in Christ and when they are in good standing with their own churches, a practice which is a de facto recognition of their Christian status" (17).

### ECCLESIOLOGY IN FAITH AND ORDER AFTER BEM

Taking up the questions and requests of the churches in their responses to BEM, the WCC F&O commission at Budapest 1989 resolved to undertake a major ecclesiological study which would integrate at least some aspects of the projects on "The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community" and "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today".

A preliminary sketch proposed making *koinonia*\* a major, though not exclusive, category: "Koinonia in the life of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (see John 14:17; 1 John 1:2-10; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Cor. 13:13) is the life centre of all who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. They share and participate in the gospel and in the apostolic faith, in suffering and in service (2 Cor. 8:4; Rom. 15:26; Acts 2:32). This *koinonia* is lived in Christ through baptism (Rom. 6) and the eucharist (1 Cor. 10-11) and in the community with its pastors and guides (Heb. 13). *Koinonia* means in addition the participation in the holy things of God and the communion of saints of all times and places (*communio sanctorum* in the double sense of the word). Each local Christian community is related in *koinonia* with all other local Christian communities with whom it shares the same faith. In this *koinonia* they live the catholicity of the church... Such a *koinonia* is not an inward-looking group of believers, but a missionary community sent into the world to bear witness to God's love for humanity and creation." It was hoped that this would allow the integration – into "a convergent vision on the nature, unity and mission of the church" – of different, but potentially complementary, key conceptions and images that all belong to the common biblical heritage but have been particularly emphasized by different Christian traditions: the church as gift of the word of God (*creatura verbi*), as mystery or sacrament of God's love for the world, as the pilgrim peo-

ple of God, and as servant and prophetic sign of God's coming kingdom (*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, 1982-1990: Report on the Process and Responses*, pp.147-51).

Under the guidance of work done in F&O, the seventh assembly of the WCC (Canberra 1991) adopted a brief statement on "The Unity of the Church as *Koinonia*: Gift and Calling". The fifth world conference on Faith and Order, held at Santiago de Compostela in 1993, was in fact conducted under the title "Towards *Koinonia* in Faith, Life and Witness". Section I devoted itself to a basic "understanding of *koinonia* and its implications". Section II took up the apostolic faith study under "Confessing the One Faith to God's Glory" and encouraged the churches in their continuing consideration of *Confessing the One Faith* (1991); and this was also seen as the area to which the called-for development of "an ecumenical hermeneutic" would most naturally be related. Under "Sharing a Common Life in Christ", section III sought to harvest the fruits of the BEM process and prepared the way for the 1994 Ditchingham conference and report "Towards *Koinonia* in Worship". Under "Called to a Common Witness for a Renewed World", section IV prolonged the theme of the church and the human community in its emergent shape as "ecclesiology and ethics".\* Thus the principal functions of the church – *martyria*, *leitourgia*, and *diakonia* – were retained in interwoven fashion in F&O's continuing ecclesiological reflection as it now worked towards a major statement on "The Church as *Koinonia*".

Faith and Order's principal post-Santiago study on ecclesiology produced in 1998 an interim statement on "The Nature and Purpose of the Church". Some basic agreements were solidified: the divine origin of the church as the creation of the Word and of the Spirit (*creatura Verbi, creatura Spiritus*); the Trinitarian pattern of the church as "people of God", "Body of Christ", "temple of the Holy Spirit"; the calling of the church, as "a reflection of the communion in the Triune God", to be "the instrument" in fulfilling "God's design to gather all creation under the lordship of Christ" as it "participates in the mission of Christ to reconcile all things to God and to one another". It was noted that the notion of *koinonia*, in its

“richness of meaning”, was being reclaimed in the ecumenical movement as “a key to understanding the nature and purpose of the church”, although the document admitted that some were asking “whether this notion is being called to bear more weight than it is able to carry”. In a new typographical device of “problem boxes”, certain “remaining areas of difficulty and disagreement” were detailed, some of them familiar, some partly resolved, some just emerging. The old included the following: the relation between the institutional dimension of the church and the work of the Holy Spirit; the church and sin (can the church sin, or only its members?); the propriety of speaking of the church itself in terms of “sacrament”; the varied understandings of “communion” and “visible unity”; the limits of legitimate diversity in regard to cultural expression, doctrinal emphases and confessional identity; the relation between the local and the universal dimensions of the church; the more precise understanding and practice of baptism, eucharist and ministry; the communal, personal and collegial dimensions of oversight, including the relation between conciliarity and primacy. Among the new problems: it was reported that in the matter of confessing the apostolic faith, churches now differed on whether it was “church-dividing, to understand the resurrection of Christ only symbolically; to confess Christ only as one mediator among others”; and that in the matter of ethics, “an increasing range of issues, including those of human sexuality, have polarized Christian communities and risk damaging or destroying the bonds of koinonia already existing”. Most fundamentally for the ecclesiological question, the 1998 statement recognized that “churches understand their relation to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church in different ways”, and that “this has a bearing upon the way they relate to other churches and their perception of the road to visible unity.”

Perhaps the most promising feature in all this recent process is the repeated invitations to existing ecclesial communities to integrate current concrete achievements – such as convergence in liturgical understanding and practice, the establishment of concordats of communion in word and sacrament, joint engagement in evangelistic and social con-

cerns and action, the creation of ecumenical parishes, and full constitutional unions at national levels – into their dogmatic ecclesiology and thence to make legal and practical provision for further growth “on the way to fuller koinonia” (to use the title of the official report from Santiago).

### FROM DIVISION, THROUGH RECONCILIATION, TOWARDS THE KINGDOM

All the bilateral and multilateral reflections on ecclesiology recognize and try to give an account of a number of tensions that may in fact be variants of a single tension: between the ideal and the actual, the believed and the empirical, the already and the not yet. The four “notes” of the church – its unity,\* holiness,\* catholicity,\* and apostolicity\* – all labour under that tension: there is need for reconciliation and a manifest unity; there is an imperative to the conquest of sin and a growth in holiness; there is room for many forms of the true faith in a harmonious catholicity; there is a test of apostolicity to be applied to all intended embodiments of the gospel message.

According to the Toronto statement\* of 1950, no church is required to give up its own ecclesiology for membership in the WCC. Ecclesiological dialogues, whether under the auspices of the WCC or not, show churches discovering the presence of Christian faith and life beyond their own boundaries, struggling to formulate an account of that fact which may in effect gradually modify their respective ecclesiological theories, and reflecting on the conditions and means of bringing all acknowledged Christians and their divided communities into the unity which the gospel entails. The Methodist-Roman Catholic report of Nairobi 1986 judges that “as we reflect on a re-united church, we cannot expect to find an ecclesiology shaped in a time of division to be entirely satisfactory”. Nevertheless, “our explorations towards a more adequate ecclesiology have begun and are helping us to give proper recognition to each other’s ecclesial or churchly character. They will also assist in overcoming our present state of division” (22). Not even an ecumenically formulated ecclesiology may be perfect, yet it remains the task of the ecumenical movement to fashion a faithful doctrine of the church that will best al-

low for the recognition of the Christian reality wherever it is found, for the reconciliation of those who have been divided, and for the life henceforth in a church that is seeking that perfection of unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity which will mark the completed kingdom of God.\*

See also **church and world; church as institution; church discipline; church order; images of the church; intercommunion; unity, models of; unity, ways to.**

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## CHURCH AND STATE

THE TWO modern Christian terms refer to the distinctive practices, pieties and politics of communities of worship in relation to institutions of governance in a nation by law and social conventions. More broadly, the terms indicate that religion and politics are never identical but always shape each other accordingly as each is constituted.

In tribal and clan-based societies, religious traditions and a sense of a natural order of things are linked to political authority and tied into a common social fabric, way of life and ethnic identity. Enduring over long periods, these unities are subject to conquest or hegemony by more complex and dynamic systems of religious, social and political life. These traditions survive by mixing with dominant patterns of belief and power to form religious sub-cultures, which exist in every mixed society.

Complex civilizations integrate a number of tribal peoples into large systems in various ways. What is called Confucianism, for example, was for centuries the systematic extension of a particular spiritual-moral cluster of insights, loyalties and practices that imperial designs established over a vast region and many peoples. In practice, the emperor was guided in cosmology, ritual behaviour and policy by a "priestly" array of trained "literati" who administered the system and instructed the people in their moral and spiritual duties. All other groups, beliefs and centres of power were subordinated to the whole, sometimes in authoritarian, sometimes in totalitarian ways. Maoism continued the pattern in China by sharply restricting ideas of either independent churches or alternative political parties.

In contrast, what we call "Hinduism", the complex metaphysical-moral philosophies of India, stacked the peoples of the Indian sub-continent into a ladder of religio-ethnic "castes". Each caste\* had a distinctive set of ritual behaviours, status markers

and economic roles. Political rulers were subordinate to the “hierarchy”, the dominant, priestly Brahmins who developed this complex social spirituality and instructed the many regional maharajas, kings and princes who stood below them on the social scale, on political and sacred duties. Various gurus and local *sadhhus* nurtured comparable beliefs among the “lower” farmers, traders and workers. Each group had its own form of piety, interfamilial network and territory, and understood its place in the hierarchical arrangement. Tribal and landless peoples who did not integrate into the system were excluded from full participation in society, although current Hindu renewal movements are seeking to convert them – efforts opposed by Marxist “outcast” parties and non-Hindu religions.

The Buddhist protest against Brahmanic domination in favour of a more humanist enlightenment was the most important effort to reform that system. The Buddha thought that Hindu forms of piety were fruitless, and after a long spiritual search he discovered another way – a spiritual path focused in the inner state of consciousness. In time, Buddhism was largely driven from India, for it challenged the structured hierarchy of the society. However, Buddhist missionaries also carried hierarchical views into surrounding cultures. Although “truly enlightened” minds detached themselves from such mundane matters as politics, monks and nuns came to be viewed as “jewels in the crown of the king”. This tradition could, thus, adapt into a monarchical Thailand, an imperial Japan or a hierarchical Tibet.

In Islam, religion may relate to politics by legitimating support of imperial domination or hierarchical guide and by subordinating political authority to a legal system (*sharia*) or through flexible adaptations to existing regimes. Characteristically, the Sunni tradition inclines rule by the Caliph, the Shi’a by the Ayatollah, while the heterodox Sufi adapts to many settings. Still, Islam is closer to the tribal traditions where faith and politics are interwoven into a unified vision. However, that ideal is then projected as the ideal for all of humanity under the one Allah and his holy law. In principle, the Caliph, Ayatollah and mystical Saint all see political and religious leadership inextricably

interlocked, cooperating to turn the “brotherhood of Islam” into a universal theocracy. Thus, Islam is not only hostile to the many deities of Hinduism, but to the godlessness of Confucianism and Buddhism, to the ethnocentrism of Judaism, and to Christianity’s separation of church and state which, they say, leads to the secularization of politics.

Tribal, imperial, hierarchical, personal-adaptive and theocratic patterns have, with nuanced variations, exemplified the most frequent attempts to integrate religion and politics into an encompassing civilization. The patterns are found also in the biblical record: in the twelve tribes of Israel, in the imperial Davidic dynasty, in the later priestly hierarchy of the Jerusalem temple, in the enlightened insights of “Wisdom” writings, and in the theocratic impulses of the prophets.

A model which is, in principle, distinct from these, however, appears in the Christian formation of the church.\* Its establishment brought a revolution in social history. It formed a new centre for identity and society distinct from politics. It became a body of believers “called out” (*ekklesia*) and “called together” (*synagogues*) for worship and mutual edification, and “sent” in mission to all peoples. The new model modified existing ideas of assembly and gathering and human fulfilment.

This new community (*koinonia*\*) understood itself as the Body of Christ in space and time. It is distinct from tribal identity (“God can raise up children of Abraham out of these very stones”, Matt. 3:9) and is not rooted in kinship connections (“whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother”, Mark 3:34-35). People are baptized into the church, for birth does not confer religious membership as in tribal, Sinitic or Hindic societies; and social condition or genetic make-up does not determine status (“in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female”, Gal. 3:28). As an institution distinct from political authority, the church could not be identified with imperial or royal rule (“my kingdom is not of this world”, John 18:36). Of course, the church was to honour true and just political authorities, “appointed by God” and “not a terror to good conduct,

but to bad” (Rom. 13:1-3). Thus the church could “render unto Caesar what is Caesar’s...”, but distinguish its duties under God from political rule (“but render unto God what is God’s”, Matt. 22:21).

Such Christian claims challenged traditional political legitimacy in all its models, but it did so with difficulty, for conversion does not destroy tribal identity, or cancel patterns of authority that reflect imperial authority, hierarchy or theocracy, or profound personal spiritual quest. As Christianity spread, it faced all these possibilities.

After Constantine had become the Roman emperor, he proclaimed toleration for all Christians of the empire (313) after years of persecution, and he sought their support. When Theodosius declared Christianity to be the official religion of the empire (380), the church had to decide how to relate to political power.

On the whole, the Eastern (Orthodox) churches bent towards the imperial model, while the Western (Catholic) ones leaned towards hierarchy, centred in the papacy. In both, the secular and the spiritual realms were linked, but two fateful developments took place in the West. After Rome fell, in 800 the pope crowned Charlemagne emperor, temporarily subordinating imperial authority to the church and its bishops. Later (962), Otto I revived a “holy Roman empire”. The Germanic ruler and his successors used the church to provide Christendom’s moral and spiritual inner fabric. This imperial pattern lasted, in name at least, until its final dissolution by Francis II’s abdication in 1806.

Christendom’s millennium of imperial/hierocratic interaction faced difficulties. In principle, both church and regime operated under the laws of God, for the purposes of God, and on behalf of the people. But in fact popes and kings engaged in endless jousts over who had the right to crown or excommunicate rulers, and who had the authority to appoint or remove clergy. Still, within this dual structure, the church cultivated the vision of a pluralistic commonwealth, a “Christendom” with many parts – craft guilds, charities, cities, corporations, universities and territories – all ruled by the twin powers of religious and secular authority working side by side under a higher law for an ultimate pur-

pose – the salvation of humanity. Further, the terms of this rule were codified in canon law,\* the first actual “constitutional government” in history. However, canon law was essentially the church’s law, although emperors called councils to elect or depose popes, and popes altered law to constrict rulers who acted against ecclesial interests.

The Reformation, in part, radicalized these developments. Luther publicly burned the book of canon law. The reformers engendered an intense new interest in the Bible, then made widely available through vernacular translations and new printing methods. The reformers also drew upon the humanist recovery of classical learning and the new interest in science, and helped generate a new nationalism linked both to a demand for cultural autonomy and a new individualism. Neither peoples nor persons wanted their beliefs or morals dictated by a distant hierarchy any more than they wanted to be ruled by the residues of old empires.

In these developments, a proto-democratic spirit was born. A common faith no longer held together the body politic, so new creeds had to be developed. Options proliferated. Each region had to decide which creed, now linked to national culture rather than to a supra-national canon law, should rule, and which part of the biblical heritage should be the model. Debate became sharp: which church is most faithful to scriptures, best supports the people, and should legitimate what political order?

A quick resolution of these issues was not possible. Not only did the Catholics mobilize political and military forces to constrain Protestant dissidents to preserve hierocratic standing, but Lutherans and Calvinists also tried to defend and extend their newly articulated faith, sometimes in theocratic ways. The Wars of Religion that swept the continent, and later the British Isles, forced all who tried to remain neutral to take a stance. These wars continued until the peace of Westphalia of 1648, which made the creeds “national” under the principle of “whoever reigns, his religion”. Here, then, was the establishment of modern notions of the sovereignty of the nation state and the acceptance of a pluralism of churches. These ideas deeply influenced colonial America. Each state had its own church!

Old models of religion and politics re-appeared in new constellations of church and state. But three movements sought more radical changes. One argued that certain teachings of Jesus demanded that the church and its members should have little to do with the state. Mennonites\* and Friends\* (Quakers), for example, held that since the state uses coercive force, believers should renounce participation, and instead show by example a genuine communal democracy among believers in the church. Such groups were harshly treated by those who held that believers must also be citizens and sometimes soldiers, but these groups also gradually evoked tolerance for religious minorities.

A second movement tended to “baptize” primal cultures by giving them spiritual legitimacy. The shattered hegemony of earlier models unleashed a host of new nationalisms. A politicized neo-pagan “tribalism” appeared in aspects of Catholic Iberia and Poland, Lutheran Germany and Scandinavia, Reformed Holland and Scotland, with the churches’ blessings. The terrors of, for example, Franco’s Spain, Hitler’s Germany and Botha’s South Africa revealed the subversion of Christianity by churches which embraced this tendency even as the prophetic critiques of them revealed the power of theological views of justice to provoke political resistance to it.

A third movement sought to divorce church from state by making faith entirely a matter of private conviction. In this view, religion might be permitted as personal belief; but the state was to be entirely secular, and neither religious symbol nor conviction could be allowed as a basis for public policy. So argued Roger Williams in New England. Elsewhere, instruments of state, including coercive force, were used to secularize society and the institutions which the church generated and protected: the family, hospitals, universities, etc. Indeed, secular terror was used to dispose of political leaders and clergy who claimed a holy public authority. Only two centres of agency were recognized: the individual and the state. This was the strategy of the French revolution, of one imposing wing of the Enlightenment, and later of Marxism-Leninism.

None of these movements has been embraced by the main Christian churches. They

developed another approach. In constant interaction with other movements of modernity, but more informed by biblical ideas of the realities of sin, the necessity of government, and the promise of covenantal relationships, Protestants have developed constitutional democracies, with some national variations in form. In these the churches and the institutions they foster are separate from and protected by the state, yet have a duty under God to shape the moral and spiritual life of society, and are recognized as having rights that the state cannot violate or compromise. The state may reserve a right to supervise church institutions for reasons of health and safety and to judge criminal behaviour in or by some church. But the churches have a right to public worship, to shape personal conviction and piety, to advocate for civil liberties in the society, and to speak for or against the state, its leadership or its policies – so long as the church does not itself become essentially a political party which seeks to control state functions. In recent years this model has been officially embraced by the Roman Catholic Church and most Orthodox churches, and by many heirs of Roger Williams in the Baptist churches (see **Baptists**), as well as by some leaders from non-Christian traditions. It now has become the basic model, in principle, for the common life in the 148 constitutional democracies of the world’s nations. It is the presumed standard of the community of nations, most international agencies, and various “parliaments of religion”.

In many ways this is the prospect for the foreseeable future. Yet globalization brings not only new forms of economic, technological and informational interaction among the peoples of the world, it also modulates the idea of the sovereign nation state. Moreover, the churches have regained some sense of purpose as they stand face to face on the world stage with resurgent forms of tribalism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam for whom this pattern is a decided challenge. It is unsettled whether these resurgent traditions will embrace or repudiate church-state relationships that the constitutional democratic and the pluralistic, faith-based forms of civil society\* have developed.

The future lies in part in the witness of the churches. It also lies in the justice of the

international policies of democratic societies. But it also lies in the willingness of non-Western peoples to reform in their own tribal, imperial, hierarchical or theocratic patterns that have haunted the world for centuries.

See also **Confessing Church; religious liberty; responsible society; theology, political.**

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## CHURCH AND WORLD

FUNDAMENTAL to a biblical understanding of the relation between the church and the world is the Old Testament profile of the calling of Israel among the nations. The background of this calling is the divine concern for the world as a whole (creation,\* restoration); the experiment of the covenant\* is the election of one people out of and for the sake of "all nations".

The self-understanding of the New Testament community of believers in Jesus Christ – the people of God, the Body of Christ, the temple of the Spirit – presupposes this profile: the community is seen as a new form of the covenant among the nations and as the sign of the coming restoration. This position of the church determines its relation to the world: there is much hatred and hostility (a specific emphasis in the gospel of John and also in Paul's references to principalities and powers), but there is also a basic solidarity in suffering and hope (Rom. 8). The world is seen in the perspective of its createdness and fallenness, its relation to God (where the Greek word *kosmos* is used), or in the perspective of its impermanence, its contrast with the "age to

come" (Greek *aion*). All these elements are implied in the NT concept of mission.\* A vision of the church which is true to these biblical emphases will somehow integrate a reference to the "cosmic" context of creation and eschaton, a sense of a particular and distinct calling, and the basic conviction that it is in the life of the world that the signs of the kingdom\* have to be made manifest.

## HISTORICAL PROFILES

In the history of Christianity this basic biblical conviction has taken on different forms, institutionally and theologically.

Eastern Orthodox Christianity tends to interpret the nature of the church as a reflection of the mystery of the Trinity.\* This mystery is celebrated in the eucharistic liturgy, and this celebration includes the whole created world ("the liturgy is the cosmos becoming ecclesia"). "Mission" does not refer in the first place to particular activities which the church undertakes in the world, but to the self-presentation of the Christian community as a "living icon of Christ". Because of this emphasis, a basic tension between the church and the institutions of culture\* and politics is not a matter of principle.

In Western Christianity, the relation between church and world has developed in a more political-institutional way: there is a tension between faith\* and culture, religion and society,\* church and state.\* Augustine's *City of God* is of paradigmatic significance in this tradition. In the course of post-Reformation history, at least four models have become distinguishable.

The Roman Catholic model emphasizes synthesis and continuity in the relation between the community of the people of God and the whole created world; in the encompassing framework of the divine law,\* there is no ultimate contradiction between the fundamental tendencies in the life of the world and the revelation\* which the church represents, although there is a duality: church and worldly institutions have distinct responsibilities.

The Lutheran model (sometimes called the doctrine of the two kingdoms; the relation of this doctrine to Luther's teaching is disputed) sees a fundamental distinction be-

tween the realm of faith and church community and the realm of public responsibility – on the basis of a fundamental discontinuity between human sinfulness and divine grace.\* There are two ways in which God deals with humankind: organizing human life by restricting evil, and gathering a community on the basis of the gospel of justification.\* When these are confused, the nature of salvation\* itself is obscured.

The Calvinist model assumes a constructive tension between gospel and world: the world is being sanctified and transformed, both in individual lives and in social structures; the institutions of public life have a function of their own to perform in the encounter of revelation and human life. This model has occasionally stimulated ideals of a “Christian commonwealth”.

The model of the radical reformation sees a basic antithesis between worldly powers and the community of those who choose to follow the alternative of the gospel (see **first and radical Reformation churches**). The antithesis leads sometimes to virtually complete withdrawal of the church from the world, sometimes to creative forms of witness\* on the basis of an attitude of non-resistance.

The development of Christianity in North America gives the impression of a melting pot in which all the available alternatives begin to look alike. The most important feature of this melting pot is disestablishment; separation between church and state is axiomatic, and all churches are “free” – including those which by tradition and conviction would opt for a form of establishment. At the same time, religion as such has an important function in culture and in public life, and many churches consider themselves as the guardians and representatives of this function. The interplay between these two factors – disestablishment and public function – has decisively influenced the conception of the church-world relation in North America.

While churches in the so-called third world have inherited one or more earlier models of the relation between church and world, new elements have influenced both missionary practice and theological reflection since the end of the colonial period. One is the minority position of the church in

contexts where other religious traditions are present or even dominant; another is the new sense of national and cultural identity growing up in many countries in the struggle against Western dominance. A basic solidarity of Christians with nation\* and culture thus goes hand in hand with a sense of competition with other religions, significantly influencing the way in which mission and ethics are conceived.

Given this historical plurality, theological reflection on the position and the calling of the church in the midst of and over against the realities of the world, in the broad frame of reference of creation and eschaton, must deal with the strengths and weaknesses of the various options. Behind common convictions about the church’s missionary task or political responsibility may lie widely divergent interpretations of the biblical structure. These divergences are clearly due in part to historical developments, but they are also obviously connected to differences in fundamental conviction about human nature, sin,\* reconciliation\* and redemption.\* Thus the relation between church and world is not an isolated topic: dealing with it involves addressing issues such as the meaning of revelation and the nature of salvation.

### THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

The ecumenical movement has grown at a period of important changes in the experience of the relation between church and world: the development of global networks of social and economic life, the force of secularization\* which stimulates this development and meanwhile has become a dominating feature of Western culture, two world wars, the process of decolonization\* and the emergence of many diverse liberation\* movements. More specifically Christianity is beginning to experience within itself the effects of cultural diversity and the influence of worldwide economic and ideological developments. A rethinking of the church-world relation – more particularly, the nature of mission, the relation between general human history\* and “history of salvation”, the relation of church, kingdom of God and humankind – has become necessary now that the “unity of humankind” has become a pressing issue. Various ecumenical involve-

ments, such as the fight against racism,\* the struggle against poverty,\* the promotion of inter-religious dialogue\* and critical reflection on the relation of women and men (see **women in church and society**), have emphasized this necessity.

Important developments in 20th-century theology have been instrumental in this process of rethinking. Henri de Lubac and Karl Rahner helped to transform the traditional Roman Catholic conception of nature\* and super-nature and to define the church as the pioneer and sacrament\* of a dynamic of grace\* which pervades the whole of humankind. Karl Barth and Dietrich Bonhoeffer helped to break through the paralysis of thinking in terms of two realms by emphasizing the absolute priority of God's "mission" and the concreteness of worldly obedience to this mission. Johann Baptist Metz and Jürgen Moltmann have opened the eyes of many to the destructive effects of a "political religion" which legitimates bourgeois narrow-mindedness with an appeal to an unworldly gospel. Liberation theologians such as Gustavo Gutiérrez, José Míguez Bonino and Juan Luis Segundo radicalized this approach by linking theological reflection to the praxis of involvement in the historical struggle for the poor.\* The cosmic aspects of Christology have been rediscovered by Asian theologians to the benefit of constructive thinking about inter-religious dialogue. And process theologians have consistently emphasized the open-endedness of human history and of God himself as involved in this history. On the strength of these and other contributions, and in the context of an unprecedented secularization – a loss of social and cultural support for the Christian faith which is both threatening and liberating – many Christians are rediscovering the nature of the church-in-mission and the relevance of a creation- and eschaton-oriented faith for the actual problems of humankind.

An impression of the harvest of this rethinking of the church-world relation can be gained by looking at several important ecumenical texts. While the Second Vatican Council's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), may not reach the level of later insights into issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation in its analysis of the

problems of global society, its theological structure has been very influential. The order of creation and the order of salvation are seen in close relation to each other; the humanity of humankind is both the purpose of creation and the challenge of the gospel; the church is the sacrament, the sign, of the unification of the whole of humankind in God. For the church this implies an awareness of its position in history and its character as a pilgrim people and a readiness to cooperate with many "worldly" movements serving the same purpose of humanity.

Crucial for ecumenical reflection on the nature of mission was the 1952 conference of the International Missionary Council\* in Willingen, Germany. Various lines of thinking converged here: a biblical-eschatological vision of the relation of mission and kingdom of God, an effort to link the mission of the church to the signs of Christ's presence in secular history, and a battle against church-centrism in mission in favour of a "worldly" concept of salvation. Willingen helped to prepare the ground for the central role of the concept of *missio Dei*\* (God's mission), which places the centre of gravity of all mission in God's plan of salvation for the whole world, rather than in efforts of expansion of the church or of Western culture.

The WCC study on "The Lordship of Christ over the World and the Church" (1957, 1959), a careful effort to summarize Protestant thinking on the church-world relation in a period of awakening social responsibility, tried to take up in a more dynamic fashion the traditional dualistic way of speaking about the negative situation of the fallen world and about the positive purpose of God. The world and the church are destined to become the one kingdom of God, each in its own way: the church's calling is to be a critical sign of salvation history among hostile powers, but in positive appreciation of what is given in creation.

Two reports of the WCC Department of Studies on Evangelism which greatly influenced the Uppsala assembly (1968) attempted to deal with the experience of secularization in a theologically constructive way ("The Church for Others" and "The Church for the World" – a quest for structures for missionary congregations, 1967). The relation between God and world is the decisive

framework here for the definition of the “ex-centric position” of the church; the familiar sequence God-church-world should be changed into God-world-church.

The study document “God in Nature and History”, presented to the Faith and Order commission at its Bristol meeting (1967), sought to deal with the difficulties presented to the Christian faith by the development of modern science (see **science and technology**) and the experience of universal history. It tries to show that the biblical and the modern world-views, although not identical, are not totally incompatible; that technology is rooted in the desacralization of nature, which is an aspect of biblical thinking, and can therefore be approached with an open mind; that creation and salvation are decisive moments in a history of God with humankind that includes nature and is aimed towards consummation.

In the study document *Church and World* (1990), F&O presented the results of a study programme on “The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community”, itself the successor of the earlier (1970s) project “Unity of the Church and Unity of Humankind”. In focusing particularly on issues of justice and on the challenge of a more complete and authentic community of women and men, the document strongly affirms that search for unity and world-directedness are inseparable. The eschatological perspective – faith in the coming kingdom – is the binding element here. Both aspects of the church – “mystery” and “prophetic sign” – are to be understood in this perspective: what takes place in the church refers back to the world and forward to its final redemption.

Taken together, these examples show that the ecumenical experience has generally led to a more positive appreciation of “the world” and simultaneously to a more dynamic interpretation of the role of the church vis-a-vis the whole of humankind. A rediscovery of OT notions as well as of the cosmic significance of Christ may have contributed to this. Meanwhile, more radical questions regarding the survival of humankind and the sustainability of life on earth are likely to stimulate further thinking on creation and eschaton and might ultimately lead away from the Christocentric

missionary paradigm which has tended to dominate ecumenical thinking until recently.

See also **church and state**, **eschatology**.

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## CHURCH AS INSTITUTION

THE INSTITUTIONAL nature of the church\* has been the subject of WCC studies from both theological and sociological perspectives. The Theological Commission on Christ and the Church (1952-63) described the church as at once “essential and provisional” and (following Barth) as “event and institution”, while the study on institutionalism (1955-63) stressed that the church was not just a divine-human community (*koinonia*\*) but an historical institution, similar in structure to other social institutions. A later study on Spirit, order and organization (1964-71) focused on the activities of the Spirit in transforming the forms and structures of church life; and one on the missionary structure of the congregation\* (1962-67) pointed out that the structures of the church can help or hinder its missionary purpose (see **mission**). Protestant churches engaged in re-shaping inherited structures drew insights from this study and, increasingly, from the sociology of organizations, though these were often applied half-heartedly and sometimes without due regard to theological considerations.

A similar debate arose within the Roman Catholic Church after Vatican II,\* which in *Lumen Gentium* put primary emphasis (following Yves Congar) on the church as the people of God,\* yet also retained the traditional view of the church as a divine institution manifest in history through the Catholic

hierarchy. The resulting ambiguity, together with uncertainty regarding the limits of permissible change, led to a tension between more traditional and more radical views of the church as institution. After the anti-institutional fervour of 1968, many Catholics were led to distance themselves from “the institutional church” and to set up church base communities\* (CBCs, also known as basic Christian communities), most notably in the third world but also in Europe. During the 1970s, small Christian communities emerged in Protestant churches as well – some (like the CBCs) with a socio-political commitment, others with a more personal or charismatic orientation. These appealed to many (especially younger) Christians dissatisfied with the institutionalized character of the larger churches. In Latin America the rapid growth of CBCs – not so much to oppose existing church structures as to fill gaps left by a thinly spread diocesan system – accompanied the development of liberation theology.\*

While some European observers see the institutional church as doomed, others (like the Catholic Karl Rahner and the Reformed theologian Jürgen Moltmann) believe that “double strategies” of church reform are necessary, both from below and from above. The Brazilian theologian Leonardo Boff encountered the opposition of the Vatican when he asked bluntly: Can the institutional church be converted? Boff himself believes that it can, that there is “a new way of being church” – one that is more flexible and more lightly institutionalized. Many third-world Christians would agree; and European CBCs have come to the same conclusion.

Gerd Theissen has shown that the original Jesus movement, like other protest groups, inevitably became institutionalized on its transference to Hellenistic culture. A similar process is visible today in many Pentecostal and charismatic churches. Some commentators point to a possible shift in the other direction, as “old-line Protestant churches” in the West begin to relinquish their establishment character and are revitalized by contemporary movements critical of hierarchies and bureaucracies. To contrast such movements with “the institutional church” is both inexact and confusing. In different ways, Ian Fraser, Christian Duquoc

and Moltmann have insisted, like the earlier studies, that the church is *both* movement *and* institution, and that what must above all be avoided is a church institution which seeks to wield power and to control its members.

See also **church discipline, church order.**

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## CHURCH BASE COMMUNITIES

CHURCH BASE communities (CBCs) consist of groups of Christian laypeople, generally poor, who meet regularly (once a week or fortnightly) in private homes or communal premises to hear and ponder the word of God,\* nourish a spirit of fraternal community and undertake activities of Christian commitment in the world. These grassroots Christian communities represent a new pastoral experiment – or, better, a new comprehensive church movement – which arose in Latin America in the 1960s and spread worldwide.

The internal structure of CBCs varies considerably. Some consist of elementary groups of 10 to 15 – called biblical circles, evangelization groups or fraternal encounters – which meet, usually on their own initiative, in homes. Others initially form a community of families (15 or more) and meet in a chapel or communal premises. Both types have (1) coordination, (2) a programme of activities, including worship, formation, festivities and celebration of the sacraments, and (3) organization of the var-

ious services (lay ministries), such as care of the sick, catechesis, liturgy and administration within parishes, CBCs maintain with them a relation of communion and renewal.

The constitutive elements of every CBC are (1) the Bible,\* heard and shared jointly and related to the life of the people, (2) the community, united and organized in its various services, and (3) concrete commitments for justice and solidarity which the community undertakes.

CBCs are thus *communities* (primary groupings in which relations of deep fraternal communion\* prevail), *church*, or *ecclesial* (specifically Christian groups, which meet in church on the basis of the word of God), and *base*, or *basic* (elementary associations – as it were, church cells or miniature churches). Their starting point is the “basic” constituents of the church – word, faith, baptism, fraternal charity, service of others, etc. – and they constitute the base or basis of the church, which is the laity. This primary ecclesiological sense of the term “base” means “of the people”, “popular”. Because CBCs have emerged from the poor strata of the population, they are generally found in the countryside and on the outskirts of towns.

### ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

Social and religious factors influenced the emergence of CBCs in Latin America during the 1960s, the so-called decade of development.\* This was a time of great economic progress and enormous social vitality, particularly on the popular level. That vitality, stimulated from above by populist governments, found expression in a great variety of social movements: trade unionism, basic education, communal organization, technical assistance and general human advancement. The triumph of the Cuban revolution (1959) served to hasten the process of popular ferment. This was the soil in which the CBCs took root. The end of the “development illusion” and the emergence of a different social consciousness (dependence\*/liberation\*) at the end of the decade, as well as the rise of military regimes, did not hinder but rather promoted the advance of CBCs.

The reaction of the church in this historical climate was complex. First, the crisis

and breakdown of traditional pastoral practice in Latin America centred on the inability of the parish and clergy to reach the Catholic masses. This breakdown can be seen as a “negative cause”, prompting positive reactions in the direction of what eventually became CBCs. Second, the emergence of the social pastoral action of the church united activists and prophetic bishops such as D. Larrain (Talca, Chile), D. Helder Camara (Recife, Brazil) and others. Third, Vatican II’s powerful impulse for church renewal brought added justification to the nascent popular pastoral movement. Fourth, the Latin American bishops conference (CELAM) in its assemblies at Medellín (1968) and Puebla (1979) formally confirmed the existing experiment of the CBCs and relaunched it on a continental scale. Finally, the 1974 synod of bishops and Pope Paul VI’s 1975 encyclical *Evangelii Nuntiandi* recognized the validity of CBCs throughout the church.

Amidst this cultural, social and ecclesial ferment, thanks to the initiative of some priests, focal points of church creativity sprang into life all over the continent – and in the third world generally. The vanguard of this process was in Brazil, where the first CBC may be identified as that of St Paulo do Potengi, in the northeast, in the early 1960s. An emergency plan drawn up by the Brazilian bishops in 1962 on the recommendation of John XXIII launched the idea of CBCs as an innovative and promising pastoral project; and the general pastoral plan for 1966-70 presented CBCs as a pastoral priority on the national level.

The CBCs can be seen as a particular expression in church terms of the wider phenomenon of communitarianism. A chief source of the “communitarian principle” is the reaction against the anonymity of modern mass societies, kindled and symbolized by the revolutionary mood of 1968. This had its counterpart within the churches to the extent that they were perceived as rigid mass institutions. In the first world this desire for personal involvement through the medium of the community indubitably represents the most powerful factor in the communitarian phenomenon. That was subsequently reinforced in church circles by the influence of the CBCs of the third world. In

Africa and Asia the process seems to have been similar. The example of the Latin American CBCs reinforced internal factors, among them African tribal culture and the social situation of religious minorities in Asia, leading to the emergence of their own CBCs. Whenever people meet together, wherever they are socially and wherever they are, in order to take up responsibility for their own faith and the demands it makes, a church base community has come into being.

### **CBCs AND THE INSTITUTIONAL CHURCH**

The CBCs are offspring of the institutional church. In most cases the pastoral agencies of the church itself – priests, sisters, laity – initiated them and continue to run them.

The general pattern of relations between CBCs and the institutional church is as follows. At first the CBCs spring up in the margins of the institutional church, among the masses not reached by the church's pastoral ministry. A real process of ecclesio-genesis – a birth of the church – but in new patterns (new, that is, in comparison with the traditional type, not with the New Testament ideal): lay, popular, participatory, biblical, evangelical, prophetic, liberating. As they grow, the CBCs make their way into the domain of the existing institutional church, becoming influential in liturgy, catechesis and meetings. Then comes a period of conflict with the institution, for the “new way of being the church” (as the CBCs define themselves) clashes with the traditional centralizing tendency. Finally, if things go right (as has usually happened in Latin America), this new way is accepted by the church authorities and it tends to predominate in the structuring and general activities of the local community – parish, diocese, region, even country – though traditional clerical, sacramentalist and socially uncommitted forms of church organization may continue to exist, often scarcely modernized.

The ecclesiological status of the CBCs is actually no longer that of a church movement, but rather of *the whole church in movement*. The CBCs are not in themselves a new type of church, rather, they represent a comprehensive project or idea of the church, a new dynamic – in fact a “new

mode of being”. The new church model, formed around the axis of the CBCs, comprises the whole force of the renewal and innovation emerging in the church institution: renewal of the *traditional parish* and its activities (catechesis, liturgy, sacraments, ordained ministries), emergence of *new pastoral services* (pastoral concern for the sick, for children, for Indians, for blacks, for workers, for human rights), rescue of *popular religion* and piety with its festivities, pilgrimages, novenas, etc., creation of new *church movements* (serving youth, women, industrial workers, farmers) and creation and strengthening of independent *popular movements* (associations, trade unions, parties). All this constitutes the church of the poor or people's church, of which the CBCs are the living tissue.

### **BIBLE READING IN THE CBCs**

The cornerstone of the CBCs is the word of God. Members come together in order to hear it, thus constituting an ecclesia – the assembly of those called together by the word. What primarily constitutes the CBCs is thus not friendship or the struggle for survival or social change but the word, which gives rise to faith. In the CBCs the word of God is received directly in the Bible, its prime witness, not in secondary witnesses such as catechism, documents of the magisterium or particular theologies – not even the theology of liberation.

In the CBCs the Bible is always read face to face with the actual life of the people: the struggle for survival and for social change. This “Bible/life method” obviates any spiritualizing fundamentalism. Bible and life are linked in a hermeneutical circle: the Bible leads to vital commitment, and vital commitment leads to better understanding of the Bible. While the danger exists of making a political tool of the Bible, this is more the case with middle-class activists than with the people, who have a deep sense of God and sincere respect for religious things.

Bible reading in the CBCs is done in a communal, i.e. participatory way. Furthermore, it is an extremely flexible and creative reading, rather like the *sensus spiritualis* (spiritual sense) of the fathers – though here it is very “material”. The CBCs may be said to express and transmit the great hunger and

thirst for the word of God felt by the religious and disinherited masses of the third world. Their re-appropriation of the Bible is leading to renewal of the church and transformation of society in accord with the purposes of the Spirit who inspired the sacred books.

### CBCs AND SOCIAL COMMITMENT

The commitment to striving for justice and social transformation is constitutive of CBCs. While this dimension of liberation is most apparent when a CBC owes its existence to a particular social conflict, it is always present from the start at least in the form of openness and interest. The growth of the community, through the dynamic relation between gospel and life, leads to the real creation and deepening of social commitment, generally in various stages: (1) mutual help within the CBC and its neighbourhood, (2) participation in struggles in the locality or perhaps in associations, (3) entry into the world of work, through trade union and other campaigns, (4) various degrees of party-political involvement.

CBCs in Latin America have thus been the seedbed of many popular organizations and continue to provide them with active participants and support. Yet they recognize that organizing the social struggle is only a secondary function. They seek to bring into existence and strengthen independent popular associations, trade unions and parties, but their own specific and permanent function is evangelization – always in the perspective of liberation and thus adapted to the demands of each historical moment.

This element of social commitment may create problems, including the radical secularization of militants originating in the CBCs but deviating from them, or the temptation of “neo-Christendom”, the impression that CBCs can transform society on their own, or the notion that the social question will be solved the day when everyone is like them.

### CBCs AND ECUMENISM

CBCs are of particular ecumenical significance by the mere fact of re-creating the church according to the pattern of the early church rather than as a reproduction of the prevailing type of church. Their essential or elementary character emphasizes not the

denominational (in Latin America, typically Catholic) but rather the common Christian elements: baptism, the centrality of faith in Jesus Christ, the sacred scriptures, the Lord's supper, charity, witness, etc. This is not, as has sometimes been suggested, a case of Protestantizing the Catholic church – which would be to fall back into the domain of denominationalism. Rather, the CBCs are striving to get nearer to the one and undivided church, like the apostolic church.

In consequence, while preserving their origin and denominational identity (demonstrated by communion with their own church through their own pastors), the CBCs have achieved an original kind of ecumenical activity. This is marked by two distinctive features. First, it is built around charity (practice) and not around faith (doctrine). In other words, the Christian poor meet in the same struggles, where they get to know and esteem one another and only subsequently come to pray together and to discuss their respective religious convictions. Second, the ecumenical practice of the CBCs is at the church-base level among simple believers and therefore not in the upper reaches of hierarchy and theology. Simple believers, especially if they are poor, are more genuine and free in regard to ecumenical dialogue.

While many Catholics and Protestants – the “historic” Christians in Latin America – feel at home in the style of “basic Christianity”, there is also resistance, opposition and competition from many sectarian groups on the basis of their biblical fundamentalism and political conservatism. In Catholic circles in the CBCs some traditional anti-Protestant prejudice remains.

The process has scarcely begun of forming a new church model (not a new church), i.e. a participatory and liberating church model, of which the CBCs are the living cells and embodiment. The journey is long and conflictual, precisely because it is new and historic, but everything indicates that the way has been found. It is a matter now of going ahead, at the impulse of the Spirit.

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## CHURCH BUILDINGS, SHARED USE OF

CHRISTIAN congregations in every locality normally seek to meet on a regular basis, if possible in a building of their own, designed to enable and enhance their particular style of worship. Such church buildings are usually reserved for the worship and related activities of that particular denomination. Legal trusts may limit their use in this way. However, in some places church buildings are used by two or more distinct congregations from different Christian traditions. This represents good Christian stewardship and should be encouraged, especially where a church building is under-used and there are other Christian groups with inadequate premises. This may require special legislation.

For example, in the 1960s the churches in England and Wales secured an act of parliament enabling a church building of one denomination to be used on a regular basis as if it were a building of another. There are now many such formal "sharing agreements" in the United Kingdom. Usually a joint council comprising equal numbers of each denomination involved is formed to settle acceptable patterns of use and appropriate financial contributions. Capital money can be contributed by the "guest" church on the understanding that if the building is sold, an agreed percentage of the sale price will be reimbursed.

Even if no "sharing agreement" exists, sharing congregations are encouraged to meet to increase understanding. Tensions can arise between a locally drawn and a more widely gathered congregation. Cultural and language differences may re-

inforce denominational ones. It is noticeable that the opportunity to share a building often promotes integration of worship, ministry and congregational life. In England sharing agreements under the sharing of church buildings act are regarded as a form of local ecumenical partnership (see **local ecumenical partnerships**).

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## CHURCH CALENDAR

THE PURPOSE of a liturgical calendar differs from that of the civil (solar) calendar. The latter counts the days in relation to the tropical solar cycle with its four seasons – spring, summer, autumn and winter – which are defined by the four phases through which the earth passes as it goes round the sun. The dates which correspond to the spring equinox (when day and night are equal), the summer solstice (the longest day), the autumn equinox (when day and night are equal) and finally the winter solstice (the shortest day and longest night), which may be described as cosmic events, are provided by a good solar calendar.

By contrast, the liturgical calendar is not concerned with the tally of days, but uses the civil calendar which science has already fixed and gives it a liturgical content. The criterion for this content is the light, which at one point of time is eclipsed by the darkness and at another makes the darkness disappear. Thus the sun becomes, as it were, an icon of God, and the darkness becomes a symbol of death. In this scheme, cosmic events (the two equinoxes and the two solstices) have a liturgical meaning which represents the struggle of light with darkness. For example the winter solstice (when the day begins to become longer) corresponds to the nativity of Christ (in the northern hemisphere); the spring equinox (when the day begins to be dominant) corresponds to the annunciation and also to Easter.\*

A solar calendar was introduced in the Roman empire at the time of Julius Caesar (46 B.C.), and is thus called the Julian (or Old Style) calendar. It has 365 days in the year, and every fourth year an additional day (29 February) is added to ensure that the calendar dates correspond to the sun. As a result of the inaccuracy of this correction, the Julian calendar falls behind the sun by one day every 128 years. Thus around the time of the first council of Nicea (325), which defined the principle for dating Easter, the spring equinox, which was on 25 March in 46 B.C., fell on 21 March.

By 1582 the calendar date corresponding to the spring equinox had fallen ten days further behind, to 11 March. The church of Rome under Pope Gregory XIII decided to correct the calendar by eliminating ten calendar dates (5-14 October 1582 inclusive), restoring the date of the spring equinox to 21 March, as it had been in the 4th century. To prevent the calendar's falling behind in the future, it was decided to eliminate the 29th day of February three times every period of 400 years. The calendar thus corrected is known as the Gregorian (or New Style) calendar.

At present the Julian calendar is at odds with solar time by 13 days, and the spring equinox falls on 8 March, whereas the Gregorian calendar will continue to correspond to the sun for a very long time. It lags behind the sun by around one day for every 3323 years rather than the 128 years in the Julian calendar.

Regarding liturgical events with fixed calendar dates, two practices are followed in the Orthodox church. The majority follow the New Style, the others the Old. Thus Christmas\* is fixed for 25 December; and if the Russian church appears to celebrate it on 7 January, it is because this day is in fact 25 December according to the Old (Julian) Style.

The movable (paschal) cycle is fixed not according to specific dates of the solar calendar but depends on the date of Easter – “the feast of feasts” – which changes from year to year in accordance with the principle worked out in 325 at Nicea. It was decided to celebrate Easter on a Sunday chosen in relation to the sun and the moon, the “two great lights” (Gen. 1:16). First comes the

spring equinox, corresponding to the point in the year when the day (the sunlight) begins to triumph over night. Next comes the full moon, when the “lesser light” is on the dark side of the earth (that away from the sun) to “rule [or illuminate] the night” (Gen. 1:16); thus the earth is simultaneously lit on both sides. The first Sunday after this phenomenon becomes Easter Day.

According to a 4th-century document from Asia Minor, the Nicene formula for the date of Easter – the feast of Christ's resurrection – makes a direct link between the “week of creation” and the “week of redemption” as its fulfilment. The spring equinox recalls the first day of creation (Gen. 1:5). The full moon is the fourth day, when “God made the two great lights – the greater light [the sun] to rule the day, and the lesser light [the moon] to rule the night” (Gen. 1:16). Finally, the first Sunday, corresponding in this context to the eighth day, follows both Friday, the sixth day (the creation of human beings and their fall), and Saturday, the seventh day (on which God rested and which the Christian church regards as Christ's descent “to the dead” or “into hell” prior to his resurrection).

To make it easier to apply the paschal formula, the Christian church began quite early to compile tables giving the date of Easter for relatively long periods. Paschal tables appeared in about the 7th century covering a period of 532 years in conformity with the Julian calendar. These tables were regarded as perpetual; i.e. at the end of the 532 years, everything should begin again in the same order. The Orthodox church has continued to use these tables up to the present. According to them, 21 March Old Style should always be the day of the spring equinox. According to the New Style that day is already 3 April, i.e. 13 days later than the actual spring equinox.

For Western Christians, the necessary correction was introduced into these tables after the Gregorian reform in 1582, so that the festival of Easter depends on the actual spring equinox. This is the reason for the difference between Western and Eastern Christians as to the date of Easter; the idea that the Orthodox supposedly reckon the date from the Jewish Passover, which Western Christians do not, is a misunderstanding.

The full moon of the Nicene formula happens in fact to coincide always with the OT Passover.

Full moons occurring between 21 March and 3 April (New Style) are thus paschal moons for Western Christians but not for the Orthodox. In this case the Orthodox Easter will come after the second full moon – making a difference of four or five weeks in the dates.

It may be hoped that in their quest for unity, Christians will come to agree on a calendar as close as possible to the solar system and that this will enable them to celebrate all the great festivals of the liturgical year together, especially Easter, the “Feast of Feasts”, by applying together the principle adopted at Nicea I.

See also **Pentecost**.

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■ D. Heller, “The Date of Easter: A Church-Dividing Issue?”, *ER*, 48, 3, 1996 ■ “Report of the Consultation on a Fixed Date for Easter”, *ER*, 23, 2, 1971 ■ *Towards a Common Date for Easter*, WCC-MECC consultation, WCC, 1997.

## CHURCH DISCIPLINE

THE TERM “church discipline” (French, *discipline ecclésiastique*; German, *Kirchenzucht*) is used primarily in Reformed churches and some communities of the radical Reformation for that procedure by which God’s word is applied by particular exhortation to individual members. More specifically, the reference is to cases falling under the provisions of Matt. 18:15-18, according to which faults in the congregation are to be treated first by way of fraternal conversation, then by a small group (usually pastors and elders), finally, if necessary, before the whole church. To the true preaching of the gospel and the obedient administration of the sacraments, Calvin and many Reformed confessions added “right order” or “the exercise of discipline” as a third mark by which the church on earth can be recognized (Calvin, *Institutes* 4.1.1,22; 4.10.27-32; 4.11.1-5; 4.12.1-21; Belgic confession, 29; Scots confession, 18). According to the Westminster confession, “church censures are necessary for the reclaiming and gaining of offending

brethren; for deterring of others from the like offences; for purging out of that leaven which might infect the whole lump; for vindicating the honour of Christ, and the holy profession of the gospel; and for preventing the wrath of God, which might justly fall upon the church, if they should suffer his covenant, and the seals thereof, to be profaned by notorious and obstinate offenders” (30:3).

Combining the concerns that figured in the so-called church orders of the early centuries (from the *Didache* onward), church discipline in a broader sense covers the regulation, standards and pattern of the spiritual and moral life of Christians and their communities in their entirety. It always takes some juridical form (see **canon law**), but it also involves pastoral care and looks for faithful observance on the part of all believers. All would-be Christian communities in fact practise an ecclesial discipline of one kind or another. But they differ over the *proper* discipline, over which elements in it should be attributed to “divine law” and which to merely “human law” within the church\* (often as the question of the variability or invariability of particular disciplinary dispositions), over whether and when the juridical order should be understood as advisory guideline or as binding law (Lukas Vischer), and over the importance they attach to discipline in relation to other features of church life; they differ in the relative rigour or laxity with which they put their discipline into practice; and amid the vicissitudes of political history, they have differed over the appropriate relation between church discipline and civil law.

The most fundamental matter in church discipline concerns the requirements for entry into, and continuance in, the ecclesial community. Baptism is almost always a necessary, but seldom the sufficient, condition of church membership. Thus the British Methodist church regards both baptism and the Lord’s supper to be of “divine appointment and perpetual obligation”, and abstinence for long from the communal means of grace could lead to the removal of a member’s name from the rolls on grounds of having “ceased to meet”. The (Anglican) Church of England requires that “every parishioner shall communicate at least three

times in the year, of which Easter to be one". To be a Roman Catholic, one must belong to a local church whose bishop is in communion with the see of Rome. In practically all would-be Christian bodies, a member may for various failings suffer varying degrees of suspension or even exclusion from communion (see **excommunication**).

The ecclesial community makes certain requirements of faith and morals. It is expected that one will continue in the faith to which one has been summoned and invited by the preaching of the gospel, the faith in which one was baptized and which finds eucharistic expression in the celebration of the Lord's supper. The search epitomized by Faith and Order's project "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today" is thus a vital part of the restoration and achievement of church unity, for unity is impossible without agreement in what is commonly "necessary and sufficient" to the Christian faith. Yet although all churches similarly cherish certain moral expectations of their members, ecumenical dialogues, both multilateral and bilateral, have been noticeably reticent concerning the treatment of ethical teaching. The international Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue was a modest pioneer in daring to mention issues of home and family life (Denver 1971, paras 69-78; cf. Dublin 1976, para. 39), while the tripartite Lutheran-Reformed-Roman Catholic statement on "The Theology of Marriage and the Problem of Mixed Marriages" (1977) went somewhat further. The second Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission went furthest in claiming that "despite existing disagreement in certain areas of practical and pastoral judgment, Anglicans and Roman Catholics derive from the scriptures and Tradition the same controlling vision of the nature and destiny of humanity and share the same fundamental moral values" (*Life in Christ: Morals, Communion, and the Church*, 1993).

Almost all churches assign to "pastors and teachers" (Eph. 4:11), however named, a special role in maintaining church discipline. They are to instruct all members in the faith; "in them", as *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* puts it, "the church seeks an example of holiness and loving concern"

(M12); and they are usually the ones principally entrusted with the ministry of encouragement, admonition and (where necessary) rebuke and even excommunication. Their duties call for their own fidelity to Christian doctrine in faith and morals as their church receives and perceives it, and for their own acceptance of ecclesial discipline. None of this responsibility should be seen in terms of a personal superiority in faith or practice on the part of an ordained ministry; it is rather a functional necessity for the edification of the church and all its members. In Calvin's words: "Thus the body of Christ is built up; thus 'we grow up in every way into him who is the Head' and grow together among ourselves" (*Institutes* 4.3.2). Discipline subserves the church in its primordial responsibilities of worship (*leitourgia*), witness (*martyria*) and service (*diakonia*).

Different versions of ecclesial discipline reflect basic options and guiding perspectives in Christology, pneumatology and the understanding of the gospel and the church. The legal structure of the Roman Catholic Church emphasizes Christ the legislator, and both Orthodox and Protestant critics have considered this an over-emphasis. The more sacramentally and pneumatologically inspired concept of the Orthodox churches can nevertheless leave their canonical order "fixed" at an early stage of the Tradition and make it difficult to accommodate to changes in the social and cultural context. In the sharp distinction, even opposition, Lutherans make between law and gospel, other Christians have feared a resulting antinomianism. Calvinists and Methodists allow a "third use of the law" as serving the sanctification\* of believers; the danger here is of hypocrisy for the sake of outward observance. "Enthusiastic" communities have exalted spontaneity in ways that threaten to divorce the Spirit from the word of God\* and the great Tradition.\*

Although there will probably always be variety in the detailed translation of the faith into practice, particularly as historical circumstances differ, the attainment and recognition of consensus\* in major doctrines should have the result of bringing the disciplines of the churches within recognizably common bounds of principle. In turn, work on current disciplinary differences could

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help the churches in their search for a common expression of the faith.

See also **church order**.

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## CHURCH GROWTH

FROM THE beginning, reports on the progress of the church have frequently included reference to its numerical increase (e.g. Acts 2:41). A goal of missionary outreach was the winning of new adherents to the faith (see **mission**). Debates surrounding the work of outstanding figures such as Francis Xavier, Robert de Nobili, Matteo Ricci, John Eliot and David Livingstone focus on the most effective missionary means or strategy of adding converts rather than on whether or not growth of the church was a legitimate goal.

The 19th-century Protestant missionary movement was based on the premise that the object of mission was the founding of an “indigenous church”, one of whose characteristics would be continuous propagation or growth. The Roman Catholic term was the planting of the church (*plantatio ecclesiae*) in every nation, but Pope Benedict XV began to stress the “de-Europeanization” of mission work by insisting that the planting of the church should result in a strong local clergy and hierarchy who become fully responsible for the church. Only would an indigenous local church truly grow (*Maximum Illud* 1919).

“Church growth” became a technical term in the 1960s for a particular missiological approach introduced by Donald A. McGavran, who served in India with the US Disciples of Christ missionary society. His *The Bridges of God* (1955) and *How Churches*

*Grow* (1959) critically evaluated and attacked the traditional “mission station” mentality and approach, and forcefully advocated a radical overhaul by promoting numerical growth as the primary goal of mission strategy. McGavran developed the “homogeneous unit principle”. Missions ought first to respect the social unit – ethnic clan, class, caste – in which the individual is most at home. Since the degree of responsiveness varies from one group to another, the mission priority seeks to win to Christ those more responsive people or groups, identified by thorough-going scientific research. McGavran’s *Understanding Church Growth* remains the authoritative statement of church-growth theory and methodology.

Protestant reaction to church-growth thinking has been mixed. Conciliar Protestants, in particular in WCC circles, largely ignored or rejected it. In 1950 the Dutch Reformed missiologist J.C. Hoekendijk, in a highly influential article, “The Call to Evangelism” (*International Review of Mission*), roundly criticized the church-centred orientation of the modern mission movement (see **missio Dei**), and argued that church planting is not a legitimate goal of mission.

This widely accepted critique has had two consequences: in mainstream Protestant missiology it contributed to a devaluation of the church, but among conservative evangelical Protestants it fostered a change of emphases – from the church as goal of mission to the church as instrument, and from the church to the reign of God as the basis for missionary witness (see **kingdom of God**).

This church-growth thinking has reinvigorated conservative evangelical mission studies and stimulated the founding of new schools of mission round the world. Nevertheless, acceptance has been accompanied by critical response and modifications, focused on the overweening emphasis on pragmatism and dependence on the social sciences, on inadequate biblical foundations, on the ideological pitfalls inherent in such a methodology, and especially on the “homogeneous unit principle”, of which incisive criticism has come from South Africa and Latin America, where the strategy is judged as only reinforcing racism and classism.

The flowering of the church-growth movement coincided with the introduction

of “contextualization” as a replacement for “indigenization”. Contextualization theory emphasizes the importance of local cultural materials and leadership in developing churches with integrity. This emphasis relativizes the role of the missionary outsider in relation to the local church and its leadership. Both streams of influence draw attention to the importance of culture in the development of indigenous churches.

The original impulse to church-growth thinking was the concern to re-invigorate and extend cross-cultural mission beyond the borders of North America and Western Europe. But by the early 1970s, the methodology was being adapted to the new North American and European contexts where the major historic churches face declining membership and a growing religion-cultural pluralism within the societies. Here church-growth associations have training programmes for pastors and lay leaders which equip them to use church-growth methods in their home countries.

See also **evangelism**.

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## CHURCH MUSIC

ANY MUSIC used in or associated with Christian worship can be considered church music; and the musical forms, styles and performance practices in Christian churches have always exhibited great variety. Differences in musical practice may indicate underlying differences in theological emphasis, since the music used in Christian worship reflects a church's interpretation of its liturgy;\* likewise, similarities may indicate ecumenical agreement or convergence on theological is-

ues. Much of the significant diversity stems from two factors: (1) an emphasis on different liturgical functions of music, especially its relationship to the words of the service; (2) differing interpretations of the liturgy, which lead to different requirements for its performance.

### LITURGICAL FUNCTIONS

The church has generally regarded music as an essential part of the liturgy because it supports the liturgy's purpose: praise of God. Most churches agree that this means that the music must in some way be subordinated to the larger aims of the liturgy; however, they have differed widely in their attempts to provide acceptable music. For example, in most Eastern Orthodox churches the liturgy is primarily chanted and generally unaccompanied by instruments: vocal music is considered normative, since the words of the liturgy keep the function of the music clear. In contrast, the role of music has gradually changed in Western liturgies. While it has often consisted entirely of vocal music, Western churches gradually accepted instruments starting in the 8th century and de-emphasized chant (cultivating polyphony) from the 12th century on.

In all churches, musical practices and the liturgy have interacted in two important ways. First, music has influenced the interpretation of liturgical texts and actions. Even in a largely chanted service, music indicates how a text is to be performed and understood, by punctuating the text through melodic formulas and cadences; by emphasizing words through melisma, or repetition; and by organizing the length and balance of each section of the liturgy. Changes in musical style alter the delivery of the texts and have often been considered disruptive of the liturgy, consequently causing conflict. For example, as early as the 4th century a melodic style of chanting imported from the East caused considerable controversy as it spread through Western churches. According to Augustine, the problem was that the music could detract from the words by calling attention to itself. Such tensions between words and music have been heightened in the West by the development of functional harmony, which aims at relatively autonomous musical forms, making words dis-

pensable or interchangeable. However, these forms have not been found necessarily incompatible with the supporting of words, as the widespread popularity of the accompanied hymn suggests. In practice, even purely instrumental music has generally been tied to words or liturgical actions: substituting for words, as in the *alternatim* practice of the late middle ages; referring to words, as in the Lutheran chorale prelude; or highlighting an important action, as in the baroque elevation toccatas.

Second, changes in liturgical style and content can lead to a sense of musical deficiency. For instance, the translation of liturgies into various vernaculars has provoked changes as diverse as the growth of divergent families of Byzantine chant and the development of the Lutheran chorale. More recently, the Second Vatican Council's emphasis on the vernacular and the transplanting of various Eastern churches to the West have led to the creation of many new or adapted vernacular settings.

### PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

Most churches agree that the liturgy requires the active participation of all those assembled; however, there is little agreement about how such participation should be reflected in church music. In Eastern churches the liturgy is predominantly sung, but the singing parts are mostly taken by ministers, cantors or choirs; congregational participation largely consists of (active) listening. In contrast, the churches of the Reformation have historically emphasized congregational singing.

Differences in the performance of the liturgy stem from the fact that churches emphasize various traditional models of worship. The New Testament offers two influential examples: the model of heavenly worship (Rev. 4-5) and the model of the community gathered to remember the Lord Jesus (1 Cor. 3,11-14). It would be fair to say that the Eastern churches have tended to emphasize the former, while the Western churches have swung between the two, currently tending to emphasize the latter.

Most churches would tend to agree that it is the relationship between the two models that needs to be expressed in the liturgy. The predominantly congregational music of the

West and the predominantly ministerial music of the East may both need to re-discover a balance which the history of church music could suggest. For instance, in the 4th century the liturgy included specialized musical ministries exercised by the priest and cantors, as well as congregational participation. These two performance practices were commonly interpreted by the church fathers as reflecting the two music metaphors implicit in the word *symphonia*: musical harmony (the balance between various musical elements and performers), and musical agreement (most fully realized in unison congregational singing). Both metaphors stress a unity which reconciles all diversities, but if both are to be realized fully, some sort of variety in musical roles may still be necessary.

The ecumenical investigation of the history of liturgy has led to a number of insights relevant to this issue, which are reflected in the revised liturgies of both Roman Catholics and Protestants. From its origins at the abbeys of Solesmes and Maria Laach, the modern liturgical movement\* has gone hand in hand with a renewed appreciation of chant. One indication that musical practice is responding to these recoveries is the increasing use of responsorial psalm forms in both Protestant and Roman Catholic churches. In North America, the question of congregational singing is also being raised more frequently in Orthodox publications.

Although the musical practices of the churches continue to indicate unresolved theological and social tensions, they may also indicate important resources for mutual enrichment. The Western churches would profit greatly from examining the wider range of interaction between text and music which can be observed in the largely chanted services of the Eastern churches; this might enable the West to recover what is useful of its own chant tradition. The East might also offer some insights into the question of the proper ministerial role of the choir. The Eastern churches could attend to the successful balancing between congregational singing and professional musical ministry in the Protestant and Roman Catholic traditions.

Both in the East and in the West, church music from the Southern hemisphere is receiving increased attention and respect.

Many areas, particularly in Latin America, Africa and South Asia, have discovered their own musical voice for worship. Furthermore, the music indigenous to local cultures is increasingly being recognized as useful for worship. Both regional and local music is being adopted and adapted by a larger number of communities, many of which are only remotely connected to the groups which produced the music. For this reason, all churches will find a need to attend to the theological significance of musical and liturgical inculturation, particularly by noting how the wide diversity of music available now for liturgical use is adapted to differing liturgical, musical and social circumstances.

See also *hymns; lex orandi, lex credendi; worship in the ecumenical movement.*

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## CHURCH ORDER

THERE IS MUCH diversity in structure or polity, but three basic patterns of church order have dominated since the 16th century: congregational, presbyterial and episcopal. Episcopal polity, characteristic of Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican traditions, is the most widely used. Presbyterial or congregational structures are more prominent among churches that emerged out of the Protestant Reformation\* or later divisions.

All three polities may claim New Testament antecedents. A congregational structure would have suited the so-called house churches formed by early missionaries like Paul, who refers several times in his letters to churches in the homes of persons he knew (Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Philemon 2). The church at Corinth probably employed a congregational structure. A presbyterial pattern, in which leadership is exercised by presbyters (also called overseers,

episcopoi) and deacons, seems to have gained wide currency during the last half of the 1st century. Paul saluted "bishops and deacons" at Philippi (Phil. 1:1). Acts and the pastoral epistles, both perhaps dating from the late 1st century, envisioned apostolic appointment of presbyters "church by church" or "city by city" (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5). In 1 Tim. 4:14 Paul referred to a "council of elders", or *presbyterion* (see *presbyterate*).

Monarchical episcopacy,\* or rule by a single bishop, did not develop until the 2nd century, but a kind of prototype for it may be found in the primitive community of Jerusalem. Parallels between the structure of this community and that of the Jewish community at Qumran are striking. James, brother of Jesus, stood at the head, like the Qumran *mebaqqer*, or "superintendent" (episcopos). The Twelve, including the "three pillars" (see Gal. 2:9), formed a kind of council like the Council of Twelve – including or in addition to three priests – at Qumran. Beyond these were the presbyters and the "many" in both communities (Acts 15:2,4,6,22,23).

Progress towards the threefold order (bishop, presbyters, deacons) moved at different paces in different places. According to J.B. Lightfoot, the twofold order of presbyter-bishops and deacons prevailed in most churches by the end of the 1st century. Within the church of a city (polis), whatever the number of congregations, one of the presbyter-bishops probably served as chair of the *presbyterion*. A number of factors – the demands of an expanding constituency, threats of schism and heresy, a natural inclination to clarify authority – probably encouraged a permanent presidency. When this happened, the term "episcopos" was reserved for the presiding presbyter-bishop and the term "presbyter" for others.

Judging from the urgency of the plea of Ignatius of Antioch to "do nothing without the bishop!" (*Letter to the Philadelphians* 3.2), the church of Asia Minor had not yet fully secured the tripartite order at the time he passed their way en route to Rome c.110-15. Indeed, Ignatius left his own flock in some kind of turmoil (*ibid.*, 10.1; cf. *to the Smyrnaeans* 11.1; *to Polycarp* 7.1). Rome, always conservative, moved still more slowly to accept the monarchical episcopate.

Concern for the indigent, the need for additional assistance and the desire to include as many persons as possible in the ministry of the church led to the development of "minor orders" not part of the threefold ministry: sub-deacons, widows, deaconesses, exorcists, porters, readers, acolytes and others. These varied widely from church to church.

In line with the Pauline mission strategy, the polis-church served as the primary unit in the development of Christian polity. They extended their reach to surrounding villages and the countryside; and the bishop naturally considered himself the bishop of areas evangelized by his church. Accordingly, Ignatius called himself bishop of both Antioch and Syria (see his *Letter to the Romans* 2.2). Claims often overlapped, necessitating the establishment of certain lines of jurisdiction. At Nicea in 325 bishops accepted the Roman dioceses and provinces as the units recognized by the church. Parish units did not develop until around 400 or after, perhaps first in Gaul. Heads of churches in provincial capitals gained special recognition as metropolitans (in the East) or archbishops (in the West).

From an early date certain churches held more eminent places and came to be designated patriarchates. Jerusalem did so for a time by virtue of its importance in Christian origins, then faded out of the picture after the Bar Kochba revolt (132-35) but recovered some of its pre-eminence after Constantine's conversion opened the way for Christians to return. The council of Nicea in 325 officially restored to the Jerusalem church some of its status. Antioch gained prominence as a result of its special role in the early Christian mission led by Paul and Barnabas. Rome had a natural advantage as the capital of the empire, and the martyrdoms of Peter and Paul there further enhanced its standing. When Constantine shifted the capital from Rome to Byzantium in 330, he brought the latter immediately into the limelight; yet it never succeeded in taking the place of Rome. At Constantinople in 381 the bishops listed it second after Rome as "the New Rome". Several other large cities such as Alexandria, Ephesus, Carthage and Caesarea gained prominence at one time or another, but of these only

Alexandria, perhaps as the centre of Christian learning in the 3rd century and after, attained the title of patriarchate in the early church.

Rome held a certain prestige almost from the beginning, but the extent to which it exercised authority over churches outside Italy is debated. The theory that the bishop of Rome was Peter's successor appeared first in Tertullian (*Prescription* 32). Damasus (366-84) established clerical right of appeal to Rome. Pope Leo I (440-61), however, shaped the theory of Roman primacy\* based on succession from Peter, which claimed for Rome full power over the whole church. The power vacuum created by the barbarian invasions allowed Rome to implement the theory in the West in ways it could not in the East.

Church order changed little during the middle ages either in East or West. The Protestant Reformation, however, led to radical changes. Although Luther emphasized that clergy differ from laity\* only in function, he did not make far-reaching changes. Calvin and more radical reformers wanted to return to the order set by primitive Christianity but disagreed among themselves as to what the pattern was. Anglicans steered a middle course under guidance of the church fathers and not too far from the Orthodox and Roman Catholic models (except for rejection of Roman hegemony over the Church of England).

Episcopal polity, whether Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican or Lutheran, is usually conceived in terms of a diocese over which a bishop presides with the assistance of other clergy. The bishop is the chief pastor, worship leader and teacher. Priests (presbyters) serve as the bishop directs in pastoral, liturgical or other duties, normally in a parish, a sub-unit of the diocese. After a long eclipse, the diaconate\* has recently been revived as a permanent order in some churches. Today many episcopal churches still recognize a number of "offices" for which persons are not ordained. Ordination\* to the priesthood is believed to confer special grace for the performance of certain sacramental functions and thus to distinguish clergy and laity.

In the Roman Catholic Church bishops exercise authority only in union with the Ro-

man pontiff, who “has full, supreme and universal power over the whole church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered... Together with their head, the Supreme Pontiff, and never apart from him, the bishops have supreme and full authority over the universal church; but this power cannot be exercised without the agreement of the Roman Pontiff” (*Lumen Gentium* 22) (see **collegiality**).

Presbyterial polity, preferred especially by churches of the Reformed/Presbyterian tradition, is less tied to a territorial understanding of the church and stresses instead the relative independence of the ministerial “college”. In this model the ordained clergy belong to congregations grouped under them. The clergy – originally pastors, elders, teachers and deacons, according to Calvin’s scheme – lead in word (preaching), sacrament (baptism and Lord’s supper) and exercise of discipline. Local synods and national assemblies attended by both clerical and lay delegates wrestle with issues of common interest and exercise varying degrees of authority over the smaller units.

Congregational polity operates on the assumption that power lies with people gathered voluntarily for worship, education, discipline and fellowship. Cooperation between congregations is also voluntary and varies widely – from complete independence to an order similar to the presbyterial. Many congregational traditions such as Baptists have abandoned almost all traditional offices and developed structures like those employed by modern business corporations. Although they may retain names such as pastor or deacon, authority may rest with an executive board and various committees entrusted with a variety of responsibilities: personnel, nominations, education, worship, ministry, outreach, etc. The prevailing social model obviously affects all three major types, but it has greater impact on the congregational one than on the others because of its limited commitment to a defined structure.

The Lima text on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* (1982) recognizes that certain features of the episcopal, presbyterial and congregational systems all have an appropriate place in the order of a reunited church, where ministry should have “personal, colle-

gial and communal” dimensions (M26-27, with comm.).

See also **church discipline; laity/clergy; ministry in the church; ministry, threefold**.

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## CHURCHES, SISTER

THE CURRENT use of “sister churches” in ecumenical discourse, in particular between Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholics, restores an ancient church expression. “Your elect sister” (2 John 13) is the only biblical reference. Already Clement of Rome (d. ca. 101) and Ignatius of Antioch (d. ca. 107) had witnessed to the family relations between local churches. Later the theological foundations became explicit: common apostolic origins, communion in faith and hope, believers calling one another “brother” or “sister”, mutual hospitality (Irenaeus of Lyons, d. ca. 200; Tertullian from Roman Africa, d. ca. 225). During the era of the first ecumenical councils\* in the 4th and 5th centuries, large geographical spheres of church administration emerged; responsible for them were bishops, especially those who became patriarchs of the more important centres. The council bishops who represented their churches were brothers of one another, colleagues, *syllleitourgoi*, and they assured the sisterly relations between their churches.

Later development saw a double movement: in the West, the accent on the primacy of the local church of Rome; in the East, the predominance and privileged place which the patriarchs gave to Constantinople. This divergent evolution, to a large extent, resulted in the gradual dissolution and final rupture of communion between the Byzantines and the Latins. Letters from the Byzantine patriarchs Nicetas of Nicomedia (1136) and John X Camateros (1198-1206) protest Rome's seeking to annul their authority by presenting itself as "mother and teacher" (*mater et magistra*), arguing that the church of Rome is only the first among "sisters", equal in both dignity and origin.

In the 20th century ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras was the first (1963) to describe the relation between the church of Constantinople and the church of Rome as "sister churches"; and the next year Vatican II's Decree on Ecumenism\* recognized the legitimacy of the Eastern churches' theological, spiritual and canonical traditions, and described the nature of the family relations "which ought to exist between local churches, as between sisters" (n.14). In a letter to Athenagoras in 1967, Paul VI declared: "For centuries we lived this life of 'sister churches', and together held the ecumenical councils", "children of the same Father who share in a common life, through the Son in the Holy Spirit", made explicit in baptism, then "united more closely by the priesthood and the eucharist, in virtue of the apostolic succession". This papal declaration recognized the full ecclesial character of the Orthodox church, and envisaged that the relations between the church of Rome and the Orthodox church could follow a model other than that of the authority which Rome now exercises in the Catholic church.

In Rome in October 1967, Athenagoras and Paul VI issued a common declaration that their meeting had helped "their churches to make a further discovery of themselves as sister churches". The 1984 common declaration of Pope John Paul II and Syrian Orthodox Patriarch Mar Ignatius Zakka I Iwas designated "the church of Rome and the Syrian church of

Antioch" as "sister churches". An emphasis on the local dimension is found in the common Christological declaration of John Paul II and Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV of the Assyrian Church of the East\* (Rome 1994): "Living by this faith and these sacraments, it follows as a consequence that the particular Catholic churches and the particular Assyrian churches can recognize each other as sister churches." Although the term has since become customary, not all the theological and practical conclusions have yet been drawn from it.

In 1970 Pope Paul VI, on the occasion of the canonization of the 40 English martyrs, used the expression as a future hope for Catholic-Anglican relations: "There will be no seeking to lessen the legitimate prestige and the worthy patrimony of piety and usage proper to the Anglican church when the Roman Catholic Church... is able to embrace her ever beloved sister in the one authentic communion of the family of Christ: a communion of origin and of faith, a communion of priesthood and of rule, a communion of the saints in a freedom of love of the spirit of Jesus."

See also **Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue.**

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## CIMADE

THE INTER-MOVEMENT committee for aid to evacuees (CIMADE – Comité inter-mouvement auprès des évacués) was set up by French Protestant youth movements in October 1939 to send teams to live among the French evacuees from Alsace. After the Nazi invasion in 1940, CIMADE worked to alleviate the situation of foreigners assembled in internment camps under inhuman material and psychological conditions.

Through the efforts of general secretary Madeleine Barot and president Marc Boegner, CIMADE teams were able to go into the camps. With the beginning of mass deportations, particularly of Jews, in 1942, and it became necessary to go underground in the resistance. With the help of the WCC, then in the process of formation, and many parishes, CIMADE did whatever was possible to help those most at risk to flee to Spain or Switzerland.

After the liberation, CIMADE, still headed by Barot and Boegner, helped to resettle persons displaced by the war, working with Swiss churches, which donated temporary huts, and “fraternal workers” – volunteers delegated by churches abroad to help in post-war reconstruction, as an act of witness to the gospel. Later the teams also contributed to the efforts for reconciliation with the Germans by setting up temporary reception centres in Germany. CIMADE also took more ecumenical initiatives, such as organizing training conferences involving Roman Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants.

CIMADE gradually affirmed its identity as an organization independent of the churches but related to them. Its defined purpose was to show active solidarity with refugees, migrant workers and oppressed peoples: “CIMADE is one form of the service which the churches seek to render to humanity in the name of the gospel of liberation. It works in relation with the World Council of Churches, the French Protestant Federation and the Orthodox church and cooperates with various lay and Roman Catholic bodies.”

As numerous uprooted people arrived in France from Eastern Europe, Africa and the Mediterranean countries, then from Latin America and the Caribbean and Southeast Asia and, more recently, from Africa and the Middle East, the work done by the teams has changed to meet the needs of each successive group. The reception and support given to the refugees is marked by the desire to respect their adherence to their own beliefs until they can return home.

This effort to work in partnership also involves undertaking legal defence of foreigners and migrant workers and combat-

ing all forms of discrimination, including racism.\* As more and more people who came to France expecting to stay for only a short time remain in the country, their integration has become an important element in CIMADE’s work. Because one of the main causes of migration continues to be underdevelopment and unequal living conditions, CIMADE has been developing a third branch of its work and extending its activities to partners in the countries of the South, anxious to take their own destiny in hand. CIMADE now has working links with some 30 countries.

CIMADE’s activities outside France are complemented by work to make French people themselves more aware of the structures of inequality. Whether in relation to human rights\* in France, or the structures of injustice and exploitation elsewhere, CIMADE focuses on the root causes of the situations which challenge Christian responsibility. This calls for constant reflection and review in the light of changing situations. Such reflection makes it possible to go beyond giving personal help, necessary as this always is, to the level of dealing with the structures which cause marginalization and exploitation.

As CIMADE continues its efforts, its direct involvement in the reality of tragic situations and injustice makes its voice unmistakably authentic when it calls on political authorities, society at large and church members to work unceasingly for justice\* and the defence of outcasts.

See **interchurch aid**.

ANDRÉ JACQUES

## CIVIL RELIGION

THE IDEA of civil religion goes back to the Enlightenment and to Rousseau’s *The Social Contract*. Its four simple dogmas – about the existence of God,\* the life to come, the reward of virtue and punishment of vice, and the exclusion of religious intolerance – had both a polemical and emancipatory character in contrast to the spirit of established churches and theology. Civil religion became a form of widely accepted religious beliefs that were private, personal, civil and inward.

Within the ecumenical movement attention to this complex religious phenomenon was initially stimulated by the analysis of US sociologist Robert N. Bellah: "There actually exists alongside of and rather clearly differentiated from the churches an elaborated and well-institutionalized civil religion in America. This religion – perhaps better, this religious dimension – has its own seriousness and integrity and requires the same care in understanding that any other religion does."

From 1981 to 1987 the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Department of Studies coordinated an interdisciplinary ecumenical study on civil religion in 52 countries, using a working definition of civil religion as "a pattern of symbols, ideas and practices that legitimate the authority of civil institutions in a society. It provides a fundamental value orientation that binds a people together in common action within the public realm. It is religious in so far as it evokes commitment and, within an overall world-view, expresses a people's ultimate sense of worth, identity and destiny. It is civil in so far as it deals with the basic public institutions exercising power in a society, nation or other political unit. A civil religion can be known through its observance of rituals, its holidays, sacred places, documents, stories, heroes and other behaviour in or analogous to recognized historical religions. Civil religion may also contain a theory that may emerge as an ideology. Individual members of a society may have varying degrees of awareness of their civil religion. It may have an extensive or limited acceptance by the population as long as it serves its central function of legitimating the civil institutions."

Churches, universities, seminaries, experts and institutions prepared local and national studies, and the LWF organized several area and continental conferences and a final meeting for general evaluation. According to the findings of the study, civil religion is not a "religion" like Christianity, Buddhism or Islam but rather a socio-political orientation – sometimes overt and sometimes hidden – that borrows and interprets for its own purposes a given religious framework. Every socio-political

system can produce a civil religion to legitimate its way of life, understanding of history, beliefs, values and regulations in relation to other socio-political systems.

The study distinguished four inter-related aspects of civil religion: (1) religiosity as folk-church or folk religious tradition (e.g. communities and individuals struggling for identity and hungering for transcendence); (2) the relationship between church, religion and state, as defined by the constitution, legislation, the national anthem and the idea of a "neutral" state; (3) the relationship between church, religion and nation, which includes national or tribal elements of religiosity and the role of religion\* in the process of nation-building; (4) the relationship between church, religion and the deep structure of basic values, as reflected in the values of the constitution and the educational structures.

Governments and people in authority have always used religion to legitimate or safeguard their own position. The privileged church or religion used its music or liturgy to support social and civil institutions, which in turn guaranteed its favoured treatment. Every society harbours certain forms of civil religion, which differ according to the society's background and the elements that have shaped its development. If civil religion is to integrate and unite a society through myths, ceremonies and ideologies, it must provide a sense of a common past, present and future in transmitting and interpreting the society's values and goals and make them appear to be right, necessary and, indeed, the only possible ones.

A further element can be the mobilization of people for common tasks and responsibilities. For example, in Indonesia the five pillars of Pancasila represented an attempt to provide a framework of unity for religion and peoples through belief in one supreme God, just and civilized humanity, the unity of Indonesia, a democracy led by the wisdom of deliberations among representatives, and social justice for the whole of Indonesia.

Any theological evaluation of civil religion must remember that the church is always involved in the process of civil reli-

gion. At its best, civil religion can create social order and national or group cohesion, and at its worst it can become a kind of idolatry. The church can sometimes use civil religion as a point of contact (*Anknüpfungspunkt*); at other times the church should stand in prophetic judgment over it.

See also **church and state**.

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## CIVIL SOCIETY

THE ORIGINAL use of the term “civil society” in modern philosophy was intended to contrast *civil* society with *natural* society – the former being a “well-ordered” political society or state, the latter being a society without an effective political order. It is used in this sense, for example, by John Locke (1632-1704).

The fact that in current usage the state is not only not identified with “civil society”, but contrasted with it, suggests that (1) the term has been expanded and has undergone a shift of meaning in the history of thought; (2) having various connotations, it is liable to be used loosely or manipulatively; (3) care should be taken when using it to set it in its discursive context.

It is the first point which interests us here. The opposition of “civil” and “natural” in the early development of bourgeois society was easily associated with the distinction between “civilized” and “primitive” or “barbaric”, reflecting a philosophy of history which saw capitalist organ-

ization of the economy as the supreme expression of the development of the human spirit and everything non-capitalist as inferior and everything anti-capitalist as chaos. The next step was to locate the superiority of the capitalist order, not in its economic relations but in the sphere of government. This is found in Rousseau (1712-78) and above all Hegel (1770-1831). Rousseau distinguishes between natural society, civil society (still not adequately political) and political society or the state. Hegel saw the state in categorical terms as superseding the civil society, from which by implication it drew its power. In all these versions, “civil society” is to be understood as the well-ordered *bourgeois* society. The difference lies in the emphases placed on the factors in the relation between economy and politics.

Following Marx’s prologue to his *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (not necessarily correctly understood), civil society came to be identified with the economy or the sphere of particular interests – something quite different from what it originally meant. The situation became more complicated, even within the Marxist tradition, when Gramsci (1891-1937) categorized the notion in relation to the state function of hegemony.

The most widely used sense of “civil society” today distinguishes it from government and the state, defining it as the sphere of particular interests, organized to some degree, and not necessarily in conflict with political institutions. (In some literature on the subject in English, “civil society” is simply synonymous with “society”; some Latin American writers close to this tradition make the same transposition.)

With the increase of globalization under the neo-liberalism of the 1980s, the term “civil society” once again returned to socio-political discourse and analysis. The anti-state rhetoric of neo-liberalism developed a Manichean dualism of state and market, presenting the latter as the basis of social relations. Within this framework, civil society can be held up as the sphere in which enterprises, including informal workers, can be strengthened and express themselves. It is the arena of liberty, free of

political or party-political corruption (intervention). From another angle, the opening up of the markets under the neo-liberal project increased the impoverishment and exclusion of the labour force and gave a new form to social tensions and conflicts. Against this background came the collapse of the societies living under historical socialism and renewed talk of the “end of ideologies”. As a reaction to this, the attention to civil society reflects a quest for new social forces and actors who might bring about the changes that are needed, at least by Latin American societies. In its extreme form, civil society is seen as the sphere of the *alternative*, of New Historical Subject; more moderately, it is a space where the many new actors on the social scene (feminists, ecologists, etc.) can organize and assert their identity alongside the traditional ones (trade unionists, farmers, etc.). Many saw the uprising in Chiapas, Mexico (1994), as a sign of the vitality of this new civil society.

Analytically, “civil society” is to be understood as a *humanly* well-ordered society. It refers to the differing needs of the diverse social groups and the forms of reasoning, spirituality, structures and institutions that link and empower them as a community. Civil society, then, is the space where both the diverse needs and the will for a constructive linkage of differences are expressed. By definition, civil society is plural in nature.

To the extent that civil society included the tendency to respond to all the needs without exclusion, it is also an *ecumenical* space. This implies a tendency towards the absence of domination and hegemony. “Civil society” can thus be associated with a category like the people of God\* – a people in which everyone appreciates and values other cultures and other religions as manifestations of the richness of the one God of life.

Slowly the churches are becoming aware that (as Israel Batista has put it) “whatever we call civil society, be it an old idea, a new paradigm or an easy slogan, society is becoming a testing place for alternatives, the reorganization of social movements and the space for the healing witness of local churches and ecumenical

groups in the face of the predominance of the market economy and the weakness of the state”. In June 1995, in cooperation with the Evangelical Academy at Loccum (Germany), the WCC called a consultation on theology and civil society and published the preparatory papers and a booklet of testimonies on “Witnesses of Faith Communities in Changing Societies”.

HELIO GALLARDO

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## COLD WAR

THE TERM “cold war” designates the ideological, political, economic and military struggle between the two super-powers, the Soviet Union and the United States, each the centre of a bloc of allies, during the period from the end of the second world war through 1989. These two blocs had fought together against facism in Europe and Japanese imperialism in Asia during the second world war, but from 1945 both sought to expand their spheres of ideological, political, economic and military influence worldwide. The ideological hostility resulted in the “iron curtain” between East and West, symbolized most graphically in the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961, halting communication between peoples at all levels.

In 1955, a conference of Afro-Asian countries in Bandung, Indonesia, used the term “third world” to distinguish these countries from the ideological power blocs of the “first” and “second” worlds, and in 1961 a group of 25 developing nations formed the Non-Aligned Movement to declare their intention not to emulate the policies of either of the super-power blocs.

While armed military conflict between the two super-powers was avoided, they confronted one another in destructive regional proxy wars in Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Southern Africa, Central America and elsewhere.

Global tensions between capitalist and socialist systems inevitably posed serious problems also for the WCC. At its founding assembly in Amsterdam in 1948, a classic debate between John Foster Dulles, the USA statesman, and Joseph Hromádka, the respected Czech theologian, on Christian attitudes towards the cold war set the tone for decades of ecumenical confrontation. From the beginning, the WCC included churches from East, West and non-aligned blocs. In this tense situation the WCC sought (1) to ensure that neither the ecumenical movement as a whole nor the individual churches would so “identify themselves with any political or social ideology that religion would become exploited for purely secular political ends”; and (2) to defend the “fundamental liberty of the church to exercise its evangelistic and prophetic functions without hindrance” (Visser ’t Hooft).

The Amsterdam assembly urged churches to do all in their power to attack the causes of war by promoting peaceful change, the pursuit of justice and resistance to the deployment of weapons of mass destruction.

The first test of these ecumenical principles came in June 1950 when war broke out between North and South Korea. The United Nations, after receiving a report from its commission in Korea, concluded that “all evidence points to a calculated attack prepared and launched with secrecy” by North Korean troops, and approved “a police measure” by member nations to oppose this “aggression”. Meeting in Toronto in July 1950, the WCC central committee adopted a statement on the Korean situation and world order supporting the UN action, while urging governments to press individually and through the UN for a just settlement by negotiation and conciliation. After a bitter and costly conflict, an armistice was declared in 1953, though the Soviet Union

and the USA continued to support their respective allies on the divided peninsula. (From 1984, the WCC took the lead in promoting Korean re-unification, and in 1986 brought Christian leaders together for the first time in more than four decades.)

There were more cold-war crises throughout the 1950s. In October 1956 a revolt against the communist regime in Hungary was quickly suppressed by Russian troops and tanks, to the dismay of churches and the WCC. In the same month an Anglo-French military incursion in the Middle East sought to deny Egypt control of the Suez Canal, and this was equally condemned by the ecumenical movement.

In December 1961 the Russian Orthodox Church was received into membership in the WCC along with nine other Orthodox and Protestant churches from the USSR and Eastern Europe. Though some in the West feared that this would weaken the stance of the WCC on many cold-war issues, most churches welcomed the views of additional churches from the communist-bloc nations.

The Vietnam war (1962-72) generated worldwide criticism of the Western bloc, especially the USA. Opinion within the USA itself was bitterly divided. Large student protests in the USA, Europe and elsewhere gave rise to mass popular movements – in which many WCC member churches joined – which openly defied their governments’ policies in Indochina. Simultaneously, the “doctrine of national security” applied by the USA to support military dictatorships in Asia, Africa and Latin America was widely condemned by the worldwide ecumenical movement. There was similar ecumenical reaction to the Soviet military suppression of the “democratic” Marxist government in Czechoslovakia (August 1968), which reminded the world that the USSR was also unable to accept any dissenting views in its bloc.

The Western doctrine of “containment” of communism through the 1960s and 1970s led to reliance on nuclear deterrence by both sides to preserve the “peace” of the cold war. During the 1970s

and 1980s the nuclear arms race grew dramatically. From the time of the US decision in 1979 to modernize its nuclear weapons stationed in Western Europe, massive popular protests began around the world against the nuclear arms race. A WCC public hearing on nuclear weapons and disarmament in Amsterdam in 1982 called special attention to the threat of global nuclear destruction. The sixth assembly of the WCC in Vancouver the following year echoed the concerns of the first assembly in 1948 and issued a ringing appeal to Christians and churches to refuse to participate in research, production or use of nuclear arms.

Internal problems in the communist bloc in the late 1970s, especially the disastrous results of communist economic policies, and internal reactions to the Soviet military invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, began to erode public confidence in the communist parties. Eventually new economic thinking and proposals for social restructuring (glasnost and perestroika) began to emerge in the USSR and throughout Eastern Europe. In the last months of 1989, the once fearsome cold war ended with dramatic political and economic changes throughout the communist world, leading to the eventual collapse of the Communist Party system. New, closer links were established with Western nations. However, the political and economic risks in bringing this about were underestimated. Not only did the former socialist bloc led by the USSR break apart, but the Soviet Union itself collapsed, resulting in a new configuration of nations in the area, in some cases accompanied by painful and prolonged ethnic conflicts.

A major contribution of the WCC and the ecumenical movement during the entire period of the cold war was to build bridges between churches living and witnessing in East and West. At times these represented the only human contact across the iron curtain. In some, though not all, of the post-cold war conflicts these ecumenical ties contributed significantly to reducing the level of violence in the transition from socialism to another system. The role of the churches in the German

Democratic Republic in the period leading up to the fall of the Berlin Wall was a particularly dramatic example of this.

See also **national security**.

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## COLLEGIALITY

THE SECOND Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church officially describes collegiality thus: "Together with its head, the Roman pontiff, and never without this head, the episcopal order is the subject of supreme and full power over the universal church." This college of bishops, "in so far as it is composed of many members, expresses the variety and universality of the people of God, but in so far as it is assembled under one head, it expresses the unity of the flock of Christ" (*Lumen Gentium* 22). All bishops, by virtue of their episcopal consecration and their communion among themselves and with the head of the college, the bishop of Rome, have a corporate or collegial responsibility for the unity of faith\* and communion\* of the universal church\* and for its mission\* "to teach all nations and to preach the gospel to every creature".

The authority of the pope and the bishops is always to be exercised through the faithful preaching of the gospel, the administration of the sacraments and loving governance. They thus collaborate in the Holy Spirit's work of unity "in the confession of the one faith, in the common celebration of divine worship and in the fraternal harmony of the family of God" (Decree on Ecumenism 2).

Since all power in the church is that of Christ in the Spirit, and thus truly vicarious, Vatican II wrestled with how to explain the bishops' power as coming from Christ while still maintaining good order and structure in the church. And since the agents of supreme power are multiple (i.e., the pope and the rest of the bishops in full communion with him), the issue of their relationship in the exercise of authority is

crucial. Otherwise that power which is intended for the unity of the church could seem to lead to disunity. Thus, the need for a further development of collegiality in theological theory and ecclesial practice is for the sake of both the local and the universal church, with direct ecumenical consequences.

Since Vatican II there are at least three major schools of thought on the relation between the pope and the other bishops in terms of supreme authority. The first focuses solely on the pope. No act of supreme authority can take place without his direct involvement, even if he joins himself to other bishops in a general council. A second view sees two different modalities of exercising legitimately the unifying power of Christ as the supreme authority: the pope in his own right, not involving the college of bishops, or the pope acting together with the bishops in a collegial act. Thus there are two subjects of supreme authority, though they are inadequately distinguished. A third view considers the role of the college of bishops, or the pope of the first college of the apostles, as more central in the plan of salvation. The college alone is the subject of supreme power. When the pope freely acts by himself, he is still exercising the supreme power that Christ gave the apostolic college, a college that Christ designated Peter to head but not to replace or duplicate.

In this debate, collegiality must be set within the Vatican II understanding of the worldwide communion of the people of God\* and of the local (diocesan) churches in which they live, for the church is at once local and universal. Bishops are rooted in these particular churches in which they minister. In the universal church as "a communion of churches", the relationship of these churches to one another "is the foundation of the office (*munus*) that one bishop has in regard to others, whether as pope, patriarch, metropolitan, etc." (James Provost).

The 1985 synod of bishops stated that "the ecclesiology of communion provides the sacramental foundation of collegiality. Therefore the theology of collegiality is much more extensive than its juridical as-

pect. The collegial spirit is broader than effective collegiality understood in an exclusively juridical way."

This "collegial spirit" (or "affective collegiality") embraces the attitudes and motives of mutual interaction and collaboration in decision-making within the college of bishops and their structural expressions (e.g. national and regional episcopal conferences, the international synod of bishops, the college of cardinals and the Roman curia). The "spirit of collegiality" is also popularly used in a more extended sense to describe attitudes and structures in the local church or diocese through presbyterial and pastoral councils, and relations between bishop, clergy, religious and laity.

Could a broad interpretation of collegiality, biblically understood and historically developed, at least constitute a base of agreement between the churches? How might the pope exercise a ministry of primacy\* which is acceptable to other churches? How does collegiality relate to conciliarity\* and lead to a future "council truly ecumenical"?

Such topics have appeared in the official RCC bilateral dialogues with the Orthodox and Anglicans (and the RCC-Lutheran dialogue in the USA), with an impetus from the 1982 *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* section on the continuity of the apostolic Tradition and the episcopal succession as a servant, symbol and guardian of the continuity of the apostolic faith and communion. Indeed, collegiality contributes to the emerging inevitable question: What and for what is the Christ-given authority\* in and of his one church? Where is that authority, and how should it be exercised?

See also **episcopacy**.

TOM STRANSKY

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## COLONIALISM

AN EXAMINATION of official church statements from the end of the 19th century shows that the Christian churches were slow to recognize the implications of colonialism. Not until long after the end of the second world war did the term "colonialism" begin to appear in church documents. Although the peoples of Asia and Africa had been busy for years organizing nationalist and freedom movements, not to mention armed movements for national liberation, practically nothing of this activity appears in official ecclesiastical texts. Only after the war are a few explicit references found, often in a very watered-down form.

Colonialism is not mentioned in any of the great social encyclicals.\* Yet the anti-colonialist movements were born long before the end of the 19th century and were even organizing international conferences like the one held in Brussels in 1925.

In the case of the WCC the first relatively concrete treatments of the problem came with the Evanston and New Delhi assemblies in 1954 and 1961. The first explicit allusion on the side of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) dates from the Second Vatican Council. But these ecclesiastical statements are generally short on social analysis and reflect a very optimistic view of colonialism. The 1967 papal encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, for example, makes the following statement: "It must certainly be recognized that colonizing powers have often furthered their own interests, power or glory, and that their departure has sometimes left a precarious economy, bound up for instance with the production of one kind of crop whose market prices are subject to sudden and considerable variation. Yet while recognizing the damage done by a certain type of colonialism and its consequences, one must at the same time acknowledge the qualities and achievement of colonizers who brought their science and technical

knowledge and left beneficial results of their presence in so many underprivileged regions. The structures established by them persist, however incomplete they may be; they diminished ignorance and sickness, brought the benefits of communications and improved living conditions."

How are we to explain this lack of awareness or historical objectivity in judging the situation?

## THE HISTORY OF MISSIONS AND ITS PARALLELS WITH COLONIALISM

There were two main stages in colonialism: mercantilism and industrial capitalism.

Mercantile colonialism (15th to 18th centuries) was undertaken by the monarchies of Portugal and Spain and later by those of the Netherlands, England and France. In the nations of southern Europe like Portugal and Spain, mercantile colonialism was seized on to establish a balance between the feudal aristocratic class and the merchant class.

Since the feudal ideology, which was religious, continued to dominate, the mercantile enterprise was given a legitimation of the same sort. At the same time, the RCC saw in this mercantile activity a possibility of evangelism\* (at least as understood in this period). Thus the ventures of the kings of Portugal and Spain were regularly legitimized by papal bulls issued throughout the entire mercantile period. It is true that not a few missionaries, particularly from religious orders (e.g. the Dominicans in Santo Domingo, the Jesuits in Paraguay, and even some bishops), fought against the brutality of the conquest and tried to develop a different understanding and practice of evangelization. But their testimony, sometimes heroic, was not able to modify seriously the course of events or change the policies of a church subject to the patronage power of the state and generally allied to the interests of the colonizers.

In return for this legitimation, the effort of evangelism received material and political assistance from the royal power. Evangelism was seen, on the one hand, as one of the best means of establishing tacit

agreements with the local populations or of domesticating slaves and, on the other hand, as a task incumbent also on lay Christians in the exercise of power.

The second stage of colonialism concentrated mainly on the discovery and exploitation of raw materials for industrial development and the marketing of manufactured goods. The large Indies companies of the Netherlands, France, Sweden and Britain paved the way for this stage. Gradually, the new type of colonialism found itself competing with the more traditional powers, which continued to engage in mercantile colonialism – hence the wars between Britain and Holland, on the one hand, and Spain and Portugal, on the other, and the eventual conquest of the respective colonies in Latin America, Asia and Africa. The colonialism of this stage no longer claimed the same religious legitimization as that which prevailed in the mercantile period. Adopting a much more pragmatic approach and making use of the colonial governments, capitalism provided the churches, both Catholic and Protestant, with support to encourage the arrival of missionaries in the colonized territories, entrusting them with educational and medical missions extremely useful to the colonial enterprise of the day. Support for the work of missions was thus never interrupted, even when the European governments adopted a hostile attitude towards certain churches in their own countries.

In Latin America, the emergence of nationalist, anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist movements directed against the Western countries dates back to the beginning of the 19th century. The Vatican refused to recognize the new nations and long remained loyal to Spain, thus endangering the organization of local churches during a long period. Members of the lower-ranking clergy joined the nationalist movements, which at that time represented the emancipation of a local middle class rather than of the ordinary people. These movements, however, played an important historical role.

In Asia, strong nationalist movements based on traditional cultures and religions began to develop from the beginning of

the 20th century: Hindu movements in India; Buddhist movements in Sri Lanka, Burma, Vietnam and Laos; Islamic movements in most of the Arab countries, Iran, Malaysia, Indonesia and that part of British India corresponding to present-day Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Most Christian churches were alarmed by these movements and resisted national emancipation, preferring to maintain their links with the colonizing powers. Only a few churches adopted a truly national position; elsewhere, it was only a few isolated voices, usually in lay intellectual circles. There were exceptions, notably in Indonesia and in Korea (which had been colonized by the Japanese).

Generally speaking, the Reformation churches had less difficulty in severing connections with the colonial power, since these connections were usually less direct. An exception was the Anglican church in British India; given its character as an established state church, it tended to take its cue from government colonial policy, though the same also applied when that policy was one of decolonization.\* All this helps to explain why a number of political leaders in Asia after independence were Christians with a nationalist bias but at the same time exponents of the capitalist ideology characteristic of the West.

In Africa, the movement for independence after the second world war was rather sudden, and the local clergy adopted positions more explicitly emancipatory in character. This was the case with a number of local Roman Catholic episcopates, some of them predominantly white. This stance is attested, for example, by the pastoral letters of bishops in Tanganyika and in Madagascar in 1953, in Cameroon, French West Africa and Togo in 1955, and in Madagascar in 1956. A number of anti-white emancipation movements were led by Africans who had founded independent churches or religious movements such as Kimbanguism in the Belgian Congo.

The case of Portuguese colonialism was particularly distressing. The RCC did not dissociate itself from the colonial war waged by Portugal right up to 1974. The concordat between the holy see and the Portuguese government was still in force,

and the holy see never renounced it. Only a tiny number of priests and lay Catholics joined various leaders of the Protestant churches in identifying themselves with the nationalist movement.

It is clear, then, that the Christian churches had a largely blinkered ecclesiastical and proselytizing vision of what was happening and lacked the critical distance for an objective analysis. They were almost completely unrepresented in the critique of colonialism which had developed in the West, largely inspired by socialist movements and later by a Marxist analysis, and played hardly any part in the movements within the colonized nations which for the most part preached a cultural emancipation inspired by the traditional religions. A number of the IMC conferences – particularly Tambaram 1933, Whitby 1947, Willingen 1952 and, even earlier, the Latin American missionary congress of 1926 in Panama – sharply criticized the colonial enterprise. But only later, particularly in the struggles in Southern Africa, were some churches, following the leadership of the WCC, able to overcome the colonialist mentality and establish a positive relation with liberation movements, often led by people from the local churches – and these relations were violently criticized in the West.

The positions adopted by the Christian churches at the end of the colonial era emphasized their tasks in the new situation of national sovereignty and the importance of the autonomy of the local churches, rather than critically appraising the colonial past. This was the standpoint expressed, for example, at the Uppsala assembly of the WCC in 1968.

### A EUROCENTRIC VISION

Another feature of church documents is their deep conviction of the superiority of the civilized values which “Christian” Europe brings to the “non-civilized” peoples. From the 15th to the 16th centuries, this was the justification for the struggle against Islam. The absolute conviction that Christianity was necessary for the salvation\* of all human beings and that it was essential to spread it by all legitimate

– or what were deemed legitimate – means found expression in its alliance with the mercantile colonial enterprise. The notion of European cultural superiority and the blessings of European civilization together constituted a particularly important ideological basis during the period of colonialism by the industrial nations, and the Christian churches were the main vehicle for this ideology.

Even after the attainment of independence by the former colonized countries, church documents still remained close to the old way of thinking (seen, for example, in the address of Pope Pius XII of 24 December 1955). A critical distance in this area is found only in certain positions adopted by the WCC, notably in 1961 at the third assembly in New Delhi.

### THE POST-COLONIAL ERA

The churches were very quick to draw a veil over the colonial era and at the same time in many cases to adopt a more concrete and courageous attitude to the problems of the post-colonial era. In *Pacem in Terris*, Pope John XXIII spoke of the relationships between the young peoples and the old peoples. The self-determination of the new nations was a theme at the Uppsala assembly. The encyclical *Populorum Progressio* tackled the theme of development and did not hesitate to condemn economic imperialism.\* Various documents of the WCC and especially of its Programme to Combat Racism\* have spoken of the phenomenon of neo-colonialism. The capacity for analysis was gradually developed within the churches. It must be acknowledged, however, that the official documents show little in the way of self-criticism as to the role played in colonialism by the churches themselves, whatever the personal devotion and heroism shown by individual missionaries. Nor are there any critiques of colonialism as such, of its economic and political roots and the domination resulting from it.

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## COMMON CONFESSION

FROM ITS VERY beginning, the organized ecumenical movement has aimed at attaining a common confession of the same apostolic faith.\* As early as 1927, the first world conference on Faith and Order\* at Lausanne received this resolution unanimously: "Notwithstanding the differences in doctrine among us, we are united in a common Christian faith, which is proclaimed in the holy scriptures and is witnessed to and safeguarded in the ecumenical creed, commonly called the Nicene, and in the Apostles' Creed, which faith is continuously confirmed in the spiritual experience of the church of Christ" (4.28).

Perhaps such a declaration was at that stage too optimistic for the ecumenical movement as a whole. The "basis" prepared for the constitution of the WCC, adopted at Amsterdam (1948) and revised in a more Trinitarian direction at New Delhi (1961), was indeed a provisional and minimal criterion of faith for admission to membership. But it was not yet the common confession required and sufficient for the unity\* of the church and the "unity in one faith" which is the explicit goal pursued by the WCC and its F&O commission.

From Lausanne onwards, F&O has studied ways for making a common confession and the problems which hinder the reception\* of a common confession of faith. Its world conference at Montreal in 1963 studied the relation of scripture, Tradition and traditions\* and, within that context, the relation of scripture and creeds.\* Thereafter, studies were undertaken on the councils of the early church and their hermeneutical significance, and on the possibility of a genuinely universal council which would be able to receive such a common confession. In 1967, at the F&O commission meeting in Bristol, the proposal for a study on a common confession of faith was deemed to be unripe for the time being. The emphasis after the Uppsala assembly (1968) and the Louvain meeting of the commission (1971)

was on the contextual pluralism\* of credal witness and of "accounts of hope". On the basis of material collected from all parts of the world, F&O issued, at its meeting in Bangalore (1978), a "Common Account of Hope" (see hope). It was followed directly by a proposal for a study on the "Common Confession of the Apostolic Faith Today", in order to implement more fully the exhortation of the Nairobi assembly (1975): "We ask the churches to undertake a common effort to receive, re-appropriate and confess together, as contemporary occasion requires, the Christian truth and faith, delivered through the apostles and handed down through the centuries. Such common action, arising from free and inclusive discussion under the commonly acknowledged authority of God's word, must aim both to clarify and to embody the unity and the diversity which are proper to the church's life and mission."

A joint consultation of F&O and the Joint Working Group\* between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC produced in 1980 an important study document, "Towards a Confession of the Common Faith", which takes up the issue of the plural, and sometimes contradictory, character of confessional traditions among the churches: "Since their divisions the churches have each given themselves either conciliar decrees or confessions to which they attach a real authority. But this authority always remains subject not only to the authority of scripture but also to that of those universally received documents which concern the centre of the faith and which the church holds from the period that may be deemed its building period."

In spite of those differences, however, the churches within the ecumenical movement have to meet the aspirations and hopes, doubts and fears of people in various contexts. Confidence could be restored between older and younger churches, and between older and younger church members only if "the faith of the church through the ages" was expressed in such ways that it met the longings and desires of people in modern societies without destroying the trust and faith as it

is held by older people or by the older churches.

Time-bound expressions of faith must always be measured by the *regula fidei* (rule of faith) transmitted through the centuries. To face the hermeneutical task, the Lima meeting of F&O in 1982 proposed a study project in three stages, under the title "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today". It aimed at three interdependent goals: (1) recognition of the Nicene Creed\* (in the version of 381, i.e. without the filioque\* clause) as *the* ecumenical creed of the church, (2) explanation of that creed for the sake of contemporary understanding and establishing confidence concerning its meaning in the service of unity, and (3) finding ways to express that same common faith today.

Recognition of the Nicene Creed – without the addition of the filioque clause – seems a real possibility now, provided that an ecumenical explanation becomes a sufficient basis for mutual trust. Such explanation has been developed within the F&O commission, and a first draft was published in 1987, entitled "Confessing One Faith". After further work, it was shared with the churches at the F&O world conference in Santiago de Compostela in 1993. This explanation sets out the biblical sources of the articulations of faith used in the creed of 381, describes their 4th-century context and then treats them in relation to questions being asked about them today. A popularized version of "Confessing the One Faith" was adopted at the F&O plenary commission meeting at Moshi, Tanzania, in 1996.

Recognition and explanation of the Nicene Creed, however, must not replace the search for new confessions of faith\* as they are provoked today by situations of persecution, of church union negotiations, or of urgent socio-economic, political or ideological threats. Several such examples of "credal witness in context" were collected and published by the WCC in the series "Confessing Our Faith around the World". Among this material, some modern confessions of faith that have been made on an authoritative level could enrich the variety of credal expression and ought to be communicated within the ecumenical

community as concrete evidence of "listening to what the Spirit has to say to the churches". Reception and fraternal correction of such confessional formulas would become a real sign of koinonia\* and conciliar fellowship. An ecumenical "Book of Confessions" would then become an enriching possibility for dialogue and exchange of spiritual experiences.

Important problems still to be solved in the explanation of the ancient creeds and the reception of contemporary expressions of faith relate to the understanding of creation\* and redemption,\* the images and names of God,\* the challenge of atheism,\* dialogue with other faiths (see **dialogue, interfaith**), the doctrine of the incarnation\* and the resurrection\* of the Son of God, the activity of the Holy Spirit\* in church\* and world, and the right understanding of the gospel of "the kingdom of God".\*

More important, however, is the question of how the churches could discover together "how to *live* the faith in such a way that it will meet the aspirations on which people and persons set their hopes together, and how to proclaim this faith unanimously by overcoming its divisions" (*Towards a Confession of the Common Faith*).

See also **common witness**.

ANTON HOUTEPEN

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## COMMON WITNESS

THE TERM “common witness”, in use since the early 1970s, refers to the witness\* that the churches, even while separated, bear together, especially through joint efforts, by manifesting whatever divine gifts of truth and life they already share and experience in common. A more limited understanding of common witness had been conveyed in the Protestant origins of the ecumenical movement by terms such as “cooperative missions”, “united ministries” and “joint mission”.

### EARLY COOPERATION

Cooperation marked a few Protestant missions from their beginnings in the early 18th century: already in 1710 the Anglican-based Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge began supplying personnel and funds to the Lutheran Danish-Halle mission in India.

In the 19th century, Christians across denominational lines formed associations, notably Bible and tract societies, and some mission groups worked for common policies and effective home-base collaboration. Cooperation in health and education ministries led to union institutions, e.g. in India and in China. At least they bore common witness to basic Christian convictions about helping people in need and sharing the same gospel.

By so-called comity arrangements, various church-related or independent mission groups divided new territories into spheres of operation. Although comity led to “denominationalism by geography”, it did reduce wasteful duplication of resources and kept at a distance obvious variant forms of worship and polity which could scandalize non-Christians and hinder witness to the basic gospel message which Christians share.

The Edinburgh world mission conference in 1910 (see **ecumenical conferences**) stimulated cooperation along other lines, especially in the gradual spread of interdenominational “home base” and “foreign” federations; after the first world war, many of these developed into national Christian councils.

Some Protestant bodies – e.g. Missouri Synod Lutherans, Seventh-day Adventists

and most Baptist groups – rejected the very principle of such cooperation. Up until the 1960s, the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) and most Orthodox churches also refused to cooperate. The Catholic and Orthodox refusals were based on ecclesiological self-understanding, on the pastoral judgment of “not confusing the faithful” by apparent compromise of revealed truth, and on the anxiety about legitimating if not promoting what they judged to be Protestant proselytism\* among their vulnerable flocks.

On the other hand, Protestants and Orthodox questioned RC understandings and policies on religious freedom.\* The RCC seemed to demand free exercise of religion where Catholics were in a minority in any nation, and to refuse and deny it where they were the majority. If RC initiatives towards cooperation with other Christians were to be trusted, the RCC should state “clearly and authoritatively that it will respect the liberty of other believers, even if it has the power or the occasion to do otherwise, and that it condemns intolerance, persecution and discrimination on grounds of religious liberty” (A.F. Carillo de Albornoz, WCC secretary for religious liberty, 1964).

### THE PRE-CONDITION OF COMMON WITNESS

In hindsight, it is apparent that consensus over religious freedom and proselytism (or false witness) was a pre-condition for the acceptance of authentic common witness among all the churches. The WCC’s third assembly (New Delhi 1961) approved a report on Christian witness, proselytism and religious liberty. Its clarifications eased the entry of the Orthodox churches into the working life of the WCC – itself a “privileged” instrument and sign of common witness.

The RCC’s active entry into the ecumenical movement was officially signalled in several documents of Vatican II\* (1962-65), especially those on the church, on ecumenism and on religious freedom. Based on the ecclesiological conviction that “real but imperfect communion” already exists between the churches, the Decree on Ecumenism\* pleaded: “Before the whole world, let all Christians profess their faith

in God, our Redeemer and Lord. United in their efforts, and with mutual respect, let them bear witness to our common hope." The decree called for "cooperation among Christians", for it "vividly expresses that bond which already unites them, and sets in clearer relief the features of Christ the Servant" (12). In its declaration on religious freedom, Vatican II insisted that no individual or community may be forced to act against conscience\* or be prevented from expressing belief through teaching, worship or social action.

The expression "common witness" appears extensively for the first time in the 1970 document of the WCC-RCC Joint Working Group,\* "Common Witness and Proselytism". It elaborated and updated the theme in its "Common Witness" study documents in 1982 and 1996.

### IMPLICATIONS OF COMMON WITNESS

Christian witness is, in the first place, the continuous act by which a Christian individual or community proclaims, in deed and word, God's saving deeds in history. Christ calls each disciple wholly to be his witness but does not demand each to be a witness to the whole of him. Only the church,\* the community of all disciples, in its many-splendoured variety, is a witness to the whole incarnate counsel of God. This continual witness includes the whole life of the church: personal and communal worship, responsible service and proclamation of the good news. The church is prodded to persevere in such witness by the "cloud of witnesses" (Heb. 12:1), especially of those who suffered for the faith, even unto death (see *martyrdom*).

Second, common witness, as it is now used, applies to the historical situation of the real but imperfect communion\* between the churches in their search for the full visible communion of the one church of Christ. Common witness will always remain imperfect until there is full communion in faith, sacramental life and teaching authority,\* and in the exercise and recognition of all the Spirit's charisms\* given "for the common good" (1 Cor. 12:7), "for building up the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12).

Third, even while still lacking that full communion, the churches nevertheless ac-

knowledge that proclaiming the saving deeds of God is their central task, and this should be the burden of their common witness. They all find in the one gospel the motivation, purpose and content for their common witness. The churches give common witness whenever and however they express the gifts of faith, hope and love according to God's word, e.g. in Christian marriage and family life, in Sunday worship, in acts of compassion and forgiveness, in selfless service to those who are in material and spiritual need, in the promotion of social and economic justice, in the explicit invitation to hear Christ's call through God and his church, and even in the silence of a prison cell or of a restricted but still serving, waiting, praying church.

This indicates that common witness is broader than cooperation or joint efforts. In fact, Christians give common witness when they acknowledge and respect the shared gifts of grace, truth and love in all the churches, rejoice in their exercise and praise and thank God, always wonderful in divine works.

Fourth, common witness is heightened whenever the churches and their members jointly carry out shared Christian responsibilities: prayer (common celebrations to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity\* or highlight the great Christian festivals or locally significant occasions); reading, studying and praying through the Bible; translating, producing and distributing the Bible editions; preparing Christian catechism texts, especially for the young; reflecting theologically on classically dividing issues (bilateral and multilateral dialogues\*); approaching local, national or international authorities to offer Christian witness on political matters where human rights and dignity or spiritual and moral values are at stake; and direct evangelism.\*

The range and diversity of interchurch organizations for joint action and other forms of cooperation run from councils of churches at various levels, to joint working groups, service councils and committees, and study and action groups of every kind. One should expect further forms to appear as renewed faithfulness to mission

impels Christians towards unity, as they already try to proclaim a message of hope and peace in a broken world.

Finally, common witness has limits because of different, even contradictory, understandings of the revealed content of the faith regarding worship (e.g. eucharistic sharing), faith (e.g. authority in and of the church) and personal and social ethics (e.g. abortion, sexual orientation, women's role in the church). In fact, on some ethical issues transdenominational coalitions may form on opposite sides, each claiming to be faithful to the gospel and to be engaged in common witness.

Such situations and experiences should further press Christians "to find the right ways to proclaim together to all peoples the good news of the kingdom of God" (Pope John Paul II) and to pray and work for that true common witness in the full visible communion of the one church of Christ, who is "the faithful and true witness" (Rev. 3:14).

See also **common confession; councils of churches: local, national, regional; mission.**

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## COMMUNICATION

THE WORD "communication" by its very definition is central to the ecumenical movement. Its literal root meaning is "bound together in one". It refers to the bond that is forged when information is imparted, when ideas and thoughts are exchanged, when cultures are shared and

when people or places normally treated as separate entities are brought into close relationship with one another. Communication lies at the heart of the churches' commission to make known the message of the gospel and supremely describes that act of sharing together in the gifts of grace when Christians "communicate" in the holy sacrament (see **eucharist**).

"I would call communication the fundamental human fact," wrote the Dutch theologian Johannes de Graaf, "because communication is the essential divine fact. The nature of the Triune God is the communication of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in that holy *perichoresis* of love, out of which results the creation and in which the creation rests."

The church has consequently from the earliest days been concerned about the means of communication and has frequently been the pioneer in the development of new media, though often expressing ambivalent views about the potentiality or perils inherent in them. Thus, though the invention of printing in the 15th century was first used to disseminate the holy scriptures, it was regarded with suspicion by those who feared that this would put into common possession writings once safeguarded by religious teachers and scholars and might lead to misinterpretation and debase-ment of their worth. Similarly, as drama developed in the churches of medieval times as a way of communicating the gospel among illiterate people, the players were eventually driven out of the sanctuaries and had to perform in the streets instead.

The same ambivalence has been apparent in the churches' attitudes towards the mass media of communication that developed in the 20th century, although in many cases their pioneers were people of good conscience and Christian intent. It is said that Samuel Morse, the inventor of telegraphy, for example, declared as his hope that it might be used to make known "not so much the price of pork, as what God hath wrought". The first public radio broadcast was made to ships at sea by the Canadian inventor Richard Fessenden, who began the transmission with a read-

ing from St Luke's gospel. Broadcasting House, the headquarters of the British Broadcasting Corporation, was dedicated at the outset to the glory of God. Yet the churches were slow to see the new opportunity for Christian communication presented by these mass media. Nor were they immediately aware of the impact that electronic methods of transmission would eventually have upon the whole of society, affecting the way people send and receive messages and shaping new patterns of perception.

### THE VALUE OF THE MEDIA TO THE CHURCHES

Pope Pius XII (1939-58) was one of the first church leaders in the 20th century to speak positively about the potential value of the mass media. While sharing the anxieties of his predecessors about the debasing of values in the secular press, he pursued the thesis that the media in themselves were not inherently good or evil but that the abuse of them reflected the sickness in human society. He emphasized that they should be used to propagate Christian teaching.

Similarly, the earliest statements of the WCC on the theme of mass communication concentrated on their value as tools to be used by the churches in their own task of evangelism\* and particularly emphasized the importance of safeguarding the right to the freedom of religious expression. At the first WCC assembly in Amsterdam (1948), the principle was enunciated that "the right to determine faith and creed becomes meaningful when man has the opportunity of access to information... This right requires freedom from arbitrary limitation of religious expression in all means of communication, including speech, press, radio, motion pictures and art." The assembly urged that further research into the effect of these media should be undertaken.

Warning notes about the perils inherent in using mass media as a means of evangelism were sounded at the Evanston assembly (1954), where it was stated: "When the gospel is secularized, vulgarized or diluted into an easy alternative to facing the demand of God for a personal response, it does much harm." But the as-

sembly emphasized the important role of communication in publicizing the ecumenical movement itself and gave a mandate to the communication department of the WCC to "make known the activities of the WCC through the church and secular press and other media. It should also serve the churches by providing them with news about the life of their sister churches."

### INTER MIRIFICA

The Second Vatican Council\* Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication, *Inter Mirifica*, was one of the earliest documents approved and was given little discussion. While it came later to be regarded as too slight a commentary on what was becoming a major issue, Pope Paul VI remarked that it was "not of small value" in emphasizing the need for everyone to develop "an upright conscience on the use of these instruments", particularly with regard to the purveying of information and the portrayal of human morality. "Within human society", the decree declared, "exists a right to information about affairs which affect men individually or collectively." But such information should be "honourable and appropriate". As with the early WCC assemblies, the main emphasis was on the value of the media in the fulfilment of the church's own task: "The church claims as a birthright the use and possession of all instruments which are necessary and useful for the formation of Christians and for every activity undertaken on behalf of man's salvation."

The practical outcome of the Vatican decree came from its recommendation of establishing national offices everywhere for "affairs of press, motion pictures, radio and television", with "the special obligation of helping the faithful to form a true conscience about the use of these media and of fostering and coordinating Catholic activities directed to this end". Following the re-organization of the Roman curia in 1989, the Pontifical Council for Social Communications is concerned with all media: written, cinema, radio and television.

Several commentators criticized the clerical and paternalistic tone of the decree

and its failure to take account of the expertise of professional journalists among the church's laity. Its insistence that "on religious shepherds devolves the task of so training and directing the faithful that by the help of these instruments [of communication] they may pursue their own salvation and fulfilment" seemed to claim the right of the church to possess the communication media for its own purposes while exercising control over all other uses.

Archbishop Andrea Pangrazio, quoted in the Italian Catholic weekly *Ave Maria* in January 1965, took a more prophetic view: "A mass society has come into being which has given itself a mass culture. The intellectual is contemptuous of it and rejects it, but the fact remains that this mass culture contains real human values: a thirst for knowledge and truth, a need to communicate these with every means and with all speed so that people may be in communication with each other, and finally a cultural heritage accessible to all and offered as a gift. These values must find their own theological interpretation so that a new humanism can be realized."

### THE UPPSALA STATEMENT

Out of a similar concern that the churches did not seem to be taking the media seriously enough and were failing to recognize the quantum leap taking place in the whole field of communication, a group of professional journalists and broadcasters met with an ecumenical group of theologians for a consultation convened by the WCC at Bossey (1965). This was the first international conference under church auspices to consider the relationship of theology to mass communication. It stressed that, with the advent of radio and television, the patterns of human perception were being changed, in that the printed word is no longer the main way in which people receive and transmit messages. While recognizing that the churches had a pastoral responsibility towards all who used the media, it emphasized especially the role of professional journalists and the wide impact of their work on society as a whole.

The outcome of this consultation was a major statement prepared for the Upp-

sala assembly of 1968 on the church and the media of mass communication. Its optimistic tone reflects the theological mood of the 1960s, affirming the presence of God in the secular world of the media, claiming the world of communication as a theatre of the Holy Spirit's operation and seeing the mass media as tools to forge a new universal human society. "The media can enrich human life considerably," it stated. "As never before, they make it possible for people to share experience with the hope that they may grow in awareness, understanding and compassion. The media provide some of the bone structure for a responsible world society. The sufferings of others are swiftly known and may be quickly alleviated. The crucial issues of our time are discussed before all people. Minority views can be given a public airing. New proposals and plans can be openly debated. Cultural treasures can be circulated en masse in what can be described as 'museums without walls'. Moribund traditions can become living knowledge. It is possible that senses which have lain dormant as a result of the development of a primarily verbal or literate culture may be quickened. The media can do these things but there is no guarantee that they will."

Within the Uppsala assembly itself much use was made of visual and aural means of communicating the concerns of the various sections. Films, songs, drama, exhibitions of graphic art were prominent foci of attention, all presented with the kind of professional expertise the statement had emphasized. "The preaching of the good news of Christ", it had said, "should not be confused with poor techniques, cheap advertising methods and presentations designed as propaganda for our own groups. The presentation of the gospel requires respect for the freedom of the audience and the integrity of the media."

Acknowledging that the churches had been tardy in taking the communication media seriously, the recommendations arising out of the Uppsala statement urged that the WCC should initiate studies in this area, a mandate given subsequently to the department of communication. This

led to considerable discussion later about whether the department was primarily to focus on the Evanston mandate to provide efficient communications to serve the churches and the ecumenical movement, or to develop programmes addressing the more wide-ranging issues identified by Uppsala.

### COMMUNIO ET PROGRESSIO

A similarly optimistic note was sounded by Paul VI in his 1971 pastoral instruction *Communio et Progressio*, which stressed the need for a more positive and affirmative attitude to the media. The pope saw modern developments as making it possible to multiply the contacts within human society and to deepen social consciousness, which would contribute to the growth of human unity. In a vivid simile, he compared the availability of the mass media to the provision of a round table which could give the whole human family an opportunity to participate in dialogue and fellowship with one another.

During the 1970s the Catholic regional offices concerned with communication were beginning to make their impact. In Latin America the issue of communication was given prominent attention at the third general conference of Latin American bishops (Puebla 1979), which made both positive and negative judgments on the basis of monitoring the media in their region. "We recognize that the media of social communication are factors for communion. They contribute to the integration of Latin America and to the expansion and democratization of culture. They also contribute to the entertainment of people. They increase people's capacity for perception and sensory acuteness through auditory and visual stimuli." But the report went on to denounce the control and ideological manipulation of the media by political and economic power groups. "They seek to maintain the status quo or even to create a new order of dependence and domination, or else they seek to subvert the existing order and to create one that is the very antithesis of it. Exploitation of passions, feelings, violence and sex for consumeristic purposes constitutes a flagrant violation of individual rights."

### THE ECUMENICAL DIMENSION OF THE MEDIA

Meanwhile, ecumenical commentators were stressing the potential of the mass media as a democratizing influence, putting information, education and entertainment within the reach of all. WCC communication director Albert van den Heuvel commended the role of the media in extending a sense of universalism over against nationalism and in unmasking the inefficiency of the churches' denominational structures. He suggested that the development of mass methods of communication was providing the one stable factor in a mobile society. While such theologians as Karl Barth, Roger Mehl and Jacques Ellul had written about communication as being of the very essence of the divine-human relationship, they had used the word only within the context of interpersonal relationships and had not seriously addressed the question of the media of social communication. This theological dimension was sounded in a 1972 report to the WCC central committee: "Often the churches have been content to talk about communication as technique without realizing that communicative techniques are always developed within a theoretical framework and betray deep theological or ideological presuppositions. It is high time that the churches accept the need to give to the theological reflection on communication the place of importance which is necessitated by the crises of communication they experience within and among themselves... The well-being of the media for mass communication, their proper structures, the code of professional ethics, their purpose and the ministry in a technological society are not given the attention which their importance requires."

During the 1970s issues of communication began to appear on the agenda of many ecumenical consultations. The WCC Sub-unit on Education discussed the growing use of mass media as tools of instruction; the WCC-RCC committee on Society, Development and Peace (SODEPAX) emphasized the role of the media in disseminating news of the developing world; the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development saw social commu-

nication as a powerful alternative to violent confrontation in seeking to change society's structures; the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs criticized the selective presentation of world affairs in the Western-dominated news media; the image of women portrayed in the media was introduced in a vivid audiovisual presentation at the 1974 conference on sexism in Berlin.

But budgetary constraints were restricting the department of communication to serving the WCC's own communication needs; and the larger questions about the theology and ethics of communication did not surface at the Nairobi assembly in 1975. The only mention of the electronic media – linked to the work of the church – was somewhat dismissive. "Never before has the church universal had at its disposal such a comprehensive set of means of communication... While we need to improve our use of such media, nothing can replace the living witness in words and deeds of Christian persons, groups and congregations who participate in the sufferings and joys, in the struggles and celebrations, in the frustrations and hopes of the people with whom they want to share the gospel. Whatever 'methodologies' of communication may seem to be appropriate in different situations, they should be directed by a humble spirit of sensitivity and participation." No doubt, such statements were influenced by scepticism about the glittering showmanship of the increasingly popular US "tele-evangelists", who were using television to reach mass audiences and draw them to what has been described as an electronic church.

### COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

Meanwhile the WCC itself had become embroiled in much media controversy in the West about its own programme and purpose, especially through the debates aroused by the Programme to Combat Racism\* (PCR). A great deal of the time of the department of communication was taken up in interpreting the Council's actions both to the churches and to the secular media. The PCR by the very nature of its action-oriented programme

had vigorously *communicated* the nature of the struggle in which it was engaged.

A communication problem internal to the WCC is language. Inherited Babel does not make easier the task of those who seek to enter into a post-Pentecost community. As the Council has grown, the number of member churches whose first language is not one of the working languages used by the Council – English, French, German, Russian, Spanish – has also grown, and the need for greater recognition and inclusion of the main languages of the southern and eastern regions of the world as well as of the northern and western has become clamant. But resource limitations have reduced possibilities even for providing language services (translation and interpretation) in the working languages.

Nairobi's emphasis on the value of person-to-person communication found concrete expression in preparations for the sixth assembly (Vancouver 1983), when team visits prior to the assembly enabled delegates to travel and to communicate with their counterparts in churches in other countries and cultures. In the Roman Catholic community too the value of travel and of personal encounter, enhanced by the cooperation of the mass media, has become a highlight of the papal tours to all parts of the world.

### THE SEARCH FOR CREDIBLE COMMUNICATION

Three church-related bodies were by then working in the field of mass communications: the WCC, the Lutheran World Federation\* (LWF) and the World Association for Christian Communication\* (WACC). These organizations cooperated in "such programmes, projects and considerations as are agreeable to their respective constituencies" which included "joint funding and execution of projects and programmes" (Lee p.30).

The "media malaise", as it has been described, grew during the 1980s. The need for deeper reflection on how the media themselves were shaping as well as reflecting modern society and extending their influence in a global network has become an even more urgent task. At a consultation in Versailles in 1981, representatives of the WCC, the WACC, the LWF

and three Roman Catholic agencies met to discuss their common concerns. It was determined that the focus of attention should still be primarily on church-related communication in the widest sense. A discussion paper was circulated among some 400 churches, media institutes and individuals involved in the media. Under the title "The Search for Credible Christian Communication", the paper was described as "an invitation to the churches to join a journey towards a new understanding of their communication opportunities in the 1980s". It noted that "the churches exist to communicate" and observed: "How well we succeed is the measure of our mission and our Christian credibility."

The paper went on to sketch out a wider context for the discussion, pleading for Christians to develop a greater awareness of the influence of the media on the whole of life. It recognized the injustice of the present international order, whereby the tools of mass communication are owned and for the most part wielded by the powerful nations or commercial interests of the Western world. The paper raised many fundamental questions, the responses to which were intended to form the basis of debate at Vancouver in 1983, where the issue of communication figured in the programme in its own right as one of eight sections set before the delegates.

The report emerging from that section at Vancouver was, in contrast to the Uppsala statement of 15 years before, more critical in its assessment of the mass media and their impact on modern society. While recognizing that "credible communication serves the cause of justice and peace", it did not support the demand for a New World Information and Communication Order, whereby people would "affirm their own values, assert their own cultures and determine their own priorities. Their demands for such a new order have been largely ignored." The Vancouver report suggested criteria by which people should judge the credibility of what they see and hear, questioning the content, the style, the opportunity for dialogue and the appropriateness of the media themselves. To these it added criteria which might be

raised from a Christian viewpoint. The gospel of Christ, it asserted, reverses the values so often pervading the modern media of communication.

In 1986 the WACC adopted the following principles for Christian communication: communication from a Christian perspective is the basic calling of all Christians; it creates community; it is participatory; it liberates; it supports and develops cultures; and it is prophetic.

The WCC's Canberra assembly in 1991 emphasized the need to develop "communication for liberation", but echoed a pessimistic view of the influence of the increasingly pervasive mass media. In the report from the section "Spirit of Truth – Set Us Free!", it described the media as "powerful means of control, where the truth is not told and we are unable to exercise an informed and free judgment. Control may be exercised by governments, the market or the dominant culture." The assembly expressed particular concern about the influence upon children of the media's promotion of violence, pornography and obscenity. Churches were urged to seek ways to educate people in discernment, both as passive and as active participants in communication. They were encouraged to promote good interpersonal communication and the telling of the stories of the people. The question of the values and life-style which the media purvey universally, the effect upon regional and indigenous cultures, the ethical issues raised by the content of modern communication and the means of expressing it, the debate about censorship and the principle of freedom of information, and above all theological reflection on what mass communication means for a faith which at its very heart is communication between God and the human soul are all matters of vital importance to the agenda of the ecumenical movement as a whole.

In his address to the WCC's Harare assembly in 1998, entitled "Visions for the Future", Philip Potter pointed out that, "During these past fifty years the oikoumene, the whole inhabited earth, has been brought into one global city, through the various high-technology means of communication, but under the control of

only a small minority of the world's population." Developments in the realm of information technology in the last two decades of the century were evident even in the organization of the assembly itself, where the administration was computerized and where provision was made for delegates to communicate with their home churches by electronic mail.

The Internet, originally designed as a means of linking up establishments of military research, has rapidly developed into the World Wide Web, influencing every sphere of life. Electronic mail has given to both interpersonal and inter-institutional correspondence an immediacy which overleaps both time and distance. By the end of the 20th century, e-mail and the Internet had become a major means of inter-church communication for the dissemination of ecumenical news and information.

Yet such developments have also increased dramatically the gulf between those who have access to modern technology and those still deprived even of the basic essentials of life. Communication technology is not only reshaping our world, it is also increasing the disparity within it. Whether it proves to be ultimately a bane or a blessing to humanity depends on who controls it, how it is used, and what values it enshrines.

At the beginning of the 21st century, Christian communicators face the enormous challenge of encouraging and reporting on inter-religious dialogue, an especially sensitive undertaking at a time when religious communities are perceived to be in conflict with one another. "Communication within a cultural and religiously plural world... requires the creation of a 'culture of dialogue'... Such communication would create a spirituality of dialogue and cooperation in a world that, despite all the modern tools, is so easily drawn into confrontation and conflict" (Lee p.9).

PAULINE WEBB

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## COMMUNION

AMONG THE many traditional conceptions of the church,\* one of the most ancient and enduring is that of a communion of human persons with the Triune God (see **Trinity**) and, consequently, with one another in God. This communion, though fundamentally spiritual, is effected, nourished and certified by adherence to common expressions of the faith,\* by participation in the same sacraments\* and, some would add, by submission to a single collegially unified pastoral leadership.

According to the New Testament Christians are in communion with God and with one another through faith, the sacraments, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, joint apostolic labours, and practical care for the poor.

In patristic times the Greek *koinonia* and its Latin equivalent, *communio*, referred to a whole set of ecclesial bonds. Each particular church was seen as a group of faithful in communion with their own bishop (see **episcopacy**) and, through the bishop, in communion with the faithful of other local churches.\* The universal fellowship was both a communion of persons (the "communion of saints"\* ) and a communion in sacred things, especially in sacraments.

In the early centuries communion was effected and expressed in a great variety of ways. For example, the bishop of Rome had the custom of sending particles of the bread consecrated at his own altar (the *fermentum*) to the titular churches of the city. Unconsecrated hosts were sent over great distances to be used for the eucharist. Bishops of major sees would send lists of approved and orthodox bishops in their own region to bishops of distant lands. Christian travellers would be furnished with *tesseræ* (letters of communion), entitling them to hospitality in the

churches they visited. The most fundamental sign of communion was admission to the eucharist\* – as celebrant or concelebrant, in the case of clergy, or as communicant, in the case of laity.

When one bishop established communion with another, he entered into communion, at least nominally, with all the bishops recognized by the second bishop. When a bishop was out of communion with the principal churches, and especially with Rome, he and his faithful were to that extent “excommunicated”.

Excommunication\* was not yet viewed as a canonical penalty imposed by a superior authority but seen rather as a suspension of communion between fellow bishops. Communion would be denied in various degrees for various offences ranging from heresy\* at worst, through schism,\* down to lesser infractions of good order. A person who was in some respects excommunicated – e.g. from the eucharist – might be in communion in other respects, such as participation in non-eucharistic prayers.

In the middle ages, the church gradually became more centralized, especially in the West, where it took on the appearance of a monarchy under the sovereignty of the bishop of Rome. With the increased codification of canon law,\* the church was seen in predominantly juridical terms as the spiritual counterpart of the holy Roman empire. Excommunication came to be viewed as a penalty imposed from above, involving a denial of churchly status to those who were, so to speak, cut off from the body. From the Roman point of view, any individual or community outside its communion was to that extent outside of the church.

This juridical type of ecclesiology continued to dominate in Roman Catholic theology until the mid-20th century. But the rise of the ecumenical movement brought an increasing readiness, also in the Roman Catholic Church, to attribute some true churchly status to bodies of Christians with whom one’s own church was not in communion. Thus the conditions were ripe for a revival of the patristic theology of communion.

In Roman Catholicism, Vatican II\* (1962-65) was a major contributor to this revival. Following the lead of Catholic the-

ologians well versed in patristic literature, the Council adopted in many key texts a *communio* ecclesiology. The Catholic church described itself as a communion of particular (or diocesan) churches, each of which, being a communion, was a distinct realization of the mystery of the church (e.g. Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy 41). The member churches, while maintaining their individual character, were linked to one another in a fellowship of charity and truth. As bonds of union the Council referred to communion in the same faith, the same sacraments and the same structured fellowship. The bishops were charged with presiding over the communion of their own churches and keeping those churches in communion both synchronically with the other churches and diachronically with the church of previous ages. The bishops were seen as mutually joined to one another in a collegial fellowship, or hierarchical communion, over which the bishop of Rome presided in charity and truth.

In its Decree on Ecumenism,\* Vatican II took the position that all baptized Christians were in some degree in communion with one another and with the Catholic church, but that the lack of full participation in the same professions of faith, the same sacraments and the same societal structures were obstacles to that full communion which should flow from baptism. Thus the present ecumenical situation, as described by the Council, was one of communions in imperfect communion with one another and with the Catholic church. The goal of the ecumenical movement was seen as the establishment or restoration of full communion among separated Christian groups.

The ecumenical vision of Vatican II has been consistently maintained by the highest Roman Catholic authorities since the Council. Pope Paul VI and Cardinal Jan Willebrands, second president of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity,\* repeatedly spoke of the desirability of restoring full communion with “sister churches”\* such as the Orthodox churches of the East. Paul VI, followed by John Paul II, described the Orthodox churches as being in “almost complete” communion with Rome (Paul VI, letter to Patriarch Athenagoras, 8 February 1971; John Paul II, address for Week of

Prayer for Christian Unity, 17 January 1979). The extraordinary synod of bishops of 1985, reviewing the work of Vatican II, re-affirmed an ecumenism of communion: "We bishops ardently desire that the incomplete communion already existing with the non-Catholic churches and communities might, with the grace of God, come to the point of full communion" (final report, 2.C.7).

The Roman Catholic conception of the church as a communion having its centre in the Petrine see was authoritatively set forth by the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith in its letter *Communio in Notio* (28 May 1992). The statement in this letter that any church not in communion with Rome is "wounded" in its ecclesial existence provoked critical comments from highly placed theologians in a number of other churches. In his encyclical on ecumenism, *Ut Unum Sint*\* (1995), Pope John Paul II depicted ecumenism as a movement that begins with the partial and sometimes unrecognized communion that already exists among baptized Christians and moves towards full and visible communion in one church, as willed by Jesus Christ.

A similar theology of communion is accepted by many other Christian bodies. In dialogue statements representatives of the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches have been able to agree that "the church is a communion of believers living in Jesus Christ and the Spirit with the Father. It has its origin and prototype in the Trinity, in which there is both distinction of persons and unity based on love, not subordination" (USA consultation, 4 December 1974). The International Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church declared in its Munich statement on "The Church, the Eucharist and the Trinity" (July 1982): "The one and unique church finds her identity in the koinonia of the churches." In its Bari statement on "Faith, Sacraments and the Unity of the Church" (June 1987), the same commission stated: "The human person is integrated into the Body of Christ by his or her koinonia (communion) with the visible church, which nourishes this faith by means of the sacramental life and the word of God, and in which the Holy Spirit works

in the human person" (see **Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue**).

Anglicanism has traditionally defined itself as a fellowship of local and regional churches in communion with the see of Canterbury. The Lambeth conference of 1930 depicted the Anglican communion as "eagerly awaiting the time when the churches of the present Anglican communion will enter into communion with other parts of the catholic church not definable as Anglican... as a step towards the ultimate reunion of all Christendom in one visibly united fellowship". The national ecumenical consultation of the Episcopal Church, USA, in its Detroit report of 5-6 November 1978, declared: "The visible unity we seek is one eucharistic fellowship, a communion of communions, based upon mutual recognition of catholicity." The final report of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission in 1982 stated in its introduction that the concept of koinonia was fundamental to all its statements.

Lutheranism has historically looked upon itself as a confession, but this confessional consciousness does not exclude the idea of communion. Lutheran commentators have discussed the question of pulpit and altar fellowship in the context of a well-articulated ecclesiology of communion; and the new constitution of the Lutheran World Federation,\* adopted in 1990, defines the LWF as "a *communion of churches* which confess the Triune God, agree in the proclamation of the word of God and are united in pulpit and altar fellowship".

In its statement "Facing Unity", the Roman Catholic-Lutheran Joint Commission (1984) proposed a gradual process of achieving a structured fellowship. The statement takes its departure from the assertion that the church is by its very nature a *communio* subsisting in a network of local churches (5). The statement also calls attention to the union of Florence (1442) as one possible model for church union without merger or absorption. Communion is seen in "Facing Unity" as involving three dimensions: fellowship in confessing the same apostolic faith, fellowship in sacramental life and fellowship in ministry and service.

The WCC at its New Delhi assembly (1961) used the concept of koinonia to ex-

plain the meaning of the “one fully committed fellowship”, which the member churches accepted as the goal for which they should work and pray. The assembly warned, however, that this fellowship did not imply “a rigid uniformity of structure, organization, or government”. The Nairobi assembly (1975) approved a new constitution in which the purpose of the WCC was described, in the first instance, as “to call the churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship expressed in worship and in common life in Christ, and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe”. The “conciliar fellowship” envisaged at Nairobi may be seen as a version of what has been here described as communion. Recognizing the central importance of communion for the ecumenical movement, the fifth world conference on Faith and Order, held at Santiago de Compostela in 1993, took as its theme “Towards Koinonia in Faith, Life and Witness”.

Because communion admits of many degrees and modalities, it is not possible to state in simple terms which churches are in communion with one another. Churches that are still divided to some extent in doctrine and polity have sometimes chosen to express their mutual proximity by establishing “interim eucharistic fellowship”, such as that which was encouraged in the Consultation on Church Union\* in the USA. Other churches that are very close to each other in doctrine, styles of worship and ecclesial polity have seen fit to refrain from eucharistic sharing until all barriers between them have been overcome. Thus eucharistic fellowship, although it is of great importance in the concept of communion, should not be used as the exclusive criterion.

The term “full communion” is used with various nuances. For Roman Catholics it normally signifies not only doctrinal and sacramental agreement but submission to the same system of pastoral rule. Some ecumenical statements, however, use the term to designate a relationship of “pulpit and altar fellowship”, together with commitment to mutual respect and consultation in teaching and decision making, among communions that “become interdependent while remaining autonomous” (Anglican-Lutheran Joint

Working Group, Cold Ash, Berkshire, England, 1983). In the US important new agreements establishing full communion among churches were achieved around the turn of the century, for example between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Episcopal Church, and between the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Presbyterian and Reformed churches.

According to the perspective adopted in this article, ecclesial communion is a complex notion that includes not only eucharistic fellowship but also agreement regarding the necessary doctrines of faith, sharing in the full sacramental life of worship and affiliation with the same socially structured community. Christians who believe that a unified pastoral office is essential to the church will regard acceptance of the same body of leaders as necessary for full communion. Whenever any one of these elements is present, even minimally, communion exists to some extent, but “full communion” requires the total verification of all the elements.

See also **church discipline, intercommunion, koinonia**.

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## COMMUNION OF SAINTS

IN SOME ancient eucharistic liturgies, the celebrant turns to the people at the time of communion with the words “holy things for holy people”, words which are sometimes now translated “the gifts of God for the people of God”. This sharing in holy gifts by holy people is created by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the love of God the Father and by the communion of the Holy Spirit (see **Trin-**

ity). This communion\* is not broken by death, for by his death Christ has destroyed death. It is a communion which fulfills the loving purposes of the Father from all eternity, bringing all together into a unity which preserves all the richness and diversity which God has placed in his creation.

In time the all-inclusive phrase *communio sanctorum* – a sharing of holy people in holy things – came to refer especially to the sharing of life and love across the barrier of death which exists between all who are in Christ and the Spirit. We are at one with the saints in heaven, and they are at one with us. Questions have been raised about this doctrine, however, and differences surfaced, particularly at the time of the Reformation. What is the situation of those who have died? Are they already either in heaven or in hell and so beyond the reach of our prayers? Or are we still bound together with them in mutual prayer and intercession? Should we pray for them and ask for their prayers? How far should the churches officially recognize and proclaim certain of their departed members as saints, a practice common to Roman Catholics and Orthodox, and not unknown among Anglicans? Does such a recognition undermine the faith that all God's people are called to be saints?

Most if not all Reformation theologians maintain that we should not address the saints directly, and that if we pray for them our prayer should take the form of a simple commendation of them into the hands of God. To pray *to* the saints, in this perspective, is to make a confusion in the nature of prayer. Prayer is that which is addressed to God alone. Christ alone is Mediator and Intercessor. This does not mean that the doctrine of the communion of saints is repudiated. In hymnody in particular there is sometimes a strong affirmation that the saints are worshipping with us. But in much of the Protestant world, little is said on this subject.

The Eastern Orthodox tradition is very different in this respect. The church's faith in the unity of heaven and earth across the barriers of death finds exuberant expression in prayers and hymns, in the veneration of relics and icons, in the commemoration of the departed in church and home. We are at one with them. They pray for us, we pray for

them. At the heart of the communion of saints stands the dearest of them all, Mary the mother of God, always praying for the human race.

The practice and theology of the Roman Catholic Church is in many ways very similar, not least in the central place given to Mary.\* In some areas, at least in the past, lines have been more sharply drawn. It was commonly taught, e.g., that whereas we have a duty to pray for the souls in purgatory, they are not able to pray for us. But in Catholicism as in Orthodoxy, the veneration of the saints and prayers for the departed have an essential place in the official liturgy of the church, no less than in the faith and devotion of the people.

Is this not a point where mutual correction and enlightenment is possible? The Reformation insistence on the centrality of Christ in Christian faith and worship is universally accepted. The saints should lead us to him and not divert us from him. But the Catholic and Orthodox affirmation of our solidarity with the departed gives vivid expression to our faith in the resurrection\* of Christ, which breaks the power of death, and to our faith in the transforming power of God, which works wonders in the lives of his servants, men and women of flesh and blood like ourselves.

See also **life and death, martyrdom.**

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## COMMUNITY OF WOMEN AND MEN IN THE CHURCH

AT ITS 1974 meeting in Accra, the WCC's commission on Faith and Order (F&O) agreed to "undertake a study of the theological and practical aspects of the community of women and men in the church". This action was taken in response to recommendations from a consultation in Berlin on "Sex-

ism in the 1970s", sponsored by the WCC's Sub-unit on Women in Church and Society several months earlier. The F&O study was designed to address theological issues such as the Christian concepts of God, the authority of scripture in the light of present-day situations, the fullness of diakonia as it affects the relationship and ministry of women and men, the ordination of women and the "language, symbols and imagery of scripture and churches today as they influence men-women relationships".

The decision to sponsor this study followed considerable debate, in which some argued that the issues raised in Berlin were "non-theological matters" and that the "woman problem" had nothing to do with the unity of the church. Not until the WCC's assembly in Nairobi the next year, with its theme "Jesus Christ Frees and Unites", did F&O affirm that the unity of the church "requires that women be free to live out the gifts which God has given them and respond to their calling to share fully in the life and witness of the church". Also at Nairobi, the Sub-unit on Women in Church and Society agreed to collaborate with F&O to "ensure active continuation" of the study assembly delegates had received for their consideration under the title "The Community of Women and Men in the Church", leading to an international consultation.

Debate over where the community study should be based continued until the WCC central committee voted in 1976 to lodge it in the secretariat on F&O, thus clarifying that it would be a study of church unity with particular regard to the experience of women. According to Constance F. Parvey, the Lutheran pastor from the USA who directed the study, this clarification was "part of the breakthrough": "... the issues being raised by women... are issues concerning the church and its wholeness". The study officially ran from January 1978, when Parvey joined the F&O secretariat in Geneva, to the 1982 meeting of the F&O commission in Lima, where its findings and recommendations were reported.

During 1978 local study groups were launched, the first regional consultation was convened, the first of several specialized consultations on issues integral to F&O discussions met, and plans were set for an interna-

tional consultation in 1981. A study book using an experience-based method of theological reflection was developed and distributed to WCC member churches, church-related organizations and interested individuals. From an initial printing of 3000 copies in English, French and German, the distribution grew to an estimated 65,000, largely at the initiative of women's church and ecumenical organizations, official church and ecumenical agencies, and some seminaries. It was also translated by local initiative into at least 13 additional languages.

This experience-based method had its precedent in a study undertaken before the founding assembly of the WCC in 1948. Replies to a questionnaire on "The Life and Work of Women in the Church", formulated by Twila McCrea Cavert, a US laywoman, were sent to Geneva from nearly 60 countries, thus eliciting the largest response of any of the enquiries made by the WCC before the Amsterdam assembly. These responses subsequently formed the basis of a book edited by Kathleen Bliss on *The Service and Status of Women in the Church*, published in 1952.

Responses to the community study book 30 years later addressed issues of identity, sexuality, marriage, family life, scripture and Tradition in relation to the community of women and men in the church, theological education, worship and ministry. Questions that asked participants to describe their particular contexts were also posed. Throughout the study book, personal and corporate experience was taken as the starting point for reflection.

Approximately 150 groups sent reports to Geneva. Some came from South and Southeast Asia, Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, Latin America, Australasia and the Pacific, though the vast majority were sent by churches in countries in the North Atlantic. Regional consultations provided crucial additional input for both appreciating the range and depth of differences and finding the commonalities among women's experiences in the churches.

This portrait of women's experience in the churches was further enriched by the specialized consultations on the ordination of women,\* on theological anthropology (including the *imago Dei* and the Virgin

Mary) and on the authority of scripture in light of new experiences of women.

Protestant, Orthodox and Roman Catholics participated in each arena of the community study – from local groups and the regional and specialized consultations to the international consultation in Sheffield, England, in July 1981. All groups and gatherings, from grassroots to Sheffield, were encouraged to be 60% women and 40% men in order to redress the imbalance of decision making, which saw women’s participation in many churches at 10% or less. Equitable representation regarding race and other minority status was always considered, but not always realized.

The community study is significant in several respects. While its experientially based method was unusual but not unprecedented for a F&O study, the use of this method played a crucial role in the revival of the “Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community” study in Lima in 1982. Moreover, the several hundred local group reports that informed the findings and recommendations reported to the Lima meeting anticipated the many responses to “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry”, a study sent to the churches from Lima.

Moreover, the method of the community study was significant because it was interdisciplinary and co-sponsored. In this way the study made clear that the search for the unity of the church cannot be undertaken without attention to the realities of the world in which the church lives and to which it witnesses. Accordingly, the method invited new constituencies into the ecumenical conversation, affirming the growing recognition that “doing theology” is a task for the whole people of God.

The significance of the community study was most immediately visible at the sixth assembly of the WCC (Vancouver 1983), which recommended that its findings and recommendations be appropriated and translated into a variety of WCC programmes. This translation became apparent in such initiatives as the Ecumenical Decade – Churches in Solidarity with Women\* (1988-98) and Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation, as well as in increased participation of women in decision making in the life and work of the WCC. In Vancouver, as never be-

fore, the integral relationship of the unity of the church and the healing and reconciliation of the world’s divisions was recognized and highlighted: “Christ – the life of the world – unites heaven and earth, God and world, spiritual and sacred.”

The significance of the community study for the ongoing work of F&O has been slower but steady. Besides the study on the “Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community”, its influence has been apparent in studies on gospel and culture, on ecclesiology and ethics and on ecumenical hermeneutics. Moreover, the focus of the ecclesiology study on koinonia indicates an ongoing commitment to emphasizing the integral connection of the search for church unity and the healing of human community, as well as the church as local eucharistic community of faith, life and witness.

See also **sexism, women in church and society.**

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## CONCILIARITY

ALTHOUGH the whole history of the church is punctuated by councils or synods, conciliarism and the theory of conciliarity did not appear until the late middle ages, at the time of the great schism in the Western church, when two popes each laid claim to legitimate authority. The controversy could be settled only by a council. In the decree *Haec Sancta*, the council of Constance in 1415 declared that “being lawfully assembled in the Holy Spirit, constituting a general council and representing the Catholic church militant, this synod has its power directly from

Christ. All persons of whatever rank or dignity, even a pope, are bound to obey it in matters relating to faith and the end of the schism.” This conciliar doctrine was based on earlier theological and canonical tradition. However, from the time of the council of Florence (1438-39), it was strongly contested and later came to symbolize what was known as Gallicanism (1682), which was opposed by the First Vatican Council (1870) (see **Vatican Councils I and II**).

At the council of Constance large numbers of laity, non-episcopal clergy and religious were present, and many of them were entitled to speak and vote through the nations, princes and universities they represented. In most Reformation churches, the laity played an active part in the synods alongside the pastors from the outset. This is also the case today in the Anglican communion. Most Orthodox churches also have, in addition to the synod of bishops, wider councils at which the laity are entitled to speak and vote. Nevertheless, only the bishops have the authority to decide in matters of the faith. Their doctrinal decisions, however, must be “received” by the whole people of God (see **reception**).

When the encyclical of the Orthodox patriarchs (1848) affirmed that “the preservation of the faith resides in the whole body of the church”, the Russian thinker Aleksey Khomyakov saw in this text the foundation of his doctrine of conciliarity known as *sobornost*\* (from the Slavonic word *sobor*, meaning “council”, and the adjective *sobornaja*, which translates the word “catholic” in the Nicene Creed). *Sobornost*, according to Khomyakov, is the specific mark of the Orthodox church which, through the action of the Holy Spirit, unites all the faithful in freedom, harmony and love and so ensures the infallibility of the church (see **indefectibility/infallibility**). Others, however, have criticized this concept of *sobornost* as compromising the explicit authority of the bishops in the councils.

Since 1960 ecumenical reflection on conciliarity has been prompted by the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) and by the need to clarify the significance of the WCC and the goal of unity\* which it is intended to serve. The Uppsala assembly (1968) suggested that the member churches should

“work for the time when a genuinely universal council may once more speak for all Christians and lead the way into the future”. Faith and Order took up this suggestion at Louvain (1971) and started a study on conciliarity understood as “the coming together of Christians – locally, regionally or globally – for common prayer, counsel and decision, in the belief that the Holy Spirit can use such meetings for his own purpose by reconciling, renewing and reforming the church by guiding it towards the fullness of truth and love” (*Louvain 1971*, 226). The Salamanca consultation (1973) declared: “The one church is to be envisioned as a conciliar fellowship of local churches which are themselves truly united. In this conciliar fellowship, each local church possesses, in communion with the others, the fullness of catholicity, witnesses to the same apostolic faith and, therefore, recognizes the others as belonging to the same church of Christ and guided by the same Spirit.” This description, adopted and refined by the WCC at Nairobi (1975, sec. 2), is now being developed by F&O in its continuing work on the nature and goal of unity. More recently, the question of presidency in conciliar gatherings at various geographical levels has opened an avenue for exploring the possibility of ecumenical ministries of primacy\* (see *The Nature and Purpose of the Church* 107-110).

See also **ecumenical councils; unity, models of**.

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## CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN CHURCHES

THE CONFERENCE of European Churches (CEC) is the regional ecumenical organization for Europe. It comprises some 126 member churches in all European states, and 41 associated organizations. CEC is both in association with the WCC and a non-gov-

ernmental organization recognized by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (Ecosoc) and the Council of Europe.

The project of bringing the churches of Europe into conversation with each other developed in the deep divisions and acute tensions in Europe after the second world war. This was the period of the so-called cold war,\* which grew dangerously in Europe in the mid-1950s. In the midst of profound international separations and perilous tensions, a small group of church leaders from Eastern and Western Europe, most of them friends from the pre-war period, began to consult together about the possibility of contributing to the establishment of a true peace by bringing into conversation churches in European countries separated by highly differing political, economic and social systems. Building on the basis of already-existing bilateral structures for reconciliation between the churches, exploratory conversations began in the early 1950s, but it was only in 1957, at Liselund, Denmark, that a first preparatory meeting could be convoked.

The first full assembly, simply described as “a conference of European churches”, was held in January 1959 in Nyborg Strand, Denmark, also the site of assemblies in 1960 and 1962. At first these assemblies represented nothing more than a very loose association of the churches concerned, but at the assembly in 1964, with the adoption of a constitution, a decisive step was taken towards forming a regional conference of churches, as was happening in other parts of the world. Important for the 1964 assembly was its setting, for it took place at sea, aboard the *MV Bornholm*, as the only possible answer to last-minute visa problems. The fifth assembly (1967) in Pörschach, Austria, prepared the way for the replacement of the existing part-time executive secretariat by a full-time general secretariat as from April 1968. Subsequent assemblies were held in Nyborg Strand (1971), Engelberg, Switzerland (1974), Crete (1979), Stirling, Scotland (1986), Prague, Czechoslovakia (1992), where a totally revised constitution was adopted, and Graz, Austria (1997). A 40-member central committee meets annually to oversee the continuity of the work.

The preamble to CEC’s constitution states that it “seeks to help the European

churches to renew their spiritual life, to strengthen their common witness and service and to promote the unity of the church and peace in the world”. In this activity churches of the Anglican, Protestant, Old Catholic, Pentecostal and Orthodox traditions from all over Europe play a part. Although the Roman Catholic Church is not a member, a steady pattern of cooperation has developed since 1964. Ecumenical encounters organized by CEC and the Council of Roman Catholic Bishops Conferences in Europe (CCEE) began in 1978 and have been held at about four-year intervals. Two European Ecumenical Assemblies have been convened with the two organizations as sponsoring partners (Basel 1989, Graz 1997).

At the 1989 Basel meeting on “Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation”, there was an increased presence of Eastern European churches, particularly Orthodox, making it the most representative church meeting in Europe ever. It was also an impressive instance of the church exercising a prophetic role, taking place a few months before the walls between Eastern and Western Europe began to crumble. The theme of the 1997 assembly, “Reconciliation: Gift of God and Source of New Life”, was discussed against the background of new European tensions and the civil war in the former Yugoslavia, making evident the dire need for reconciliation between both churches and peoples on the European continent.

After relying in its early years on frequent assemblies, developments in CEC’s structure followed the diversification of activities and the increase in membership. While assemblies have become less frequent, there has been a growth in theme-related consultations. This resulted in the creation of special secretariats alongside the general secretariat.

The first to be established was a study secretariat, now the Churches in Dialogue Commission. This was followed by a secretariat with the joint tasks of administration, finance and interchurch service. Interchurch service later separated and expanded to include the Ecumenical Churches’ Working Group on Asylum and Refugees (ECWGAR). The latter work then became a shared responsibility with the Churches’ Commission on Migrants in Europe (CCME), based in

Brussels. Then came a churches' human rights programme for the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act, established as a joint activity with the national councils of churches in the USA and Canada. This work was administered from the CEC peace, justice and human rights programme. A communication service was also integrated into the general secretariat. A desk was later established to initiate work on women's concerns.

After the end of the cold war certain restraints on the work of CEC within the European Community were no longer valid. This led to a process of integration with the European Ecumenical Commission on Church and Society (EECCS), with offices in Brussels and Strasbourg. The work of these offices together with related work in the Geneva office now functions as the Church and Society Commission of the CEC.

In accomplishing its tasks CEC cooperates closely with other ecumenical organizations at the world and regional levels, especially the WCC. CEC is, nevertheless, completely autonomous and self-supporting, and CEC membership includes some 25 churches which are not members of the WCC.

Among the conditions peculiar to the European situation which CEC has to face and which determine its priorities are the long history of separation and enmity between the churches, much of it originating in Europe; the relationships between church and culture\* and church and state;\* the cooperation of very large and very small churches, and of ancient and comparatively new churches; European responsibility in the divisions and tensions of the contemporary international situation; and European responsibility towards the developing nations.

See also **Europe**.

GLEN GARFIELD WILLIAMS  
and ROBIN GURNEY

## CONFESSING CHURCH

THE CONFESSING Church (*Bekennende Kirche*) was formed in the context of the German church struggle (*Kirchenkampf*) during the Third Reich, 1933-45. Inspired by National Socialism, the so-called German Christians aimed to produce a synthesis between na-

tionalist ideology and Christianity. Some favoured a German Christian national church, incorporating the "new deeds of God of 1933" and Adolf Hitler as saviour of the German people into its standards and proclamation.

The contamination of the German church by such thinking, the luring of young church people into the Hitler youth movement, the notorious church elections of July 1933 (won by the German Christians), and the new regime's interference in church affairs (Hitler's nomination of Ludwig Müller as the imperial bishop of the newly combined German Evangelical Church, antisemitic laws, offences against church constitution and life) sparked the *Kirchenkampf*.

Opposition groups, such as the emergency alliance of pastors led by Martin Niemöller and theologians inspired by Karl Barth and *Theologische Existenz Heute* (May 1933), joined to form a "confessional community". Despite Nazi and German Christian threats, its leaders came together at Barmen in May 1934 as the first Confessing Church synod. The synod declared itself to represent the only legitimate German Evangelical Church, and proclaimed a theological declaration whose starkly worded six "evangelical truths" rejected the false doctrine that the church should or could claim for itself the tasks of the state as an organ of the state (see **church and state**). The declaration identified a deep-seated disease in the life of church and society: placing one's trust in life's realities rather than in God's grace, deriving God's word from history, reason and desires rather than the only valid source of revelation, Jesus Christ, the one Word of God who is to be heard, trusted and obeyed. Thus, the Confessing Church struggle was about the true church and a false church.

As the church struggle evolved, the state tried to settle the problem on its own authority, dismissing Barth from his professorship at the university of Bonn, arresting Niemöller and prohibiting theological education. There were also divisions and power plays within the Confessing Church. While preparing the Final Solution, Hitler strategically observed peace with the churches during the 1939-45 war. Protestant groups of the pietist and revivalist traditions generally supported Hitler. The Roman Catholic

Church arrived at a treaty with him (concordat of 1933), but expressed concern over state idolatry, racism and the initial holocaust (encyclical *Ardenti Cura* 1937). Confessing Church members were at work in German-occupied countries, in the Netherlands, Norway (led by Bishop Eivind Berggrav of Oslo) and France (led by Pastor Marc Boegner). Thus a European Confessing Church was arising.

The ecumenical significance of the Confessing Church appears at various levels. The WCC "in formation", by electing members of the Confessing Church such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer to its provisional committees, indicated where it saw the true church at work; it also initiated studies on church, nation and state. The provisional WCC could not publicly speak up for the Confessing Church; and the Nazi state forbade ecumenical contact abroad. Nevertheless, W.A. Visser 't Hooft and Bishop George Bell of Chichester acted on behalf of the "other Germany" – the Confessing Church and the resistance movements. Bonhoeffer's statement that "whoever parts knowingly from the Confessing Church separates himself from salvation" placed the ecumenical movement before the question of its own ecclesial quality.

The "confession of guilt" (*Schuldbekenntnis*) in the 1945 Stuttgart declaration\* enabled the German church in post-war reconstruction to participate in the ecumenical movement and be accepted by the churches elsewhere. This was possible because of the Confessing Church's ecumenical relations during the war and the assistance church and interchurch groups had given to German war victims. Prominent Confessing Church figures also served as WCC leaders: Niemöller, for example, was a member of the central committee from 1948 to 1961, and president from 1961 to 1968. The Confessing Church has subsequently been evoked as a model in situations of strong confrontation between church and state and painful political oppression (e.g. South Korea, South Africa, Latin America). Bonhoeffer is often cited as an outstanding example of Christian witness and martyrdom.\* The Barmen declaration as a model statement of Christian freedom and obedience has inspired texts such as "A Message to the Peo-

ple of South Africa" (1968) and the Kairos document\* about the South African situation (1985). It remains an example for churches in search of witness in social and political matters, although its theological perspective seems highly problematic for contextual theologies in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The questions it raises are controversial: To what extent can religious, political and socio-economic conditions determine theological statements and the Christian confession? And how do a theology of the word of God\* and a theology of history\* relate to each other?

See also **fascism**, *status confessionis*, **totalitarianism**.

KLAUSPETER BLASER

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## CONFIRMATION

IN ITS ORIGINS, confirmation is the second post-baptismal anointing of the Roman liturgy, in which the bishop anoints the newly baptized on the forehead with chrism and imposes his hand on them, giving thanks for the gifts of the Holy Spirit (see **baptism**). It is a liturgical expression of the reality that "in God's work of salvation, the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection is inseparably linked with the pentecostal gifts of the Holy Spirit" (*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*,\* B14). In time confirmation became separated from the rest of the Roman baptismal liturgy because it was reserved to bishops, who were no longer able to be present at every baptism. By the 5th century the rite had come to be called confirmation and began to be given a theology of its own, independent of its baptismal roots. This theology emphasized the images of "strengthening" and "confirming to fight" and drew heavily on medieval images of chivalry.

During the middle ages the rite was administered as soon as possible after baptism (by one, two or three years of age), and it was only in the 16th century that it generally came to be reserved for candidates who had attained the age of reason (seven years). In the contemporary Roman Catholic rite it is administered at the time of baptism to all those aged 14 or older (by either the bishop or the priest presiding) and is closer in form to chrismation\* of the Eastern and Oriental churches than to its medieval predecessor. Those baptized as infants are not confirmed until a later time, often early adolescence.

In the churches of the Reformation, confirmation was given an entirely new meaning. Rejecting the medieval understanding of confirmation as a completion of baptism, it instead became a completion of catechesis.\* Beginning with the 15th-century Bohemian Brethren, a rite developed in which young adolescents, after a period of intensive catechesis, made a public profession of their faith.\* Through Erasmus, this new practice came to be known and adopted by reformers of the 16th century, for whom a rite of catechesis appealed to their Renaissance concern for education. In this second, catechetical form it found a place in a number of Reformation churches (Anglican, Lutheran) but was totally rejected by others. In some Reformed churches confirmation was introduced in the 19th and 20th centuries only as a rite of admission to communion after a period of intensive catechesis.

Because the same word is used for two or more quite distinct liturgical practices and because the theologies given to confirmation often relate to the churches' contemporary theological understanding of baptism, the place of confirmation in the life of the churches is being questioned increasingly. It seems to be an area in which ecumenical agreement cannot be achieved easily.

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## CONFLICT

CONFLICTS have been a recurring feature in the life of the church and in the history of nations, as even a cursory reading of the New Testament shows. Sometimes they have been resolved by the recognition of different doctrinal, liturgical or moral views coexisting with greater or lesser tension in the same community or in different communities; sometimes they have led to division. The roots of conflict have been seen as either doctrinal or moral (see **apostasy**, **heresy**, **schism**).

In modern times there has been much greater awareness of the psychological and social dimensions of conflicts in the religious field. In a well-known letter written in 1949, C.H. Dodd called the attention of the WCC to "non-theological factors" in church conflicts. This led to studies on institutionalism (see **church as institution**) and to the attempt to relate the issue of conflict and unity in the church with that of conflict and community among humankind (see **unity of humankind**).

In recent decades, however, social, international and ideological conflicts have increasingly forced the churches and the ecumenical movement to take positions in matters that involved theological, ethical and social issues. In extreme cases, like Nazism in Germany (see **Confessing Church**) or apartheid,\* churches have found conflicts irreconcilable. In other cases, they have had to admit that differing points of view can claim legitimacy and have to be kept in tension (e.g. in questions of violence and non-violence,\* pacifism,\* just war\*).

Sometimes churches have raised conflictive issues through documents that try to provide a theological framework but leave the question open for discussion (e.g. the United Methodist "In Defence of Creation", 1986, or the US Roman Catholic bishops' "Letter on the Economy", 1986). In a similar way but with more precise limits, a Vatican "Instruction" on liberation theology tries, first, to set limits to the admissible interpretation and, then, to define lines for a

positive understanding of the issue of freedom and liberation.

In describing typical forms of conflict, social scientists have distinguished between conflicts that occur within a shared set of values and those that represent ultimately incompatible options, and they have considered different ways of containing and resolving conflict and the positive significance of conflict for social life. Some of these studies have been fruitfully used to understand the dynamics of conflict in the early church. But neither churches nor the ecumenical movement has, on the whole, taken advantage of insights from such studies to deal with their internal conflicts or with those that emerge in their relation with society.

JOSÉ MÍGUEZ BONINO

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**CONGAR, YVES**

B. 13 April 1904, Sedan, France; d.22 June 1995, Paris. One of the most influential of the pioneering Roman Catholic ecumenists, Congar was a Dominican priest (ordained in 1930) whose *Chrétiens désunis* (1937) marked the first carefully argued shift in the theology of ecumenism which would be developed and recognized in the Decree on Ecumenism\* of the Second Vatican Council.\* Congar had attended the 1937 conferences of Life and Work (Oxford) and of Faith and Order (Edinburgh), where he began to meet future WCC leaders.

As a medical orderly in the war, Congar spent five years in a German prisoner-of-war camp, a crucible of shared suffering in which he experienced a unity of faith and charity far deeper than the “Protestant” and “Catholic” labels of cellmates. After the war he became a leader and mentor of the French church’s flowering renewal in theology, missionary and pastoral practice, e.g. the worker-priest movement and the missionary parish. His *True and False Reform in the Church* (1950), a lengthy historical survey which included the true but frustrated insights of Martin Luther, was withdrawn from circulation on Vatican orders. Three

years later he produced the also lengthy *Lay People in the Church*.

Under growing threats from Rome to dissolve the French Dominicans, Congar and some prominent confrères obediently went into exile in February 1954, forbidden to teach and, for Congar, to have contacts with Protestants. After a quiet period of writing in Jerusalem and Cambridge, Congar was assigned to Strasbourg, still under suspicion but more or less left alone. This dark decade he described as a time of “active patience”. He was a member of the Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Questions\* and was enlisted by WCC general secretary W.A. Visser ’t Hooft in the drafting of the WCC’s 1950 Toronto statement\* and in reflecting on Faith and Order studies.

Pope John XXIII (1958-63) rehabilitated Congar by personally placing him on the preparatory theological commission for Vatican II. During the Council he helped to draft such important documents as those on the church, the church in the modern world, revelation, religious freedom, missionary activity and ecumenism. The documents vindicate his *Tradition and Traditions* (1966), a history of the doctrine of tradition and a theology of tradition viewed as the organic life

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of the church as it continually reflects on revelation.

Although inflicted already in the mid-1930s by a chronic and painful neurological disease, Congar seemed indefatigable. When not lecturing to groups ranging from parish workers to international scholars, he spent 12-13 hours a day at his desk. His bibliography lists over 1300 books and articles up to 1985, when his illness made such scholarly research almost impossible. His last major studies were *I Believe in the Holy Spirit* (3 vols, 1979-80) and *Diversity and Communion* (1982). Other themes treated in his works are Christ, Mary and the church, laypeople and their ministries in the world, the local church, the Eastern churches, the 16th-century reformers, the early councils of the undivided church, collegiality and the papacy, evangelization, and the ecumenical future of the church. His careful studies restored an historical understanding of the RCC as “a living, collective, organic personality faithful to revelation recorded uniquely in scripture and summoned to constant renewal... History ran through the narratives of the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, and history insisted that the church be both the same and different for various ages and cultures” (T. O’Meara). His culminating work presents the Holy Spirit\* as the source and image of church unity, making it possible for tradition to be living and to prompt renewal and growth. Congar concludes that the ecumenical movement is a movement of the Spirit, and no generation should make an idol of any stage.

Congar bluntly claimed that the logical refutation and canonical separation characteristic of post-Reformation RC apologetics did not do justice to the intent and insights of the reformers, most of which should be incorporated into the entire church to be more church. He insisted that the Eastern Orthodox tradition on the church’s mystery, sacraments, government, monasticism and pieties offer “a complementarity” with the Western tradition; although differing in their tangible and historic expression, “the two constructions of the mystery are experienced by the same faith” (1982).

Congar’s personal journey never gave way to defeatism. He wrote at the age of 80

that “whatever we have to... say, as sublime as it is, it is really not worth much unless it is accomplished by a praxis, by real action, by concrete service and love”. When John Paul II made him a cardinal in 1994, the 90-year-old priest remarked to friends that Paul VI had conferred a far greater honour when he asked Congar and other leading theologians at Vatican II to concelebrate with the pope the eucharist at the high altar of St Peter’s basilica as the Council was concluding in December 1965.

TOM STRANSKY

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## CONGREGATIONALISM

CONGREGATIONALISM understands the church to be God’s gathering of saints, called by the Spirit through the word. As such it is both local and visible, catholic and eternal, and subject in all things to Christ as head. The local church meeting, comprising professed believers, calls its officers – normally minister(s) and deacons – and orders its worship and witness under the word. Usually, though not universally, it is associated with sister churches in regional and international fellowship. While this polity is shared by Baptists, some Pentecostals and others, this entry focuses on the Congregationalists themselves.

The 16th-century harbingers of Congregationalism were separatist Puritans in England who despaired of adequate church reformation under any establishment, whether episcopalian or presbyterian. Under persecution many fled to Holland. In 1620 some sailed as pilgrims to the New World; others returned to England in 1640. Their ranks were swollen when, in the wake of the Cromwellian era, the monarchy was restored in 1660. Between that date and 1662, some 172 Congregational ministers were

ejected from their livings. Not until the toleration act of 1689 were dissenters given limited and conditional religious freedom.

The spread of Congregationalism to many parts of the world was the result of the evangelical awakening of the second half of the 18th century and its child, the modern missionary movement. Colonial expansion played its part, and 19th-century revivals in Czechoslovakia, Sweden and Finland further increased the Congregational family. The International Congregational Council (ICC) first met in London in 1891, secured its constitution in 1948, and united with the World Presbyterian Alliance (WPA) to form the World Alliance of Reformed Churches\* in 1970.

Doctrinally, Congregationalists have traditionally been orthodox Trinitarians (see **Trinity**) and (*pace* the Dutch Remonstrants) Calvinists. From the 18th century onwards they have been subject to the moderating influences of evangelical Arminianism and, to a much lesser extent (except locally, e.g. in New England) to Unitarianism. They observe the dominical sacraments.\*

Though for the most part shunning subscription to creeds\* and confessions, Congregationalists have confessed their faith\* in a variety of ways: in formal declarations (classically, the Cambridge [New England] Platform, 1646-48; the Savoy Declaration of Faith and Order [doctrinally a revision of the Westminster confession, with additions on Congregational church order], 1658); in local church covenants; in personal testimonies on reception as church members; at the ordination and induction of ministers; and in their hymns – supremely those of Isaac Watts (1674-1748) and Philip Doddridge (1702-51).

Although Congregationalism's *raison d'être* is ecclesiological, internal variety is not precluded; some, for example, are more open to advisory synods than others. In England, the home missions and county unions were roughly contemporary with concerted foreign missionary activity; the Congregational *Union* of England and Wales was proposed in 1831 and formed in 1832; but only in the 20th century was the idea that mutual cooperation and episcopate are not only useful but right espoused widely enough to enable formation of the nationally covenanted Con-

gregational *Church* in England and Wales (1966) – an unbiblical anomaly, tolerable given the divided church.

Because of their inherent catholicity\* (to be a member of the local church is to be a member of the church catholic), many Congregationalists have been ecumenically inclined. The charter of the (largely Congregational) London Missionary Society (1795) was both noble and practical in disavowing any intention of propagating a particular church polity. The ICC-WPA union of 1970 remains the only merger of its kind to date. Congregationalism has given such leaders to the ecumenical movement as Leslie E. Cooke, A.E. Garvie, Norman Goodall, Douglas Horton and Henry Smith Leiper. Congregationalists went into transconfessional church unions in Canada (1925), South India (1947), the Philippines (1948), Zambia (1964), North India (1970) and Australia (1977); and into Reformed unions in the USA (1957), Jamaica and Grand Cayman (1965), and England and Wales (1972, with the further union with the Reformed Association of Churches of Christ in 1981, and with the majority of Scottish Congregationalists in 2000).

Like all polities, Congregationalism, so vulnerable in human hands, is prone to degeneration. Freedom under Christ can degenerate into “freedom to do and believe as we like”. When the polity is misconstrued as democratic rather than Christocentric, the objective becomes “one person, one vote and government by the majority”, rather than the mind of Christ and unanimity in him. The advocacy of local autonomy can be a pretext for (sometimes financially motivated!) isolationism.

The ecclesiology of earthed sainthood is undermined theologically when the biblical-Calvinistic distinction upon which it rests – i.e. that there is an eternally significant gulf between those who are Christ's and those who are not – is eroded by more genial, relativistic doctrinal stances. The idea of the covenant people of God has been threatened by post-Enlightenment individualism (not least in its evangelical-awakening form, whereby the church can come to be regarded as the aggregate of saved, atomistic souls), whence flows religious consumerism. The reduced emphasis upon regeneration and

personal testimony, coupled with the increased emphasis upon infant baptism as the point of entry into the church, raises the question of the *process* of Christian initiation; while the increasing participation of children in the Lord's supper poses an important question to those who have traditionally required both profession of faith and the acceptance of church-governmental responsibility (e.g. attendance at church meetings) prior to participation in the supper qua sacrament of the (professed and enrolled) church.

Further challenges are posed by societal change, or lack of it. The classical Congregational order could not be imposed upon hierarchical societies. In socially mobile environments it can be difficult to keep track of the saints, especially when they wish to be elusive; and in some areas the Congregational church, being the only neighbourhood church, functions as a quasi-parish church. In contexts which are tolerant to the point of being unprincipled, "godly discipline under the gospel" is all but a relic of the past.

Perils, pitfalls and lapses in practice notwithstanding, those of the Congregational way make affirmations of profound ecumenical significance: Christ alone is Lord of the church, and church order\* must reflect this fact. Christian profession entails locally rooted church membership; one cannot be a Christian "in general". The church which hears the word and receives the bread and wine must go on (church meeting) to seek the mind of Christ for its witness\* and mission.\* Since the church catholic comprises all whom God calls, the sectarian spirit, whether inspired by establishment, sacerdotal, theological or "issue-oriented" considerations, is strenuously to be resisted.

See also **Anglican-Reformed dialogue, church discipline.**

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## CONSCIENCE

THE TERM "conscience" (Greek *syneidêsis*, Latin *synderesis* and *conscientia*) refers to the knowledge of oneself as a responsible, acting and judging person, the place or organ of this knowledge and the relations of one's responsibilities. Thus conscience involves a person's experience of responsibility, a relation between a person's actions (or inaction) and his or her identity, a relation to the empirical knowledge of the problems involved, a relation to other people and their expectations, and a relation to God. The judgments of conscience bear on a person's planning of future behaviour and actions as well as his or her critique of past decisions to act or not to act.

While no Hebrew word in the Old Testament quite corresponds to the meaning of *syneidêsis*, it is the "heart" (a symbol of wholeness) where a person is affected by the word of God in order to respond to him (see Deut. 30:14; Ezek. 36:26). In the New Testament the term is frequently used by Paul, Hebrews and the epistles of Peter. In most cases "conscience" is seen as a critical organ, a sort of court of appeal that judges actions, rather than as a legislator. Frequently the word is used with an adjective (good, bad, clear, blemished). Conscience can be misguided by sin, and therefore it is not an infallible judge, but it can be cleansed by faith through the redeeming work of Christ (1 Tim. 1:5,19; Heb. 10:22).

Augustine and the Greek fathers understood "conscience" as the place and the organ of sin and guilt as well as of faith and truth. Medieval authors distinguish *synteresis*, the basic capacity (*habitus*) of moral judgments (*Urgewissen*), from *conscientia*, the actual decision based on reasons in a single case. In Augustine *conscientia* means the "inner person", the "heart" of a person in confrontation with the eternal God. Thomas Aquinas taught that a person is obliged to obey his or her conscience (*quaconscientia*) even in case of (personally unknown) error. In ancient and medieval theology and philosophy there is a tension between the (personally) voluntaristic and the (potentially)

universalistic rational aspects of *conscientia* (i.e. knowledge common to others and other authorities). Martin Luther did not follow this tradition; he understood “conscience” – in accord with the biblical traditions – as the centre and heart of a person in relation to God, either bound by the power of sin and death, or as the liberated conscience bound by the word of God. This “good consciousness”, founded in the will of God, produces good works of love, and in deciding what to do in particular cases it tries to give rational reasons for everybody.

This two-tier interpretation of conscience as *synderesis* and *conscientia* is also evident in Immanuel Kant. On the one hand, he calls it the “application of our actions to the law in us”; on the other hand, he speaks of the practical reason that judges itself. Because the same person cannot be both the accused and the judge, conscience for Kant must be thought of “as a subjective principle of responsibility for one’s actions before God”, but the leading principle is the self-centred responsibility (“autonomy”). This twofold structure – the personal confession and conviction on one side, the elaborated orientation to the “common good” as a principle of universalization on the other – is very important for the discussion of conscience. Hegel contrasted the liberty of individual conscience as a significant achievement of modern times after the Reformation and the French revolution with the danger of arbitrary conscientious decisions which can end in terrorism.

Following the religious wars of the 16th–18th centuries, religious freedom and the liberty of conscience became predominant principles in the constitutions of states which established the rule of law. Protection of the individual conscience was not self-evident; it always had to be claimed against the vested interests of churches, states and other powers in society. The acceptability of freedom of conscience was a consequence of societal differentiation (Niklas Luhmann) and required the institutionalization of public tolerance. While modern constitutions since 1776 and 1789 have acknowledged the principle of freedom of religion and conscience, its implementation has remained difficult, especially in the area of pacifism (see *conscientious objection*) and religious dissent.

As a specific modern insight conscience is regarded as the result of education and processes of socialization. Freud stressed the importance of personal and societal “internalized” authorities (“Über-Ich”), which condition personal attitudes and judgments; Piaget discovered the development of moral judgment in childhood. It is evident that a person’s capacity to behave and to act in relations of responsibility and to gain a “good conscience” is determined by many factors, individual and societal.

In Christian ethics protection of the individual conscience of women and men is a predominant value. Therefore many churches have been and are engaged in favour of the individual right of religious liberty and of conscientious objection against military service. Most churches agree that true autonomy of conscience integrates the rational knowledge of facts and the individual moral judgment (in relation to “ultimate concerns”), and that the individual conscience is the result of very complicated processes in education and personal experiences. It is not necessary to assume a contradiction of “autonomy” and “theonomy” insofar as there is no violent action against the individual conscience. Protestant churches tend to assume that the individual conscience is the result of a specific biography and should not be modified without the free consent of any person, while the Roman Catholic Church postulates that every Christian should obey the magisterium\* (see *Veritatis Splendor*, 6 Aug. 1993). But it is a matter of fact that the acceptance of the principles, insights and advice of the moral teachings of all churches in modern times is a question of individual consent and conscience.

WOLFGANG LIENEMANN

## CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION

AT LEAST as early as Deuteronomy (20:5-8), legislation prescribing who must participate in war has provided exemption for certain categories of persons. Medieval canon law\* called for priests, religious and penitents to be excluded. Sometimes rulers have accorded exemption to minorities (Jews, Mennonites\*) on the grounds of other services

they rendered to the regime. Others have excluded some of their subjects of whose loyalty they were unsure. Since modern states have adjusted to religious pluralism,\* providing legal protection for the rights of conscience,\* it has become possible to call states to respect the rights of individuals or communities whose faith convictions lead them to refuse military service on moral grounds.

This development has recently come to be designated as conscientious objection. That governments ought to recognize conscientious refusal to serve in war was stated by the WCC central committee in 1951 and confirmed in 1953. The same call was stated by Vatican II (*Gaudium et Spes* 79). Germany is the only nation where such exemption is constitutionally protected.

Recognition of the rights of a conscientious objector is usually conditioned upon the individual's being willing to render some alternative service to the nation. The state's claim to judge what counts as authentic religious or philosophical "conscience" necessarily runs risks of arbitrariness.

No nation has yet found a way to respect those who conscientiously reject a *particular* war or weapon on grounds of discrimination guided by the just-war\* tradition (see **just war**).

JOHN H. YODER

## CONSENSUS

THE QUESTION of the meaning of consensus for the true unity\* of the church\* has been the subject of intensive ecumenical theological and ecclesiological reflection in recent years. Yet essentially it is as old as the ecumenical movement itself. To ask about the unity of the church is inevitably to raise the question of the kind of consensus necessary for unity. To give an idea of the issues involved, four sets of general observations may be made.

### IMPLICATIONS OF THE WORD "CONSENSUS"

The word "consensus" may refer either to the agreement that characterizes a particular community – the fundamental convictions, attitudes and behaviour common to its members, whose validity is generally unchallenged – or to agreement in the form of a specific accord or joint statement.

This distinction is important. The consensus which makes community possible and sustains it is far more fundamental and comprehensive than anything that can be expressed in specific agreements and declarations. It rests on common experiences, on certain commonly acknowledged authorities, on customs evolved over a period of time. It is expressed in stories, songs, rites and other communal actions. Consensus in the narrower sense is the attempt to understand the agreement that is rooted in the life of the community, to interpret it and express it in appropriate ways, e.g. through a constitution or a confession of faith.

The two senses of consensus are intimately related and mutually interactive. Without the preliminary agreement of the community (*consentire*), explicit agreements and statements are inconceivable. Conversely, interpretations and formulated statements can help to strengthen and deepen the basic consensus of the community and perhaps even guide it in new directions.

The starting point for exploring the consensus that characterizes the church is that it understands itself as a community which has its origin and its *raison d'être* in Jesus Christ. It did not constitute itself but was called into being on God's initiative. It is the church so long as it reflects this fundamental understanding in its life, its prayers, its words and its action. The content of the consensus that characterizes the church is therefore God's gracious gift in Jesus Christ. It is first and foremost accord with Jesus Christ, the head of the body, and only afterwards, and on that basis, agreement among ourselves.

This raises the difficult question of the relationship between truth and community. How can consensus reflect the truth of the gospel and at the same time represent the common convictions of the church as a human community? The accord with Jesus Christ may be watered down by certain compromises made for the sake of "unity". But the fellowship among us can equally be placed at risk if too great a value is put on certain theological statements. The church has always been exposed to these twin dangers in its efforts to achieve genuine consensus.

In society\* and church alike, consensus is never something static but is *a constantly*

*evolving process.* New historical experiences create new conditions. Questions arise that call for answers. Things which once stood unchallenged are suddenly called in question, and the consensus has to be established all over again. This is not an easy challenge for any community. The danger is that it may shy away from the task and simply keep invoking the existing consensus. But that consensus may eventually be so undermined by such refusal to face up to the challenge that it collapses and the community crumbles with it.

The consensus has to be renewed in each new generation, and also when the composition of the community changes for other reasons. To be genuinely valid, a consensus has to be supported by the whole community. This problem is particularly acute in the church today. The missionary movement has made the church a worldwide community. Does the consensus that holds this worldwide community together really accommodate the experiences of the young churches, or does it actually represent only part of the *oikoumene*?\*

For the church as a worldwide community today to confront seriously the difficult task of broadening the base of its inherited consensus, *appropriate structures* are required. The community must be able to keep revising its understanding of what binds it together. It is no mere chance that throughout the ages the church has gathered in representative assemblies. Only as a conciliar fellowship can the church be and remain the church. It has to live in a constant process of exchange. It has to face up to the questions asked of it and, when necessary, to take decisions to settle the issues. Councils are instruments which have often helped the church to "tune in" to what for it is the fundamental truth.

### THE POSSIBILITY OF CONSENSUS

Christianity today is divided into numerous traditions and communities. How can they arrive at a consensus which will allow them to see themselves as one fellowship? The ecumenical movement works on the assumption that, despite all their divisions and differences, the churches are bound together by a fundamental consensus. They confess their faith in Jesus Christ, and this confes-

sion obliges them to assume at least the possibility of fellowship with one another. The goal pursued by the ecumenical movement is to bring to light the fundamental consensus that binds the churches together and to make them consciously aware of it. By so doing, it confronts them with their common confession\* of faith\* and obliges them to examine how far their respective interpretations can withstand comparison with it. Where have they become one-sided, rigid and exclusive with the passage of time? Where has the truth been betrayed? Where has legitimate diversity been suppressed? Where has the fundamental consensus been blotted out by disobedience and self-righteousness? The task of the ecumenical movement is not to create consensus but rather, in a conciliar process, to rediscover and make effective the consensus that is given in us in Christ.

### CONSENSUS IN CHURCH HISTORY

Every confessional tradition is likewise held together by a particular consensus. Each has its specific teaching, its particular spirituality, forms of worship and internal organization. This consensus forms a whole which cannot be resolved into individual elements. Moreover, every confessional tradition has its idea of the kind of consensus necessary for true church unity. The differing conceptions of consensus that the churches bring into conversations make understanding more difficult to achieve.

Some may insist that the consensus which holds the church together remains essentially unchanged throughout the ages. The Orthodox church maintains that the original Tradition\* has developed in its midst through the power of the Holy Spirit. It has represented across the centuries *the* consensus which marked the church of Jesus Christ from the very beginning. Unity can only come about as others likewise let themselves be permeated by this consensus. The Roman Catholic Church lays no less a claim to have preserved the original truth in unbroken continuity and free of inner contradictions: what the church's magisterium today describes as consensus may perhaps seem like a new interpretation, but in substance it is claimed to be what "has been believed by all at all times and in all places".

The Reformation\* led to radically new perspectives. In view of the church's decadence the prevailing consensus had to be called in question. Genuine consensus can be achieved only when the church heeds the word of God\* as it is attested in holy scripture\* and allows itself to be guided by it. Consensus is formed not by tradition but by the church's following its Lord and "heeding no other voice". Therefore, true consensus may on occasion be represented by only a small flock.

At the same time, the consistent following of God's word opened the way for a new conception of unity, namely the view that agreement on the essentials of the faith was sufficient for true unity. So long as churches agree that Jesus Christ is the sole source of salvation,\* they can admit differences in many spheres in regard to both doctrine and order. This path has been trodden again and again since the consensus of Sandomir (1570), which linked different Protestant groups together in a federative union, up to the Leuenberg agreement (1973), which declared church fellowship among the Lutheran, Reformed and United churches in Europe.

This conception, however, inevitably raised the question of what constituted the nucleus on which agreement must prevail. The Protestant churches have given various answers to this question over the centuries. Whereas for the reformers the essential thing was the message of forgiveness, later generations tried to define what was central in a series of dogmatic theses or rational statements about God and the human being. In the age of pietism and revival, attention focused on the experience of salvation.

There have also been attempts to bridge the contradictory concepts of consensus by appealing to a fundamental common basis. In the 17th and 18th centuries, for example, the idea of the *consensus quinquesaecularis* was discussed – i.e. the suggestion that, on the strength of the tradition of the supposedly undivided ancient church, the churches should come together. The Lambeth Quadrilateral\* of the Anglican communion took this idea up in a new way.

### CONSENSUS WITHIN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

In the ecumenical movement various concepts of consensus have been used over

the years. The 19th-century movements such as the Evangelical Alliance continued the Protestant idea of agreement on essentials: they called on Christians of all (or at least all Protestant) traditions to come together for exchange and common witness on the basis of a confession of faith which synthesized the indispensable core of the gospel. In the first half of the 20th century different concepts of consensus were pursued by three movements. The *International Missionary Council*\* held the conviction that the decisive consensus comprised the common affirmation of the church's missionary task. If the churches faced up to the urgency of this mission,\* they would also be brought together. Arguments about questions of doctrine, initially at least, were therefore deliberately set aside and postponed. The *Faith and Order*\* movement, in contrast, set itself the task of gradually working out, in patient conversations, the agreement in doctrine and order that is necessary for church unity. The same concept underlay the discussions on union which have led to the formation of a number of united churches, particularly in North America, Asia and Africa. The *Life and Work*\* movement held the view that the churches can come together only at the level of action. While the churches were divided at the level of doctrine and would in all probability remain so in the foreseeable future, at the level of action they were confronted with challenges to which they could respond only by referring back to the original tradition. As they faced up to these challenges, they might be brought to confess the gospel together in a new way. The consensus that was formed simply on the level of action might develop into a common confession of faith. In this respect the experience of the Confessing Church\* in Germany at the time of the Third Reich broke new ground. The response to the challenge of that time revealed a consensus which was not incorporated in that form in any of the established confessional traditions.

The founding of the WCC in 1948 led beyond these three approaches. A simple idea underlay this step: conversations, exchange of ideas and occasional meetings are not enough. If a sustainable consensus is to be formed among the churches, they must begin to share their life together. The WCC

gives the churches the chance to come together in a fellowship of exchange and common witness,\* based on their common confession of “Jesus Christ as God and Saviour”, but without relinquishing their distinctive identity. The three concepts of consensus previously followed in the three separate movements are now linked together. *Within* the fellowship into which they have entered, the churches are trying to extend the consensus on doctrine and order, to fulfill their missionary task and to respond in action to the challenges of the times. The WCC lives in the hope that their common experience and common efforts will form the basis on which a consensus will gradually grow and allow the churches one day to declare full fellowship with one another.

The consensus within the WCC has gradually been deepened over the decades. The basis was expanded by a reference to the Trinity\* (1961), and while for the moment no definition was given of “the unity we seek”, the assemblies in New Delhi (1961) and Nairobi (1975) adopted extensive texts on the goal of unity. Following the Nairobi assembly, which described unity as a conciliar fellowship, the F&O commission was able to reach agreement on what kind of consensus was necessary for unity: consensus in the apostolic faith; in baptism, eucharist and ministry; and on structures making possible common deliberation and decision (Bangalore 1978). The work on both the church’s confession of faith and on its understanding of baptism, eucharist and ministry were initial steps in this direction.

More important still, perhaps, is the consensus it has been possible to achieve in the WCC regarding the response to certain contemporary challenges, such as the common responsibility for the poor countries, the struggle to combat racism,\* defence of human rights,\* the community of women and men in the church.\* At the same time the debates on these issues also caused profound tensions. The consensus reached at the level of the WCC met with resistance and rejection in some churches. In coming to terms with new issues, the WCC must work through exactly the same difficulties as individual churches (e.g. the debate on the ordination of women\* in the Anglican communion).

The Roman Catholic Church attaches particular importance to bilateral talks (see **dialogue, bilateral**) between the different confessional traditions. Since it decided in favour of active participation in the ecumenical movement during the Second Vatican Council, a network of bilateral conversations with almost all the confessional traditions has developed. The aim of these conversations is to determine the degree of consensus in teaching, worship\* and church order.\* To what extent does consensus exist? To what extent do different statements ultimately mean the same thing? How far is mutual recognition possible? The bilateral dialogues of recent decades have undoubtedly contributed to bringing the churches closer together.

The partial consensus noted in the talks has come to symbolize the lively relations between the churches. But at the same time the limits of the bilateral conversations must be recognized. With the exception of the Lutheran-Reformed conversations in Europe (Leuenberg 1973) none of these dialogues has so far led to full communion\* being declared between two traditions. The results up to now are no more than instruments which can help in formulating an acceptable consensus.

How can a comprehensive consensus be achieved? It is obvious that the consensus necessary for unity has to be built up by various means at once. Above all, it is becoming increasingly clear that a valid consensus has to be implanted in the minds of ordinary church members (*sensus fidelium*) (see **consensus fidelium**). Consensus cannot be worked out at the level of official representatives alone. This aspect has not been sufficiently considered in the ecumenical movement up till now. Attention needs to be given to the experience which members of different churches have had and continue to have in the ecumenical movement, for a tradition is growing up here which can lead to a common interpretation.

See also **conciliarity; dialogue, intrafaith; teaching authority; WCC, basis of.**

LUKAS VISCHER

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### CONSENSUS FIDELIUM

IT IS LARGELY through the influence of Cardinal Newman in the 19th century that the concepts *sensus fidelium* and *consensus fidelium* were revived. What they express is an essential feature of ecclesial life, namely the implementation of the *sensus fidei*.

*Sensus fidei* (the instinct of faith). The *sensus fidei* is the consequence of the presence in the church of the Spirit, who inspired the prophets, Christ and the apostles. It may be described as a kind of instinctive discernment or "spiritual sense" by which Christians whose lives are faithful to the gospel are enabled to perceive intuitively – like a musician with "perfect pitch" – what accords with the word of God\* and what does not. Although Christians may often be unable to provide a rational explanation, they know that their discernment "rings true".

This *sensus* is in every Christian inasmuch as he or she participates in the life of the ecclesial body as a full member. Possession of it comes through membership in the community of all the baptized, upon which it is formally bestowed; and its presence in each individual is an instance of the supernatural sense of the faith inherent in the whole body (*Lumen Gentium* 12).

*Sensus fidelium* (the mind of the faithful). The *sensus fidelium* is a consequence of the *sensus fidei*. It is the expression of the latter by the community of the faithful and always reflects the contemporary social and historical background. It is not the sum total of the spiritual idiosyncrasies of the baptized but rather their manner of affirming the con-

science of the body of Christ in response to the constantly changing situation. The truth that has been revealed and remains unchanged must nevertheless be interpreted afresh to meet new needs; and the *sensus fidelium* perceives what is appropriate or necessary, in the light of important developments in the realm of human affairs, so that the gospel may remain a living reality through all the fluctuations of successive generations. The *sensus fidelium* also perceives any strands of untruth which may permeate attitudes, movements or facile concessions to changing values in the world. Clearly, it is not to be obtained by a majority vote, for there is no element of democracy involved. It is usually perceived through dialogues with those exercising doctrinal ministry. However, if an impressive number of Christian faithful speak out on their own for or against a certain opinion or decision, the profound significance of their views should be recognized and their ideas given serious consideration by all those who hold authority or exercise an official teaching role (see **teaching authority**).

Throughout the course of history the corporate perception of the *sensus fidelium* has been sought and expressed within an institutional setting by means of synods at all levels convoked for this purpose. The Orthodox church, for example, has remained firmly committed to this procedure, and the churches issuing from the Reformation also give it an important place. The canonical legislation of the Roman Catholic Church attests to its continuing importance, and it has been infused with new life and strength by diocesan synods since Vatican II.

*Consensus fidelium* (the agreement of the faithful). The expression *consensus fidelium* has several meanings. When used as a synonym of the *sensus fidelium*, following Newman, it expresses the communal perception of the baptized. On some occasions it has the more precise connotation of an agreed statement by the faithful in response to questions previously brought to their attention by ecclesiastical authorities or by public opinion (Pius XII's consultation of Catholics concerning the assumption of Mary illustrates the former, and the Christian condemnation of racial prejudice and violations of liberty the latter).

A careful study of Tradition reveals a third and more important use of the term: the reception\* by the ecclesial community of the decisions and, above all, the definitions of faith issued by councils or other hierarchical bodies. In so doing, the church as the community of the faithful recognizes its own good in the judgments and accordingly accepts them as its own.

By circulating the Lima document (*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\*) among the churches, the Faith and Order commission set in motion a procedure along these lines. The ecumenical movement will bear real fruit only to the extent that, having elucidated the desire for Christian unity and put forward proposals for agreement, it can lead Christians to a consensus\* on the essential truths of the faith and on the structures necessary to bring about ecclesial communion.

See also **communion, communion of saints, Tradition and traditions.**

J.-M.R. TILLARD

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## CONSTANTINOPLE, FIRST COUNCIL OF

THE FIRST council of Constantinople was convened by the Roman emperor Theodosius I to bring an end to the Arian dispute, which had continued after the condemnation of Arianism at Nicea (325), and to deal with various new heretics who emerged during the 4th century as a result of this dispute. It lasted from May to July 381 and was attended by 150 bishops, all of them Easterners, including such leading figures as Gregory the Theologian, Amphilochius of Iconium, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril of Jerusalem and Nectarius of Constantinople, as well as a good number of moderate Arianizers un-

der the leadership of Meletius of Antioch, who presided at the council but died during its proceedings. It was accepted by the fourth ecumenical council (Chalcedon\* 451) as the second ecumenical council, especially because of its positive work in reconciling the moderate Arians around Meletius to the Nicene position and in expanding the original doctrines of the Nicene Creed\* in the light of new needs. The theological work of the council is summed up in the so-called Nicene-Constantinopolitan (or simply Nicene) Creed, though modern scholars have propounded a variety of opinions as to the precise connections of this creed with the deliberations of Constantinople and with the original creed of Nicea.

The creed as it stands re-affirms the doctrine of the consubstantiality (the *homoousios*) of the Son with the Father and adds certain new clauses, especially to the third article concerning the Holy Spirit.\* The council also issued seven canons which succinctly represent the contents of its proceedings. Canon 1 stresses the necessity of retaining the faith of the council of Nicea and its creed and condemns the following heretics: Eunomians and Eudoxians (who denied the consubstantial Trinity\* and supported a sort of tritheism), semi-Arians and Pneumatomachians (who denied the true godhead of the Holy Spirit), and Sabellians, Marcellians and Photinians (who were unitarians and had an inadequate doctrine of the Trinity). Canon 2 restricts the movements of bishops to their own dioceses. Canons 3 and 4 deal with the church of Constantinople; the former grants the status of seniority of honour to the bishop of Constantinople next to that of the bishop of Rome, because Constantinople is New Rome, and the latter nullifies the irregular ordination of Maximus the Cynic to the throne of Constantinople and of those who had been ordained by him. Canon 5 accepts as Orthodox certain Trinitarian statements of the churches of Rome and Antioch. Canon 6 deals with procedures for adjudicating accusations against bishops. Canon 7 specifies the manner of receiving into the catholic church heretics who repent. This council also dealt with the canonical ordination of bishops to the thrones of Constantinople, Antioch and Jerusalem, and with the

processes for electing and ordaining their bishops.

GENNADIOS LIMOURIS

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## CONSULTATION ON CHURCH UNION

THE CONSULTATION on Church Union (COCU) came into being in 1962, the result of a sermon preached by Eugene Carson Blake (later general secretary of the WCC) in December 1960. Within ten years it had grown to include nine US communions, including three predominantly African American churches. The stated purpose of COCU was to explore the establishment of a church that is truly catholic, truly evangelical and truly reformed.

During the period 1962-68 growing theological agreement in areas such as ministry\* and the sacraments\* was reached in COCU. From 1968 to 1970 a plan of union was written, envisioning a new ecclesial body, including institutional merger. An ambitious study programme was undertaken throughout the United States.

But by 1973 it was clear that this type of union was not acceptable to the member churches. Thus, through the 1970s experience and insight were sought and gained in various types of unity in local settings, such as sharing of the eucharist\* among several congregations and joint mission\* for definite periods among contiguous bodies. The theological insights of African American Christians, women, and persons with disabilities were sought, and a theology commission worked from the mid-1970s to 1984 to develop an acceptable theological agreement. This COCU *Consensus* was agreed upon in 1984, and by late 1989 all nine member churches had officially found it an "expression in the matters with which it deals, of the apostolic faith, order, worship and witness of the church". Another important development of the late 1970s was the official recognition by each church of the baptism\*/membership of the others.

From 1979 a second form of unity was developed, inasmuch as the traditional union proposed in 1970 had not been accepted. It was called covenanting\* and, on its own interpretation, incorporated the primary foundation stones of "conciliar fellowship" as affirmed at the WCC Nairobi assembly (1975). The intention of covenanting was "to enable organic unity without organizational merger and while providing for much diversity in retaining the ethos of each communion".

In 1988, COCU's seventeenth plenary approved the document "The Churches in Covenant Communion" as a plan for the formation of this covenantal relationship among the churches, and commended it to them for official action. Seven of the denominations approved the text and declared their willingness to enter into a new relationship of "covenant communion". The Presbyterian Church (USA) approved the proposal in its general assembly; but that church's presbyteries subsequently rejected necessary constitutional changes concerning a proposed ministry of oversight. Meanwhile, the Episcopal Church indicated it was not ready to enter covenant communion and expressed a number of reservations about the proposal.

Against this backdrop, representatives of the churches met in 1999 for COCU's first plenary in ten years. It recommended that the participating churches "enter into a new relationship to be called Churches Uniting in Christ (CUIC), and that they together inaugurate this new relationship through public declaration and liturgical celebration during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in the year 2002".

Marks of Churches Uniting in Christ include: mutual recognition of each other as authentic expressions of the one church of Jesus Christ; mutual recognition of members in one baptism; mutual recognition that each affirms the apostolic faith of scripture and Tradition which is expressed in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds and that each seeks to give witness to the apostolic faith in its life and mission; provision for the celebration of the eucharist together with "intentional regularity"; engagement together in Christ's mission on a regular and intentional basis, especially a shared mission to combat racism; international commitment to promote "unity

with wholeness” and to oppose “all marginalization and exclusion in church and society based on such things as race, gender, forms of disability, sexual orientation, and class”; an ongoing process of theological dialogue, especially regarding the churches’ understanding of racism and the question of ministerial reconciliation; and “appropriate structures of accountability” and appropriate means for consultation and decision making. As this list indicates, the entire question of ministry is left to the dialogue following inauguration of Churches Uniting in Christ. The 1999 plenary called on the churches to complete this dialogue, aimed at full reconciliation of ordained ministry, by 2007.

In January 2002, CUIC came into being, with the following nine constituent bodies: African Methodist Episcopal Church; African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Christian Methodist Episcopal Church; Episcopal Church in the USA; International Council of Community Churches; Presbyterian Church (USA); United Church of Christ; United Methodist Church.

See also **unity, models of; unity, ways to; united and uniting churches.**

GERALD F. MOEDE and MICHAEL KINNAMON

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## CONVERSION

WHILE THE general religious use of this term refers to adopting a religion, belief or opinion, a specific concept of conversion developed in the course of the pietistic, Methodist and revival movements beginning in the 17th century. Counteracting the orthodox Protestant emphasis on doctrine and formal church membership, this concept of conversion stressed the need for a personal dedication to Christ, implying a clear decision for him. Some held that the particular moment of such a decision, rather than baptism,\* is the starting point of one’s Christian biography.

The Protestant missionary movement gave the concept of conversion new refer-

ence and prominence. William Carey in 1792 defined the aim of mission\* as “conversion of the heathens”. In consequence a double meaning came into use: conversion as the heart of mission, standing for a personal acceptance of faith by each individual, and the conversion of a group, tribe or people as the general goal of the missionary enterprise.

The importance of conversion for Protestant mission placed it on the ecumenical agenda in the context of the integration of the International Missionary Council\* into the WCC. While the Orthodox churches emphasized the questions of mission and unity\* and mission and church,\* attention was drawn to all that conversion stands for in order to integrate more strongly the evangelistic tradition of the missionary movement. A WCC study of conversion, published in the workbook for the Uppsala assembly (1968), and the resulting discussion process contributed to a recovery of the biblical meaning of conversion as wider than the pietist Protestant missionary usage of the term.

Recovering a biblical understanding meant going back to the Old Testament, where the Hebrew *shub* refers to the prophetic call to the people of Israel to return to the covenant\* relationship with God. Here conversion has a collective meaning, challenging Israel to re-orient itself within a given relationship. In the New Testament two words appear: *epistrephein* and *metanoein*. The first, meaning to turn around from a wrong way, is addressed to disciples after following Jesus for years (to Peter in Luke 22:32) and is also used of the conversion of Saul to Paul at Damascus (Acts 9), of Israel (2 Cor. 3:16) and of Gentiles (Acts 15:3). The latter, with the connotation of radically thinking anew, though sparsely used, is central to the message of Jesus, summarized as “the kingdom of God is at hand; repent” (Mark 1:15 and par.). The Johannine writings speak of re-birth.

In summary, there is no closely defined concept of conversion in the NT which would lend itself to a doctrinal or ideological use. However, conversion is always linked with the kingdom of God\* rather than with entry into the church or a mere individual decision. Conversion always means a re-orientation to God and to fellow per-

sons at the same time. In the words of Lesslie Newbigin, conversion is “a turning round in order to participate by faith in a new reality which is the true future of the whole creation. It is not, in the first place, either saving one’s soul or joining a society. It is these things only secondarily.”

The aim of furthering an interchange between the evangelical and other traditions in the ecumenical movement was only partly achieved. For instance, *The Ecumenical Review* in 1967 published a theological discussion on conversion to which such diverse figures as Nikos Nissiotis, Billy Graham, E.R. Wickham, Letty Russell, Christoph Barth and Emilio Castro contributed. But the debate on renewal in mission at the Uppsala assembly (1968) failed to reconcile theological differences, and the growing estrangement between the WCC and conservative Evangelicals led in 1974 to a separate international congress on world evangelization at Lausanne, which emphasized evangelism\* in line with the traditional understanding of conversion and established the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization.\*

The 1982 WCC ecumenical affirmation “Mission and Evangelism” – which grew out of consultations that involved Evangelical as well as Roman Catholic missiologists – re-defined the understanding of mission. Conversion remains a prominent point, described as a personal decision to accept the saving power of Christ and to enter into his discipleship, but the statement warns of a narrow delineation and includes a transpersonal, collective significance. Also the call to conversion is seen as part of the missionary task together with engagement for justice\* and dialogue with persons of other faiths (see *dialogue, interfaith*).

Although a specific right to change one’s religion is established in the UN Declaration on Human Rights, some governments have passed laws which restrict or prohibit conversions. In many societies, conversion may result in total ostracism of the convert. In its response to the 1982 *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* document, the Church of South India points to the problem that “making public declaration of one’s commitment to Christ as Lord and Saviour” may be understood as becoming “separated from the community and lost to the culture”.

The ecumenical discussion indirectly exposed the Western individualistic anthropology which deeply influences the traditional concept of conversion. Accordingly, third-world theologies and progressive Western trends made little use of it or gave it a very different emphasis as conversion to the world or conversion of structures. On the other hand, the topic stimulated an inter-religious discussion of parallel phenomena of conversion in different religions and even a common approach between Christians and Marxists (see M. Machovec, *The Ecumenical Review*, 1968). The Groupe des Dombes\* marked the 50th anniversary of its founding by a study on the theological foundations of the experience of conversion, whose findings were published in *For the Conversion of the Churches*.

Within the Roman Catholic Church before the Second Vatican Council,\* conversion referred to the transition from one church to another or, more specifically, from any other church or religion to the RCC. Now a clear distinction is made between already-baptized Christians who “enter into full communion with the RCC” and the unbaptized, whether religious or not, who “convert”. More recently, Pope John Paul II has used conversion in several ways, e.g., from the “culture of death” to the “gospel of life”; and in the ecumenical context, the Christian personal and communal “need for repentance and change of heart through self-denial and unstinting love”, through “an examination of conscience, a kind of dialogue of consciences”.

See also **evangelical ecumenical concerns, proselytism**.

PAUL LÖFFLER

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## COTTESLOE

THE COTTESLOE consultation met from 7 to 14 December 1960 in the Johannesburg

suburb of that name. It was convened in response to the crisis generated by the Sharpeville massacre on 21 March of that year, when 20,000 people had converged on the Sharpeville police station in support of a campaign to defy pass laws. Sixty people were killed, and 180 injured. Two weeks later, on 8 April, the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress were banned under the hastily enacted unlawful organizations act. Repercussions echoed around the world, and Robert S. Bilheimer, then associate general secretary of the WCC, visited South Africa in the latter part of April to assess the situation on behalf of the Council. As a result of the visit it was agreed that a consultation should take place between representatives of the WCC and South African member churches as a basis for formulating an appropriate Christian response to the crisis at hand.

The consultation statement issued by the delegates had far-reaching implications for the church and society in South Africa, although it cannot be regarded as in any way radical. Much of it was based on a preparatory document drafted by Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK) theologians.

The document regarded the prohibition of racially mixed marriages as without scriptural warrant but admitted they were inadvisable in practice. It further suggested that there could be “no objection in principle to direct representation of coloured people in parliament”. Regarding apartheid\* and the church, Cottesloe resolved that “no one who believes in Jesus Christ may be excluded from any church on the grounds of his colour or race” and that the “spiritual unity among all men who are in Christ must find visible expression in acts of common worship and witness, and in fellowship and consultation on matters of common concern”. Most churches around the world took such observations as self-evident. The Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk (NHK) had, however, a clause which excluded blacks from membership, and the NGK a policy of segregated churches.

The NHK rejected the consultation statement and subsequently withdrew its membership from the WCC. Although the majority of the NGK representatives at the Cottesloe meeting accepted the statement, the

NGK itself, under pressure from prime minister Hendrik Verwoerd, rejected the statement and re-affirmed its own theological justification for government policy. Later that year the two NGK synods which had been members of the WCC (the Cape Province and the Transvaal) withdrew from the Council. The process of moving into increasing ecumenical isolation by the white Afrikaner Reformed churches had started. It would come to a head with the declaration of the theological justification of apartheid as heresy and with the suspension of the membership of both the NGK and the NHK by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches\* at the meeting of its general council in Ottawa in 1982.

CHARLES VILLA-VICENCIO

■ *Cottesloe Consultation: The Report of the Consultation among South African Member Churches of the World Council of Churches, 7-14 Dec. 1960 at Cottesloe, Johannesburg, Johannesburg, 1961* ■ A.H. Luckhoff, *Cottesloe, Cape Town, Tafelberg, 1978* ■ C. Villa-Vicencio, *Between Christ and Caesar: Classic and Contemporary Texts on Church and State, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1986.*

## COUNCILS OF CHURCHES: LOCAL, NATIONAL, REGIONAL

A COUNCIL is a voluntary association of churches within a defined geographic area which, without compromising the distinctive identity and authority\* of its members, enables their sharing in common reflection and action on matters of Christian unity,\* faith\* and ethics,\* and in programmes of common Christian witness\* and service (see *diakonia*).

Councils are among the most pervasive and significant expressions of the ecumenical movement. They vary greatly in size, number of members and staff, and scope of programme, and the terminology used of them is inconsistent. Historically, many local and national councils have included cooperative missionary organizations, interchurch or non-denominational Christian organizations such as the YWCA\* or Bible Society, or Christian “action groups” working on specific issues such as world hunger. Such broadly based bodies are properly (though

not always in practice) termed “Christian councils” or “Christian federations” rather than councils of churches (see **federalism**).

Because councils are, properly speaking, the *churches* joining together in reflection and action, the tendency today is to emphasize the unique authority and role of the councils’ member churches, with other bodies having associate membership or observer status. Most regional councils refer to themselves as “conferences” of churches; their membership may include also national councils and other Christian bodies. Finally, the term “local” may refer to any level from suburb or town to federal state, while “regional” indicates a large, culturally coherent geo-political area such as Africa, Latin America or the Pacific.

In principle, councils exist as servants of their member churches and have no authority apart from that granted to them by these churches. For national and regional councils these are autonomous, usually national, churches; for local councils, congregations or city or local denominational structures. The various levels of councils are structurally independent; they do not form a hierarchy in which local councils are “branches” of their national councils, which in turn make up the regional ecumenical bodies.

Modern councils must be distinguished from the “ecumenical councils”\* of the ancient church. These were authoritative deliberative and decision-making bodies, among churches which understood themselves to be one, on matters of doctrine and practice; modern councils are organs for common reflection, consultation and joint programming among still-separated churches. (In French and German the first meaning of the English word “council” is indicated by the terms *concile* and *Konzil* respectively, the second by *conseil* and *Rat.*)

### THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN COUNCILS

Several essential elements of modern councils were heralded by Philip Schaff in his address on “The Reunion of Christendom” to the 1893 World’s Parliament of Religions in Chicago; he called for a “federal or confederate union” between churches, each

retaining its independence “in the management of its internal affairs” but recognizing the others as having “equal rights”, and all “cooperating in general enterprises” in areas of evangelism, apologetics, social services, and social and moral reform.

The earliest national council-like structure appears to have been the Protestant Federation of France, formed in 1905; this added the dimension (crucial to councils in difficult cultural and political situations) of providing a channel for the churches’ common action to preserve freedom of religious expression, and “to uphold with public authorities, where necessary, the rights of the churches in the federation”. The formation of a council in Puerto Rico in 1905 is also reported.

The modern council with the most extensive programme and largest staff was also founded in this era: the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, set up in 1908. Its constitution was typical of those of many later councils: it sets careful limits to the council’s activities; it seeks actively to promote the “spiritual life and religious activities of the churches”; and it “recommends a course of action in matters of common interest”. By 1910 its membership of 31 denominations encompassed the majority of Protestants in the USA. Its successor in 1950, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, subsumed the Federal Council and seven other national religious bodies (such as the National Protestant Council of Higher Education and the United Council of Church Women).

The origins of many national councils are rooted in the efforts in the early 20th century to strengthen the identity and independence of missionary-founded churches in Asia, Africa and Latin America (see **missionary societies, common witness**). Cooperation between mission agencies and the new national councils enjoyed the enabling support of the International Missionary Council\* (IMC) at its founding meeting in 1921. (Indeed, John R. Mott considered his greatest contribution to the IMC to have been enabling the formation of these national Christian councils.) The IMC also provided the newly formed national councils with access to other international ecumenical structures.

For example, in India in 1922 the National Missionary Council became the National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon, which required that 50% of the churches' representatives be nationals of their countries. In Japan a federation of churches, continuing impulses from the Conference of Federated Missions (1902), led in 1922 to the National Christian Council, which soon became an IMC member. The need for a common Christian voice in dealing with governments often provided a powerful impetus towards the formation of councils. Thus in Indonesia a "missions consulate" (1906) represented virtually all Protestant mission bodies in the Netherlands Indies in their relations with the state, and this proved to be the forerunner of the National Council of Churches in Indonesia, founded in 1950.

The number of national councils has grown steadily from only 2 in 1910 to 23 in 1928 and at least 30 by 1948, including 9 in Asia, 3 in Africa and the Near East, and 5 in Latin America. By 2001 there were at least 103 national councils, including some 25 in Africa, 15 in Asia, 10 in the Caribbean and Central America, 20 in Europe, 2 in North America, 4 in Latin America and 8 in the Pacific.

Local councils of churches exist in most towns or rural areas with a sizeable mix of Christians. They have often developed to provide a more structured cooperation among local church leaders, or to sustain the initiative of laypersons who, impatient with denominational divisions, sought broader forms for fellowship and cooperation with other Christians. Such councils have played a vital role in enabling – and sometimes legitimizing – contacts across denominational lines: indeed, for many Christians, "ecumenism" means the annual Week of Prayer\* observance or the "interchurch food pantry", both typically sponsored by the local council of churches. Far more than national or regional councils, local councils offer opportunities for lay ecumenical leadership. One can only loosely estimate the number of such councils by "tens of thousands".

Regional councils exist in all major geopolitical areas except for North America, where there are separate councils for the US and Canada. Their principal aims include

helping their members to shape a common Christian response to issues of regional concern and serving as a bridge between churches and national councils in the region and global issues and worldwide organizations.

Many regional councils also have roots in the contacts fostered by the missionary and Christian youth movements in the early decades of the 1900s. On the basis of regional encounters through the World Student Christian Federation\* in 1907 and 1921, Asian Christians called at a 1922 WSCF meeting (Peking) for a regular "international conference in the Far East... to promote cooperation" and mutual understanding. In response to this need, the IMC proposed an East Asia regional *committee*; but the Asian Christians themselves preferred a more independent "East Asia *conference*", whereby representatives of the church can share their experience and concern, join in meditation and prayer and make common plans for participating more fully in the life of the ecumenical church". Such a conference met first in Bangkok in 1949; from its second meeting in 1957 in Prapat, Indonesia, its three secretaries worked each from their home countries of Burma, New Zealand and Ceylon, and in 1959 the East Asia Christian Conference (EACC) held its inaugural assembly in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In recognition of its true scope its name was changed in 1973 to the Christian Conference of Asia\* (CCA): now headquartered in Hong Kong, it encompasses nearly 100 churches and 14 national councils of churches in 18 countries from Korea in the north to New Zealand in the east to Pakistan in the west. Its traditional concerns include justice and the healing of divisions in the human community; since 1990 it has increasingly been concerned with (the related!) issues of church unity.

The All Africa Conference of Churches\* (AACC), inaugurated in 1963 and based in Nairobi, has focused on issues of worship and evangelism, the search for a Christian family life in the African context and indigenization of the gospel (e.g. in 1966, a first consultation of African theologians on biblical revelation and African belief). In recent years it has worked extensively on issues of violence (especially in relation to regional

wars) and justice (particularly in relation to debt relief and slavery).

The Pacific Conference of Churches\* (PCC), founded in 1966 and headquartered in Suva, Fiji, has emphasized themes of education, citizenship, and the relation of gospel to culture, with an increasing engagement with issues of justice (especially immigration and nuclear testing) and the protection of the environment. The Caribbean Conference of Churches\* (CCC), founded in 1973 and based in Trinidad, includes 34 "Christian denominations" and works in 32 countries in the pan-Caribbean region. It has focused upon "the decisive action of God in Christ in terms of [Caribbean] culture, experience and needs", and the search for both unity and renewal among the churches. The Latin American Council of Churches\* (CLAI), founded in 1982 and based in Quito, Ecuador, culminates a long history of cooperation among Protestant missions and then indigenous churches. Including more than 150 churches and "Christian organizations" (working in areas such as youth and theological education) from 21 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, it has supported its members especially in evangelism and in their search as Christians for "a system based on justice and brotherhood". The Middle East Council of Churches\* (MECC), founded in 1974 and based in Beirut, with regional offices in Cyprus, links some 27 churches in a "[confessional] family" structure. It has emphasized promoting understanding and cooperation among its member churches, inter-religious relations with the predominant Muslims, and links with the global ecumenical family, as well as making a common Christian witness on issues of regional concern such as violence and justice, and working on the need for a common date of Easter. The special calling of the Conference of European Churches\* (CEC), founded in 1959 and headquartered in Geneva, has been enabling the churches' common participation in the spiritual and material rebuilding of a Europe shattered by the second world war. It includes some 123 churches and 25 associate organizations in all the countries on the European continent. Since 1999 the European Ecumenical Commission on Church and Society, with offices in Brussels and Strasbourg, has been integrated into CEC.

In some regions, councils with a sub-regional focus have become an important part of the ecumenical scene (e.g. the Nordic Ecumenical Council, based in Uppsala, Sweden). These help groups of churches linked by historic and cultural factors to express their distinctive identity and witness within the larger regional framework.

Regional councils have also been an important factor in indigenizing the church and developing a Christian identity rooted in local culture. Thus in 1959 retiring EACC general secretary D.T. Niles spoke of the EACC as an expression of the "growth of the church in Asia into selfhood..., the instrument of our resolve to be churches together here in Asia". And voicing their sense of "coming of age" over against the Western missionary agencies which had "planted" them, Niles called this regional council "the means by which we [Asian churches and Christians] enter into a meaningful participation in the missionary task of the church".

#### **MEMBERSHIP, ORGANIZATION AND PROGRAMME OF COUNCILS**

Most councils began as pan-Protestant organizations (though there are early examples of Orthodox membership, such as the four Eastern Orthodox churches which entered the Federal Council in the US in 1940). Councils today typically encompass the classic "ecumenical" Protestant churches (from Brethren through Methodists, Disciples and Presbyterians to Lutherans and Anglicans) and often Orthodox churches. Others, such as Seventh-day Adventists and the Salvation Army, are also sometimes involved. There is often a significant presence of churches whose members are predominantly from minority groups (for example, the black-led churches, with their Caribbean roots, within the former British Council of Churches). Many councils today are making serious efforts to include a broader range of members, particularly from the Pentecostal and Evangelical churches.

The formal basis for membership in most councils reflects the Christocentric orientation of the Protestantism of the first half of the 20th century, broadened by a Trinitarian allusion and by references to the scriptures and to the churches' divine calling to common witness and work. The following state-

ment (used by national councils in such diverse countries as Zambia, Tonga and Austria) is typical: "The council is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (see WCC, basis of). Other themes may be mentioned, such as the imperative to work for unity (as in the basis of the Council of Churches of Malaysia).

Two negative principles have helped many councils to encompass churches with very diverse theological, ecclesiological and cultural profiles. The first is that council membership does not imply that a church accepts the doctrinal positions – or even full ecclesiological status – of other member churches: councils exist precisely to help the *still-divided* churches understand one another and work together. Second, membership does not commit a church to specific statements and actions taken by the council: the churches retain their autonomy of judgment and action in each case. In practice, the process for shaping common statements on public issues and determining their status remains among the most complex and difficult issues faced by councils.

Though there were occasional instances of cooperation, Roman Catholic membership in local, national and regional councils was out of the question before the recognition, heralded by Vatican II's Decree on Ecumenism,\* that other churches are in some sense "ecclesial communities" and that it is imperative to seek cooperation with them. Roman Catholic participation is defined by the 1975 text *Ecumenical Collaboration at the Regional, National and Local Levels*: initiating "formal doctrinal conversations" is the prerogative of the churches themselves in their "immediate and bilateral contacts"; procedures for making public statements must leave room for member churches to define their own distinctive positions; representatives of churches "should be clearly aware of the limits beyond which they cannot commit the[ir] church without prior reference to higher authority". Within these limits, there is clear approval for the fullest possible RC involvement in councils. The decision whether to join rests with the

"highest ecclesiastical authority in the area served by the council" (for national councils, the national bishops' conference); in reaching this decision there "must necessarily be communication" with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.\* The 1993 *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* emphasizes that RC membership is not possible in councils "in which groups are present who are not really considered to be ecclesial communities".

In 1971 there was RC membership in 11 national councils; this had increased by 1975 to 19, by 1986 to 33, and by 2001 to no fewer than 58, including membership in NCCs in 16 countries in Europe, 12 in Africa, 12 in the Pacific and 11 in the Caribbean, with the remainder divided across Asia, Latin America and North America. The RCC has observer or consultant status in four countries. In addition Roman Catholics are members of three regional conferences of churches (the Caribbean, the Pacific and, as of January 1990, the Middle East). There is increasing Roman Catholic involvement in local councils of churches; for example, in 2001 an informal survey of 21 of the 41 state councils of churches in the US revealed that the Roman Catholic Church had membership in 13 and observer status in 6.

Nevertheless, councils which actively relate to the ecumenical movement incorporate only a portion of the churches within their area (for example, in the 1980s the AACC – with its 117 member churches and 19 associate Christian councils in some 38 countries – encompassed about 35% of African Christians.) Most Pentecostal, Evangelical and fundamentalist churches have not sought membership, fearing inevitable association with council statements or actions with which they disagree, or generally distrusting the ecumenical movement as being "too progressive" theologically in matters of social witness, or believing that councils tend towards the creation of a "super-church", so that membership would inevitably compromise their own freedom of judgment and witness (see **criticism of the ecumenical movement**). Often such churches form their own organs for agreed forms of Christian witness and action, and these may

cooperate selectively with councils and with other churches in specific areas, for example in making a common Christian representation on matters of religious freedom (e.g. the Christian Federation of Malaysia, which includes the Council of Churches of Malaysia, the Roman Catholic Church, and an alliance of Evangelical churches).

Councils have adopted many forms of governance. Typically there is a general assembly, meeting every one to three years to set broad programmatic guidelines; a governing board of church representatives meeting every year or two for detailed programmatic and personnel oversight; an executive committee; and steering committees in such areas as faith and order, evangelism, world service and family life. Council staffs range from a few volunteers to 100 or more full-time ecumenical professionals. Councils are usually financed by contributions from their member churches, though some receive significant funds from government or other secular sources in support of "community service" programmes. Most councils receive insufficient support to provide the programmes and services which their member churches ask them to provide.

Council programmes and activities vary greatly. Almost every council promotes common worship and spiritual life among their members. A few councils in the most affluent countries conduct extensive national and even international operations; they have a larger programme and staff than some of their member churches. Others with more limited financial and personnel resources restrict themselves to specific areas. Many councils emphasize programmes of aid or relief in the face of natural disasters, or the continuing social disasters of chronic poverty and unemployment, drug abuse or juvenile delinquency. Councils have been very active in common witness where a divided Christian voice would be less effective (e.g. prison and hospital chaplaincies). Many councils encourage evangelism (though its practice is understood to be the prerogative of the churches themselves, hopefully working in consort); and many have publishing programmes, particularly of worship materials and Christian analyses of local issues. Some councils promote inter-faith dialogue, helping their churches relate

responsibly to other faith communities; others are called upon to represent their member churches in dealings with the government. Sometimes councils feel duty-bound to speak out in support of human rights, or to criticize unjust social structures; such prophetic witness often has its price (a dramatic example being the 1987 expulsion of the CCA from Singapore).

Some councils have traditionally dealt more zealously with the divisions of society than with the theological and cultural divisions within and among their own member churches. But recently, many councils are giving more attention to the "difficult" questions of faith and order, and to helping members to discuss their differences of doctrine, church order and moral teaching. This has been an important point of contact with the broader ecumenical movement, as for example many councils have used the WCC's Faith and Order text *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* as a basis for shared reflection.

Councils have developed extensive contacts with one another for sharing of information and for mutual support. Regional councils have sought close working relationships with the WCC; and many national councils have sought "associate council" status with the WCC. Three international consultations for national councils of churches have been held, in Geneva in 1971 and 1986, sponsored by the WCC, and in Hong Kong in 1993, held under the auspices of the national councils themselves, with strong WCC and RC participation. In 1982 the WCC, together with the Roman Catholic Church, held an important consultation on the ecclesiological significance of councils.

### ENDURING ISSUES AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

Councils at all levels face certain enduring issues. First is *the nature of their relationship to their member churches*: do the councils exist only to serve the churches, enabling their more effective witness in certain carefully defined areas; or must they sometimes lead the churches by calling them prophetically back to the search for unity,\* common witness and service? The churches have an essential and legitimate concern for their unique ecclesial status, and the councils must remain their servants. But if the churches cling to their present structures and

divided identities or fail to bring a common Christian witness to bear on crucial issues of the day, then is it not the councils' duty – precisely as their faithful servant – to challenge them to a deeper and more costly ecumenical commitment?

This issue often comes to sharp focus on issues of participation in councils (e.g. the controversy in the early 1990s around the application of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches for observer status in the US National Council of Churches) or over council statements on controversial public and ethical issues such as abortion.

A second, related issue is that of the *ecclesiological significance of councils of churches* (see **church**). Recent ecumenical discussion has placed this squarely within the context of the churches' search for unity. The first international consultation of national councils in 1971 emphasized that theological work for unity is not an "extra" beside the practical work of councils, but is "the real basis for their common witness and action"; and that although councils lack an independent ecclesiological status, they are nevertheless "instruments" which enable crucial ecclesiological developments to occur among member churches. The 1982 consultation emphasized the role of councils as instruments of the churches' "irreversible" commitment to unity among themselves; councils are but "interim expressions of unity" shared by churches already committed to each other and to their common search for unity. The subsequent consultations of councils of churches have reinforced these ideas, emphasizing the need for common reflection and action appropriate to the local context.

Councils, then, offer an environment in which churches and ecclesial communities "provide each other with the means to grow together towards full ecclesial status, each helping the other to acquire what it lacks"; in their "communion of mission, witness and prayer the full *koinonia* [of the churches in a truly conciliar state] is seen in profile and forecast". This means that membership in a council "expresses a commitment to practise some real measure of mutual recognition and reconciliation at every level of church life". This ascribes to councils a real,

though carefully limited, ecclesiological significance, one unthinkable a few decades ago. But such a purely "instrumental" understanding does not satisfy those Christians who have experienced their foretaste of unity through the life and work of councils rather than – if not in spite of – the structures of their still-divided churches.

A third issue confronting councils is the *continuing search for a truly adequate form* for their life and work. In the past 25 years several national councils have entered adventurous schemes of re-organization. For example, in Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, Britain and Canada, one major aim was to enable the fuller participation of the Roman Catholic Church. In some cases, most strikingly the USA, the need to re-align programmatic and financial aspects of the council's life has been an insistent factor.

Such re-organizations may yield creative new insights for councils of churches. In Britain, for example, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland is the coordinating body for regional ecumenical instruments in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. This grew out of a broadly inclusive process, "Churches Together in Pilgrimage", launched in 1985 as a response to the failure of several church union schemes and the positive experience of many Christians worshipping and working together across denominational lines in local ecumenical projects (now partnerships). It is rooted in churches' resolve to move, in Cardinal Basil Hume's words, "quite deliberately from a situation of cooperation to one of commitment to each other". Given this, the new ecumenical instrument need not be a force "outside" the churches, but an expression of their own will towards unity. It was suggested that the new instrument would not develop its own "programmes", but rather ensure that the churches' existing programmes were pursued together rather than separately. Thus there could be a shift from "ecumenism as an extra which absorbs energy" to "ecumenism as a dimension of all that [the churches] do which releases energy, through the sharing of resources" (Robert Runcie).

The new Conference of Churches in Aotearoa New Zealand (1987) raises a fourth issue: *the proper participation\* of the*

*whole people of God\** in their life and work. This was a major theme at the second international consultation of national councils (1986), which went so far as to refer to an “imperative towards participation” and to identify as an “urgent challenge” the need “to create a context within which their member churches may challenge each other [towards] fuller participation... in their koinonia of confession, worship and action”. This challenge was taken up boldly in Aotearoa New Zealand; its new ecumenical body sought a much greater participation of persons normally under-represented in church decision-making structures, particularly laypersons, women and youth, and has committed itself to inclusive and participatory styles of work, to consensus styles of decision making, and to a decentralized structure.

The results and implications of these new ventures are not yet clear. The British scheme has been very successful in expressing the churches’ desire for unity and their understanding of councils as servants of their members (to the point that the new council should not issue public statements in its own right at all, but only “enable” the churches themselves, when they agree, to speak a common word). This raises the question of how independent a council *must* be in order to maintain its own identity, and to challenge its members should their enthusiasm for unity and prophetic witness falter. The new body in Aotearoa New Zealand has been very successful in expressing the desire of the people of God for fuller participation (to the point that its first three presidents were all laypersons, and its first three co-general secretaries women), but through the 1990s this bold alignment has come under severe strain. This raises the question of how independent a council *can* be and still maintain sufficient contact with its members’ traditional structures to be taken seriously by them.

In a complex and changing ecumenical situation, three developments are of special interest for the future. First, many councils are emphasizing anew the fact that they “belong to”, and exist “for”, their member churches; councils understand more clearly that their role is not to exist apart from the churches but to encourage and enable them

to express their common faith, life, witness and action within the local, national or regional context. While councils continue, and indeed intensify, their engagement with issues of justice and witness, this has been complemented by an increased concern for related issues such as church unity and common worship. Second, in a few cases, particularly in Europe and North America, a council’s diaconal programmes of social relief and development work have separated themselves from the council, forming a new structure. These function increasingly as independent aid agencies, with the council no longer serving to channel and coordinate the churches’ efforts in this area. It is unclear whether this trend will spread, and what its long-term implications will be. Third, many councils are finding interfaith issues to be an increasingly important part of their agenda. Depending on the context this may involve engagement in interfaith dialogue, working with other living faiths to promote reconciliation, or seeking common cause on issues of mutual concern (for example, freedom of religious expression, human rights, or the protection of the environment). In some contexts, particularly in Europe and North America, this has re-opened the debate about the nature – and membership – of councils of churches.

The future of councils of churches is at once uncertain and hopeful. They often face unclear or even conflicting expectations about their identity and role. They may become frustrated at what seems the snail’s pace of the churches towards unity. And finally they are dependent upon the ecumenical enthusiasm, commitment and (sometimes severely) shrinking financial means of their members. Particularly since about 1990 many councils have faced increasing, sometimes severe pressure as their member churches could not maintain earlier levels of support. This has led some councils to “re-structure” or “rationalize” their finance and operations, often according to then-current secular management principles, usually with the result that the same programmatic load has to be carried by fewer staff.

Yet councils are an essential expression of the ecumenical movement. Ecclesialogically speaking, they embody (in however imperfect a form) the divided churches’ calling to

be *together* the church in each place. Practically speaking, they enable the divided churches to reflect together on issues which divide them, and to work together day-by-day. They will remain necessary as long as the churches remain divided, for they provide a precious “space” in which the churches’ *common* life, reflection, witness and work is “normal”, and it is their continuing state of *division* which is the “problem”. They confirm the words of the great ecumenical pioneer J.H. Oldham, who wrote in 1922 of the nascent national Christian councils around the world: “If our unity is real, and we have a common purpose, these must express themselves through some visible organ.”

See also *conciliarity*, *local church*, *local ecumenism*, *local ecumenical partnerships*.

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## COUTURIER, PAUL-IRÉNÉE

B. 29 July 1881, Lyons, France; d. 24 March 1953, Lyons. A Catholic priest and ecumenical pioneer of “spiritual ecumenism”, Couturier learned of Orthodox piety and spirituality in his encounter with more than 10,000



Russian refugees in the Lyons area during the 1920s. In 1932, a stay at the Benedictine priory of Amay-sur-Meuse (Chevetogne\*) introduced him to the thinking of Lambert Beauduin and to the attempts of Cardinal Mercier to foster RCC-Anglican church union through the Malines conversations (see *Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue*). He devised a format for a yearly eight-day period of prayer for church unity at Lyons. Protestants and Orthodox welcomed his formula: “the unity as Christ wishes and by the means which he desires”, broader than the “return to Rome” formula of the already practised octave inspired by the former Anglican Paul Wattson. “Unity is not a return but a re-grouping.” From 1935, Couturier’s Universal Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, 18-25 January, reached beyond Lyons and France (see *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*). In 1937 he helped to initiate the annual interdenominational retreat conferences of the Groupe des Dombes\* and influenced Roger Schutz at the new Taizé\* community. He was in close touch with early WCC leaders. His efforts are continued by the interconfessional association *Unité chrétienne* (Lyons).

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## COVENANT

THIS CENTRAL biblical word first appeared in ecumenical vocabulary in the message of the first assembly of the WCC in 1948: "Here at Amsterdam we have committed ourselves afresh to [God], and have covenanted with one another in constituting this World Council of Churches. We intend to stay together. We call upon Christian congregations everywhere to endorse and fulfill this covenant in their relations with one another. In thankfulness to God we commit the future to him."

The idea of churches covenanting together had not been a familiar part of the ecumenical call to renewal\* and unity.\* Indeed, the word does not appear in the first volume of the *History of the Ecumenical Movement* (1517-1948) except for the above quotation, and it does not re-appear in the second volume.

### EARLIER USAGE

At the very beginning of the Christian era, a deterrent to using the word "covenant" may have been that for the Roman authorities a covenant meant an illegal secret society, which the Christian community was already considered to be. It may also be conjectured that the great Eastern and Western churches, after recognition by Constantine, would not want to emphasize the covenant character of the church in view of their close links with the state. Of course, it was long accepted, from the formation of the canon\* of the scriptures, that the two parts of the Bible were originally the old and new covenants ("testament" being a Latin translation of the word *berith* in Hebrew and *diatheke* in Greek).

With the Reformation and the availability of the Old and New Testaments (covenants) in the hands of the people, "covenant" became a rallying point for reform and radical obedience to the word of God. Peasants in Germany banded themselves into associations called by the general title of *Bund* (covenant), and their leather-laced shoe (*Bundschuh*) became their symbol of protest. The peasants were encouraged by Thomas Münzer with his preaching on the covenant of the elect, but their rebellion was brutally suppressed in 1524-25. In 1531 the Protestant princes and free cities

combined to form the Smalcald league, or covenant (*Bund*), to preserve their freedom of belief and practice, by force if necessary. With John Calvin, covenant (Latin *foedus*, French *alliance*) became, in close association with the doctrine of predestination, a major theological category in the history and understanding of salvation.

In 17th-century Britain an important segment of the Church of Scotland adopted the word "covenant" as a protest against the determination of Charles I of England to impose episcopacy and a new liturgy on the Reformed Kirk. In 1638, a group of their leaders made a national covenant for the defence and preservation of "the true religion, liberties and laws of the kingdom". Each pledged to behave "as becometh Christians who have renewed their covenant with God". The rebellion of 1640 in England led, among other things, to convening the Westminster assembly, which produced a Solemn League and Covenant whose purpose was to preserve reformed religion in England, Scotland and Ireland "according to the word of God and the example of the best reformed churches".

In 1648 the Dutch theologian John Cocceius, in *Doctrine of the Covenant and Testaments of God*, sought to change the emphasis of Calvinism on the unilateral decrees of God by drawing attention to the divine covenant of grace,\* prefigured in the OT and fully revealed in the NT, by which every repentant sinner may share in the covenant grace. During the latter part of the 17th century a new piety developed among the puritans, who regarded themselves as people who were bound to God individually and corporately, and who, especially on new year's day, would renew their covenant with God and pledge to be more devoted in worship and the reading of the word of God, to employ their time wisely and to seek opportunities for doing good to others.

John and Charles Wesley were heirs to this puritan tradition. John Wesley notes in his journal on Christmas day 1747 that he rejoiced in God his Saviour with a gathered company of believers, and during the following days, "I strongly urged the wholly giving up of ourselves to God, and renewing in every point our covenant that the Lord should be our God". Around that time Wes-

ley began the practice of the covenant service on the first Sunday of the year. It has developed into a liturgy celebrated by Methodists, which has also been used at ecumenical meetings as an affirmation of God's covenant of grace and our participation in it in all dimensions of our existence.

One active member church of the WCC is called the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden. Starting in 1855 as a congregation, it became a denomination in 1878 as "a free association of committed believers in local fellowship".

Another use of the word "covenant" has not enhanced its popularity. "Covenant" was a legal term since the middle ages for an agreement or promise made under seal to do or refrain from doing things, or to lease or renew lease of land. The term carried a certain solemn commitment about it. After the first world war, the 26 articles agreed in the Treaty of Versailles formed the covenant of the League of Nations. It constituted a firm undertaking by the signatory states to maintain international peace and security, to promote international cooperation and to act collectively when the territorial integrity and political independence of member states were threatened or violated. In the event, the USA, the leading state at the time and the best guarantor of the covenant, withdrew its membership. The invasion by Japan of Manchuria in 1931 was unchallenged. Germany left the league in 1933. Italy invaded Ethiopia in 1935, but while condemning Italy, the member states did little to deter Italy. The Spanish civil war began in 1936. The way was set for the second world war and the demise of the League of Nations. "Covenant" became such a word of ill repute that, when the United Nations was formed, the former "covenant" was now named "charter". But in 1966 the UN assembly re-introduced the word "covenant" by adopting, under the rubric of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, two international covenants – one on economic, social and cultural rights, and the other on civil and political rights. The further fact that many nations took a long time to ratify these covenants (or did not ratify them at all) has encouraged the perception of a certain cynicism or at best disinclination about being committed to meeting obligations in-

ternationally. Some of these unhappy associations of the word "covenant" may help to explain why few church traditions employ it in expressing their commitment to God in Christ and their relations to one another.

The biblical and theological renewal of the 1930s and 1940s highlighted the central and comprehensive character of God's liberating work and covenant with Israel, fulfilled in the covenant made in Christ through his ministry and death for the redemption of the world. Walther Eichrodt's preface to the 1957 edition of the first volume of his *Theology of the Old Testament*, published in 1933, re-affirms his conviction: "As an epitome of the dealings of God in history the 'covenant' is not a doctrinal concept, with the help of which a complete corpus of dogma can be worked out, but the characteristic *description of a living process*, which was begun at a particular time and at a particular place, in order to reveal a divine reality unique in the whole history of religion." Eichrodt's colleague at Basel, Karl Barth, published in 1945 the first part of volume 3 of his *Church Dogmatics* on "The Doctrine of Creation", whose central section is entitled "Creation and Covenant". Barth's thesis was that "the purpose and therefore the meaning of creation is to make possible the history of God's covenant with man, which has its beginning, its centre and its culmination in Jesus Christ. The history of this covenant is as much the goal of creation as creation itself is the beginning of this history." He goes on to say that "in the Christian concept of the creation of all things the question is concretely one of man and his whole universe as the theatre of the covenant of grace; of the totality of earthly and heavenly things as they are to be comprehended in Christ (Eph. 1:10)". This scriptural text provided the theme of the inaugural assembly of the WCC, "Man's Disorder and God's Design", which Barth rightly pointed out in his address to the assembly should have been "God's Design and Man's Disorder".

### ECUMENICAL USE OF "COVENANT"

The message of the WCC's second assembly (Evanston 1954) invoked the Amsterdam "covenant" in a paragraph addressed directly to each congregation: "To stay together is not enough. We must go for-

ward. As we learn more of our unity in Christ, it becomes the more intolerable that we should be divided. We therefore ask you: Is your church seriously considering its relation to other churches in the light of our Lord's prayer that we may be sanctified in the truth and that we may all be one? Is your congregation, in fellowship with sister congregations around you, doing all it can to ensure that your neighbours shall hear the voice of the one shepherd calling all into the one flock?"

The call to go beyond staying together to going forward and growing together was seen as an expression of the covenant relationship of the churches which God has established in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. The accent is clearly on the churches being obedient to their call in all its manifold dimensions.

The New Delhi assembly (1961) did not use the word "covenant", although it attempted to give a vision of the unity which Christ wills for his church on earth to be "one fully committed fellowship". In his report to the assembly, the general secretary, W.A. Visser 't Hooft, posed the question of how the local congregations in each place can become "unitable". He asked: "For what is the use of deep convictions and imaginative plans about unity which arise at the level of world meetings, if our church members are indifferent, lukewarm or even hostile with regard to unity? There is as yet an immense task to be performed by all of us together to prepare our churches spiritually for action towards unity."

In November 1964 the first British conference on Faith and Order in Nottingham called on "the member churches of the British Council of Churches, in appropriate groupings such as nations, to covenant together to work and pray for the inauguration of union by a date agreed amongst them... Since unity, mission and renewal are inseparable, we invite the member churches to plan jointly so that all in each place may act together forthwith in mission and service to the world" (*Unity Begins at Home*, 77-78).

This quite spontaneous suggestion of covenanting came up against the history of the word in the great conflicts of the 17th century regarding Scottish covenanters and

the puritans, and the word "covenant" was later replaced by the phrase "an act of commitment". However, six churches in Wales continued to have a joint covenant committee and to discuss "the implications of covenanting". The discussions in the British Isles have not produced any major breakthrough, apart from union of Reformed churches in England. But a significant number of joint congregations have demonstrated the will to live and witness together on the local level.

At the WCC's fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968), the section on "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", again not using the word "covenant", expressed its substance. It articulated "a fresh understanding of the unity of all Christians in all places. This calls the churches in all places to realize that they belong together and are called to act together. In a time when human interdependence is so evident, it is the more imperative to make visible the bonds which unite Christians in universal fellowship" (*Uppsala Report*, 17). More explicitly, the WCC's fifth assembly (Nairobi 1975) formulated the first of three guidelines for future WCC programmes as follows: "All programmes of the WCC should be conceived and implemented in a way which enables the member churches to grow towards a truly ecumenical, conciliar fellowship. In this respect, the programmes of the WCC should become living expressions of the covenant relationship among the churches within the WCC and foster growth towards fuller unity. These programmes should challenge the churches beyond the brokenness of our human situation as well as beyond the partial, incomplete character of our ecumenical efforts towards deeper sustained and sustaining relationships" (*Breaking Barriers: Nairobi 1975*, 297).

The clearest instance of discussions on church unity or "conciliar fellowship of local churches" where "covenant" emerged strongly was the Consultation on Church Union\* (COCU) in the US. The scheme proposed in 1988 by and to nine churches was entitled: "Churches in Covenant Communion: The Church of Christ Uniting". The whole document was written as a covenant act and process. An explanatory pamphlet said: "It begins at a moment in time when

church representatives stand together before God and the world and make promises to each other. It continues as a process of growing daily into deeper understanding and spiritual unity. God has made covenant with us in Jesus Christ, and has drawn us to God by cords of saving love. In grateful response to God's covenant with us, we make covenant with one another to live henceforth, not as strangers or competitors, but as one community in Christ – just as our Saviour prayed that we should. Covenanting is not an interim step towards eventual church union, because covenanting is itself a valid form of church union, though differing from the more traditional forms."

In the ecumenical movement and among the churches the covenant has been mentioned in terms of God's new covenant in Christ, which demands that, according to the WCC basis,\* the churches "seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit". And that common calling is to renewal, unity, mission and service. At the WCC's sixth assembly (Vancouver 1983), one of the priority areas articulated for WCC programmes was: "To engage member churches in a conciliar process of mutual commitment (covenant) to justice, peace and the integrity of all creation... The foundation of this emphasis should be confessing Christ as the life of the world and Christian resistance to the demonic powers of death in racism, sexism, caste oppression, economic exploitation, militarism, violations of human rights, and the misuse of science and technology." Curiously, the word "covenant" was put in parenthesis.

The fact is that there was much debate about the use of the concept of covenant both during the assembly and in the years following. Nevertheless, the world convocation on "Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation" in Seoul in 1990 made several major affirmations "in responding anew to God's covenant". The convocation proposed as an "act of covenanting" examples of faithful action required for promoting justice, peace and the integrity of creation. It said: "They translate the response to God's covenant into acts of *mutual* commitment within the covenant community. The building of links of solidarity around specific is-

sues and concerns, of networks of communication and support, is the most urgent priority for action today. This underlines the fact that the human response to God's covenant is a corporate act."

### BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

It is clear that ecumenical thinking is still at an initial stage concerning the relation between covenants given by God, the human acceptance of them and, within that context, covenants made among human beings themselves. What, then, is the biblical foundation for an act of covenanting in response to God's covenant? The word "covenant" in the OT, *berith*, is related to various languages in the ancient Near East and has the general meaning of a strong reliable bond or treaty. But while there is abundant evidence of covenants as a normal feature of international relations, as demonstrated by Hittite records of the second millennium before Christ, only in the Bible is "covenant" used to describe the relations between God and humanity, and especially between God and Israel, old and new. God is always the true subject of covenants and lays down the conditions of the covenant, which are based on God's character as holy, righteous and merciful.

In the OT record, three covenants which God makes can be mentioned in the order in which they appear in scripture. The first is God's covenant with Noah before and after the flood which destroyed nearly all creation as a result of human corruption and violence on the earth. This primeval story speaks of God's everlasting covenant with the whole creation, the rainbow being the visible sign of God's grace (Gen. 6-9).

The second covenant is God seeking to create a people bound in faith and obedience, starting with the call to Abraham to go out to a land which he will be shown. God says he will make of Abraham "a great nation, and I will bless you... and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 12:2-3); and later: "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless... this is my covenant with you; You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations" (Gen. 17:1,4). This is the promise of the new humanity which exists by the blessing, shared empowerment and life in community.

The third covenant is the centrepiece of God's revelation to the people of Israel. When God rescued the people from Egypt and accompanied them through the wilderness, Moses went to the mountain, where he received the word of the Lord for the people: "You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now, therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation" (Ex. 19:4-6). This covenant includes God's claim not only on the people of Israel but also on all the earth. The content to the covenant is given in the book of the covenant (Ex. 20-23), and particularly in the ten commandments (Ex. 20:1-17).

Four basic features of these commandments should be noted. (1) They are the proclamation of a fact. The people's existence derives solely from Yahweh, the One who has been present with them, hearing their cry and liberating them from slavery in Egypt, and leading them in the desert so that through the struggle and learning God's way they may become a people ready for God's service. That is the foundation and living reality of the covenant. (2) God demands as a consequence of this fact that they have no other gods, that they not give their allegiance to other powers or ideologies or styles of life. There must be no graven images or representations of God other than the constant awareness that they, like all human beings, bear the image and likeness of God. Nor must they try to manipulate God, for this is taking God's name in vain. (3) The covenant calls for the celebration of sabbath, which enables people to pause and recollect their place before God in creation and to follow a rhythm of respecting the identity of all creatures and the interdependence with them under God. This is further developed in the sabbath and Jubilee years, when the land is rested, prisoners and slaves are freed, the poor, the widows and strangers have a chance to share the fruit of the land, and all things have the state of shalom, of the imbalances being put right (Ex. 23:10-11; Lev. 25). (4) At the centre of the covenant is a solemn call to respect and maintain the in-

tegrity of all persons in the community as well as living creatures.

Faith in the one God remains faith only as it is practised in the way which is unfolded, and that means all realms of life. Faith is ethics, and ethics is faith. Faith means faithfulness to all that God demands in the covenant, which involves our relations with God, humanity and the rest of creation. It is this undivided character of faith and ethics which is sealed by the act of the covenant – the bond, obligation, disposition, commitment. The people offer their allegiance to keep the covenant, and blood is offered up to God and sprinkled on the people as a symbol of life, binding them together as a people to be witnesses in word and deed to the peoples of the world.

The subsequent history of this covenant people is the long drama of how they kept the covenant and renewed it from time to time (Deut. 31:9-13), and especially how they broke it, with disastrous consequences for themselves and for creation (e.g. Isa. 24:4-6). The prophets testified to the failure of Israel to live up to the covenant teaching. It was Jeremiah who saw that God would have to make a new covenant in which everyone, of whatever age or status, being forgiven, would know God and walk with God in a relationship of responsible faithfulness in their whole life and in creation (Jer. 31:31-34).

This new covenant is fulfilled in Jesus Christ,\* who comes and calls people to a radical change of mind and attitude and to belief in the gospel of the kingdom of God\* in righteousness, reminding the people that they cannot serve God and mammon (Mark 1:15; Matt. 6:24,33). It is he who embodies the covenant. In the dread hour of betrayal, he shares the paschal meal with his disciples: "This is my body that is for you... This cup is the new covenant in my blood" (1 Cor. 11:24-25; see **eucharist**); and in the presence of the destroying powers of the world at the cross, his blood is poured out for the life of the world. In communion\* with him in his body and blood, Christians offer their body and blood for the life of the world, thus being an inseparable part of God's covenant to continue Christ's eucharistic ministry in creation\* for justice and peace. This is done in the light of Christ's "new commandment" to

love one another (John 13:34-35). The competence for doing this comes from God, “who has made us competent to be servants of a new covenant”, not in the written code (of the old covenant) but in the life-giving Spirit, in whose presence there is freedom (2 Cor. 3:4-6,17). This freedom in the Spirit means being part of a new creation in Christ entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation\* (2 Cor. 5:17-20).

Thus although the covenant is a matter of God’s unmerited grace, it requires constant, loyal commitment in the daily realities of existence. And for the members of the worldwide Body of Christ, the church,\* the commitment must be a mutual one carried out in a continuous process of taking counsel together on ways to be obedient to the covenant God.

See also **covenanting, New Testament and Christian unity, Old Testament and Christian unity.**

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## COVENANTING

COVENANTING is a concept of visible church unity\* that seeks to respond to the diversity of traditions within the unity Christ gives to and wills for the church. As a modified expression of organic union (see **union, organic**), it calls the churches to unite in “sacred things” (*communio in sacris*) – faith,\* baptism,\* eucharist,\* ministry\* and mission\* – without organizational unity. In covenanting, each church maintains, for the present and as long as each church shall decide, its ecclesiastical structures, traditions, forms of worship and systems of ministerial placement. Nevertheless, in a solemn act the churches ask God through the Holy Spirit to create out of their separated lives a new ecclesial community committed to common mission in the world.

The first serious initiative towards covenanting as a model of reconciling divided churches came in Wales. Responding

to a resolution from the British conference on Faith and Order in Nottingham in 1964, six Welsh churches formed the Joint Covenant Committee, which produced three documents: “The Call to Covenant” (1966), “Covenanting in Wales” (1968) and “Covenanting for Union in Wales” (1971), which included specific proposals. On 18 January 1975, the Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist and United Reformed churches in Wales made solemn covenant in worship “to work and pray in common obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, in order that by the Holy Spirit we may be brought into one visible church to serve together in mission to the glory of God the Father”. The Welsh pattern is one of mutual recognition and common mission based on seven “recognitions”, namely of the same faith, of the same calling of God to serve all humanity, of already being in the one church of Jesus Christ, of common baptism and membership, of ordained ministries, of patterns of worship and sacramental life that are “manifestly gifts of Christ”, and of the same concern for church government. Since the covenanting act in 1975, the formation of a united church in Wales came closer with the publication of two consensus reports: “The Principles of Visible Unity in Wales” (1980) and “Ministry in a United Church: From Recognition to Reconciliation” (1986). In 1997 the Commission of the Covenanted Churches in Wales put forward a proposal for an “ecumenical bishop”.

In England the covenanting process began in 1973, when the United Reformed Church invited all Christian churches in England to develop a new approach to visible unity. Their Churches’ Unity Commission eventually articulated a proposal for covenanting in “Visible Unity: Ten Propositions” (1976). Five churches – Anglican, Disciples of Christ, Methodist, Moravian and United Reformed – then constituted the Churches’ Council for Covenanting, whose major document “Towards Visible Unity: Proposals for a Covenant” (1980) put forth their interim hope for unity. The English covenant shared similarities with the Welsh, including full recognition of each other as churches, the placement of their unity in the wider context of all churches, mutual recognition of each other’s baptism and members,

receiving members of the covenanting churches at the eucharist, acceptance of one another's ministries as "true ministries of word and sacrament in the holy catholic church", and commitment to common ordinations in the future using a common ordinal. Additional dimensions were to include, following the lead of the WCC Faith and Order commission, the development of processes of joint decision making, a respect for the rights of conscience\* and freedom of thought and action. However, when the churches voted in 1982, the Methodists, Disciples of Christ and United Reformed voted affirmatively, but the Church of England failed to win final approval when the proposals missed by only a few votes to secure the required two-thirds majority in the house of clergy of the general synod.

The covenanting concept was endorsed during this same period in several commonwealth countries, usually after an impasse had been reached on plans of structural union. Activity, mostly short-lived, took place in Ghana, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and Aotearoa New Zealand. None produced lasting fruits, especially as Anglicans turned away from intimate ecclesial relations with Protestants and became preoccupied with possible reconciliation with the Roman Catholic Church.

Learning from their Welsh and English brothers and sisters, the US churches in the US Consultation on Church Union\* (COCU) developed another variation of covenanting. The nine churches of COCU – Episcopal, Disciples, Presbyterian, United Methodist, African-American Methodists (AME, AME Zion, and CME), United Church of Christ, Community Churches – based their proposals for a united future on two documents: "The COCU Consensus" (1984) and "The Churches in Covenant Communion: The Church of Christ Uniting" (1989), both deeply indebted to the WCC's convergence text *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*.\* COCU proposed eight elements of covenanting: claiming unity in faith, mutual recognition of one another's members in one baptism, mutual recognition of each other as churches, commitment to become an inclusive church (by race and gender), mutual recognition and reconciliation of ordained ministry, establishing regu-

lar eucharistic fellowship, engaging together in mission and evangelism, and forming appropriate structures of mutual accountability and decision making. While definitely not duplicating the various continuing denominational structures, the "councils of oversight", varying in composition and operation from place to place, were to exercise leadership in the covenanting process "as member churches move forward year by year into deeper unity in Christ". The essential dimensions of "covenanting" became encompassed under the language of "koinonia ecclesiology" used in recent F&O conversations, and bilateral dialogues. The aim has been to express the visible unity of the church without merging structures, and to hold together the authentic diversity of churches in koinonia.

In 1999 COCU's 18th plenary in St Louis was faced with the resistance of two churches to move forward towards covenant communion. The Presbyterian Church (USA) failed to give approval when "Churches in Covenant Communion", the primary vision document, was not sustained in the required majority of presbyteries. The historic Reformed hesitancy about the office of bishop flared up in a new generation. The Episcopal Church also expressed hesitancy to enter into full communion, when other COCU churches seemed uncertain about a reconciled ministry of deacons, presbyters and bishops in apostolic succession – a consensus point since the beginnings of COCU. It was also clear that many Episcopalians seemed predisposed towards their concordat with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, while others exclusively preferred their dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church.

In a strategic move the St Louis plenary decided to remove, for the time being, the proposal for the mutual recognition and reconciliation of ordained ministries and to claim the other seven elements as the basis for entering into a new relationship under the new name of Churches Uniting in Christ (CUIC). At the same time, the participating communions were to pledge in their common life to combat energetically the pervasive racism that marginalizes and divides people and churches in the US and throughout the world. All nine churches were by the summer of 2001 to vote on entering into this expres-

sion of church unity. The CUIC would, it was hoped, be inaugurated 18-22 January – during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity – in 2002. In the meantime, a special commission started working towards a common theological understanding of the ministry of oversight – personal, collegial and corporate – in a way that invites universal recognition by other churches. CUIC did in fact come into being in January 2002.

As its brief history reveals, covenanting is not a magic formula. In some instances and places it was unachievable; in a few places it goes forward with promise and hope. As with all other models of unity, the decisions necessary to sustain covenant communion are often affected more by historical burdens and non-theological factors than by the adequacy of the concept. Its value lies in the commitment to bind divided churches in an undeniable, visible unity as a sign of God's unity given in Jesus Christ for the whole world.

See also **covenant; unity, models of; unity, ways to.**

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## CREATION

IMPLICIT in the confession of the Judao-Christian tradition that the world is God's creation are a number of fundamental themes, most of which recur explicitly or as assumptions in the literature of the ecumenical movement. Among these, the following may be named:

*Purposeful:* To designate the world as creation is to deny that it is either random or value-neutral. While the tradition does not find its redemptive principle within creation as such, it does assume the purposefulness of the created order.

*Contingent, yet distinct:* The creation is wholly dependent upon its Creator, yet it is not an emanation; and in relation to God it is both "other" and internally comprehensive.

*In essence, "good":* Despite its forthrightness with respect to evil, the tradition insists on the essential goodness of creation as the work of God. In the words of the WCC's Evanston assembly (1954), "this world, disfigured and distorted as it is, is still God's world. It is his creation, in which he is at work, and which he sustains in being until the day when the glory of his new creation will fully appear."

*Made out of nothing:* The dogma *creatio ex nihilo*, officially formulated at the fourth Lateran council of 1215 (though appearing as early as 2 Macc.), denies the assumption of pre-existent matter and therefore, at least in theory, curbs the persistent "religious" temptation to attribute evil to materiality.

*Reflecting divine commitment:* That the world is God's own work suggests the continuing commitment of the Creator to creation. While this implication of creation theology has frequently been neglected or underdeveloped, it is a rudimentary assumption of biblical faith, is foundational for the doctrines of providence and *creatio continua* and is confirmed by the central affirmation of Christian faith – the incarnation of the Word. In its deliberations and documents, the WCC has frequently drawn upon this as-

sumption, e.g., “God has not abandoned this world... He rules and over-rules its tangled history... The world in which we... live is the world that God has loved from all eternity in Jesus Christ” (Evanston).

*Confessional:* Belief in creation is not based upon scientific observation or philosophical speculation. As in the historic creeds, the epistemological presupposition of all creation theology is faith\* in God.

### PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE DOCTRINE

Like every area of Christian teaching, the doctrine of creation is attended by inherent or acquired ideas and practices which must be regarded as problematic. A responsible theology must be aware of the real and potential distortions which result from such problems as the following three.

Especially in the 19th and 20th centuries, in reaction to modern methods of scriptural analysis as well as the impact of the natural sciences, *biblical literalism* has marred the discussion of creation. Taking the Genesis creation sagas as literal accounts of the world's beginnings, many Christians (esp. in North America) have entered into conflict with the advocates of other theories, notably the theory of evolution (see *creationism*).

This approach is linked with a second recurring problem, namely the tendency to consider creation *an event rather than a process*. Moreover, the event in question is pictured as a *past* event – something which occurred long ago, at the beginning of time, and was almost immediately distorted by “the fall”. While such conceptualization sustains a theoretical confession of creation, it is almost wholly lacking in existential import. Furthermore, when combined (as it often is) with a strong emphasis on “personal salvation”, it easily leads to a third problematic area: the tendency to regard salvation\* as salvation *from* the world.

Although Christological and Trinitarian theology links creation and redemption, there has always been a temptation in and around Christendom to “spiritualize” the doctrine of redemption and thus to supersede creation. This is historically associated with Gnostic and other forms of world denigration, yet its roots are deeper than these

influences, involving perhaps the most subtle form of sin\* – the abhorrence and rejection of our creaturehood.

### A “NEW” PROBLEM: ANTHROPOCENTRISM

The theological emphases of the WCC have demonstrated a consistent sensitivity to the problems just enumerated. Ecumenical Christianity has generally fostered responsible scholarship with respect to biblical interpretation; it has been open to process theology and other modern schools of thought, including modern physics, which have helped to replace static with dynamic views of the universe; e.g. the Uppsala assembly report (1968) states that “the Living God [is] the creative force within everything that is constantly renewing all things”. Above all it has accentuated the world as the locus of God's redemptive activity, thus combating the otherworldliness of much conventional religion.

Within recent decades, another problematic dimension of the Christian concept of creation has surfaced in a conspicuous way, and a cursory examination of WCC literature demonstrates that ecumenical thought has not been as sensitive in this area. In the light of contemporary threats to the natural world, Christianity in general seems to have concentrated so wholeheartedly upon the well-being of the *human* creature that it has fostered a civilization whose “manifold crisis” (C.F. von Weizsäcker) is in part its apparently inevitable propensity to befoul and destroy its natural environment.\*

Many contemporary environmentalists have accepted the accusation of historian Lynn White Jr that the Judeo-Christian tradition, accentuating, as it seems to do, the “dominion” of the human being over all of nature, contains “the historical roots of our ecological crisis”. While as historical analysis such an explanation must be deemed simplistic, it cannot be taken lightly by contemporary Christians. One must at least ask whether some 20th-century voices in the ecumenical discussion were not too eager to celebrate modern secularity and Western technology.

Secularism reduces the natural order to a one-dimensionality devoid both of mystery and meaning. Eager to accentuate human dignity and responsibility and to avoid the

hint of pantheism, Christian theologians have sometimes failed to discern the dangerous overtones of their affirmation of secularity. Read against the backdrop of present-day concern for the environment, a statement like the following (from the preparatory essays for the 1966 Geneva conference on "Church and Society") re-inforces the need for theology to be vigilant with respect to the negative aspects of its own positive pronouncements: "The biblical story... secularizes nature. It places creation – the physical world – in the context of the covenant relation and does not try to understand it apart from that relation. The history of God with his people has a setting and this setting is created nature. But the movement of history, not the structure of the setting, is central to reality. Physical creation even participates in this history; its timeless or cyclical character, so far as it exists, is unimportant. *The physical world, in other words, does not have its meaning in itself.* There are no spirits at work in it which can help or harm mankind. It is the creation of God alone and is the object of his manipulation" (*The Church amid Revolution*).

Since the secular mentality offers no opposition to the technological society, it is not surprising that the same mood which permitted the WCC and other Christian agencies to celebrate "the secular city" simultaneously regarded Western technology (see **science and technology**) uncritically, sometimes indeed in almost salvific terms – and did so on the basis of a type of creation theology. E.g.: "The traditional Christian doctrine of creation is an obvious basis for the view that God acts in and upon nature. It teaches that nature is both to be dominated by man and to be offered to man's contemplation and awe... Nature is under both the providence of God and the mastery of men... We cannot and we must not speak of nature apart from human perception in the historical development of knowledge, since man gives meaning to nature, as the only being called by God to name, to keep and to use nature; as such, he is the crown of creation. In this sense the comprehension of nature is theologically anthropocentric... Jewish and Christian theology... has thus freed men for their critical examination of natural phenomena. They can proceed with scientific and technical research

and development without fear of being impious or guilty of desecration. It is this deification or de-sacralization of nature which is one basic starting point of true science and of its results in technology" (*Christians in the Technical and Social Revolutions of Our Time*, 1967).

The same document does go on to speak of human "stewardship" of nature;\* yet in making the language of stewardship almost synonymous with that of mastery, it evokes a posture which seems calculated to confirm the worst suspicions of scientists and environmentalists who link technocracy and Christian anthropocentrism: "'Subdue the earth and have dominion,' God says to man (Gen. 1:28). What does this mean? Does God give man the vocation of controlling or dominating the world which he puts at man's disposal? Yes. Moreover, God puts no limit upon man's dominion or control over nature except that it has to be fulfilled under God's lordship: it is man's *mastery* and God's *lordship*. Man is responsible to use his stewardship of nature to make possible a fuller human life for all mankind; in this way he regains his original God-given destiny for which Christ dies and has risen... Man is both the master and the steward of nature."

In a similar vein, the deliberations at the third assembly (New Delhi 1961) seemed prepared to embrace the technological mindset – or at least to see no negating potentiality within technology itself: "For Christians, who recognize that Christ is Lord of the mind, so that all that has been rightly discovered belongs to us, there cannot conceivably be any kind of choice between science and religious faith. For science is essentially a method of discovering facts about nature and ordering them and interpreting them within a conceptual pattern. Pure science is concerned with the body of knowledge thus acquired; technology with the useful application of this scientific knowledge and technique. The nature that scientists investigate is part of God's creation; the truth they discover is part of God's truth; the abilities they use are God-given. *The Christian should welcome scientific discoveries as new steps in man's dominion over nature.*"

While the anthropological and technological optimism of such pronouncements

has usually been qualified in WCC circles by reference to such unavoidable aspects of the Tradition as the doctrine of human sin,\* for a long time the Council, like most other Christian bodies, did not exercise a critical regard for its possible over-emphasis on the *human* creature or (more to the point) explore the Judaeo-Christian tradition for its positive and independent valuation of *extra-human* creation.

### "THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION"

The recognition of this neglect inspired – and in turn was stimulated by – the decision of the Vancouver assembly (1983) "to engage member churches in a conciliar process of mutual commitment (covenant) to justice, peace and *the integrity of creation*" (JPIC). Exploration of the integrity of creation was expedited by the growing urgency of the multifaceted crisis of the environment and the recognition by many Christian scholars of the important contributions the tradition has to make to the search for new and better human attitudes towards the earth and its myriad creatures.

Meeting in Amsterdam in 1987, a small group of scientists and theologians reflected on this facet of the JPIC theme and achieved remarkable unanimity both in their assessment of the problem ("the disintegration of creation") and the pertinence of neglected dimensions of the Christian tradition for "reintegrating God's creation". Their report drew on the biblical metaphor of stewardship, but in contradistinction to the earlier reference cited above assumed the solidarity of the human "steward" with all the creatures for whom the steward is responsible and deplored the language of mastery, which "not only ignores the most rudimentary *theology* of the biblical Tradition, which attributes sovereignty to God *alone* (Calvin), but bypasses as well the Tradition's most salient *anthropology*, which confesses on the one hand the permanent *accountability* of the human creature... and on the other is consistent in attributing human *pretension* to sovereignty to rank sin and disobedience."

A subsequent consultation in Granvollen, Norway, in 1988 produced similar conclusions: "The drive to have 'mastery' over creation has resulted in the senseless ex-

ploitation of natural resources, the alienation of the land from people and the destruction of indigenous cultures. It ignores the experience of oppressed peoples like the blacks and women who suffer under its weight. It also undermines other highly developed systems of scientific, religious and philosophical thought. For example, Western medicine as it developed and spread over the world began to supplant indigenous systems of medicine which have a more holistic approach to health care and healing."

For the first time in any consistent manner, such documents demonstrated the church's readiness to consider the creation for its own sake and not only as the setting for the human drama. There is even a sense in which the human creature is a late and perhaps a reluctant participant in a creational glory which precedes and vastly transcends its own consciousness: "Creation came into being by the will and love of the Triune God, and as such it possesses an inner cohesion and goodness. Though human eyes may not always discern it, every creature and the whole creation in chorus bear witness to the glorious unity and harmony with which the creation is endowed. And when our human eyes are opened and our tongues unloosed, we too learn how to praise and participate in the life, love, power and freedom that is God's continuing gift and grace" (Granvollen, 16).

### FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Clearly, the question ecumenical Christianity will have to address in this area of theology is whether the biblical and traditional bases of the faith are able to sustain a "theology of nature" which can function both *critically* – as a prophetic critique of the rampant technocratic manipulation and rape of the natural order – and as a *source of vision and courage* for the development of alternative conceptions of the relation between God, humanity and extra-human creation. To achieve this, it will be necessary for Christians to overcome the abiding ambiguity about the world which has tempted them to distinguish too sharply between nature and grace,\* secular and sacred, creation and "new creation", and to entertain doctrines of salvation which in effect bypass this world. Creation can no longer be treated as

a mere preliminary to the gospel story. In a context comprising enormous threats to the future of the planet, the hope of the gospel must be articulated as the redemption of creation itself.

See also **anthropology, theological; church and world; covenant; history; justice, peace and the integrity of creation; providence; secularization.**

DOUGLAS JOHN HALL

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## CREATIONISM

THOUGH all Christians are creationists in the sense of believing that God created the universe, the term "creationism" now generally refers to the belief that, contrary to theories of naturalistic or theistic evolution, the world was created in the relatively recent past in six 24-hour days and suffered a universal flood as described in the biblical account in Genesis.

After the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859, many Christians – including conservative Protestants – gradually came to accept some form of theistic evolution. Following the first world war, however, fundamentalists in the United States, led by William Jennings Bryan, pressed to ban the teaching of biological evolution in the

schools. This movement climaxed in the famous Scopes "Monkey Trial" of 1925. Negative publicity in the national press dealt a serious blow to the anti-evolution movement and led to its gradual demise.

In its narrow contemporary form, creationism, or "creation science", was developed primarily by Henry Morris. Morris and like-minded fundamentalists, following the lead of George McCready Price (1870-1963), seek scientific evidence for a young earth and a worldwide flood. Hence, contrary to many earlier fundamentalists, such as Bryan, who allowed for an old earth and perhaps even some evolution of lower life-forms, creation scientists deny all biological evolution. Dissatisfied with the increasing acceptance of theistic evolution in the American Scientific Affiliation, an organization of fundamentalist and evangelical scientists founded in 1941, Morris founded the Creation Research Society in 1963, which helped to spawn a number of related organizations. Beginning in the 1970s, creation scientists promoted legislation, sometimes with temporary success, to require US public schools to give equal time to "scientific creationism" as a balance to the teaching of biological evolution. Many other Christians, including mainline Protestants, many evangelicals, and Roman Catholics, opposed such legislation and attempts to limit the term "creationism" to a literalistic reading of Genesis. Though generated principally in the US, creationism has been spread around the globe by its adherents.

See also **evangelicals, fundamentalists.**

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## CREEDS

FOR THE RESTORATION of the full communion\* of Christians, a common confession of the

faith\* will be an essential prerequisite. From the very beginning of the modern ecumenical movement, with the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral (1888),\* it has been recognized that the classic creeds, notably the Apostles’\* and the Nicene\* creeds, are the most common ecumenical formulation and the most appropriate. While the WCC is not authorized by its member churches to compose or propose a creed to the churches, studies “Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today” assist the churches in their pilgrimage towards full reconciliation.\* This article treats the definition and use of creeds, their role in the ecumenical movement and issues being addressed today in connection with them.

Before the text of the New Testament itself was received, and as these texts were being brought together in the early church, short formulations were in use as elements in initiation and instruction and occasionally as authentication of orthodoxy (see 1 Cor. 12:3; Phil. 2:11; Rom. 10:9; 1 John 4:2-3,15). Such formulations were sometimes spontaneous acclamations or *homologia*; in other cases they took the form of summaries of elements affirmed to be essential for Christian initiation or evangelical witness. They represent a personal testimony of continuity with the faith of the apostles and communion with the church\* into which one was being baptized. Often they bear the character of prayers or hymns.

As creeds emerged in the liturgical practice of the church, their structure was Trinitarian. While the formulas may have differed from local church to local church, their character and content were rather consistent. The word “symbol” is often used for these early creeds.

In the patristic period, after the reception of the biblical canon\* and the liberation from persecution, creeds of initiation became useful vehicles for a common confession of faith. This function was particularly important in the early councils (325, 381, 431, 451). Later councils likewise put forward affirmations as formulations of, then as criteria for, the authentic confession of the apostolic faith. Confessions, or confessional statements of the faith, gained particular importance during the Reformation,\* when they served the functions both of clarifica-

tion and differentiation on the one hand and of uniting the confessing parties on the other.

In some branches of the Reformation, covenants\* became the primary mode of formulating the faith in a similar fashion to creeds and confessions. These covenants are rooted in the experience of confession found in the Hebrew scriptures and play a credal function in congregations and churches. Elements of the Free church and Pentecostal traditions claim to have “no creed but scripture”; however, careful listening to the worship, preaching and hymnody of these communities discloses both fundamental affirmations and often tests of orthodoxy which are no less specific and not necessarily any more biblical than those of churches affirming the Nicene Creed.

The early use of creeds was in the rites of Christian initiation. From these baptismal formulas the church drew the formulations put forth in the early councils. The purpose of the creeds in the life of the early conciliar fellowship was to provide common affirmations that also excluded anything judged unacceptable as a formulation of the apostolic faith. They were thus contextual expressions of the biblical faith, in a particular time and place. Their use to bind the ecumenical family together in affirmations about the Trinity\* and incarnation\* precedes their use as tests of orthodoxy or impositions by secular authorities.

From the earliest times, credal differences have featured in the church divisions that give urgency to the ecumenical movement. The formulations of Chalcedon\*(451) were rejected by the Armenians, Syrians and Copts, giving rise to a schism between churches now spoken of as Oriental Orthodox\* and the rest of the Christian world. The Western insertion of the phrase “and from the Son” (*filioque\**) into the Nicene Creed – adopted, only after long resistance by the Roman church probably in the year 1014 – has been an element in the continuing schism\* between East and West. Certain Free churches and Quakers have considered the “imposition” of creeds a church-dividing issue; others express doubts about whether the content of the creeds is really affirmed by those who confess them liturgically.

Once formulated, the classic creeds came to function as theological summaries and as

such supplied the outline of theological treatises. Thus the Nicene Creed – and in the West the Apostles' Creed – formed the structure around which much of systematic theology was built. The familiarity of the creeds from their doxological affirmation in worship\* enabled them to serve admirably as a focus for synthetic theological reflection. Similarly, in areas of fresh evangelization, they became the framework for catechetical instruction. Beyond this normal use for evangelical witness, prayer and teaching, they were also used as instruments of social control and ecclesiastical scrutiny where the state\* was engaged as the instrument for ensuring orthodoxy.

The ecumenical role of the classic creeds has been affirmed by both sides at the time of the Reformation and thereafter. Luther and Calvin insisted on the credal basis of their confessional reforms, and the Anglican Articles of Religion and Book of Common Prayer are clear about their credal orthodoxy. However, the interpretation of these creeds and the church's role in this – as with the interpretation of scripture – continue to be an element of ecumenical discussion, only gradually moving towards resolution.

In the 19th century, both the World's Evangelical Alliance\* and the Anglican bishops at Lambeth made the role of the credal affirmations central to the call for reconciliation and common evangelical collaboration. In the Faith and Order movement, credal discussions had taken a central place from the beginning. At the New Delhi assembly (1961), building on the Toronto statement\*(1950), the WCC incorporated central elements of the Nicene affirmation into its own basis\* of membership (notably the Trinitarian formula "Father, Son and Holy Spirit", and the phrase "according to the scriptures").

The classic credal affirmations and their use in worship have been an important element in progress towards reconciliation in both bilateral discussions and church union negotiations. Discussions with non-credal churches have likewise begun to show a common ground in the Trinitarian faith which is affirmed by these communities, though not often in the liturgical and confessional forms used by the classic Orthodox, Protestant, Anglican and Roman Catholic churches. These affirmations are

being taken most seriously, and the non-credal churches are reassessing the usefulness of the classical formulations in a new context. Often the history of the rejection of credal formulations does not lie in their content so much as in their use by states for coercion or by ecclesiastical institutions not judged to be serious about their content.

Throughout history, but especially since the Reformation, churches and individuals have seen fit from time to time to set forth their faith in confessional statements adapted to the times in which they live. This often happens out of a sense of crisis, as in the confessions of the Reformation. Such statements can become ways of clarifying the faith of a community and producing unity. Among Protestants, those in the Reformed tradition have been more prone to produce new confessions than other Christians.

In recent centuries the ethical context has been of particular importance in eliciting confessions or creeds, as with Hitler's Germany or apartheid\* in South Africa. If one notes the history of the 4th and 5th centuries closely, the ethical and social vigour is no less present in those earlier affirmations; likewise, the doxological and orthodox character of many contemporary formulations elicited by the ethical urgency of the gospel stands up well when compared with the classic formulations.

As the churches join the pilgrimage towards that unity\* to which they are called in the gospel of Jesus Christ, unity of confession will be essential if a true conciliar fellowship is to be realized. The different approaches to creeds, their relationship to church fellowship and to authority, the means for recognizing the apostolic faith in a creed and for recognizing one another as churches authentically confessing this apostolic faith, the sufficiency or adequacy of any formulations of the faith, and the limits of diversity in the interpretation of these formulations are all elements to be considered in fidelity to God's will for Christian unity.

The WCC has provided a commentary on the Nicene Creed, *Confessing the One Faith*, that may contribute to the day when the churches can confess together their common apostolic faith. Many national councils have produced studies contributing to this credal basis for unity.

See also **baptism, common confession, consensus, consensus fidelium, teaching authority.**

JEFFREY GROS

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## CRITICISM OF THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT AND OF THE WCC

DURING the second half of the 20th century, the ecumenical movement has become increasingly polycentric as a network of relations between Christians and the churches. The movement as such is now so much wider and deeper than any of its structured expressions that to articulate constructive or negative criticisms has become more and more complicated. Christians from diverse backgrounds – confessional, geographical, cultural and political – have met in a bewildering variety of ecumenical forums. The agendas sooner or later touch on almost every divisive issue within and between the churches. Agreements, convergences and differences ultimately come into sharper relief. A position which favours or claims one point of view may provoke objections within church constituencies or even from people who are not affiliated with any church but feel confident to prescribe what the church

should say or do, especially in public arenas. Some of these criticisms are based on deliberate or unintended caricatures and judgments shaped from a distance.

The WCC, which remains the most visible international expression of the ecumenical movement, has since its foundation in 1948 been subject to diverse and sometimes contradictory criticisms, from both within and outside its constituencies. And it is often the focal point for judgments on the ecumenical vision, motivations, intermediate goals, activities and institutional forms. Many critics, strongly committed to ecumenism and to the WCC, voiced their remarks at the WCC's invitation during the process of study and consultation "Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC" between 1989 and 1997, and during the discussions of the report at the eighth assembly (Harare 1998).

For the purposes of this entry, criticisms of the ecumenical movement and the WCC are divided into four general categories: theological, ecclesiological, political and institutional.

### THEOLOGICAL CRITICISM

The main flaw in the present ecumenical movement, some contend, is the juxtaposition of so many varied visions, often flawed and limited, of what church unity is. As a result there is a potpourri of criteria by which ecumenical advances and breakthroughs, standstills and setbacks are identified. An ecumenical "success" for one is considered a "failure" by another. Consider, for example, the opposing reactions within and between churches to women priests and bishops, to the introduction of "inclusive language" into the Bible and liturgy, or to the permissibility of abortion.

Although no church equates church unity\* with a uniformity that goes beyond revealed essentials, some nevertheless fear an underlying ecumenical yearning for a future church so monolithic and well-organized that the free, unsolicited promptings of the Holy Spirit\* and the exercise of the Spirit's diverse gifts throughout the grassroots will be stifled by the weight of a church modelled as a multinational religious corporation – a globalized Coca-Cola, with the same product, the same packaging, the same slogan

and the same management techniques in every culture.

Other critics suggest that the underlying ecumenical motivation is political expediency in the face of dwindling congregations – and funds. Or more radically, that the impetus towards the reunion of denominations is not the product of evangelistic zeal, fervently held doctrinal convictions and biblical spirituality, but weariness of and scepticism about the real value of denominational systems; it is considered “a response to this sense of being about to become extinct, rather than to any zeal for union as such” (Malcolm Muggeridge, 1970).

The search for unity, some contend, is covering a multitude of sins by soft-peddalling theological barriers in favour of organizational unity based on cooperative social action. A persistent emphasis in study documents on what already unites the churches papers over what theologically really separates or should separate them. Church unity is exalted at the expense of truth. A Scottish critic called the ecumenical movement “the greatest disaster to affect the Christian church this century. It has reduced the professing churches of this country to a collection of bloodless, spineless and boneless organizations, which can hardly raise a whimper on the side of Christ and his truth.”

In 1948, a month before the WCC’s first assembly, delegates of 58 conservative Evangelical, mostly fundamentalist, churches in 29 countries formed the International Council of Christian Churches, in order “to stand against the WCC”. Though small in numbers, the ICCC continues to reflect widespread extreme conservative Protestant charges against the WCC: its theological error in failing to uphold biblical infallibility, and its betrayal of Protestantism in accepting Orthodox membership and cooperation with the Roman Catholic Church. Many Protestant fundamentalists justify the distance they keep from all ecumenical groups by appealing to the biblical prohibition of alliance with unbelievers (see **Fundamentalists**).

Other critics of councils of churches in general, and the WCC in particular, focus on what is judged to be a failure to hold together in balanced tension major theological items on the Christian agenda. In the case of

the WCC, while some charge that doctrinal (“faith and order”) issues are subordinated to “social” (“life and work”) concerns, others hold the reverse: the WCC is too “church”.

The 1961 integration of the International Missionary Council\* into the WCC was intended to place the concern of mission, especially direct evangelism,\* into the very centre of the WCC’s life. Indeed, several statements balance mission-in-unity and unity-in-mission, such as the central committee’s 1982 “Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation”. But critics claim that the WCC, including its Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, minimize or even ignore the explicit verbal proclamation of the gospel to the millions who have never been challenged to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and personal Saviour.

This questioning of the WCC’s commitment to direct evangelism took on a new divisive dimension with growing WCC involvement in interfaith dialogues.\* Does not the very fact of such dialogues dull the edge of Christian witness and lead even to “religious syncretism”? This line of thinking has led many evangelical Christians, in member or non-member churches or in para-church groups, to remain aloof from the WCC and to support other world mission forums, such as the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization\* and the World Evangelical Fellowship\*.

Some critics link this de-emphasis of direct evangelism with the “liberal theology” which they claim dominates the WCC. Such theology, they believe, has too optimistic a view of human nature; a view of sin\* that focuses too much on the subtle evils embedded in the institutions and structures of society, and not enough on downright sinful persons; and too uncritical a faith in the ever-progressing human potential for bringing in the kingdom of God.\*

Even in Faith and Order studies, what is regarded by some as strength in convergence is seen by others as weakness. Some churches in the Reformation tradition see in the 1982 WCC document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* a “catholicizing” tendency which they say subordinates the word to the sacraments or so emphasizes the special ministry

of the ordained that the ministry of ordinary believers is belittled. On the other hand, many Orthodox complain that too many ecumenical theological concerns and approaches are essentially Western (Protestant or Roman Catholic) and thus foreign to the Eastern traditions, e.g., grace and sacrament, faith and works, creation and redemption. Or that while F&O theologians are clearing away old doctrinal disputes, new potential fissures arise around pressing personal and social moral issues, especially in the areas of sexuality (e.g. homosexuality), the right to life of the unborn and euthanasia.

### ECCLIOLOGICAL CRITICISM

Never-ending discussions of the nature of the WCC as a vehicle or instrument of church unity have always been complex and generally inconclusive. Some charges endure despite repeated WCC disavowals from its earliest years: that the WCC aspires to be a “super-church”; that its statements and public declarations carry any more authority than “their intrinsic wisdom”; that WCC membership implies accepting a specific doctrine concerning the nature of church unity. Some attack the WCC basis\* as such. It is not credal, it does not specify enough of the non-negotiable elements of the Christian faith, e.g., baptism. Others object to the fact that even though every member church “expresses agreement with the basis” as a condition of membership, the WCC does not verify this assent. This is a root of the “separatist” argument that affiliation with the WCC is biblically compromising.

Others criticize the fundamental structure of WCC membership. This objection comes typically from traditions which stress that the body of Christ becomes one and visible “from below” as local congregations gather around the word and sacrament, whereas most international confessional and ecumenical structures, including the WCC, presume national churches as the basic building blocks of church unity. This national structure, claim some in the “historic peace churches”,\* is why the WCC has never taken a theologically consistent stand against war in any modern form.

Traditional ecumenical organizations include only a limited sampling of Christian diversity, and despite good intentions have

so far found that their tents are too small for the rapidly growing Pentecostal, conservative evangelical Protestant, independent and indigenous new churches. One such critic has called for “the *next* ecumenical movement with Christian unity as its clear focus and wide inclusivity its method” (M. Heim).

Some argue that the WCC’s structure as a council of churches prevents it from duly acknowledging the prophetic contributions to social justice, peace and works of mercy by Christian communities and movements, whether confessional or transdenominational. Yet others claim that the WCC and other ecumenical bodies employ too many “prophets” – elite lobbyists for single causes who are inexperienced in congregational life and in direct church governance – and not enough “pastoral, priestly, churchly” types. Consequently, the image is created of a movement too far ahead of the average laity, clergy and hierarchy who make up its constituency – and of writing them off too easily.

### POLITICAL CRITICISM

In 1948 the Russian Orthodox Church and the Eastern European Orthodox churches which followed its lead decided not to join the WCC (many did so later, in 1961). Its real aim, they declared, was the formation of an “ecumenical church” with political power rather than “the reunion of the churches by spiritual ways and means”. Continuing objections to WCC political stands often accompany charges that, to the contrary, the WCC has increasingly subordinated concerns of church unity to immediate social, political and economic issues.

This is “secular ecumenism”. Such negative, even contradictory reactions to WCC political involvement go back to the very first assembly in 1948. The assembly’s less than enthusiastic assessment of capitalism\* prompted the *Wall Street Journal* to call the critique “Marxist-inspired”, though the assembly’s equally severe criticism of communism inspired Marxist interpretations of ecumenism as “an ideological struggle to integrate modern theology and bourgeois ideology within the ecumenical framework, testifying to the deepening crisis in contemporary social thought and bourgeois society’s inner life” (Yuri Kryanev, 1983).

The allegation that the political stance of the WCC is “leftist” is common, especially in Western circles. Such criticisms became strident in the late 1970s and 1980s with widely publicized charges that many ecumenical bodies were giving money from unwitting church members to radical revolutionary and often violent Marxist causes and even to armed groups. Especially controversial were 1978 grants by the WCC Programme to Combat Racism\* to armed movements which were trying to topple white minority rule in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Critics called this “blood money”.

From the other end of the political spectrum, in 1961 Beijing’s *People’s Daily* called the integration of the IMC and the WCC a “new strategy of American imperialistic missionary enterprise”; this interpretation reflected an estrangement which dates back to the 1950 WCC central committee’s commendation of the United Nations’ “police action” in Korea. National political leaders accused the WCC of encouraging the 1956 popular uprising in Hungary, and in the late 1980s of supporting the workers’ revolt in Poland. In the 1980s Brazilian landowners who were exploiting Indian lands described WCC support for the land rights of the Indian population as a conspiracy with Western interests to deny Brazil’s sovereignty over its own country. And in the tangle of Middle Eastern politics, all sides have criticized the WCC, and often blame it for activities of Christian groups, in and outside the region, with which the Council has no connection whatever.

A more general objection is that ecumenical bodies such as the WCC exhibit “selective indignation” in political stands, including human rights violations, e.g. explicitly condemning the suppression of Christians’ rights to religious freedom in Islamic North Africa, but remaining largely silent about the corruption of some political and church leaders elsewhere in Africa.

For more than 40 years, the cold war\* sharpened the polemical edge of criticisms of political positions taken by the WCC and other ecumenical bodies. In the West, annoyance and suspicions were raised by the vigorous critiques of the capitalist way of life and politics voiced by a growing number of church leaders in the South in WCC forums;

and little credence was given to their claims, in the bipolar geo-political context, to represent a “non-aligned” voice. The entry and visibility of churches from Eastern Europe (especially the Russian Orthodox Church, which has the largest membership of any WCC church) fed suspicions of infiltration by agents of Soviet and other intelligence services. At the same time, there were repeated criticisms that the WCC, zealous to denounce human rights violations by right-wing military dictatorships around the world, was unaccountably and culpably silent about the oppression of totalitarian communist rulers and remained unmoved and inactive in the face of the persecution of Christian dissidents at their hands.

The end of the cold war and the opening of massive files from these intelligence agencies, especially the Soviet KGB and Stasi in the former German Democratic Republic, re-launched the debate about the relations of ecumenical bodies, especially the WCC, with the officially authorized church representatives from these countries during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Within the countries of the former Soviet bloc, in turn, some church leaders come under pressure for having been too influenced by the communist governments of this period, and this has contributed to a more general anti-ecumenical climate in these countries.

Some critics are proposing that ecumenical bodies should refrain from making public statements on international issues, arguing that they try too quickly to analyze conflicts and propose unworkable solutions and that their “instant expertise” smacks of Christian arrogance. In any case, some would say, it is impossible to maintain a balanced stance that is comprehensively forthright about the flaws and wrongdoings, the strengths and right actions of all governments, political parties and movements.

### INSTITUTIONAL CRITICISM

As the ecumenical movement has evolved, some observers say that institutionalization has blurred its original vision and somewhat frozen the movement. Ecumenical bodies are said unwittingly to preserve and even strengthen the status quo; they satisfy the majority of the members, including the leaders, who prefer the closed autonomy of

denominations to church unity, yet who want to be “ecumenical” cafeteria-style – opting for some activities with some members. The main structural flaw, some argue, is not in fact in the ecumenical bodies but in their member churches, which are not structured to receive the full service of national councils or the WCC. Furthermore, membership in such councils is no guarantee that authentic ecumenical thinking, attitudes and practices deeply affect the majority of Christians. In fact, they did not do so, even in those churches that pioneered the movement decades ago. Ecumenical bodies are pastorally to help a minority movement grow, not to comfort the majority in cosy indifference or adamant standstills.

On the other hand, committed Christians do criticize large ecumenical structures, such as the WCC, in order to help those instruments achieve their stated goals. Airing differences is a ministry of healing in a forum for churches from so many different confessional, cultural, political, social, economic and linguistic contexts. And such forums are a test of Christian patience with institutions. Some churches – especially perhaps the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox churches – are faulted for having too much patience, others for being too impatient. This can lead either to eccentric steps beyond any ecumenical institutions (“wild” or, more politely, “prophetic” ecumenism) or to a resignation and withdrawal from ecumenical structures into self-centred ghettos.

Some complain that the large ecumenical structures are still too much under the control of the church professionals. High-level visits and fact-finding tours, summit conferences and confidential conversations (called dialogues) eventually produce conclusions that all other Christians are expected to accept or else be labelled “unecumenical” – a procedure that is all too familiar in the world of secular politics. Others point out that in the face of so many human needs, the WCC too reflexively adds new programmes to its already heavy agenda. This overload complicates an organization which already has too little coordination, and the programmes have little chance of being digested by wider constituencies, which already have more than enough to cope with on their pastoral plates.

Finally, critics charge that the numerous international conferences absorb too much staff time and energy and cost too much money for what such gatherings in fact accomplish. Their most permanent legacy takes the form of documents which are almost invariably too long, and either too rhetorical or too technical, thus appealing to a very limited audience even among those who would like to take advantage of them.

TOM STRANSKY

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## CRUSADES

THE CRUSADES were a series of military expeditions of the Western church, supported by royal, knightly aristocratic and popular pieties, and organized to liberate Jerusalem from the Muslims, and to help defend the Eastern church and the shrunken Byzantine empire against further Islamic encroachments. They took place between Pope Urban II’s call at the synod of Clermont (France) in November 1095 and the fall of Acre (today’s Akko, on the coast of northern Israel) in May 1291.

The original expeditions were called pilgrimages or “the Jerusalem journey”. The pilgrims were God’s soldiers in a holy war, meriting special papal indulgences (“the journey will be reckoned in place of all penance”, Urban II). Much later do the terms crusade and crusader appear, from the cross (*crux*) sewn on the outer garment of the soldier-pilgrim. Whatever their European country of origin, for the Easterners all crusaders were “Franks” (*Franji*).

Historians debate over the interplay of religious motivations and justifications, pragmatic political and economic interests, and crusaders' relations with local Christians, Muslims and Jews which developed. But today selective memories and negative images still rule, even as we outline the ecumenical and inter-religious consequences, principally in the Middle East.

*Eastern churches.* Despite the 1054 mutual excommunications of the pope of Rome and the patriarch of Constantinople, the Eastern Christians initially welcomed the Western pilgrims, expecting them to be a well-disciplined conventional army. But that welcome quickly faded in face of the crusaders' plundering conduct. Their disdain for fellow Christians of the East was expressed, above all, in taking over (1099) the Holy Sepulchre church in Jerusalem, and expelling from the city all the Orthodox clergy of different rites – Greek, Georgian, Armenian, Syrian and Coptic. The Eastern Christians welcomed Salāh al-Din when he brought Jerusalem once more under Muslim control (1187).

The hostile anger culminated in 1204. Pope Innocent III's well-intentioned fourth crusade to restore Jerusalem to Christian sovereignty turned into sheer lust for conquest and blind treacheries. The Venetian-led army detoured to Constantinople, looted the city, slaughtered its Christian inhabitants, and desecrated Hagia Sophia, the pride church of the East. As already had been done in Edessa/Armenia, Antioch and Jerusalem, a feudal kingdom was established, "the Latin kingdom of Constantinople". As a final blow, the pope replaced the Eastern with a Latin patriarch, something which had already been done in Antioch and Jerusalem. This was in direct violation of the canons of the council of Chalcedon\* (451).

The humiliation and rancour are expressed in the popular Christian slogan, "Better to come under the turban [the sultan's head-dress] than under the tiara [the pope's crown]." Prior to Pope John Paul II's trip to Greece in 2001, many Orthodox bishops, monks and laity in Greece would condition at least their tolerance of his visit on his pre-arrival explicit apology for "1204".

The almost two centuries of crusader presence symbolized Western Christian tri-

umphalism. The Easterners' fear and distrust of Western unconditional subjugation of their empire to the Latins and their church to the pope helped support resistance to sincere papal, patriarchal and imperial attempts of reunion, a non-reception of the reunion decrees of the general councils of Lyons in 1272 and of Florence in 1439. The perception of a more subtle crusading spirit prompted anxious opposition among the Orthodox churches when later the Uniate (see **Eastern Catholic churches**) and Latin Catholic missionary expeditions were to proselytize in the midst of vulnerable flocks.

*Muslims.* The Muslim historian Abu'l-Fida, a young soldier in the final defeat of the crusaders at Acre in 1291, concludes his chronicle: "All the lands were fully restored to the Muslims... God grant that the Franj will never set foot there again!" The list of vivid unforgettables is long: above all, the blasphemy against Muhammad and Islam, and the ridicule of Muslims as a "vile" and "abominable" race "absolutely alien to God". Of special example is the difference between the peaceful captures of Jerusalem and the respect towards Christians and Jews by Caliph Omar in 688 and Salāh al-Din in 1187, and the crusaders' conduct in 1099 when they murdered all 40,000 of the city's Muslim men, women and children. The memory of the massacre blocked any future permanent modus vivendi.

The crusades only strengthened the Muslims' resolve, through their own holy war (*ji-had*), to conquer Europe itself. Intermittent attempts to stop the Turks failed disastrously at Nicopoli (Bulgaria) in 1396. In 1453 the Muslims took Constantinople. By 1529 their army was on the hills overlooking the walls of Vienna.

Islamic historians trace the interwoven factors which led the Muslim Middle East to turn in on itself, to be wary of "the road to modernization", and still to see the West as a natural enemy, whether hostile acts are political, military, oil-based, cultural or religious. Amin Maalouf states in no uncertain terms: "There can be no doubt that the schism between these two worlds dated from the crusades, deeply felt, even today, as an act of rape."

The analogies are in the vocabulary. Some Muslims label Israel as a new crusader

state. Arab political and religious leaders refer to the 1187 re-capture of Jerusalem as a sign of hope in the present pessimism about Jerusalem's political future. Radical Muslim Palestinians, in the *jihad* against Israel, find comfort in the patient wait for the Israelis, like the crusaders, also eventually to be "driven into the sea". Saddam Hussein's Iraqi rhetoric during the Persian Gulf war period (early 1990s) repeatedly referred to the American/English/French joint forces as crusaders. Mehmet Ali Agca, who tried to assassinate John Paul II (1981), considered the pope "the supreme commander of the crusades".

*Jews.* Jewish chroniclers call Clermont, where in 1095 Urban II had first called for military expeditions, "the mountain of gloom" (*Har Afel*). In hindsight the period is singled out as the start of, and explanation for, the severe persecution of Jews by Christians, even though the excesses were only symptomatic of a prior process of church antisemitism.\*

If the pilgrimage of holy war were to defeat the Muslims who had stolen Christ's tomb in Jerusalem, why not begin by punishing the Jews who had killed him? A blessed vengeance. So even before the first expedition met its official enemies, undisciplined crusading mobs in the spring of 1096 stormed through the German cities of Speyer, Worms, Mainz, Cologne, Trier and Regensburg, and through other cities en route, e.g. Prague. The pilgrims harassed or killed the Jews (if they would not convert and be baptized), destroyed their synagogues and Torah scrolls, and desecrated their cemeteries. Such pogroms continued in part in later expeditions, often despite the harsh protests of local bishops. When the crusaders entered Jerusalem (15 July 1099), the Jews sought refuge in synagogues which their attackers then set on fire. The few surviving Jews were sold into slavery.

Pope Innocent convened the fourth Lateran council in 1215, in his words, "to correct faults and reform morals,... to get rid of oppression and foster liberty". The canon (68) most remembered by Jews today prescribed distinctive dress or marking for them (and for Muslims), primarily to prevent concubinage or intermarriage with Christians.

The marks varied, but the "yellow badge of shame" stands out, the predecessor of Hitler's yellow star for the Jews not yet exterminated.

These series of crusading events, in Europe and in Jerusalem, have fused into a single symbol for the Jews – "the first holocaust" (Shapiro).

*Ethics.* The crusades went beyond the just-war tradition initiated by Augustine (see **just war**). For the official church, not only was the war not offensive but it was positively pleasing to God. It was "Christ's business" (*negotium Christi*, fourth Lateran), a virtuous act which merited the commutation of penance for all one's sins. The new tradition of canonized violence justified the church crusades against the Moors and Jews in Spain, against the heretical Cathars and Albigenses in France, and the Hussites in Bohemia.

Nevertheless, during the crusade period itself, public criticisms on ethical grounds were not muted and enter the history of moral theology: not returning evil by evil; "those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword"; the boundaries that limit blameless acts of self-defence; the conditions for an offensive just war; conscientious objection by non-officers; the conversion of the non-Christian by peaceful persuasion, not by force or bribery.

TOM STRANSKY

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## CULLMANN, OSCAR

B. 25 Feb. 1902, Strasbourg, France; d. 16 Jan. 1999, Chamonix, France. Cullmann's ecumenical interests are evident in his study on the place of Peter in the early church (*Peter, Disciple – Apostle – Martyr*,



London, SCM Press, 1953). Observer at the Second Vatican Council and active in developing relations between Protestants and Roman Catholics in Europe, he believed that every Christian confession embodies a permanent spiritual gift which it should preserve, nurture, purify and deepen, and which should not be given up for the sake of homogenization. He was especially concerned in developing a theory of *Heilsgeschichte* (history of salvation), which he expounded in *Christ and Time* (Philadelphia, Westminster, 1950). According to Cullmann, what is most distinctive in the New Testament is its view of time and history.\* Running through the whole course of world history there has been a relatively narrow stream of sacred history (see *salvation history*). This special history, the midpoint of which is Jesus Christ, provides the clue to the understanding of general history, which is linear in form and runs from creation to consummation.

Cullmann studied at Strasbourg and Paris, and in 1930 became professor at Strasbourg. From 1938 he was a professor at Basel, and after 1948 concurrently professor in the Protestant faculty of theology in Paris. He also lectured at the Ecole de hautes études of the Sorbonne in Paris and the Waldensian Seminary in Rome.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## CULTURE

THE ISSUE of the relation between Christianity and culture is not new. The fledgling Christian community in Antioch had to face it around the Mosaic practice of circumcision for gentile Christians. Between some Jewish Christians who asserted that circumcision was essential for salvation\* and Paul and Barnabas who opposed it, “no small dissension and debate” broke out (Acts 15:2). The case was brought to Jerusalem, where the first Christian council was held to settle the matter. The outcome was an apostolic letter sent to the gentile Christians in Antioch conveying the decision “to impose on you no further burden than these essential things: that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication” (15:28). The issue of circumcision was resolved, but that of “food sacrificed to idols” was not, as Paul’s letter to Christians at Corinth was to show later (1 Cor. 8:1).

As Christianity spread from Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8), the question of circumcision receded into the background and finally disappeared. But the question of “food sacrificed to idols” came to the foreground and has not ceased to engage the mind of the Christian church down the centuries. For generations of Christians the phrase “food sacrificed to idols” came to stand for idolatry, and idolatry stood for religions other than Christianity. From time to time the Christian church also found itself under hostile socio-political systems in which the power of “Caesar” is divinized and takes the pseudo-religious form of idolatry. In the minds of Christians, then, idolatry, whether in its religious or pseudo-religious form, is identified with religious beliefs and cultural practices alien to the Christian faith.

*Christ and Culture*, the influential work published in 1951 by US theologian H. Richard Niebuhr, should be understood against this background. In the history of Christianity, Niebuhr discerned five ways or types by which the Christian church had addressed itself to the complex problem of the relations between the Christian faith and cultures: Christ against culture, the Christ of culture, Christ above culture, Christ and culture in paradox, and Christ the transformer of culture. While such a typology makes possible a better understanding of the issues involved in the problem, there is a danger that this descriptive account may prevent thoughtful Christians, especially perhaps those in the third world, from taking a fresh look at the problem and coming up with insights into a new Christian theology of cultures.

The negative view of Protestant neo-orthodox theologians towards culture and religion is well known. Karl Barth's pronouncement on religion\* as unbelief (*Church Dogmatics I/2*), taken out of context, serves to deepen the suspicion of the Christian church towards the world of cultures and religions outside the sphere of its own influence. The Dutch missiologist Hendrik Kraemer did much to translate this neo-orthodox theological view into a missiological formulation of the relations between Christianity and other religions. This is evident in the prominent theological role he played at the world missionary conferences in Jerusalem in 1928 and in Tambaram (Madras) in 1938.

Then came the second world war, during which the world witnessed an unprecedented destruction of human lives and civilization. It also marked the beginning of the end of Western colonial culture in Africa and Asia (see **colonialism**). Emerging from the war were newly independent nations preoccupied with the terrifying task of nation-building (see **nation**). Inevitably, there was resurgence of the indigenous cultures and religions – which often went hand in hand with a strong sense of nationalism. One thing became abundantly clear: a world under the sole influence of Christian religion and culture could never have existed, and Christianity had to face other cultures and religions asserting themselves with new vigour. A quest for new relations between

Christianity and cultures had to begin, particularly in Africa and Asia.

In the West, the theology of culture developed by Paul Tillich re-defined the issue of relations between Christianity and culture on the broader basis of religion and culture. After discerning three forms of culture (autonomous culture, heteronomous culture and theonomous culture), he identified theonomous culture as an expression of an ultimate concern and coined the now-famous dictum, "religion is the substance of culture, and culture the form of religion". This theological approach to religion and culture, while correcting the excesses of the neo-orthodox position and opening up the possibility of correlating religion and culture theologically, may result in subsuming all cultural activities under the religious rubric, leading to a new conflict between Christianity and cultures endowed with other religious values than those of the Christian church.

It is at this point that Christian theology must turn to behavioural sciences, especially anthropology, for a broader understanding of culture. It must be acknowledged that scholars differ in their understanding of what culture is, but the working description offered by the English anthropologist Edward Tylor (1832-1917) remains useful: "Culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnological sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (*Primitive Culture*, 1871). Culture, it is evident, is closely related to religion. But it has to do with religion not in the narrow sense of doctrine, teaching or institution, but with the complex whole of life in which religion plays a critical and dynamic, but not the only, role. It is within this expanded framework of culture that relations between Christianity and cultures must be reconstructed theologically.

This central concern underlies most of the theological efforts undertaken outside traditional Western theology in recent years, especially in Asia and Africa. These efforts are expressed in different but related ways. *Indigenization* first came to be widely advocated. The Christian gospel must take roots in the soil to which it has been transported.

To use a metaphor popularized by Sri Lankan theologian D.T. Niles, the Christian gospel must cease to be a “potted flower” without roots in the alien soil. The movement towards indigenization gained momentum in the 1950s and the 1960s and enabled churches in the third world to shed their foreignness. But the change was largely structural and political. It was assumed that the Christian gospel would remain unchanged in the process of indigenization. Theologically, it was on the whole a matter of finding parallel indigenous religious and philosophical language and ideas and expressing the Christian truth in those terms.

Closely related to the indigenization model is the emphasis on *contextualization*, or the careful study of the “fit” between the Christian Bible, the gospel, and the various cultural and religious settings to which Christian faith addresses itself. This was carried out with much zeal and insight, mainly in the area of theological education. It was indebted to the Theological Education Fund, later the WCC’s Programme for Theological Education, for initiative and inspiration in the late 1960s and the early 1970s. Shoki Coe, an energetic theological educator from Taiwan, did much to focus attention on the relation between the text and context in theological schools and seminaries. Although there was no surprising breakthrough, the contextualization model encouraged innovative theological education in the third world and firmly put cultures in the forefront of continuing theological efforts.

It became obvious in the efforts of indigenization and contextualization that Christian theology could not go about reconstruction of the relations between Christianity and cultures single-handedly, but must be open to the findings and insights of colleagues in other fields of study and research, particularly behavioural sciences and history of religions. It is not surprising that from the mid-1970s terms such as “acculturation” and “inculturation” came to be a part of theological language in both Protestant and Roman Catholic circles. *Acculturation*, to put it simply, is to adapt Christian practices to local culture: the clergy in the pulpit wearing traditional clothing, using indigenous music and traditional instruments in worship service, incorporating local archi-

tectural ideas and styles into church buildings, developing Christian arts in relation to indigenous art forms. This is obviously a great step forward, although it still remains tentative for most established churches in Africa and Asia, heavily conditioned as they are by their Western mentors. But the acculturation process is bound to develop more and more in the years to come.

The question is whether these traditional cultural forms and expressions adapted into the practice of Christian faith are only the means to make Christianity appear less foreign, or whether they also lead to interactions between Christianity and cultures on a much deeper theological level. The latter seems to be the case. *Inculturation* deals more with this deeper matter of the theological understanding of different cultures. It is no longer just the question of forms and styles but one of theological relations between Christian faith and cultures. As the Ghanaian theologian Mercy Amba Oduyoye puts it: “How can one be African and Christian at the same time? In this area we meet, for example, questions about the rites of passage, naming and other initiation ceremonies, as they confront Christian baptism and confirmation” (*Hearing and Knowing*). This is a soul-searching question for Christians not only in Africa but in Asia also. It is the most urgent and most difficult question for Christians and churches in the third world.

At the heart of these and other theological efforts to wrestle with the question of relations between Christianity and cultures is the concept of *incarnation*. If the divine has taken human form not only in Judeo-Christian cultures but in cultures that are African, Asian, Latin American or secular Western, do we not have to admit that there are already theological meanings embedded in these cultures? Do we not have to train our Christian theological minds to perceive God’s judgment and salvation working through men, women and children in their own cultures? Cultures will then open new theological horizons that give us glimpses of the depth and breadth of the mystery of God,\* the Creator and Saviour of all nations and peoples.

See also **anthropology, cultural; gospel and culture; history; inculturation; Jesus**

**Christ; salvation history; uniqueness of Christ.**

CHOAN-SENG SONG

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# D

## DANIÉLOU, JEAN

B. 14 May 1905, Neuilly-sur-Seine, France; d. 20 May 1974, Paris. Daniélou was an influential Roman Catholic theologian whose interests included ecumenism, missiology and the Christian attitude towards communism. He was a member of the editorial board of *Etudes* and, together with Henri de Lubac, edited the series *Sources chrétiennes*. He had a particular interest in biblical theology and the sacramental theology of the church fathers, and he tried to approach Marxism from a Christian vision of history based on biblical inspiration and marked by an eschatological orientation. In 1929 he entered the Jesuit order and in 1944 was appointed professor of Christian origins of history at the Catholic Institute in Paris; later he was made a cardinal. Daniélou influenced

several decrees issued by the Second Vatican Council. He was co-editor of *The Catholic-Protestant Dialogue* (Baltimore, Helicon, 1960).

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## DAY, DOROTHY

B. 8 Nov. 1897, New York; d. 29 Nov. 1980, New York. A journalist and pacifist, Dorothy Day was co-founder in 1933 of the Catholic Worker movement, a community of



laypeople from all walks of life who embrace evangelical poverty and serve in urban places of welcome (“friendship houses”) for the homeless, runaways and persons recently released from prison.

Day, who herself spent time in jail for protesting at government sites, communicated in both words and deeds her radical convictions on Catholic pacifism, conscientious objection and creative non-violence as the response to war. Her best-seller *The Long Loneliness* described her early non-religious adult life as a confirmed Marxist with an erratic life-style before her conversion and baptism in the Catholic church (1927) – a decision that resulted in the break-up of her common-law marriage with an anarchist who considered the RCC to be one of the world’s most oppressive structures.

Influencing her life and thought was her Catholic Worker Movement co-founder, the self-educated philosopher Peter Maurin, an immigrant of French peasant origins who lived in careless simplicity. Maurin and Day shared belief in Christian personalism, a philosophical orientation that stresses the

value and dignity of each human person. US Catholic prelates, including New York’s influential Cardinal Spellman, who opposed her pacifist views which rejected the Catholic just-war position, strongly defended her right to speak out and supported her ministry to the urban poor.

To the end, Day’s stubborn piety was very traditional Catholic – daily mass, rosary, breviary. But her own person and example drew equal attention and affection from Protestants, some of whom have supported the appeal for her canonization. She herself said, “Don’t call me a saint – I don’t want to be dismissed so easily”, and considered her monuments to be the more than 80 houses of hospitality set up from Los Angeles to Oxford and Amsterdam as a result of her work. “If I have achieved anything in my life,” she said, “it is because I have not been embarrassed to talk about God.” Just before he died in 1999, Cardinal John O’Connor of New York introduced her cause for official sainthood and commented, “She was not a gingerbread or holy card saint.”

TOM STRANSKY

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## DEBT CRISIS

THE HEAVY burden borne by many countries in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific because of their foreign debt began to be apparent towards the end of the 1970s. A series of underlying causes for this may be identified. First, the world market price of raw materials, on which many of these countries depend for export earnings, stagnated and in many cases declined. Second, international financial instability began to make itself felt at the end of the 1960s. In 1971, in response to the first concerted pricing measures taken by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, President Nixon suspended US currency controls. At that point currency exchange rates began to fluctuate. Third, as a result of the action of

the US administration and the consequent increase in the number of dollars in circulation, banks in the more developed market-economy countries adopted an aggressive policy of offering loans on very favourable terms to third-world countries, assuming that development\* would be a natural consequence of good management of the debt. Consequently, from 1973 to 1979 many countries in Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America, as well as some Asian countries, doubled and even tripled the amount of their foreign debt.

From the end of the 1970s a fourth factor became operative: as a result of the instability of the international financial system, interest rates on dollar loans soared to astounding levels, in some cases even tripling. This produced an imbalance between the rate of economic growth in the indebted countries and the amount they had to pay out to service the debts incurred. Bank interest – often calculated as compound interest – raised the amounts owed by many countries to levels which simply could not be paid. Rescheduling of the payment of this interest led in turn to further increases in the debts.

A considerable share of responsibility for the debt crisis lies with the authorities of the indebted countries themselves. In many cases they contracted debts for projects which did not deserve priority, thereby adding to the sums owed. Moreover, even when the money received in loans was spent on investments to encourage development, it was often drained away from the debtor countries back to the lending banks through the process of capital flight.

It is clear that for many countries the foreign debt has become unpayable, with the interest due representing an intolerable burden. The adjustment programmes demanded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have not provided a satisfactory solution. These programmes are in general extremely rigid both in their economic approach (with the financial aspect being given priority over the necessary structural changes) and in the time period allowed for adjustment. The social cost of the adjustment programmes is extremely high, above all for the poorest sections of society.

It must be noted that the main burden of the debt is the amount due by the weight of

interest rates. As noted by the 1992 WCC study document *Christian Faith and the World Economy Today*, “The debt has by now already been more than paid, though the idea of simply cancelling it leaves all sorts of intricate questions hanging. It has become the prime example of an economic ‘system’ that grinds tragically on for sheer lack of the political, indeed spiritual imagination and will to devise a way through and out.”

Already in 1984, the WCC’s Advisory Group on Economic Matters (AGEM) spoke of the need to reform the international financial system. On the one hand, this calls for a restatement of goals and values, stressing the priority of equality, justice and sustainability. To this end, the AGEM also proposed that the churches should endeavour to formulate clearly “an international moral and ethical order. Two basic principles are at the core of the search for this order: (1) international responsibility for all the world’s people; (2) universality in the approach to finding and funding solutions to the world’s financial problems.” Clearly, this approach to the problem has to be based on an economic order which gives priority to justice (see **economics**) at both national and international levels. At the same time, the AGEM affirmed the need for systematic reforms which would include changes in the relations and *modus vivendi* of the IMF, the World Bank and national governments. These and further complementary measures would make it possible to overcome the existing stalemate.

In July 1985, on the basis of these studies, the WCC central committee called for creditors to cancel the debt. Nevertheless, as stated in the WCC study document cited earlier, “Substantial foreign debt reductions or even sheer cancellation will not prevent the problems from recurring again if this is not accompanied by comprehensive changes in political-economic systems and policies at national levels both in South and North, at the level of the world economy, and within international institutions” (41).

The WCC assembly in Harare (1998) produced a statement on “The Debt Issue: A Jubilee Call to End the Stranglehold of Debt on Impoverished Peoples”. The statement affirmed that “cancelling the debt of impover-

erished peoples... [is] a matter of urgency” and that “the basic human needs and rights of individuals and communities and the protection of the environment should take precedence over debt repayment”, and called for “new structures and mechanisms, involving participation and dialogue between creditors and debtors”. The statement also appealed especially to the G8 nations “to engage, in consultation with civil society, in a process of global economic reform towards a just distribution of wealth and preventing new cycles of debt”.

Towards the end of the second millennium movements such as the Jubilee 2000 Coalition enabled churches, church-related organizations and other concerned bodies and movements to renew their commitment to solving the debt crisis, not least by challenging their governments to review their lending and borrowing policies.

See also **globalization, economic.**

JULIO DE SANTA ANA

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## DECOLONIZATION

IN THE 20th CENTURY, decolonization in Africa and Asia involved different strategies of resistance, each rooted in certain cultural patterns.

*Primary forms of resistance.* In the *chronological* sense primary resistance refers to that which took place at the time of European penetration and conquest. Many African and Asian societies fought colonialism\* as it arrived. Resistance ranged from the Ashanti wars in Ghana to the Matabele wars in Zimbabwe, from the struggle against the British in Afghanistan to the early struggles against the Dutch in Java. In the *cultural* sense primary resistance means resistance on the basis of indigenous fighting symbols, regardless of chronology. An example is the

resistance of the Mau Mau in the 1950s on the basis of Kikuyu values and related religious beliefs; although they were militarily defeated by the British, they were triumphant in the sense that they broke white settler political power. The Maji Maji war in Tanganyika (mainland Tanzania) was primary resistance in an intermediate sense: chronologically it occurred quite early, but it was also inspired culturally by indigenous beliefs. Although militarily crushed, the movement influenced the Germans to formulate less repressive imperial policies.

*Islamic forms of resistance.* In Africa, primary resistance in the chronological sense was, at least in its symbolism, sometimes Islamic rather than purely indigenous, usually sounding the clarion call of the *jihad* (struggle in the name of God), a theme that has persisted in Afghanistan and parts of the Arab world. Islamic resistance manifested itself in the Nile valley with the Mahadiyya opposition to British penetration. It may be argued that the influence of the fear of *jihad* on British colonial policies in Muslim areas was responsible for the decision to let northern Nigeria enjoy substantial autonomy during the colonial period and for the overall policy of indirect rule in Africa. Missionary education was also discouraged in Muslim areas for similar reasons. The French also showed some caution in the policies towards Muslim colonial subjects. Opposition to European imperial rule in North Africa was often re-inforced by pan-Islamic sentiment. In Egypt nationalism became increasingly secular in the 20th century. Islamic sentiment in favour of creating a separate Muslim country (Pakistan) from British India aroused fears about Islamic militancy in other parts of the empire and among African Christian nationalists like Nhamdi Azikiwe and Kwame Nkrumah, but West Africa never experienced separatist Islam to the same degree as Pakistan.

*Indian-inspired forms of resistance.* While some colonial nationalists in the 1930s and 1940s worried about the kind of religious tension that was affecting India, the achievements of the Indian nationalist struggle for independence were often admired by distant colonial subjects. Particularly influential was Mahatma (Mohandas) Gandhi. Nkrumah used Gandhian ideas as

basis for his strategy of “positive action” in the early 1950s. Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia was also a disciple of Gandhi; for a time he opposed violence in all its forms and advocated a strategy of non-violent resistance of “soul force” (or *satyagraha*) more compatible with his Christian faith. African opposition to armed struggle was evident at the All-African People’s Conference held in Accra, Ghana, in 1958, where the Algerians – then at war with France – found it difficult to secure pan-African endorsement for their struggle. The obstinacy of white colonial rule in Southern Africa and the stubborn Portuguese insistence that the colonies were part of metropolitan Portugal helped to radicalize and militarize anti-colonial struggles.

*Christian and Western-inspired forms of resistance.* A disproportionate number of the leading figures in African independence struggles were Western-educated or educated in Christian missionary schools and colleges: notable examples were Nkrumah, Senghor, Nyerere, Kenyatta, Mugabe, Awololo, Banda, Kaunda and Houphouët-Boigny. European and North American inspiration for African and Asian resistance to colonialism also came through Christianity as a social and political force, Western political ideologies (nationalism, liberalism, socialism\*), alliances with metropolitan political parties or organizations, and the use or adaptation of Western military technology by liberation movements. Furthermore, the top political leaders in Asian and African liberation movements came disproportionately from among the more culturally Westernized sectors of the colonized population: Sukarno (Indonesia), Jawaharlal Nehru (India), Nelson Mandela (South Africa), Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Ahmed Ben Bellah (Algeria) and Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe).

*Decolonization and the second world war.* All these forms of resistance were profoundly affected by the second world war. Politically, imperial control was being weakened by the decline of the imperial powers themselves, breaking the mystique of their invincibility. Japan, on the other hand, played havoc with Burma, Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines. African nationalists watched these developments with rising hopes and aspirations for African liberation.

India was restive. Ordinary Asians and Africans tried hard to understand conflict in such remote places as Dunkirk and Rangoon, Pearl Harbor and El Alamein. Not a few “natives” were servicemen, experiencing combat but also learning new skills and acquiring new aspirations. The war also increased Europe’s need for the products of the colonies, sowing the seeds for the deeper incorporation of the colonies into Western capitalism. In other words, while politically the war prepared the way for the disintegration of the empires of France and Great Britain by weakening imperial control, economically it helped to integrate the colonies more firmly into the global capitalist system as the economies of the periphery were made to serve more systematically the war needs of the centre. Culturally, it broadened Africa’s exposure to alien influences and later resulted in the imperialist building of higher educational institutions for the colonies. Militarily it initiated more firmly the idea of recruiting colonial soldiers and setting up colonial armies equipped with modern weapons, with the well-known consequences of both military dependency and the tensions of civil-military relations in the former colonies.

ALI A. MAZRUI

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## DECREE ON ECUMENISM

THE SECOND Vatican Council\* Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, is the most authoritative charter of active Roman Catholic participation in the one ecumenical movement. Promulgated on 21 November 1964, it has three chapters.

Chapter 1 unfolds the Catholic understanding of the fundamental invisible and visible unity\* of the Lord’s “one church and one church only” as the expression of the undivided Trinity.\* This church “subsists in” the RCC but is not co-extensive with it, because “outside its visible borders”, i.e. in

other Christians and their communions, exist “elements and endowments which together build up and give life to the church itself”. Division among Christians “openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world and damages... the proclamation of the gospel”. Nevertheless, there already is *real communion\** between Christians because of what God has done and does to and through them, but this communion is *imperfect* because of what they have done and continue to do to each other – “a real but imperfect fellowship” between all Christian communions.

These ecclesiological positions shape a fundamental shift in the RC understanding of relations among Christians and underlie the guidelines, methods and helps for Catholic participation in “the restoration of unity”. The shift is from an ecclesiology of self-sufficiency and a model of unification by “return” (to the RCC), to an ecclesiology of incompleteness and the need for one another in the one but still-divided household. In this sense, ecumenism deals not with foreign, but with domestic relations. It is not a return to the past but a common search for future reconciliation.\*

In the practice of ecumenism (ch. 2), the whole church is involved, laity and clergy alike. Ecumenism demands both the “continual reformation” of the pilgrim church and the continual conversion of each Catholic. In fact, “the very soul of the ecumenical movement is the change of heart and holiness of life”, along with private and public prayer for unity and occasional joint worship. Loving understanding of each other’s communions through dialogue (see **dialogue, intrafaith**), ecumenically oriented formation in theological studies and a common search into the word of God\* foster mutual understanding and esteem. And to express the bond which already unites Christians to the Servant Lord and to one another, common witness\* through cooperative action, especially in social matters, is strongly encouraged.

Chapter 3 describes the two principal historical divisions in the Christian family – between East and West and within the West. Special features of the origin and growth of the Eastern churches resulted in a mentality and historical development different from

that in the West. The Eastern liturgical and monastic traditions, spiritualities and church disciplines, and “complementary rather than conflicting” theological formulations should be respected, for they contribute to the comeliness of the one church and to its witness.\* Prayer, dialogue and cooperation in pastoral work are the means for restoring full communion.

For the Christian communions in the West, the decree proposes a programme for dialogue. The commitment to Christ as Lord and Saviour, the loving reverence for holy scripture, the baptismal liturgy and celebration of the Last Supper, the apostolic witness to the gospel in social action – all provide points of agreement as well as disagreement among Catholics and their Anglican and Protestant brothers and sisters in Christ.

The decree ends by acknowledging that it is not an evaluation of a static position but a charter for an open movement, “without prejudging the future inspirations of the Holy Spirit”.

Since Vatican II the Secretariat (now Pontifical Council\*) for Promoting Christian Unity has issued periodic guidelines and ecumenical directories.\*

See also **church, Roman Catholic Church and pre-Vatican II ecumenism**.

TOM STRANSKY

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## DENOMINATIONALISM

DENOMINATIONALISM denotes a pattern of religious structuring and of ecclesial diversity that appeared in the modern, Western world under conditions of religious pluralism,\* disestablishment, toleration and religious liberty.\* As a state of dividedness and as the object of corrective endeavours on the part of 20th-century ecumenism, denominationalism has been portrayed negatively, as the “moral failure” of the church (H. Richard Niebuhr). A more sympathetic recognition

might see in denominations and denominationalism a form of religious order and organization peculiarly expressive of the social and cultural life of democratic capitalism.\* That recognition comes easier as the vitality and salience of denominationalism recede. In its heyday, denominationalism and related forms of voluntarism seemed to be actually constitutive of democratic society. Diversity took different forms at earlier points in the church's life and will doubtless assume a different aspect in the future. Such a perspective on denominationalism perhaps invites some reconsideration of ecumenism, construing it less in moral terms as an onslaught against schism\* and more as an expression of the church's *unity*\* appropriate to the same set of social conditions as those in which denominations express the church's *diversity*.

Denominationalism patterns vary geographically, reflecting the social-cultural landscape, the political configurations, and the route taken in each country. In the Anglo-Saxon world, denominationalism bears the marks of its origins in the 17th-century religious maelstrom out of which modern Britain emerged. The theological languages of the Reformation(s) gave urgency, even ultimacy, to causes and social groupings. British society fractured into religious parties. The fracturing itself set the terms for later British denominationalism and that of Britain's colonies.

The habits of mind and heart that characterize denominationalism and give it its peculiar colouration also derived from the 17th century, particularly from Puritanism. Reformed theology put a high premium on conceptualizing God's order for the world and actualizing order in church and state.\* Puritan parties re-inforced that mandate for structure with eschatological urgency. In the face of an imminent end, they felt driven to build God's new order. Detailed blueprints for the structural order of the church they discovered in the Bible. So Presbyterians, Independents, Separatists, Baptists, Quakers and a myriad of radical groups sought to build God's order. These groups carried the mandate for order throughout the Anglo-Saxon world, thereby providing an essential ingredient in denominationalism, i.e. purpose. Each group cherished its order as

God's own, planted it wherever it went and viewed other ecclesiological expressions as a betrayal of God's will.

Such presumption bred intolerance, fanaticism, war and regicide. It also bred the reactions which came to be known as the Glorious Revolution and the Enlightenment and which are credited with the invention of toleration. Such tolerance, or acceptance of other religious bodies, was another essential for denominationalism. And to a certain extent, the Enlightenment and political liberalism did provide the social conditions for religious groups to recognize one another's legitimacy. However, that vital achievement derived its positive content from one strand of Puritanism, namely the Independents. Committed to the ecclesial sufficiency of the local gathered community (see **local church**), the Independents worked out for themselves and ultimately for a larger Protestant community a conception of the church's unity that transcended the manifest plurality of churches (see **congregationalism**). The key notion was that schism did not apply to the mere fact of division but rather to attitudes and relationships, specifically to the want of love between Christian groups that put brothers at enmity with one another. On that premise, groups could recognize one another as legitimate, as part of the church, even though differing on non-essentials. That posture guided the attitudes towards one another of the groups bred or nurtured by pietism and thus suffused the whole evangelical wing of Protestantism.

Other constructions of unity-amid-diversity would eventually reinforce that puritan/pietist one and embed themselves in the folkways and laws of Western states. The US, in particular, made denominationalism seem almost constitutional. The federal amendments proscribing establishment of religion, providing for separation of church and state, and guaranteeing religious freedom and corresponding legislation on the state levels did seem to envelop the existing religious pluralism in political sanctity. But other factors as well made denominationalism into what Tocqueville recognized as the first of US political institutions. The public theology\* derived from New England puritanism and the missionary imperialism of revivalistic Protestantism drove denomina-

tions into the quest for a Christian America, a quest that re-oriented denominational attention away from internal preoccupations and towards the amelioration of the moral and spiritual conditions of the American people. The denominationalism that resulted constituted what scholars have recognized as a voluntary establishment of religion, an extremely ironic but nevertheless highly visible establishment despite disestablishment. Well into the 20th century, so-called mainstream Protestant denominations and denominationalism functioned as the structure or skeleton for the American civil religion.\*

That skeletal function depended upon the diversity which denominationalism permitted, even blessed. The unitive purposes of denominations and denominationalism went hand in hand with intense competitiveness and social divisiveness. Denominations facilitated division of church and society along ethnic, sectional, radical, economic and linguistic lines. It was this "compromise" of the church that Niebuhr pronounced as the sin of denominationalism.

By the final third of the 20th century, that form of denominationalism seemed to be crumbling, a casualty of the many developments that rendered mainstream Protestant hegemony implausible – the social and political maturity of Judaism and Catholicism, the waning plausibility of a missionary conception of the world, the self-critique typified by Niebuhr and known as neo-orthodoxy, the increased secularization\* of American society, the more "civil" tone of civil theology, the political strength of the Protestant right and, of course, ecumenism. Many mainstream Protestants (and increasingly Catholics as well) found in ecumenism the purpose, vision and unity that denominationalism and a Christian America had once provided. Abandoned by the mainstream, both denominationalism and the quest for a Christian America have prospered among conservative and Evangelical Protestants. The future of denominationalism and of its relation to democratic society thus remains an interesting question.

See also **federalism; oppression, economic consequences of.**

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## DEPENDENCE

THE DEBATE on development\* inevitably involved the issue of strategies for overcoming underdevelopment; and analysis of the material conditions of the underdeveloped countries in turn showed that the problem of economic growth cannot be separated from that of domination. The situation of the great majority of the underdeveloped countries is the result of an historical process which was in general decisively influenced by colonialism.\*

For most former colonies, achieving political independence has not set them on the path of development. In many instances the situation even became worse. The new nations (see **third world**), despite their new political sovereignty, generally continued to be dominated by external factors, i.e. to be in a state of dependence. This is understood to mean "the situation of underdevelopment, which socially implies a kind of domination... In extreme cases this situation presupposes that the decisions affecting production or consumption in a given economy are made in terms of the dynamics and the interests of the developed economies. The economies based on colonial enclaves represent a typical example of this extreme situation" (F.H. Cardoso and E. Faletto).

The theory of dependence stresses that this linkage of domination and dependence takes place within the process of capitalist development, with its associated social structuring (see **capitalism**). It follows that dependence brings an expansion and intensification of tensions between capital and labour (1) by alienating the immediate producers from their products, especially in the case of those who work in rural areas; (2) by concentrating excess production in private capital; (3) by concentrating and centralizing the ownership of the means of production in private capital; (4) by increasing the number of unemployed people; and (5) by giving new impetus to the development of productive resources.

The fundamental problem is that capitalist growth is a process which involves the whole of society in the same way. Capitalist development in a region and in an economic sector has a destructive effect on the forces already existing, on the production relations in that region and sector, and also in the regions and sectors which depend on it. It is therefore a destructive process which in turn creates new tensions. Thus for instance an imbalance occurs between industrialized countries and others which provide them with raw materials, promoting the power of the former while weakening the latter. This inequality in turn has repercussions within the society of the countries subjected to domination, causing serious social confrontations and general instability.

The theory of dependence was formulated chiefly as a criticism of the developmentalism of the 1950s and early 1960s. In the 1960s it was claimed that economic growth would result from a process of investment to which domestic savings and international aid would contribute. Those who formulated the theory of dependence emphasized that the impact of this investment would not yield the results claimed unless the problem of structures was tackled. The view of the developmental theorists was that the social well-being of the countries on the periphery would come about through the processes of reform and modernization: the model for growth had already been given through the success obtained by the more industrialized countries. Those who framed the theory of dependence, however, stressed that this assumption ignored the historical conditions which had led to the growth of the strong and the economic weakening of the impoverished. The development of some, therefore, meant the underdevelopment of the others and vice versa.

This view of economic and social reality contributed decisively to the initial analyses that led to the proposals enunciated by liberation theology,\* especially in Latin America and the Caribbean. Gustavo Gutiérrez pointed out that "the poor countries are becoming ever more clearly aware that their underdevelopment is only the by-product of the development of other countries... Moreover, they are realizing that their own development will come about only with a struggle

to break the domination of the rich countries." This perception sees the conflict implicit in the process. Development must attack the root causes of the problems, of which the deepest is the economic, social, political and cultural dependence of some countries on others – an expression of the domination of some social classes over others. Attempts to bring about changes within the existing order have proved futile. Only a radical break from the status quo – i.e. a profound transformation of the private property system, access to power by the exploited class and a social revolution that would break this dependence – would allow for the change to a new society.

The novelty of dependence theory does not lie in recognizing domination. Rather, the theory makes it possible to understand the effects of economic domination today on the various social classes and the state. The contrast between centre and periphery thereby gains in intensity in dependent societies. It has found expression in the continuous series of acute social conflicts in the countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pacific. Dependence was also experienced strongly by the end of the 20th century by countries which were formerly governed by communist regimes.

The dependency of peripheral countries in the world system is threefold: at the domestic level it has a social dimension; at the international economic level it is both technological and financial; at the level of relations among nations it has a political character. The experience of these situations is a main ingredient in the tense cultural confrontations of today.

See also **economics**.

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## DEVANANDAN, PAUL DAVID

B. 9 July 1901, Madras; d. 10 Sept. 1962, Dehra Dun, India. An ordained minister of the Church of South India, Devanandan was

a speaker at the WCC's New Delhi assembly in 1961. He was literature secretary of the Indian YMCA for a period, and was associated with the work of the East Asia Christian Conference and the Committee for Literature on Social Concerns. For the last five years of his professional life he was director of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society in Bangalore. After studies at Madras University and the Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, he obtained his PhD in religion from Yale University. He held several major teaching posts in the areas of theology, philosophy and religion: William Paton lecturer at Selby Oak, Birmingham; Henry Luce visiting professor at Union Theological Seminary, New York; and Teape lecturer at Cambridge University. Many leaders of churches and Christian institutions in India looked to him for personal guidance and counsel. A pioneer in the area of interfaith dialogue,\* his many friends and acquaintances included not a few adherents of other faiths. With M.M. Thomas he was editor of the journal *Religion and Society*.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ P.D. Devanandan, *Christian Concern in Hinduism*, Bangalore, Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, 1961 ■ *Christian Issues in Southern Asia*, New York, Friendship, 1963.

## DEVELOPMENT

THE IDEA of development became prominent after the second world war. The term, originally synonymous with "growth", has often been criticized as inadequate to express fully the reality of promoting human well-being through societal transformation.

Various factors contributed to the increasing use of the notion of development after 1945. A prominent one was the emergence between 1946 and 1970 of approximately 50 nations to sovereign independence, most of them in Africa or Asia, starting with India in 1947 and Indonesia in 1949. Another precipitating factor was a "revolution of rising expectations" closely associated with political freedom, new technology and increasing appreciation for the marvels of science (see **science and technology**). Contributing to this revolution was a radically

changing understanding of human and civil rights and a new commitment to social justice not only for nations but also for individuals and groups within a nation. Perhaps of lesser significance, but not to be underestimated, was the remarkable success of the US Marshall Plan for the recovery of war-torn nations, as well as the cold war,\* which led to a competition between super-power blocs to enlarge their spheres of ideological, political and economic influence.

Perhaps no title reveals the early understanding of development better than Walter Rostow's *Stages of Economic Growth*. Simplified, Rostow's argument was that nations could reach a stage of "take-off" towards economic and social prosperity if sufficient technical skills, financial support and economic organization were made available. While this view relied heavily on long-run market forces, Rostow's thesis was compatible with both socialist and capitalist views of development. Both relied heavily on capital formation, development of human technical skills, industrialization and infrastructure enhancement. Some 300 years of Western history and 40 years of Soviet history seemed to confirm the scientific validity of Rostow's view. When the newly politically independent nations found themselves shackled to economic dependence and having few of the key ingredients in Rostow's prescription, the theory of stages of growth became even more convincing. But there has been progressive disaffection, especially among some Christian ethicists, with the assumptions implicit in this notion of development.

## EARLY INVOLVEMENT IN DEVELOPMENT

It was natural for the churches, with a long tradition of mission\* and service programmes among the poor, to become involved in the development agenda. Thousands of church-sponsored schools, colleges, hospitals, rural-development schemes and other projects to improve human life had already obliged the churches to face many important questions about the purposes and efficacy of their work. What should be the relationship between mission and service? What is the relationship between charity or relief and the promotion of longer-term human welfare? Is there any end to charity unless development is also achieved?

In the mid-1950s the churches in the ecumenical movement embarked on influential studies of what happens to individuals, communities and churches under conditions of "rapid social change". A symbol of the growing attention to the reality and problems of the poorer countries was the venue of the WCC's 1961 assembly in one of these countries, India.

A watershed in the ecumenical debate about development occurred at the 1966 Geneva conference on the churches' relationship to the "social and technological revolutions of our time". Influenced more strongly than ever before by leading speakers from the third world (this admittedly problematic term is used here in the original sense of the French *tiers monde* – designating the group of nations which belonged neither to the market economies [first world] nor to the Marxist economies [second world] and which had particular characteristics and problems, including, for most of them, grinding poverty\*), the ecumenical case for systemic political and cultural transformation was dramatically argued, a transformation in which the churches would be called upon to play more than a palliative role. The nature of the church's role was vigorously debated. Some contended that mission, in the sense of proclaiming the gospel, was the primary task of the churches, with service a strictly ancillary function. Some stressed charity and relief rather than systemic development, either because the churches were perceived to be ill-equipped to engage in systemic transformation, or because systemic development required a kind of political or economic ideological commitment in which the churches should not engage.

Although this debate was not completely resolved, by 1968 at the WCC's Uppsala assembly it was clear that for most people the issue was not *whether* the churches should be involved in socio-economic development but *how*. In fact, so strong was the Uppsala commitment to development that the WCC immediately began a process to institutionalize it by establishing in 1970 the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development (CCPD). The Uppsala assembly also approved plans for a Joint Committee on Society, Development and Peace (SODE-

PAX\*), which was set up in 1968. In the early 1970s SODEPAX was seen as an instrument for wide-ranging collaboration between the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church. This dream never materialized fully, in part because of differing emphases in the analysis of development and what the churches should do to promote it. After the first period, the SODEPAX mandate was re-defined, with a reduced staff and programme, and at the end of 1980 it was terminated.

Under the aegis of CCPD, the debate about the purposes, nature and processes of development became a focal point of the ecumenical agenda. Initially, there was a fairly broad implicit acceptance of the Rostow understanding of development. In fact, some argued that the basic function of the churches was to generate financial resources to give to secular agencies and technical specialists, fully confident that the latter could achieve development through their own emphases. The debates of the early 1970s centred more on the moral question of how to generate the will and material resources for sacrificial giving than on defining goals and methods of fostering development. The Rostow conception of development was also implicit in the composition of the first 25-person commission, largely composed of technical experts in social analysis, management or technical development matters, including persons who served on specialized UN agencies. Programmatically, too, the emphasis was on technical economic considerations and the mobilization of greater capital and human resources.

### REJECTION OF EARLIER VIEWS OF DEVELOPMENT

It soon became apparent that the churches would not settle for the widespread secular paradigm for development, nor would they relinquish their own distinctive, often experimental, programmes. Formative for ecumenical thinking during the early years was Indian economist Samuel Parmar, whose emphasis on economic growth, self-reliance and social justice planted the seeds for fundamental questioning of the Rostow model. A first task for the churches was to test whether their existing mission work promoted these three goals. Clearly there were shortcomings, and alternative operational models were sought.

A common ecumenical development fund was established to generate more money, and churches and other organizations were asked to contribute 2% of their annual budget to it. A serious commitment to sharing power and decision making was implemented by transferring much more power to “recipient” groups to establish their own priorities and monitor their own progress. Comprehensive development efforts – rather than those focusing exclusively on individual sectors such as population planning, health schemes, farming cooperatives – were emphasized. Financial support, formerly often on a year-to-year basis, was committed for longer periods of time to enhance planning and fundamental development.

While all of these institutional changes implied new understandings of the churches’ role in promoting development, only in the mid-1970s did a conscious assessment of the idea of development itself come to the fore. The widely adjudged failure of the first UN Development Decade (1960-70) and the active involvement of third-world persons in the debate led to a radical questioning of the notion of development. Much of the initial challenge came from Latin America, but questions also came from Africa and Asia. Significant in this intensified questioning was the emergence of the “limits-to-growth” debate, coupled with the oil supply crunch in Western nations in 1973, which dramatically challenged the assumption that more is always better, even if more for all people were possible.

In church circles this questioning of the very idea of development had theological as well as sociological, political and economic roots. Seven major shortcomings of the concept of development were identified.

1. The traditional understanding of development has focused too narrowly on economic development, giving too little attention to non-economic factors in social transformation, such as cultural and religious divisions.

2. Real social transformation is to be measured by what happens to *people* in the process of social change, but traditional notions of development tended to emphasize more abstract economic or political objectives. In fact, “people-centred development”

was soon identified as the distinctive feature of the ecumenical understanding of development.

3. Many discussions on development, such as the Pearson commission’s influential report *Partners in Development*, assumed a too-facile harmony of interests between the rich and the poor, while the real situation, at least in the short term, was often a conflict between the haves and the have-nots. One should not assume that the rich will consider promoting the well-being of the poor to be in their own interest. To some extent, the structures which promote the prosperity of the affluent at the same time perpetuate the subservience of the poor. Some saw a direct one-to-one relationship here; others were content to argue that the correlation is close enough to forbid glib talk about “partnership in development”.

4. The typical measurements for development are inadequate. “Gross national product” and “per capita income” are defective because improvements in aggregate prosperity almost always obscure the real situation: the poor sectors of the population typically receive a disproportionately modest part of the bigger pie (or none at all). Disparities between the rich and the poor,\* between and within countries, often became larger rather than smaller. Without justice it is impossible to speak of development.

5. In the name of development, many national and international economic structures were perpetuating or even re-inforcing structures of injustice. Development has traditionally presupposed the primacy of order, predictability and rationality, but such emphases simply re-enforced the status quo. Rather than a benign collaboration between rich and poor, with a slow evolutionary process, authentic development often is conflictual and revolutionary (see **revolution**). Thus many prominent ecumenical ethicists gradually rejected “development” in favour of “liberation”\* which seemed to reflect better a holistic understanding and made it easier to connect issues of material well-being with deeper psychological and religious values and concerns. Furthermore, it was argued, “liberation” is a more biblical concept; and many rooted their understanding of it in the Hebrew exodus from slavery in Egypt. While accepting liberation as more

fully expressive of many faith affirmations, some warned that jettisoning the idea of development entirely risked marginalizing Christians from the broader development debate, thereby tacitly encouraging the churches to escape into theological analysis without taking hard economic and political questions seriously.

6. The enormous strain on the environment implied by growth models of development – in the face of increasingly visible signs of the earth's limited resources and absorptive capacities – calls into question the suitability of the goals of development, not on the basis of whether they are attainable but whether they are desirable. At the WCC's MIT conference (1979), the theologians and scientists who reflected together on issues of "faith, science and the future" seriously questioned scientific and technological values.

7. A cardinal feature of traditional development theory was that prosperity should be generated at the top in centres of strength, from where it would flow ever more fully towards the periphery of society. This "trickle-down" idea worked better in theory than in practice: not a few studies showed that "trickle-up" was the more likely scenario, transferring resources from the poor to those who were already relatively better off. To rely heavily on trickle-down is at best inefficient, at worst a hoax against the poor.

### **PARTICIPATION OF THE PEOPLE**

Two key emphases were central to ecumenical thinking about development and liberation in the mid-1970s. One was the crucial role of "participation".\* In line with the logic of the liberation argument and the example of the Exodus, it was argued with increasing cogency and insistence that people\* should be the subjects of history\* rather than the pawns moved about by others, that justice should be not merely distributive but participatory. Thus a society cannot be considered developed or even moving towards development when those governed have no share in determining where their society is headed. The popular notion of development encouraged concentration rather than distribution of power; the ecumenical community countered with the understanding of development as strug-

gle towards a "just, participatory and sustainable society".\* The inclusion in this formula of "participation" as a visible element in the vision of an emergent society corrected a long-standing association of justice solely with distributive justice.

Parallel and even more central was the dominance of the idea of "the people". The priority was not simply participation in general, but participation by the marginalized and oppressed people who had too often been written off. C.I. Itty, director of CCPD, captured this shift in his 1977 report to the commission: "Development is essentially a people's struggle in which the poor and oppressed should be the main protagonists, the active agents and immediate beneficiaries. Therefore, the development process must be seen from the point of view of the poor and oppressed masses, who are the subjects and not the objects of development. The role of the churches and Christian communities everywhere should be essentially supportive." This notion of development, he noted, has direct consequences for the way the churches should pursue development: "In situations where the poor accept their lot of poverty and misery in passive resignation, the churches should assist the masses to recognize the roots of their plight, to acquire a new awareness of themselves and the possibilities for changing their situation. In situations where the poor and oppressed are organizing themselves for the struggle, the churches should manifest their solidarity with them and provide supportive means for the struggle."

This commitment to solidarity with the poor has been controversial. Who are the poor? Which poor? Do the poor really have wisdom about the direction society should take and what methods are best to get there? Are Christians to endorse every strategy adopted by poor people? What is the relationship between poverty and righteousness? Is the church to abandon the rich and middle class? What are the practical implications for the churches as they try to promote development? One programmatic consequence for the churches was much greater attention to developing networks of people or people's movements rather than to building institutions or encouraging projects from outside the local situation.

The logic of experience and analysis, intentionally testing and contributing to one another, led quite naturally to this emphasis on people's participation. This "praxis", or dialectical interaction between theory and practice, has been a dominant motif in recent ecumenical understanding of development. Along with it has come a concern that analysis and action not be so preoccupied with the local or micro-situation as to ignore the impact of the macro-level economic, political and cultural forces, such as transnational corporations,\* many of which have more financial clout than the nations in which they are working, aid and trade decisions by rich nations, and the policies and practices of international bodies and agencies.

### SEEING THE WHOLE PICTURE

Thus, while primary attention has gone to people's participation in movements for justice and human dignity, ecumenical reflection on development has also given considerable attention to macro-level factors, e.g. through studies on the role of transnational corporations, the tendency of technology to concentrate power, the control exercised by the information and communication industries, the dependencies created by Western-style medicine on health professionals and the pharmaceutical industry, the debt crisis.\*

The 1980s brought growing awareness of the integral connections between all of the major justice questions facing the world family. Racism\* is deeply connected with economic injustice; sexism\* constitutes an incredibly resistant barrier to social development; ecological disaster compounds pressures on the poor and makes justice more difficult to achieve; militarism\* and the enormous costs of "security" exact a disastrous toll on human and financial resources; consumerist values insidiously exert their corrosive effect on humanistic and justice values; population pressures exacerbate environmental degradation, etc.

The issues are so large and complex that there is a danger of either succumbing to the temptation of ignoring them altogether or being overwhelmed by trying to resolve them all at once. As an ecumenical response to the interlocking character of all these issues and their negative impact on prospects

of justice and dignity for the poor, the WCC's Vancouver assembly (1983) offered a comprehensive vision of what society ought to be under the rubric of "justice, peace and the integrity of creation".\* While not understood as a blueprint for society, this theme nevertheless sought to provide a normative conceptual framework for keeping fragmented issues dynamically related.

Recent ecumenical discussion of socio-economic development has explored the meaning of and possibilities for a "civil society". A civil society\* is characterized by a variety of institutions, organizations and movements mid-range between the state at one pole, and the individual or family at the other. Such institutions help to give individuals and families a "social identity" and purpose which is relatively independent of the direct authority and power of the state. They also provide a pluralism and flexibility which accommodate movement and change, especially in societies which are ethnically, racially, religiously or linguistically heterogeneous.

Despite the significant strides in understanding more fully the nature and problems of development, the mood in many poorer countries at the dawn of a new century is one of exasperated desperation – sometimes quiet, sometimes not so quiet. Caught in desperate living conditions, many people argue that it is euphemistic to talk about development at all. They argue that things are not improving; in fact, in vast areas of the world they are deteriorating further. In the face of the debt crisis, environmental degradation, lack of food, dearth of elementary health care, repression by those in control, paucity of even basic education, the dominant concern is simply to survive. The revolution of rising expectations has, in many parts of the world, been replaced by a resignation to lowered expectations. Perhaps the greatest achievement of the development concept was in arousing common people to the belief, the hope, that they did not have to live in dire poverty and tacit oppression, that they were called to a different possibility. Many believed that this could happen peacefully, with the goodwill and collaboration of those who controlled society. Now that dream, belief, expectation is struggling to survive among the poor, even while it re-

mains a popular idea among people of liberal persuasion who are still determined to foster development.

The issue of development has become a major preoccupation of the churches, but the churches have not been uncritical participants in the broader debate about the goals and methods for promoting development. They have challenged fundamental assumptions and conceptions, and they have called into question many existing patterns for trying to achieve development at both the macro- and micro-levels. Not least, they have continuously explored the possible implications of these new insights for their own theories and actions. The pressures for justice, dignity and ecological sanity guarantee that, despite their complexity, the issues of development will remain a compelling challenge, conceptually as well as practically.

See also **economics; globalization, economic; growth, limits to.**

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## DIACONATE

THE PRIMARY model for the diaconate is the serving aspect of the ministry of Christ summarized in his statement, "I am among you as one who serves" (Luke 22:27). A serving ministry alternative to that of the apostles was established in the earliest church according to Acts 6, in order to reach more types of people. The first gentile Christian

church in Antioch, in thankfulness for receiving the gospel, reciprocated with diakonia\* (service) when the Jerusalem church was in need (Acts 11:27ff.). Later Paul bound together the Greek churches with the mother church through the practice of diakonia (cf. 2 Cor. 8). By the time of Philipians and 1 Tim. some ministers were definitely known as deacons. An increasing number of biblical scholars have concluded that Phoebe served as a deacon (see Rom. 16:1). Some of the enrolled widows of 1 Tim. 5:9ff. would have been obvious candidates for the women deacons of 1 Tim. 3:11.

By the 2nd century, deacons linked together bishop and people in the liturgy, social care and teaching centred on baptismal preparation. Deacons in late 2nd-century Rome were especially involved in burials and in administration of the cemeteries and catacombs, tasks later assigned to others. Rome limited the number of its deacons to seven, responsible for seven (later 14) areas of the city, which eventually – until the 19th century – gave their titles to the cardinal deacons.

Especially in the sexually segregated churches and households of the East, women deacons ministered to women and children. Their liturgical duties were connected with the baptism of women and taking communion to housebound women; they also chaperoned interviews between laywomen and male clergy. Canon 15 of Chalcedon specified 40 as the minimum age for ordination. Scholars differ as to whether canon 19 of Nicea means that all deaconesses (the term is used there for the first time) were lay, or whether those the Paulianists called "deaconesses" had never been ordained. The golden age for women in the diaconate was the 4th through 7th centuries in the East; best documented is Chrysostom's mentor, Deacon Olympias of Constantinople.

In both East and West women deacons ministered in women's monasteries. In Syria there were special canons for abbesses who were deacons. By the 14th century, evidence of the diaconate of abbesses disappeared, but traces remain in the Orthodox Euchologion and in the ordination of abbesses in the West. Probably as a result of Byzantine influence, women deacons were found in the West at least from the late 4th through 6th

centuries, as attested by the fact that synods tended to prohibit them.

For a number of centuries the minimum age for the presbyterate ensured that most clergymen served as deacons for several years. Some head or arch-deacons proceeded directly to the episcopacy (Thomas à Becket) and even to the papacy (Gregory the Great). As the diaconate came increasingly to be regarded as a transitional stage to the more highly prized priesthood, it became less qualified, retaining its liturgical roles but losing its administrative and social-service roles.

In the 19th century there was a revival of a social-serving diaconate in German Protestantism. At Kaiserswerth, deaconesses (who remained single) lived communally in a motherhouse and were sent out as nurses or teachers, for which they received pocket money. The deacons, who were allowed to marry, were trained by their brotherhood, and often worked as house fathers in institutions. After training and probation, both were blessed by the pastor of their brotherhood or sisterhood. At Zehlendorf and Herrenberg, the institution trained diakonia sisters who then worked for salaries, especially as district nurses; in return for a percentage of income, the institution provided in-service training, pastoral guidance and retirement opportunities. German cultural contacts and missionary work spread these forms throughout the world. The German example was followed in several Anglo-Saxon churches with parish deaconesses – some lay and some ordained. Churches of the Reformed tradition tended to elect lay deacons to do financial or pastoral work in parishes.

After the second world war, changes in the large German hospital-based institutions affected the deaconesses. Some nurses formed diaconal sisterhoods parallel to or incorporated into the deaconess sisterhoods. By the 1960s married German deacons both men and women were following a style of life similar to that of the diakonia sisters; they had been commissioned by their church, held both social-serving and theological qualifications, and often served as parish workers or as youth leaders in parishes. By the 1970s many Anglo-Saxon deaconesses were taking on liturgical duties.

Especially in Sweden there has been a shift from a mother-house sisterhood to deacons in the church; deacons are now ordained as part of the threefold ministry. In Europe more and more communities now contain a variety of members (women and men; deaconesses, deacons and pastors) involved in a greater variety of ministries in society, including hospice work, AIDS counselling, long-term care, retreat work, industrial safety, school administration and dance workshops, as well as more traditional tasks in central church administration.

Although in the 1970s some Protestant churches considered laicizing or even abolishing the diaconate, more and more now agree that having deacons as authorized leaders brings into focus and stimulates the diakonia of all believers. Many Protestant churches are restructuring their diaconal ministries. Worldwide, at least 50,000 men and women are authorized for lifelong diaconal ministry. The Roman Catholic Congregation of the Clergy devoted its 1995 session to examining the progress of the restoration of the permanent diaconate according to local needs authorized at the time of Vatican II. Several Anglican provinces, like the Roman Catholic Church, now have both transitional and permanent deacons, some for particular ministries. Many Anglican women priests highly value their continuing diaconal ministry. More recently Oriental and Orthodox churches have been thinking about their diaconates and about the diakonia appropriate for women, as are some Roman Catholics.

Literature on the diaconate continues to grow. Following the statement in the 1982 *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* text that “deacons represent to the church its calling as servant in the world. By struggling in Christ’s name with the myriad needs of societies and persons, deacons exemplify the interdependence of worship and service in the church’s life” (M31), the 1993 Faith and Order world conference (Santiago de Compostela) recommended further F&O work on the diaconate and noted that the experience of Protestant diaconal brotherhoods and sisterhoods, especially those with an ecumenical common life, could contribute to a fuller understanding of the structures for koinonia. “Hands and Feet: Towards a Serving

Church”, a 1995 report for the Anglican Church of the Province of Southern Africa, called the diaconate “a crucially important element in the total ministry of the serving church” and the provincial synod urged the establishment of a renewed dynamic diaconate in every parish, archdeaconry and diocese and agreed that the deacons would form a fourth house in the synod at all levels.

The Hanover report (1995) by the Anglican-Lutheran International Commission is the first international bilateral statement on the diaconate. It maintains that “when diaconal ministry involves personal identity and is not just a task, long-term or open-ended commitment is particularly appropriate” (para. 41). Pastors and priests are urged not to see the diaconate as a threat, but to welcome deacons as partners who can free them for a more focused presbyteral ministry (para. 68). The report concludes by suggesting that “because diaconal ministry is not burdened with the problems of validity and canonical recognition... we are called all the more to take up the possibilities before us for common diaconal ministry” (para. 79).

The World Federation of Diaconal Associations and Diaconal Communities (see **diakonia II**), the International Centre for the Diaconate (Roman Catholic), and the European Conference of Deacons are organizations in which men and women in various diaconates meet at regional and international levels for mutual encouragement and ecumenical enrichment.

Deacons have been challenged by the recent work of John Collins to eliminate hints of servility from their roles and to emphasize that their high-skilled and community-focused ministry involves training and leading the laity in their own diakonia. Collins has opened a debate on the fundamental nature of diakonia and of the diaconate. Some deacons whose churches practise sequential ordinations are advocating that those whose vocation is priestly be ordained directly to the presbyterate.

See also **ministry in the church; ministry, threefold.**

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**DIAKONIA**

THE TERM “diakonia” (from the Greek verb *diakonein*, to serve; cf. *diakonos*, male or female servant) refers to service as a permanent activity of the church throughout its history (part I of this entry). It is also the name of an international organization networking among those involved in the service ministries of the churches (part II). A separate entry is devoted to the diaconate\* as an order of ministry in the churches.

**I. THE DIAKONIA OF THE CHURCH**

Diakonia, or the “responsible service of the gospel by deeds and by words performed by Christians in response to the needs of people”, is rooted in and modelled on Christ’s service and teachings. The intimate link between the service of God and the service of humankind is said by *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* to be exemplified for the whole church by the ministry of deacons (M31).

The Old Testament law provided a variety of ways to alleviate the sufferings of the poor,\* and the prophets often spoke as advocates of the widows and orphans. The early Jerusalem church practised a form of communism: those with possessions sold them to benefit those who were in need. Its own subsequent needs were met in part by diakonia from gentile churches (Acts 11:27ff.; 2 Cor. 8).

**ELEMENTS OF THE TRADITION**

In the ancient churches, the funds used for diakonia were collected from the whole

congregation at the eucharist.\* In the Roman church male deacons, and in the Eastern church both men and women in the diaconate, were the key administrators of practical care in the name of the church.

By the 3rd century the church at Rome had over 1500 registered widows and recipients of alms. The city was divided into seven administrative districts, or *diaconiae*, under the care of seven deacons. Instead of the Roman state distributing bread, the deacons looked after it. The apostate Emperor Julian was extremely impressed by the care Christians provided for one another.

In Syria the monk-bishop Rabbula built a hostel and arranged for a female deacon and nuns to provide care for the women in need and a male deacon and monks to care for men. Diakonia as an institution to care for the sick and poor spread from Syria throughout the Byzantine empire. At the height of their ministry, the deacons of the Eastern churches were involved in social care, liturgical-pastoral care, teaching, administrative-judicial duties and burial diakonia. Emperor Justinian (483-565) stressed philanthropy and promulgated philanthropic legislation which covered not only the capital but also the provinces. He established separate residential institutions to care for the various types of people in need. During his reign institutions were set up to care for poor pilgrims in Jerusalem; through the pilgrims the idea of hospices reached the Western church.

While the diaconal activities of official institutions in both East and West are documented, little is known of the diakonia of the ordinary laity.\* Both Basil and Benedict expected monks to practise diakonia; each guest was to be received like Christ. The monasteries tended mainly to provide food for the poor at their gates; this feeding of the poor became part of the Maundy Thursday ritual. The name of the Hospitaliers, who specialized in their own forms of diakonia, is still attached to ambulance care in Britain. The Beguines cared for orphans and sick women, and when suppressed their houses often became municipal orphanages.

When the diaconate came chiefly to be a transitional office to the priesthood, the duties of deacons became more limited to the formal liturgical ones; and during the middle

ages responsibility for the care of the poor shifted from the bishop to the parish clergy, who coped with needs mainly on an ad hoc, local basis. Systematization developed the scheme of the seven corporal and the seven spiritual works of mercy based on Matt. 25:34-46; their illustration in art indicates the widespread diakonia practised by the laity.

The crisis of the black death greatly increased the need for care (and cost the lives of about half the care-givers). Changes in life-style and the economy added to the difficulties. By the 16th century, the diaconal system was no longer able to cope with the needs. In England the breakdown of the medieval provisions resulted in the Poor Law, by which minimal relief was provided to residents through a poor tax levied on all householders.

The reformers recalled the role of deacons in the NT church: Luther recommended that deacons "keep a register of poor people and care for them"; Calvin stressed that the proper function of a deacon was not liturgy but collecting alms from the faithful and distributing them to the poor. This was put into practice in some Reformed churches: male deacons administered the affairs of the poor, the women cared for the poor themselves. The 1662 Ordinal of the Church of England directed the deacon to search out the sick and poor of the parish and inform the curate, so that "by his exhortation they may be relieved with the alms of the parishioners, or others". The most extensive diaconal concern was shown by the radical reformers and institutionalized by the Mennonites and others.

Meanwhile in the Roman Catholic Church new religious orders, especially those inspired by St Vincent de Paul, specialized in various aspects of diakonia.

Under Turkish rule the Greek church found itself severely restricted from public diakonia, as more recently did several other Orthodox churches under various communist governments. A parish-church based diakonia and the restoration of some (formerly deaconess) diaconal houses is now occurring in some Eastern European countries.

## SOCIAL REFORMERS OF THE 19TH CENTURY

With the Industrial Revolution and the rise of laissez-faire capitalism, many people

suffered extreme hardship, and a feared “means test” was sometimes used to assess whether one was among the “deserving poor”. Both Christian and secular interests tackled these problems in the 19th century. In Hamburg the threat of revolution and social hardship led Wichern to form the Innere (or “Home”) Mission and to train deacons. At Kaiserswerth the social conditions of women and children led Fliedner to found a training institution for deaconesses who would serve as nurses and teachers in parishes. The 19th-century deacon and deaconess movement understood evangelization and diakonia as a unity and developed large institutions to care for the sick, epileptic, elderly and people with disabilities, etc.

Secular and Christian social reformers made many people conscious of the plight of their neighbours. Public charities increased, and secular movements produced a philanthropy not tied to any religion or denomination (e.g. the Red Cross). Meanwhile, the idea of the professional social worker began to emerge.

**ECUMENICAL DIAKONIA**

While the activities of the ecumenical movement of the 20th century tended at the outset mainly to take the form of conferences, meetings and reflection, a pioneering venture in ecumenical diakonia emerged in 1922 with the founding of the European Central Bureau for Inter-Church Aid under the auspices of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches, later joined by other European churches. Over the next 23 years this agency distributed millions of dollars’ worth of relief to churches, Christian institutions and pastors in need both in Europe and elsewhere, before merging in 1945 with the WCC, then in process of formation.

The WCC’s direct involvement in diakonia had begun during the years of the second world war in the form of ministry to refugees and prisoners of war, working closely with a variety of other churches and church-related organizations, as well as the Red Cross. Plans for post-war involvement in reconstruction were laid already in 1942. The scope of the refugee service – which fo-

cused on the more than 12 million people driven from their homes in Europe – soon extended to work with Palestinians displaced after the founding of the state of Israel in 1948; and from there the WCC broadened its diaconal service to other forms of emergency relief and service worldwide. The first meeting of the WCC central committee after Amsterdam, in Chichester, UK, in 1949, underscored that interchurch aid\* is a permanent obligation of the WCC, not a temporary engagement that would come to an end with the completion of reconstruction after the war, and that this is a spiritual and not just a material task. There was also a widespread agreement that the most effective diakonia is that which is rendered ecumenically, rather than bilaterally between churches of the same tradition.

Over the years, the WCC has engaged in considerable reflection on the meaning of diakonia. In 1966 a world consultation on interchurch aid, refugee and world service convened by the WCC in Swanwick, UK, added the idea of social advancement or social action to the prevailing concept of social relief work and service. The WCC was seen as playing a major role in the coordination of the help coming from the growing regional and national Christian agencies, especially in Europe. In 1967 the WCC, the International Federation of Innere Mission and Diakonie, and DIAKONIA established a diakonia desk for research and action attached to the WCC’s interchurch aid unit, though a subsequent major restructuring of the WCC in 1971 made it more difficult for the members of the diaconates to contribute to international ecumenical discussions about diakonia.

As the Western Christian aid and development agencies grew, often with major government support, criticism of the “new missionaries of the interchurch aid empire” was increasingly heard in some quarters. They were charged with making the same mistakes and putting almost the same pressures on developing nations that international aid does. This viewpoint would prefer a local sharing of resources (P. Gregorios, 3-5). The WCC’s sixth assembly re-affirmed that “diakonia as the church’s ministry of sharing, healing and reconciliation is of the very nature of the church. It demands of individuals and churches a giv-

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ing which comes not out of what they have, but what they are.” The WCC sought to broaden traditional understandings of diakonia and the ecumenical sharing of resources\* to go beyond a focus on material transfers from rich to poor and to enable practical partnerships which involved people as well as funds. A global consultation on diakonia in Larnaca, Cyprus, in 1986 discussed such issues as worldwide regression to parochialism, hunger, debt, armaments expenditure, and uprooted people. It noted that diakonia can exist on various levels — emergency, prevention, rehabilitation, development and change — and that the form it takes should be shaped by local needs. For the future, Larnaca suggested (1) renewal of philanthropic diakonia, (2) diakonia and development for justice and human rights and dignity, (3) diakonia for peace between people, (4) diakonia and church unity in the service of society, and (5) diakonia and inter-religious understanding for common involvement in justice and peace.

### DIAKONIA AND THE CHURCHES TODAY

From the 1960s to the 1980s, as governments in Western Europe tended to take on more responsibility for social security, some churches left diakonia in the hands of the social services and welfare and saw their diaconal role as one of only “plugging the gaps”. A number of churches established “boards of social responsibility” or similar bodies to influence government policy and thus practise prophetic diakonia. Especially in Eastern Europe, Christians were asking what it means to be a Christian in a socialist and communist state. Others reflected on what it means to be a Christian and to be a church in a capitalist state. Does it mean evangelizing the government as well as those in private companies? In the global village, is diakonia to be exercised only towards the Christian neighbour, or is it for all?

Individual churches in different cultures vary immensely in their degree of articulation of diakonia and in their practice. There is also great variation concerning who has primary responsibility for diakonia: central church offices (bishops or specialized national agencies), local presbyters, deacons, professional social workers or laity.

In Germany, church tax helps to support large evangelical and Catholic diaconal insti-

tutions. In January 1998 the many forms of individual and institutional work of Diakonisches Werk of the Evangelical Church in Germany involved more than 419,000 staff in some 30,130 institutions. In the Netherlands, elected lay deacons collect offerings and use them for projects at home and abroad. In some Scandinavian countries each parish is obliged to have a deacon or deaconess authorized by the church to visit those in need.

The theoretical basis for diakonia in the RCC is mainly found in the various papal encyclicals (see **encyclicals, Roman Catholic social**). The restructuring of the religious congregations has greatly affected their diakonia. Fewer religious and more lay professionals are now involved in the diminished institutional work, and religious are taking on new forms of work (e.g. AIDS\* ministry). Caritas\* is the largest Catholic aid agency.

The restored permanent diaconate of the RCC and the distinctive diaconate in some of the Anglican churches are becoming more active in advocacy for people in need, working for change which will produce justice for them, as well as continuing to lead in pastoral and emergency care. In many Anglican churches there is stress on studying root causes and trying to influence those in power. In England the *Faith in the City* report (1985) led to an exciting growth in church-based community work projects, but the question remains whether the church's diakonia can keep pace with the changes in the complex societies in which they live and work and whose problems and tensions they themselves share, as the 1988 Lambeth conference pointed out.

By the late 1980s, for reasons of both economic ideology and pragmatism, governmental authorities were increasingly asking voluntary agencies to take on the new tasks, precisely at a time when many churches were facing acute funding difficulties and had fewer staff and less financial resources for diakonia. But government support for church-related diaconal endeavours typically comes with restrictions, conditions and complicated reporting requirements, requiring further professionalization of diakonia.

Meanwhile, old problems increase in scope and new ones arise. What can churches do to ease the plight of the millions

of refugees, internally displaced persons and other people living as migrants outside their countries of origin? Ad hoc responses to emergencies vie for money and staff with long-term evaluation and remedying of causes. On the global scale not only catastrophes but also recognized long-term needs seem to be growing more rapidly than the capacity to respond either at the national or international level. Countless questions arise: for example, about the relation of aid to dependency, about reconciling local grassroots people's participation with professionalization, about the allocation of church resources to emergency aid, prevention, rehabilitation, development and advocacy, about diakonia in the face of the special plight of women and children, and so on.

During the 1990s the challenge of diakonia faced churches in the formerly socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe in dramatic new ways. The collapse of the economic system brought to the surface a wide range of unmet needs in society, but the churches, having been prevented from undertaking diaconal activities for more than 40 years (and in Russia for more than 70 years), had few structures and little experience for this. In the case of the Orthodox churches, significant reflection on diakonia had come from a 1978 consultation in Crete, which had articulated a theological approach linking diakonia with *leitourgia*: "Christian diakonia is not an optional action... but an indispensable expression of that community, which has its source in the eucharistic and liturgical life of the church. It is a 'liturgy after the Liturgy'."

With international ecumenical assistance, churches in Eastern Europe were soon undertaking a variety of major initiatives in diakonia in their own countries. A consultation organized by the Conference of European Churches in Bratislava in 1994 made it evident that the reality of the situation was not one of rebuilding church-based social care in this part of the world but of beginning from scratch. In the conflict around the break-up of the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s, Hungarian interchurch aid played a significant role in delivering diaconal services. As the conflict went on, Orthodox emergency aid conducted at an international level came to be extremely im-

portant in partnership with church-related agencies and the WCC.

Those involved in diakonia, whether as professionals or volunteers, would view service to the neighbour as half of the church's life, the other half being the worship of God. But in international, national, regional and local church structures diakonia is too often marginalized, and decisions are made by those who give priority to the pastoral care of the gathered church.

See also **ministry, threefold**.

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## II. THE ORGANIZATION DIAKONIA

DIAKONIA became part of the ecumenical movement shortly before the founding of the WCC. After the second world war, the European deaconess associations felt a need to form a close-knit federation. Thanks to Dutch initiative, an international conference in 1946 appointed an interim committee to work out a plan for an international organization. After much study, prayer and consultation, this committee met in Riehen, Switzerland, in April 1947 and produced a proposal which formed the basis of the constitution for DIAKONIA as an international ecumenical federation of diaconal associations and sisterhoods. It was adopted by the delegates of the various countries at a conference in Copenhagen in October 1947. In the beginning a conference was held every two years for the consideration of mutual concerns; from 1951 to 1975 DIAKONIA met

every three years; at present the federation holds such conferences every four years.

The constitution of DIAKONIA was rewritten at Manila in 1979 as the constitution of the World Federation of Diaconal Associations and Sisterhoods, further revised in accordance with the law of the Netherlands and approved at the Wolfville assembly in Nova Scotia, Canada, in 1992. The official name is now Foundation DIAKONIA: World Federation of Diaconal Associations and Diaconal Communities.

DIAKONIA has the status of an international ecumenical organization in working relationship with the WCC and sends a representative as an observer to central committee meetings. Its aims are to further ecumenical relationships between diaconal associations in various countries, to reflect on the nature and task of diakonia and the diaconate in the New Testament sense and to further the understanding of it, to strengthen a sense of community among the associations and sisterhoods, to render mutual aid and to undertake common tasks.

DIAKONIA presently comprises 65 individual associations or federations of many associations in some 36 countries. It has three working groups: Kaire, which encourages an ecumenical spiritual experience that embraces both contemplation and service; Koinonia/Diakonia, which reflects on the meaning and understanding of diakonia/diaconate and its practical consequences in churches and parishes (1971-94); and Diakaid, a programme for mutual aid and exchange of personnel. Its three regional sections – DOTAC (the Americas and Caribbean), DAP (Asia and the Pacific) and DRAE (Africa and Europe) – are becoming increasingly important for its work between assemblies. At DIAKONIA's world assembly at Friedrichroda, Thuringia, in eastern Germany in 1996, some of the work which its executive committee has been doing on the theology of diakonia and of the diaconate was presented to the delegates.

See also **diaconate**.

TERESA JOAN WHITE

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## DIALOGUE, BILATERAL

IN THE 16th century and later, bilateral dialogues, i.e. religious conversations between two parties only, were a usual method of overcoming or of avoiding church division. At the time of the Reformation, there were such bilateral religious conversations (between Catholics and Lutherans, Lutherans and Anglicans, and Reformed and Lutherans); in the early 20th century such dialogues also took place, e.g. between Anglicans and Roman Catholics (1921-26), Anglicans and Orthodox (1930-), Anglicans and Old Catholics (1931), and Lutherans and Reformed (1947-). Then for a time bilateral dialogues receded into the background. Multilateral ecumenical encounters and dialogues strongly prevailed, particularly in the realm of the WCC.

The 1960s brought a new emphasis on and a sudden surge of bilateral dialogues. Today, there is a widespread network of bilateral dialogues on both international and national levels, in which almost all churches and church traditions are involved. Thus, bilateral dialogues have again become a main focus within the modern ecumenical movement.

Two factors especially contributed to this development. First, the multilateral encounters of the early ecumenical movement and later within the WCC, particularly its Faith and Order\* commission, prepared the ground both theologically and spiritually for a more direct encounter between the individual churches. Second, the official entry of the Roman Catholic Church into the ecumenical movement with the Second Vatican Council\* brought in a church which, by its strong sense of identity and universality, had a natural preference for bilateral dialogues. Other churches, particularly those with their own fairly strong sense of identity and worldwide coherence in doctrine, worship and practice, took up the dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church and subsequently also among themselves.

Apart from their bilateral method, most such dialogues have two features. First, they

are *official* church dialogues in that they are authorized by the respective church authorities who appoint the delegates and to whom the results must be directly submitted. Second, they are mainly concerned with *doctrinal matters* (esp. authority\* in the church, eucharist,\* ministry,\* ecclesiology), the aim being to overcome the church-divisive divergences inherited from the past and reach agreements on these issues sufficient for the establishment of closer fellowship.

This bilateral form of dialogue has gained renewed emphasis for three reasons. First, the bilateral approach allows for thorough and detailed study of the specific issues which separate two traditions and, at the same time, makes it possible to bring out more effectively the elements which, despite separation, the traditions have in common. Second, the official nature of the dialogue helps in reaching results which carry at least a certain amount of authority and thereby contributes to the process of receiving the dialogue results in the churches (see **reception**). Third, the emphasis on doctrinal matters results from the conviction that the theological divergences rooted in the historical heritage of the churches are still operative today and must be overcome if an authentic and lasting church fellowship is to be established.

A disadvantage of bilateral dialogues may be the danger of isolating the individual dialogues from each other and of losing sight of the indivisibility of the ecumenical movement. In order to counteract this danger, there have been periodic forums on bilateral dialogues since 1978; the eighth in 2001. These have demonstrated that bilateral dialogues and multilateral dialogues are not to be seen as alternatives, but that both types of ecumenical dialogue have their specific tasks and are therefore in need of close interrelation.

See also **dialogue, interfaith; dialogue, intrafaith; dialogue, multilateral**.

HARDING MEYER

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## DIALOGUE, INTERFAITH

THE STRUGGLE to comprehend the relationship between Christianity and other religious traditions has been an important issue from the beginnings of the church.\* Christian faith\* was born in a Jewish milieu. Inevitably it soon came into contact with the Graeco-Roman world. When persons who were not of Jewish origin became Christians, controversy erupted over the basis of their common life in a religious community made up of Jews and Gentiles (Acts 15; Gal. 2). In his letter to the Romans, Paul seeks to clarify theologically the relationship between the Jewish religious tradition and the Christian faith, which by then were beginning to be seen as two distinct religious groupings. Writing to the Corinthians, Paul gave pastoral advice to people who had become followers of Christ but had partners in marriage who continued to remain in another religious tradition (1 Cor. 7:12-16).

The writings of the early church also show that there were divergent schools of thought on how to understand and relate to religious life that was not based on Christian convictions. The history of Christianity is also the history of Christian relationships, for the most part conflictual, with other faith traditions. This survey confines itself to the period of the modern ecumenical movement and to the development of the concept and practice of interfaith dialogue inspired by and structured within it.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The world missionary conference at Edinburgh in 1910 is commonly accepted as marking the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement. This conference ap-

pealed to the 1200 delegates sent by missionary societies and so-called younger churches (a total of only 17) to bring about the evangelization of the world in that generation.

The question of Christian understanding of and relationship to other religious traditions was a central issue in Edinburgh, and the section that dealt with the missionary message in relation to non-Christian religions was by common consent the finest of all the reports produced at Edinburgh. It spoke of the Christian encounter with the religious traditions of Asia, for example, as being of the same order as the meeting of the New Testament church with Graeco-Roman culture, demanding fundamental shifts in Christian self-understanding and theology. While the evangelistic thrust predominated in the overall Edinburgh message, the discussions there stimulated scholarly interest both in comparative religion and in exploring the Christian relation to other faith traditions. An influential book of the period was J.N. Farquhar's *The Crown of Hinduism*, which argued that Christ fulfilled the longings and aspirations of Hinduism.

By the time of the next international missionary conference (Jerusalem 1928), considerable controversy had arisen within the missionary movement over the approach to other religious traditions. Some European theologians detected in liberal Protestantism, especially in the USA, troubling arguments, however tentative, in support of a universal religion.\* There was also deep concern that what was considered "syncretistic thinking" with regard to Asian religions was undermining the importance and urgency of Christian mission.\* But the issue that dominated the Jerusalem meeting was rising secularism in both East and West (see **secularization**). While asserting that the Christian gospel provided the answers to a troubled world, the conference affirmed the "values" in other religions and called on Christians to join hands with all believers to confront the growing impact of secular culture.

But some participants could not agree with Jerusalem's positive affirmation of other faiths and maintained that the Christian gospel is unique among religious traditions. Thus, even though the message was unanimously accepted (largely due to the

drafting skills of William Temple), the Christian attitude to other faiths became a highly controversial issue shortly after the Jerusalem meeting. At the heart of the post-Jerusalem dispute was the *Report of the Commission of Appraisal of the Laymen's Foreign Mission Enquiry*, edited by W.E. Hocking, which criticized the exclusive attitude of Christians towards other faiths and claimed that the challenge to the Christian faith came not from other faiths but from anti-religious and secular movements. In response, the leadership of the missionary movement commissioned Hendrik Kraemer, the well-known Dutch missiologist then working as a missionary in Java, to write a book on the biblical and theological basis of the Christian attitude to other faiths. Kraemer's *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* became the preparatory study book for the next international missionary conference in Tambaram, India, in 1938.

Kraemer, following Karl Barth, insisted that the biblical faith, based on God's encounter with humankind, is radically different from all other forms of religious faith. Admitting that God's will shines through, albeit in a broken way, in the all-too-human attempts to know God in all religious life, Kraemer maintained that the only true way to know the revealed will of God is by responding to the divine intervention in history in Christ. Both Barth and Kraemer considered Christianity as a religion to be as human as any other. But neither could avoid giving, at least by implication, a unique place to Christianity in so far as it had become the vehicle through which the unique revelation\* of God is lived and proclaimed.

Despite Kraemer's impact on Tambaram and subsequent missionary thinking, there were many dissenting voices. A.G. Hogg, H.H. Farmer, T.C. Chao and others challenged Kraemer's view that the gospel was in discontinuity with other religious traditions. They witnessed to what they were convinced was a "two-way traffic" between God and the human soul in the religious life and experience of others. It was inconceivable to them that God had no witnesses among the nations of the earth. All participants agreed on the special revelatory character of the Christ event, but many had difficulty with

Kraemer's view of religions as "totalitarian systems" of human thought and practice. Thus, although the Tambaram report leaned heavily towards Kraemer's views, it acknowledged that "Christians are not agreed" on the revelatory character of other religious traditions and identified this as "a matter urgently demanding thought and united study" within the ecumenical movement.

### POST-TAMBARAM DEVELOPMENTS

Not long after Tambaram, Europe became embroiled in the second world war, and other concerns demanded the attention of the missionary movement. When the International Missionary Council\* (IMC) turned its attention again to Christian relations to other faith traditions once the war was over, it was a different world. Nationalism was sweeping through the newly independent states in Asia and Africa, and with it came a revival of religious traditions. The churches, awakened to the need to express their unity in a world shattered by war, had come together in Amsterdam in 1948 to form the WCC. Both the IMC and the WCC's department on evangelism were eager to follow up on the unfinished Tambaram debate on other faiths.

One of the strategies adopted was to set up a number of study centres around the world that would address the question in concrete historical situations. Another was a long-term joint study on "The Word of God and the Living Faiths of Men", which sought to take the discussion beyond Tambaram and the continuity-discontinuity polarity.

A great deal of attention was focused on Asia, where outstanding work on the issue was carried out by Paul Devanandan, D.T. Niles, Sabapathy Kulendran and others. Devanandan's address to the New Delhi assembly of the WCC (1961) – at which the IMC was integrated into the WCC – challenged the churches to take seriously the experience of the younger churches in the newly independent countries, where they had to work and struggle together with peoples of different religious traditions in nation-building.

In this context the concept of dialogue appears in the New Delhi statement as a way of speaking about Christian relations with people of other faith traditions. This was

further considered at the first world mission gathering under WCC auspices in Mexico City in 1963. A more significant discussion took place at the East Asia Christian Conference assembly in Bangkok in 1964. Its statement on "Christian Encounter with Men of Other Beliefs", incorporating much of the re-thinking in Asia in relation to other faiths, took the debate at many points beyond the Tambaram controversy.

A WCC conference in Kandy, Sri Lanka, in 1967, proved to be a landmark both as the beginning of serious interest in interfaith dialogue as such in the WCC, and as the first involvement in the ecumenical discussion of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians. In Kandy Kenneth Cragg challenged in a fundamental way the Barth-Kraemer attitude to religions that had so dominated Protestant thinking during the previous decades.

### DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

There were in fact significant differences between Protestants and Roman Catholics in their general theological orientation towards other religions. The Protestant missions tended to place enormous emphasis on Christology and on the need to respond to the message of the gospel as a way to salvation.\* While the attitude to other faiths had not always been negative, it had tended to be neutral at best on the question of salvation outside a response to Christ. This gave rise to a sense of urgency to bring the message of the gospel to the nations of the world.

Roman Catholic theology placed greater emphasis on ecclesiology. Salvation is a free gift of God\* offered in Christ to one who has faith in Christ. This faith is expressed by being baptized and becoming part of the church, which was instituted by Christ to carry on his saving work. Within the overall concept of the church as the sign and sacrament of the saving work of Christ available to all humankind, Roman Catholic theology could provide for the possibility of salvation to those who had not explicitly become members of the church. With reference to those who had lived before the ministry of Jesus and those who had had no opportunity to hear the message, Roman Catholic theology developed the idea of "implicit faith" or

“faith by intention”, so that no one was “lost” simply because he or she was born at a particular time or place which made it impossible to become part of the historical expression of the church. Salvation offered in Christ is mysteriously available to all who seek to fulfill the will of God; it is possible to be incorporated into the sacrament of the paschal mystery, the church, by intention.

These thoughts were developed in the 1960s by French cardinal Jean Daniélou and German theologian Karl Rahner. In so doing these two prominent Catholic thinkers spelled out the theological implications of some of the positive developments at the Second Vatican Council regarding the question of other faiths.

The Roman Catholic Church (like the WCC and many of its member churches) has had a long history of relating to the Jewish people. During Vatican II\* it was decided that a similar relation should be developed with the followers of other religions as well. Pope Paul VI thus established a special secretariat (later a pontifical council) for relationships with non-Christians; and the papal encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam* emphasized the importance of positive encounter between Christians and people of other faith traditions. The Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra Aetate*), promulgated on 28 October 1965, spelled out the pastoral dimensions of this relationship. Other key Vatican II documents, such as the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*) and the Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity (*Ad Gentes*), included important pointers to a dialogical attitude towards people of other religious traditions.

Although Vatican II did not develop clear theological positions on other religions, it did, by opening up the issue in the direction of interfaith dialogue, mark a new phase in the relationships of the Roman Catholic Church, in all parts of the world, with people of other faiths. The preparatory materials for the Kandy meeting included *Nostra Aetate* and parts of *Lumen Gentium*.

### THE DIALOGUE CONTROVERSY

The Kandy meeting affirmed dialogue as the most appropriate approach in interfaith relations, and after the Uppsala assembly

(1968) the WCC commission on World Mission and Evangelism engaged Stanley J. Samartha of India to pursue with greater intensity a study begun some years earlier on “The Word of God and the Living Faiths of Men”. A turning point in this study was the first multifaith dialogue convened under WCC auspices: Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim and Christian participants came to Ajaltoun, Lebanon, in 1970, not only to consult about inter-religious dialogue, but also actually to engage in it. Two months later, a WCC consultation in Zurich evaluated theologically the experience of dialogue in Ajaltoun and produced a report that became the fundamental document on the basis of which the WCC central committee, meeting in Addis Ababa in 1971, created a new Sub-unit on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies, with Samartha as its director.

The establishment of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians and the WCC Sub-unit on Dialogue heightened the visibility of interfaith dialogue in the life of the churches. The secretariat published materials promoting interfaith dialogue and encouraged closer collaboration between Christians and others in local situations. The WCC Dialogue Sub-unit organized bilateral dialogue meetings with Jews, Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists and sought to clarify the meaning and significance of interfaith dialogue.

Basically, interfaith dialogue was understood as an encounter between people who live by different faith traditions, in an atmosphere of mutual trust and acceptance. Dialogue did not require giving up, hiding or seeking to validate one’s own religious conviction; in fact, the need for being rooted in one’s own tradition to be engaged in a meaningful dialogue was emphasized, as were common humanity and the need to search in a divided world for life in community. Dialogue was seen as a way not only to become informed about the faiths of others but also to rediscover essential dimensions of one’s own faith tradition. The benefits of removing historical prejudices and enmities as well as the new possibilities for working together for common good were recognized and affirmed.

Within this general framework individual theological explorations have yielded a vari-

ety of points of view. Some see dialogue primarily as a new and creative relationship within which one can learn about and respect others but also can give authentic witness\* to one's own faith. Others see it as an important historical moment in the development of religious traditions, in which each of the faith traditions in dialogue is challenged and transformed by the encounter with others. Still others view dialogue as a common pilgrimage towards the truth, within which each tradition shares with the others the way it has come to perceive and respond to that truth.

Within the Christian tradition, the practice of dialogue has raised questions regarding the theological assumptions about other faiths at the heart of Christian mission. Suspicion of interfaith dialogue among some Christians surfaced in the open controversy at the WCC's fifth assembly (Nairobi 1975). For the first time, five persons of other faiths were invited to a WCC assembly as special guests and took part in the discussions of the section on "Seeking Community", where the dialogue issue was debated. Plenary discussion of the report of this section highlighted the deep disagreement within the church on the issue of dialogue. Fears were expressed that dialogue would lead to the kind of syncretism\* against which the 1928 Jerusalem meeting warned, or that it would compromise faith in the uniqueness and finality of the revelation in Christ, or that it would threaten mission seen as fundamental to the being of the church itself. As in Tambaram, Asian voices in particular defended dialogue as the most appropriate way for the church to live in a pluralistic world. The assembly referred the report back to the drafting group, which added a preamble to meet the hesitations expressed at the plenary.

But Nairobi made clear the urgent need to clarify further the nature, purpose and limits of interfaith dialogue and to give more detailed attention to issues of syncretism, indigenization, culture,\* mission, etc. Evaluating the debate, the WCC central committee authorized a major theological consultation to pursue further the questions raised at the assembly. That meeting, on the theme "Dialogue in Community", held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in 1977, aimed to clarify the Christian basis for seeking community with others and to draw up guidelines for Christ-

ian communities in pluralistic situations, in order that they might become communities of service and witness, without compromising their commitment to Christ.

The Chiang Mai consultation affirmed that dialogue is neither a betrayal of mission nor a "secret weapon" of proselytism but a way "in which Jesus Christ can be confessed in the world today". The Chiang Mai meeting led to the formulation of "Guidelines on Dialogue", adopted by the WCC central committee in 1979 and commended to the churches for study and action.

Within the Roman Catholic Church, there were similar problems. All agreed on the need to develop positive and friendly relations with people of other faiths and on the value of interfaith dialogue for mutual understanding and collaboration. But the plenary commission of the secretariat also had to draw up guidelines that dealt with the purpose and goals of dialogue so that it was seen within the overall convictions of the church; the relationship of dialogue to mission remained a persistent problem also in Roman Catholic discussions. In general, dialogue and mission have been affirmed as legitimate activities of the church. The initial guidelines sought to avoid placing dialogue at the service of mission, a view advocated by some within both the Roman Catholic Church and the member churches of the WCC.

After many revisions, arising from disagreements among Catholics on the theological basis of dialogue, a version was officially accepted and issued by Pope John Paul II in 1984 under the title "The Attitude of the Church towards the Followers of Other Religions: Reflections and Orientations on Dialogue and Mission". Like the preamble to the WCC's Nairobi report, it stressed the missionary vocation of the church, even as it sought to exhort Christians to be in a relationship of dialogue with others. But the pressure to clarify further the dialogue-mission relation was so great that, not long after the proclamation of this statement, the secretariat had to begin work on a document that specifically dealt with "Dialogue and Proclamation".

#### DIALOGUE IN THE CHURCHES

While the theological issues continue to be discussed, dialogue activities have been

more and more accepted at the local level. A number of churches have expanded their desks on ecumenical affairs to include an interfaith component. Some churches and councils have created staff positions to promote interfaith dialogue. There has been an increase in the number of local and international interfaith councils. Interest in interfaith prayer was further kindled by the call issued by Pope John Paul II to leaders of all religious communities to come together in Assisi in 1986 to pray for peace, an event that attracted media attention.

Interfaith dialogue today takes place at many levels. There is the continuing dialogue of life in all pluralistic situations. There is intentional dialogue, or discourse, where persons come together to share and converse on specific issues. There are academic dialogues among scholars, as well as spiritual dialogues, emphasizing prayer and meditation. Zen and Benedictine monasteries, for example, exchange monks each year to learn from each other's meditative practices. In India there are weekend live-in sessions where people of diverse traditions come together for exposure to each other's prayer life and to participate in common devotions. There is a proliferation of books and articles on interfaith dialogue and the challenge of pluralism.\*

#### **DIALOGUE AS A CONTINUING ECUMENICAL CONCERN**

Evidence of the overall impact of the programme on dialogue was clear at the WCC's sixth assembly (Vancouver 1983). The number of guests of other faiths rose to 15, and four made presentations to plenary sessions. Interfaith dialogue was an integral part of the assembly's extensive visitors' programme. In the section on "Witness in a Divided World", there was no serious disagreement on the need for interfaith dialogue. There was, however, much controversy over the theology of religions, with a number of participants challenging a statement in the report that spoke of God's hand active in the religious life of our neighbours. Whether other religious traditions are vehicles of God's redeeming activity became a hotly debated issue.

Evaluating the experience of Vancouver, the Dialogue sub-unit identified theology of

religions as an important issue for sustained study. A four-year study project – "My Neighbour's Faith – and Mine: Theological Discoveries through Interfaith Dialogue" – was launched with the distribution of a study booklet that was eventually translated into 18 languages, in order to raise the awareness of plurality in the churches and to explore how Christians today may look theologically at other traditions of faith. For the first time in the history of its mission conferences, the WCC invited consultants from other faith traditions to its tenth such conference, in San Antonio, Texas (1989), where the relationship of Christianity to other faiths and the challenge of dialogue to Christian understandings of mission and evangelism were among the major issues discussed. The preparation for the WCC's seventh assembly (Canberra 1991) was preceded by a major consultation on the theology of religions (Baar 1990). Representatives of other religious and indigenous traditions, including the Australian Aboriginal and Islander peoples, played a significant role in the Canberra programme, creating controversy and new interest both in gospel and culture and in the theological understanding of other religious traditions. A four-year study on gospel and culture\* in the churches led to a report to the next world mission conference in Bahia, Brazil (1996). Issues in the theology of religions were followed up in Baar II (1993).

The WCC's eighth assembly (Harare 1998) provided additional opportunities for wider participation of persons of other faiths in an assembly. The padare (meeting place) programme enabled a succession of interfaith encounters between Christians and peoples of other faiths to be organized within the context of the assembly itself. Within the WCC, the post-Harare period has been marked by increased cooperation between the Office on Inter-religious Relations (successor to the Sub-unit on Dialogue in the WCC's new structure) and those programmes of the Council that deal with issues such as education, health, indigenous peoples, international relations and youth. Collaboration between the office and the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue has also further developed. Joint studies have led to joint publications on interfaith

prayer, interfaith marriages and the spiritual significance of Jerusalem.\* A study project on the contribution of Africa to world religiosity is under way, involving various aspects of African-inspired religion.

Within the ecumenical family interfaith dialogue will continue to remain a profoundly important, if controversial, issue. The challenge it brings to the ecumenical movement is far-reaching. It summons the church to seek a new self-understanding in its relation to other religions. It requires it to look for deeper resources to deal with the reality of plurality, and it calls the church to new approaches to mission and witness.

See also **dialogue, bilateral; dialogue, intrafaith; dialogue, multilateral; uniqueness of Christ.**

S. WESLEY ARIARAJAH

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## DIALOGUE, INTRAFaITH

"DIALOGUE" has become a fashionable term, and correspondingly it lacks semantic clarity. It sounds civilized and reassuring, for it indicates an effort to fight with the weapons of the mind or even to let contrasting positions stand. In the broadest political context dialogue is the opposite of an attitude in which conflict is waged with weapons of devastating power. It is for this reason that the threat to break off dialogue – e.g. in the statement "we have nothing more to say to each other" – has such a menacing sound. Frequently the end of dialogue is the beginning of armed conflict. If we enter into dialogue, however, hostilities come to an end.

In church usage the term "dialogue" is applied in various sets of relationships. It is applied, for instance, to the relation between

Christianity and world-views which are not religious, as was the case especially with Marxism. The Vatican has published documents on "dialogue with non-believers". Dialogue also characterizes the Christian relation to non-Christian religions. Furthermore, discussions between Christian churches have been described as the way "from polemics to dialogue". The Orthodox churches have described their opening up to the churches of the West as a "dialogue of love" which is intended to lead to a "dialogue of truth".

Lack of clarity in the understanding of dialogue increases when the meaning of this term is considered in the context of the philosophy of dialogue and personalism. Is dialogue a form of behaviour intended to solve problems, or a metaphor for mutual dependence in the age of pluralism? Is dialogue an expression of human openness from which the truth question is excluded, or is it in fact the opposite: a method which occurs only in discourse and which is to be used for deciding about the truth of propositions?

In view of the varied and often not very exact use of the word, Lukas Vischer expressed doubts in 1969 about whether the term was still appropriate as a way of describing the relation of the Christian churches to each other. According to him, "the word 'dialogue' is quickly losing the magic it had till quite recently, and there is even some uneasiness about its use. For what is it that the churches are doing when they converse together? Have these conversations become a means of preserving the churches in their present condition and actually protecting them against full fellowship? They are in dialogue. What more is needed?" (*ER*, 1970).

The view of interchurch dialogue presented here bases the understanding of dialogue on *communio* as the structure of the church, thus making dialogue fruitful for tackling ecumenical problems (see **communio, koinonia**).

## A BASIS IN COMMUNIO AS THE STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH

Often the importance of dialogue receives greater stress the further the other party seems to be removed from one's own religious conviction. In particular, official pronouncements from Rome promote dia-

logue with non-believers, with world religions and with other Christian confessions, but not (it seems to some Catholics) within the Catholic church itself. Against this it must be insisted that dialogue is a mark of the church,\* which exists as a fellowship of churches. There is no longer any dispute among the confessions that the church occurs first of all as the local church,\* and that the criteria which make a church the church are met in the local situation. These criteria are the proclamation of Christ's message (see **word of God**), the celebration of the sacraments,\* Christian love (agape, caritas) and (for churches with an episcopate) the true (episcopal) ministry (see **ministry in the church**). These local churches cannot stand in mutual isolation if they wish to remain faithful to their Christian mission and message – i.e. they are members of a fellowship.

This *communio* of the churches is achieved differently in different Christian traditions. For the churches that have bishops, the highest representative of the universal church is the ecumenical council,\* in which the bishops bear witness to the faith\* of their churches, while regional synods express and embody the *communio* at their own geographical level. In non-episcopal churches the idea of "conciliar fellowship" (see **conciliarity**) links together the local churches in a network of exchanges, proclamation and criticism, and common efforts to find the right Christian path to follow. In this fellowship of local churches or among their representatives, the universal church is built up as *communio*. The Roman Catholic Church also took up this idea in Vatican II,\* seeing the church no longer as a rigid, monolithic world church but as a fellowship of churches each contributing a part to the whole. In this *communio* structure and in the mutual interdependence of the local churches and their representatives, dialogue finds its basis as an element of the church's nature.

Individual local churches are also *communio* and also achieve fulfilment in dialogue. In all the confessions there are structures and forms of organization which are intended to ensure exchanges between the different functions, ministries and charisms.\* These structures and forms make dialogue possible between ministers, church

authorities, theologians and "laity". In this fellowship of different gifts and tasks, the Christian congregation achieves its proper form and can proclaim its message in faithfulness to its origins and with relevance to the situation.

This dialogue, as a realization of the *communio* structure of the church, also determines the relation of the Christian confessions to each other. In this dialogue the degree of fellowship already existing between the churches is realized, and a situation is sought in which the still-divided churches of today become churches which are parts within the one universal church or mutually recognize each other as part-churches and thus build up the universal church.

## DIALOGUE AND UNDERSTANDING

The churches realize their *communio* structure in dialogue, and in this way their various functions, tasks and charisms and the different forms they have taken in time and space have a mutually fertilizing and stimulating effect. Such benefit occurs through their attempt to understand each other; dialogue contributes to (mutual) understanding. This process of understanding takes place at a given time between individuals in the churches, between different Christian traditions and between confessions in conflict or tension with each other; but it also takes place across time, in relation to the past.

The common factor in all these different efforts at understanding is that they are directed towards human beings or groups whose worlds are initially unfamiliar to me but which I presume have something to say to me and a meaning for my own self-understanding. But if the other party is in the first instance unfamiliar to me, how can I understand at all? My immediate horizon is the sphere within which I do my understanding. A text written long ago or uttered by someone who shapes his or her life within a circle of meaning unfamiliar to me has its own, and different, horizon. My position is not that of my opposite number but is in my own particular world. I have my particular horizon, not that of the other person.

In the process of understanding, we are attempting first of all to incorporate the unfamiliar world in our own horizon. We

therefore think initially that we shall find a confirmation of everything we already knew and wanted – congenial things that fit in with our own pre-understanding. But the unfamiliar world will simply not be disclosed in this way. Rather, understanding takes place because a strange world initially strikes us precisely as strange. Pre-eminently it was Hans-Georg Gadamer who drew attention to this fact. Initially I think I understand, but at that stage I have still not got beyond the circle of my own pre-understanding and prejudice. Unfamiliar things and people who live differently do not seem at first to be a problem, and everything makes some kind of sense on my own terms. Here I am still continuing to understand only myself. But the more I concern myself with a text or with people or with a church, the clearer it becomes that I no longer understand. Only on the collapse of my own pre-understanding do I begin to understand and another world becomes comprehensible to me in (so to speak) its own terms. So long as everything seems to be free of problems, I am working only on the basis of my own preconceptions. The first stage in any understanding is when something becomes unfamiliar and is not understood. This stage in dialogue cannot be eliminated.

In understanding, I must recognize the unfamiliar horizon but must also hold on to my own horizon. Each is equally necessary for dialogue; after all, it is I who am seeking to understand, and this means that I am not simply absorbed into the unfamiliar world. I have to live within my own horizon of understanding. In dialogue, which is meant to lead to understanding, my self-understanding is made new. The aim of the dialogue is a fusion of the horizons – of my own and the unfamiliar horizon. In understanding I remain myself, and yet as an unfamiliar world opens up to me I become another. A new world thus discloses itself to me, and my own self-understanding assumes a new form. The person who is engaged in understanding changes, and one's horizon expands. Thus dialogue opens up the future and freedom to act. New worlds and possibilities for action open up for me in the act of understanding. Understanding demands that I should take my own and the unfamiliar

horizon equally seriously; and when the two horizons fuse, the aim is achieved.

### INTERCHURCH DIALOGUE

All churches have conducted dialogue, constantly striving better to understand their ministers, theologians, fellow Christians, doctrinal traditions, and above all the biblical proclamation, and thus better to preach the Christian message and to put it into practice more fully and thoroughly. Since the age of the church fathers, dialogue has been a means of improving the formulation or implementation and exposition of Christian doctrine. Behind the medieval disputations, which flourished for the last time at the Reformation, lay the awareness that if the truth is to be discovered everyone is needed and must make his or her contribution. The rules of disputation at the medieval universities were meant to systematize dialogue and guarantee at the same time that the parties to the dialogue listened to and learned from each other – and did not simply try to confute each other.

But from the time of the Reformation, the churches carried on dialogue only with those they regarded as standing on the same ground as themselves ecclesially. It was, so to speak, only half a dialogue, which did not seek to understand the unfamiliar horizon but deliberately excluded it. Even in the ancient church, dialogue was not a stylistic medium for disputations with pagan philosophy. Medieval scholasticism did not argue with heretics. In that direction no common basis was seen that could have facilitated and justified a dialogue, and the religious discussions of the Reformation were used not to contribute to understanding the other but to demonstrate their error. From then on, a fusion of horizons transcending confessional boundaries was excluded as the point of the process of understanding, for there was in fact no desire to learn or to change. This meant that a basic presupposition for any dialogue whatever was missing.

This curtailment of dialogue to half-measures defined by confessional boundaries meant that the churches inevitably became partisan and gradually defined themselves in opposition to rival churches. Every Christian tradition emphasized *one* particular element in a special way and regarded

this as the *differentia* of one's own church as opposed to the other confession. The term "Protestantism"\* came to be used in a primarily critical way, and the protest against, or criticism of, everything Roman Catholic became the distinctive feature which characterized the Reformation churches. After the council of Trent,\* the basis of self-understanding among Roman Catholics came to be the rejection of the Reformation, and catechisms\* incorporated the idea of "not being Protestant" as Roman Catholic teaching. The after-effects of these antagonisms have continued to the present day: the "church of the word" was opposed to "the church of the sacraments", the "church of the clergy" to that of the "priesthood of all believers", the "church of authority" to that of the "freedom of a Christian man". The resulting differences were often elevated into the specific confessional identity – the "Protestant principle" or the "fundamental Catholic option". Each side identified itself by its protest against the other or against the picture it had constructed of the other. The wall of separation between them served as a means of defining their own standpoints. The separation became a system of coordinates within which their own position was fixed.

To overcome such one-sidedness and regain the fullness of witness, the churches of each individual tradition do not need to disavow it but need to understand it and change themselves in a fusion of horizons. Only the tradition which is still unfamiliar, and dialogue with it, can provide what is lacking in the various confessionally blinkered views of doctrine and structure in church and devotional life, or can balance one's own bias by other elements in tension with it. The churches need dialogue and the fusion of their horizons that occurs in the process of understanding so that they will not truncate the gospel and so that men and women today may be able to discover a meaning to their existence and a way of structuring their lives and world through encounter with the full Christian revelation.

### CONSEQUENCES FOR THE OIKOUMENE

Dialogue presupposes both common elements and divergences. Where there is no common basis, no dialogue takes place. At best there are two-way monologues which

serve to create barriers, not understanding. Dialogue requires the other to be genuinely other and calls for a readiness to listen to the other and learn from the other.

Dialogue assists self-discovery. Thus the churches need dialogue to become genuinely Christian and credible. Because of the division of the Christian world, each of the churches has become partisan and has lost credibility and the power to persuade. Ecumenical dialogue is a means of enabling them to disclose to each other what each of them has repressed and cannot acquire again in its own strength. Through ecumenical dialogue the churches will become more credible witnesses for Jesus' cause than they are at present.

Understanding means changing ourselves – in a fusion of horizons. I emerge from a dialogue changed from what I was when I entered into it. "Reception"\* is not a later recognition of what has been agreed but an inherent dimension of understanding itself. If I am not ready for input in this way, then I have not been in dialogue. In dialogue I cannot predict how and in what direction this change will take place. Dialogue is therefore always hazardous. If churches exclude a change of this kind, they are not conducting a dialogue, even if they are talking to each other.

My own position is just as indispensable for dialogue as my partner's. Only if I as myself come with my ideas and convictions and contribute what is my own to the conversation can I carry on a dialogue. Dialogue does not mean a surrender but an encounter of different horizons. It would serve no one's purpose if we were willing in advance to discard our own convictions for the sake of a false irenic approach. "Fusion of horizons" presupposes the existence of the two horizons. Abandonment of our own position is no way to conduct dialogue.

It is part of the process of mutual understanding that initially we become detached from ourselves and can no longer easily understand and accept some things. This is where dialogue inevitably becomes difficult. We are all too easily tempted to accept the other only within the limits of our own horizon. And then if someone belonging to another confession acts in a way that does not correspond to the knowledge I already have,

that person is often regarded as being dishonest and insincere. Mutual accusations of dishonesty, which have by no means been overcome in interconfessional relations, seem the most dangerous way of misunderstanding others and claiming to have the truth ourselves. In dialogue, too, I must grant that the other can be different and can react differently from what I expect. Without this acceptance of unfamiliarity and clarification of misconceptions, oikoumene would remain superficial and bogged down in an initial, facile stage of understanding.

Controversy and argument are also part of dialogue and can contribute to an enlargement of the horizon for both parties. This controversy is not the same thing as polemics, which does not seek to understand others or learn anything from them. As long as the readiness exists to let the other tell us something, to listen to his or her arguments and to acquire something of value for our own form of Christian life and doctrine from the way the others structure their Christianity, a controversy can be wholly fruitful for dialogue and can promote the credibility of the Christian churches.

After 35 years of practical experience since Vatican II, officers from the WCC and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity considered the time had come for a fresh study of "the nature and purpose of ecumenical dialogue", with recognition of its existential character, its many ecclesial levels, its commitment to truth, its transformative aims, and the complexity of the hermeneutical contexts in which it is conducted and its result are received (see *The Ecumenical Review*, July 2000, for the twofold proposal to the Joint Working Group\* from WCC general secretary Konrad Raiser and Bishop Walter Kasper of the PCPCU).

See also **dialogue, bilateral; dialogue, interfaith; dialogue, multilateral**; and the various articles on particular interfaith and intrafaith dialogues.

PETER NEUNER

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## DIALOGUE, MULTILATERAL

FROM THE beginning of the modern ecumenical movement, bilateral and multilateral dialogues have been conducted side by side. Bilateral dialogues\* enjoy the advantage of allowing the two parties to concentrate on the particular issues that have divided them or the common ground that still or already joins them. If the problems can be settled or mutual recognition achieved, official action towards the restoration or establishment of closer unity\* may follow quite expeditiously, e.g. the Leuenberg concordat of 1973 (see **Lutheran-Reformed dialogue**) between European Lutherans and Reformed, or the Bonn accord of 1931 between the Anglicans and Old Catholics, or even the various church unions between Methodist and Reformed denominations beginning with the United Church of Canada in 1925. This piecemeal approach, however, takes place within the broader ecumenical movement, whose complexity is ensured by the fissiparous history of Christendom that it seeks to mend. This wider context calls forth multilateral dialogue(s).

While a few multilateral church unions have taken place at a national or regional level (notably the Church of South India, 1947, and the Church of North India, 1970), at the universal level the WCC has been the principal locus and instrument of the churches for multilateral dialogue. In particular, Faith and Order\* has supplied the forum for the most sustained and cumulative treatment of doctrinal matters. The furthest development up to now has been embodied in "the BEM process" (see **Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry**). This experience has suggested a number of characteristics of multilateral dialogue in the ecumenical movement.

A certain common ground is needed for dialogue. This has been minimally provided by the membership basis of the WCC (see **WCC, basis of**). While member churches may retain their own ecclesiology (see

Toronto statement), to join the fellowship of the WCC implies the provisional judgment that one's fellow members are at least plausible partners in a common effort to serve the Triune God (see **Trinity**). It is worth noting that the Roman Catholic Church (since 1968) and some other churches not in membership with the WCC have official representatives on the F&O commission.

The interchurch dynamics of multilateral dialogue vary with the issues under discussion. It is not always easy to say who stands to the "right" or to the "left", who holds the "higher" or "lower" churchmanship. Having confronted the intricate diplomacy of seating arrangements at Amsterdam 1948, the Russian-American Orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemmann was fond of saying that on some matters he belonged with the Quakers rather than with his ostensibly nearer neighbours among the Old Catholics or the Anglicans. While "reunion all-round" was the mocking title of a pamphlet by the then Anglican satirist Ronald Knox in 1914, at the Lambeth conference of 1988 Archbishop Robert Runcie called for "an all-round ecumenism". Most churches have in fact discovered in and through multilateral dialogue that there are worthwhile relationships to be cultivated in all directions.

Progress may be slow, and great patience required, as the attempt is made to clarify the manifold positions of the churches, to develop a convergence from many different starting points and to keep the greatest possible number of the participants in a state of positive engagement for the furthest possible advance. The reward will be the maturity which is widely recognized in the Lima text, which resulted from 55 years of attention to questions of baptism, eucharist and ministry in F&O.

The multilateral dialogues have profited from, and perhaps contributed to, the more diffuse and sometimes less official movements which have drawn scholars and church people from a very wide spectrum together in the 20th century. At the academic level, some agreement has been attained in exegetical methods (see **exegesis, method of**) and hermeneutical principles (see **hermeneutics**). At the pastoral level, most churches have been affected by the liturgical movement.\* BEM would have been unthinkable

without the "biblical theology" of the middle third of the 20th century and the recovery of patristic perspectives on worship and the sacraments.

Multilateral dialogue helps to "keep the churches honest" in what they affirm with various particular partners in their respective bilateral dialogues. It would, for instance, be wrong to play up the question of episcopal succession in discussion with one body while playing it down with another. Less suspiciously put, multilateral dialogue encourages the churches to develop positions which are both internally consistent and simultaneously mindful of their effect on all interlocutors. Positive signs are the "borrowings" of material which take place between multilateral dialogues and the various bilaterals. Under the auspices of F&O and the officers' conference of Christian World Communions,\* eight forums (1978, 1979, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1994, 1997 and 2001) have enabled the tendencies and results of the various bilateral dialogues to be compared multilaterally.

Multilateral dialogue tends to focus on central themes of the Christian faith,\* since these are shared by the greatest range of partners, and it is on these that it is most important to find agreement in confession and interpretation. It is significant that the continuing F&O study "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today" took the Nicene Creed\* as its "theological basis and methodological tool". At the same time, multilateral dialogue allows even a single church to put on the agenda for universal attention a matter whose importance may not be widely perceived, or which others might have chosen to avoid; so that the reduction of agreement to a few uncontroversial commonplaces is less of a risk.

Multilateral dialogue corresponds to the fact that, in many ways, the churches in the 20th century have faced common tasks in a common world. The churches have needed and enjoyed mutual support among as many as they can each recognize, at least *prima facie*, to be responding to the same call to worship the Triune God (leitourgia), to proclaim the gospel of Christ (martyria), and to serve the needy among humankind (diakonia).

At the turn into the 21st century, the F&O study on "The Nature and Purpose of

the Church" (interim statement 1998) is summoning the divided "churches" to discern through their dialogue where "the church" is to be found.

See also **dialogue, interfaith; dialogue, intrafaith.**

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## DIASPORA

THE TERM "diaspora" is a Greek word meaning dispersion, dissemination (the Hebrew equivalent is *galuth*), applied by biblical writers to the situation of the Jews scattered in various places around the world, living as separate communities in foreign, sometimes hostile environments. The New Testament does not apply it to the situation of the Christian church; its three occurrences (John 7:35; James 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:1) clearly refer to the Jewish diaspora (including Jewish Christians). The related verb *diaspeiresthai* is used twice in the NT for the result of the first persecution against the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth (Acts 8:1-4, 11:19; RSV "scattered"). Another verb, *diaskorpizein*, conveys the idea of dispersion, conceived as a (temporary) curse, not as the manifest destiny of the Christian church (Matt. 26:31 and the oft-quoted John 11:52). Whereas the Old Testament as a rule sees the dispersion as a curse which will come to an end in the days of the Messiah, when the whole people of God will be gathered in one place, the NT generally insists that the gathering of the children of God which is the work of Jesus Christ breaks barriers that separate those living "far off" and those "near" (Eph. 2:13). In patristic literature all mention of the dispersion of the church worldwide supports the idea of the geographical catholicity\* of the church (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.10.1 and 3.11.8). The ecumenical discus-

sion about the biblical origin of the (modern) theology of the diaspora has definitely been marked by the contribution of the Dutch biblical scholar Willem Cornelis van Unnik in 1959, acknowledged by Hans-Ruedi Weber in that same year but still widely ignored.

The Jewish diaspora was originally thought of as the counterpart of the homeland, but after the disasters of A.D. 70 and 135, the Jewish people became practically homeless. Following the terrible experience of annihilation (Shoah) before and during the second world war, the situation of the Jews completely changed with the foundation of the new state of Israel in 1948, an event acclaimed by many Christians as fulfilment of prophecies and reinforcement of the old covenant. It includes theological and non-theological realities. The special bond with the land of Israel is maintained, although the majority of Jews live in the diaspora. The Jewish-Christian dialogue\* has to wrestle with differing appreciations of the meaning of the diaspora and of the promised land.

In modern times, nearly all Christian churches have large or small affiliated groups scattered in various places, sometimes without any active connection with the "home base" of the mother church, which in its turn may have disappeared from its original place. Schisms, reformation movements, political upheavals and demographic explosions, as well as human mobility and voluntary emigration, have led to this multiplication of denominational or confessional "diasporas": Protestant diasporas in Roman Catholic countries after the Peace of Augsburg (1555), the dispersion of the French Huguenots after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), the exile of Armenians after 1915, the emigration of Orthodox Russians after 1917, the continuing flow of immigrants to the Americas and Western Europe.

Missionary efforts undertaken by Christian denominations have created a kind of diaspora, although it is assumed that after a while the new churches (see **mission, proselytism**) will be sufficiently rooted in the local culture to gain selfhood and lose any self-awareness of being foreign. However, in some cases the foreign character of the new

church is cultivated in connection with other social, political, historical or theological factors. No country today can claim a total religious homogeneity. The ecumenical dilemma here is, on the one hand, the concern for religious liberty\* and cultural identity and, on the other hand, the pursuit of Christian unity\* at the local, national and regional levels (New Delhi 1961, document of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity 1975, Common Witness 1981, "Towards Common Witness: A Call to Adopt Responsible Relationships in Mission and to Renounce Proselytism", 1997).

Among the various movements of dissemination of the past two centuries, the significance of the Russian emigration to the West should not be underestimated. It has meant an active ecumenical interaction between the Orthodox tradition and the Latin churches, Roman Catholic as well as Protestant and Anglican. The St Sergius Institute in Paris (founded in 1924) has been a source of spiritual and theological renewal for Orthodox and other churches. National or ethnic minorities originally related to other autocephalous Orthodox churches or patriarchates have also emigrated by force or voluntarily to other countries, especially in the West.

The simultaneous presence of various jurisdictions among the Orthodox diasporas in the West creates internal problems which must be faced by the Orthodox themselves. The pre-conciliar pan-Orthodox conference at Chambésy (1986) decided to put the problem of the Orthodox diaspora on the agenda of the future great synod of the Orthodox churches. The points are, as recalled by Olivier Clément in an influential report (1977), "that there shall not be two bishops in the same town" (first ecumenical council) and "that there shall not be two metropolitans in the one province" (fourth ecumenical council).

While the concept of diaspora can be used for persons and groups of various religions, ideologies or ethnic identities, current ecumenical usage prefers the term "minority".

The term "diaspora" became popular in ecumenical reflection on the church\* after the tremendous displacements of people in Europe in the wake of the second world war

and the establishment of socialist regimes in Eastern Europe. German theologians like Harald Kruska, Gottfried Niemeier, Werner Krusche and Ernst Lange among Protestants, as well as Karl Rahner and Hans Küng among Catholics, applied the term "diaspora" to the church in order to highlight its new situation.

At one level, the proposition that the church today is fundamentally a diaspora has to do with the collapse of the *Volkskirche* both as a historical reality and as a national purpose (see church and state). The alternative to *Volkskirche* (national church) is *Diaspora-Kirche*. Here church no longer expresses the soul of a nation but has become a social minority of active Christians among a majority of non-believers. This ecclesiological self-awareness is largely a result of sociological studies on the empirical state of the churches in the modern world (see church and world). Theologically the concept of diaspora as applied to the church can draw from the OT theology of the remnant, or from the idea of the "little flock" in the NT (Luke 12:32). Another theological undertone is the idea of the church under the cross, facing harassment and oppression from the powers-that-be.

A second level of meaning pertains to the functioning of the church in society.\* The church can function in two complementary ways: first as a fellowship assembled before the Lord in worship, and second as a dispersion of believers taking action in society each in a particular place or activity. This may have been the meaning of the oft-quoted definition of the church by the reformer Melancthon as "the community of the dispersed". This idea applies specifically to the laity.\* Actually the Department on the Laity of the WCC developed a strong ecclesiology in this sense. "The whole church shares Christ's ministry in the world and the effective exercise of this ministry must largely be by church members, *when they are dispersed in the life of the world*" (WCC central committee, Galyatető 1956; italics added). A possible theological undertone of this statement is the concept of presence (French *présence au monde*, J. Ellul, 1948).

Modern theology of the diaspora is evidently not a simple concept. It has both a

pessimistic, almost sectarian form, and a more optimistic, missionary form.

MARC SPINDLER

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## DIBELIUS, OTTO

B. 15 May 1880, Berlin, Germany; d. 31 Jan. 1967, Berlin. Dibelius participated in the Edinburgh 1910, Stockholm 1925 and Lausanne 1927 conferences and was the first German to be a president of the WCC



(1954-61). He was a leader in the Confessing Church,\* and signed the Stuttgart declaration\* in 1945. A staunch anti-communist, Dibelius was bishop of Berlin-Brandenburg, 1945-66, and strongly advocated unity in

the Evangelical Church in Germany, in spite of the tensions between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## DIÉTRICH, SUZANNE DE

B. 29 Jan. 1891, Niederbronn, France; d. 24 Jan. 1981, Strasbourg, France. Diétrich was a lay leader in ecumenical youth and student



movements, founding staff member and associate director (with Hendrik Kraemer) of the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey\* (1946-54), and key figure in the mid-20th century "biblical renewal".

Born into an old Alsatian family of metal founders, Suzanne de Diétrich took a diploma in electrical engineering from the University of Lausanne in 1913. While there, she came into contact with the French Student Christian Movement, and in 1914 she decided to devote herself to student work rather than returning to the family foundry. An initial two-year commitment stretched into almost four decades, both in France and in Geneva, where she worked with the

World Student Christian Federation\* and the World YWCA.\*

Despite a lifelong hereditary disability, she travelled on five continents and took part in numerous ecumenical meetings and conferences, including the world youth conference in Amsterdam in August 1939, for which she prepared the Bible studies. She was also instrumental in fostering ecumenical worship. During her years in Bossey she organized biblical study seminars and played an active role with her fellow layperson Kraemer in preparing the institute's programmes. Returning to Paris in 1956, she worked closely with the French Protestant Federation and its aid agency, CIMADE,\* which she had helped to create in 1939 and had supported from Geneva during the war.

At the centre of de Diétrich's work stood the Bible as a whole, which she read and taught others how to read, and about which she spoke and wrote. Her books, which were translated into several languages, helped to make the biblically based Protestant, Orthodox and Roman Catholic theologies of her time – including those of Karl Barth and Oscar Cullmann – accessible to laypeople, especially to youth. “No one who heard her expound the Bible”, said an associate after her death, “will ever forget her incisive mind, her simplicity of expression and her sense of humour, nor doubt that the Bible is the living word of God for everyone, as it was for her.”

Between the two world wars de Diétrich helped to run many biblical and ecumenical seminars in Mouterhouse, her family's mansion in northern Alsace. In 1950 she received an honorary doctorate from the theological faculty of the University of Montpellier (France).

WALTER MÜLLER-RÖMHELD

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## DISABILITY

WHILE DEFINITIONS vary, the term “disability” is generally used in church and ecumenical

networks to refer to any emotional, mental or physical impairment that can prevent a person from participating fully in life and society. The usage “persons with disabilities” is preferred to the terms “disabled person” (or the earlier “handicapped person”), as a way of affirming the wholeness and recognizing the potential of the person.

Statistics from the United Nations suggest that from 7 to 10% of the world's population have some form of physical or mental disability. Famine and malnutrition, poverty, AIDS and other communicable diseases, poor quality of health care, violent conflict, accidents (home, traffic and sports) and torture and other violations of fundamental human dignity are key factors in the increasing number of physically, psycho-traumatically and mentally disabled persons.

Despite medical advances and increased awareness and advocacy in churches and in society, many persons with disabilities are denied the right to lead meaningful lives within their families, church and society. Many do not have opportunities for education, work and caring social lives and all too often are shut away in institutions, cast out from society. They may be forced to live with little or no help, financially, spiritually or emotionally, from either the government, the community or the church. The plight of persons with disabilities in the poor countries is even worse: nearly 90% of all resources spent on people with disabilities are expended in industrialized countries, and yet 85% of persons with disabilities live in developing countries – and only 2% of them receive any services at all.

Christian theological reflection and spirituality should bring all people together as one – all in some way whole and broken, rich and poor, weak and strong. While many churches have done positive work in this area, the tendency is still present to look upon persons with disabilities as objects of pity and charity. A special role for churches is in providing a spiritual dimension of wholeness alongside other more secular perspectives of service, recognizing that persons with disabilities experience suffering (as do many others in the world), but that often their point of great weakness can ultimately become their greatest strength. Such is the journey and the mystery of the cross.

In 1971 the WCC began to discuss seriously the disability issue at its Faith and Order\* commission meeting in Louvain. The fifth assembly in Nairobi (1975) issued a statement on "The Handicapped and the Wholeness of the Family of God". Subsequently, a consultant was appointed for a year and a half to work with the churches in connection with the United Nations International Year of Disabled Persons. The issue was discussed in several of the issue groups of the sixth assembly (Vancouver 1983), and persons with disabilities had quite a high visibility in the life and work of the assembly. A full-time staff consultant was appointed from 1984 to the end of 1991 to begin to coordinate further work in the Council and its member churches, much of which was reflected in the seventh assembly (Canberra 1991), where a large group of people with disabilities were present as delegates, advisers or visitors. Another consultant continued this work from 1994 to 1996, building networks with member churches and organizing regional consultations. The work continued within the programme on Lay Participation towards Inclusive Community, that prepared a visible presence of ten advisers with disabilities at the eighth assembly (Harare 1998). Their presence at the assembly influenced a number of documents, e.g. the Programme Guidelines.

The advisers at the assembly formed the Ecumenical Disability Advisers Network (EDAN), that later linked up with the WCC; the network's coordinator, based at the national council of churches in Nairobi, is also a staff member of the WCC's Justice, Peace and Creation team where the concerns for people with disabilities has been based since the Harare assembly. EDAN, whose major concern is to stimulate and engage in theological reflection on issues concerning people with disabilities, has organized several consultations and cooperates with a number of partners within the WCC, the wider ecumenical movement and disability organizations around the world. The network has also sent advisers to WCC central committee meetings. The formation of the network and its cooperation with the WCC has led to a new working style for the concerns of people with disabilities in the WCC; it remains to be seen what effect that will have for the Council, the member churches and the larger ecumenical movement.

Within the WCC issues of disability have been considered both from the perspective of inclusive community and as an issue of justice. It has become apparent that those member churches which are working on this issue have different starting points and approaches, based largely on culture. Theological understandings of what causes a person to have or encounter a disabling condition vary tremendously from society to society, which in turn affects how that society views and therefore treats someone with a disability and how people with disabilities participate in the life and work of local congregations. Ecumenically, the Consultation on Church Union\* in the USA has been notable for the intensive work done on disabilities.

Amidst this diversity, the WCC has sought to serve as a focal point to coordinate materials and work, conscientize and mobilize churches and thus emphasize a new and deeper spirituality, transforming and renewing people. Regrettably, lack of funds and limited human resources in member churches and in the WCC itself have often made ecumenical progress on regional and international levels slow; at the local level, more informal ecumenical work and sharing does in fact occur, usually out of necessity. The challenge is for many national councils of churches to incorporate the concern for people with disabilities into their agendas. The problem is often financial and, because the issue is so diverse, it tends to get lost in the list of programme priorities.

LYNDA KATSUNO and ARNE FRITZSON

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## DISARMAMENT

UNTIL THE END of the cold war, disarmament was largely a future agenda for humanity. Historically, disarmament efforts between the two world wars, particularly the work of the League of Nations (see **United Nations**), collapsed in the face of the Nazi threat. However, some of the work done before the second world war provided a valu-

able basis. Mention must be made of the 1925 Geneva protocol, which banned the use of chemical and biological weapons, as well as gas warfare. The period since 1945 – often mistakenly referred to as the “post-war” period – has been characterized by wars outside Europe and, since 1989, in Europe once again. *World Military and Social Expenditures* calculates 149 wars with 20 million casualties for 1945-92; UNICEF puts the casualties at 23 million – overwhelmingly civilian women and children – leading them to proclaim an “anti-war agenda”. According to the UN secretary-general, over 5 million people were killed in the 1990s in wars, mainly within – rather than between – countries. The recent *Yearbooks* of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) have detailed about 30 ongoing major armed conflicts each with a total of over 1000 battle deaths.

In 1959 the UN proclaimed the goal of “general and complete disarmament”. However, the goal of disarmament was replaced in government thinking by arms control, which did not prevent the quantitative and qualitative arms race. By the end of the 1980s, annual global expenditure on arms was over \$1,000,000,000,000 (US\$1 trillion) – more than the income of the poorest half of humanity. At the end of the cold war, arms spending was over 6% of the world’s gross national product, with the industrialized world accounting for three-quarters of the total. This has now fallen to 2.6% (\$780 billion) according to SIPRI.

Since the late 1980s, beginning before the cold war ended, world military expenditure, expenditure on the arms trade, military research and development (R&D) budgets and stocks of nuclear weapons have all declined significantly. The US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency estimates a 35% decline in world military spending from 1987 to 1994 from the peak of \$1.3 trillion (1987) to \$840 billion (1994 – both figures in 1994 dollars). Various expert international agencies calculate the values differently, but the downward trend is confirmed by *inter alia* SIPRI. Global R&D expenditure fell 50% in the period 1987-95 to about \$60 billion. From 1987 to 1990, conventional arms transfers declined sharply. At the turn of the millennium, major conventional arms

transfers were half the level of the cold war peak.

In the field of nuclear weapons, the Cuban missile crisis of the early 1960s served as a stimulus to the USA and USSR to try to reach agreement. Direct communication in crisis situations, the Partial Test Ban Treaty (1963) and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (1968) were some of the results. It cannot be said that the super-powers or the other nuclear weapon states have fulfilled their commitment “to achieve at the earliest possible date the cessation of the nuclear arms race and to undertake effective measures in the direction of nuclear disarmament” (art. VI NPT).

In the 1970s the USA and USSR concentrated particularly on bilateral approaches. In 1971 they agreed upon cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space and later (with Britain and France) prohibited placing weapons of mass destruction on the seabed and ocean floor. The period of detente was marked by the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty and SALT I on the limitation of strategic offensive arms (1972). The ABM Treaty, a major achievement of arms control, would be threatened should the USA deploy a national missile defence system. Towards the end of the 1970s, the collapse of detente led to the failure by the US senate to ratify the SALT II agreement. After the signing of the Helsinki agreement (1975), the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe developed into a forum where European nations, including neutral and non-aligned countries, could exert some influence over the USA and USSR. In 1990, the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) was signed. It entered into force in 1992, establishing ceilings for five main categories of conventional arms. The 1999 Agreement on Adaptation of the CFE brought these efforts to fruition.

The 1987 Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) agreement marked the beginning of genuine progress towards nuclear disarmament. Consistent with their belief that “nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought”, the USA and USSR agreed in 1988 to notify each other at least 24 hours before launching any intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles. Substantial progress has been made on nuclear disarmament between

the USA and Russia. Following ratification of START II by the Russian Duma (April 2000), by the end of 2007 each side must reduce its total deployed strategic nuclear warheads to 3000-3500. There are still as many as 35,000 nuclear warheads worldwide. These are significant reductions from cold war level, but remain an awesome destructive capacity.

In spite of concerns by third world, neutral and non-aligned states that the acknowledged nuclear weapon states (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council: the USA, Russia, China, France and the United Kingdom) have not fulfilled their obligations to move swiftly enough towards nuclear disarmament, it proved possible to extend the Treaty indefinitely in 1995. The existing dangers for nuclear proliferation among "threshold" or "over-the-threshold" nations relate to issues of regional tension (Middle East, India-Pakistan). It is still a challenge to achieve a fully effective Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty following the 158-3 vote in the UN general assembly in September 1996. India's opposition remains the main obstacle. The US Senate rejected ratification in October 1999, but the USA holds to a moratorium on testing. It remains to be seen whether the Treaty will ever enter into force.

The Chemical Weapons Convention was finally agreed and opened for signature in 1993. Political will is the key to effective implementation. The same is true for the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (agreed 1972, entered into force 1975) and achievement of a meaningful protocol on verification. The Pugwash Movement – recipients of the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize – and the Abolition 2000 movement have stressed the desirability and achievability of a nuclear-weapon-free world and a nuclear weapons convention as a necessary step.

Inherent within the UN charter is the paradox which has made disarmament so difficult. The UN was established "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". The Security Council is required "to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources" (art. 26). At the same time, however, the charter allows for the right of member states to self-defence

(art. 51). Arms spending can thus be justified by states as necessary. In spite of the first and second disarmament decades (the 1970s and 1980s) and three UN special sessions on disarmament (1978, 1982, 1988), the most that could be claimed by 1988 for the results of multilateral and bilateral disarmament efforts is that they are "limited yet significant". The disarmament trend of recent years has been mainly due to the end of the cold war and economic pressures for arms cuts.

In the world of multilateral negotiations, the UN Conference on Disarmament, the "single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum", established a permanent ten-area agenda in 1979: (1) nuclear weapons in all aspects, (2) chemical weapons, (3) other weapons of mass destruction, (4) conventional weapons, (5) reduction of military budgets, (6) reduction of armed forces, (7) disarmament and development, (8) disarmament and international security, (9) collateral measures including confidence-building measures and verification, and (10) a comprehensive programme of disarmament leading to general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

The UN machinery is only as powerful as the member states enable it to be. Regional agreements should also be mentioned, such as the Antarctic Treaty (1959), which makes the region a demilitarized zone, the 1967 Treaty of Tlatelolco and the 1986 Treaty of Rarotonga, which declare Latin America and the South Pacific nuclear-free zones.

From the perspective of the churches, there are clear motivations for concern for disarmament. The ecumenical movement has been consistent in its support for the disarmament efforts of the UN, as the then WCC general secretary Philip Potter underlined in his address to the UN Second Special Session in 1982. The churches' concern for peace, justice and environmental protection requires disarmament. In particular, in the 1970s and 1980s, there was growing moral criticism of nuclear weapons, leading to the WCC Vancouver assembly (1983) statement that "the production and deployment of nuclear weapons as well as their use constitute a crime against humanity". This statement is hard to harmonize with positions which maintain that nuclear deterrence is still re-

quired. The clearest example is that of Pope John Paul II at the UN Second Special Session, who said: "In current conditions 'deterrence' based on balance, certainly not as an end in itself but as a step towards progressive disarmament, may still be judged morally acceptable." The common denominator is agreement that deterrence based upon weapons of mass destruction must be overcome in the future. In October 1993 the permanent representative of the holy see at the UN argued that there is no case for retaining or further developing the "cataclysmic firepower". He continued: "Security lies in the abolition of nuclear weapons and the strengthening of international law." The 1996 judgment of the world court stopped short of declaring nuclear weapons illegal. The churches have yet to address the challenge of the Canberra assembly calling for the phased elimination of nuclear weapons.

As the perceived threat of nuclear war receded, attention in the churches turned increasingly to restricting the conventional arms trade, opposition to landmines and restricting trade in small arms. The WCC has played an active role in efforts to ban landmines and is addressing small arms. As the UN secretary-general points out in his millennium report *We the Peoples* many of the 5 million people killed in the wars of the 1990s were killed by small arms, such as assault rifles – of which up to 500 million are in circulation. These are bought for "the price of a chicken or a bag of maize". Some 50-60% of the small arms trade is legal.

In 1994, the WCC established its Programme to Overcome Violence. At its Harare assembly (1998) it declared the years 2001-10 a Decade to Overcome Violence. There is still disagreement within the churches between the pacifist and just-war traditions, although there would be theological consensus that the churches must be committed to peace with justice, as well as reconciliation – the theme of the 1997 second European Ecumenical Assembly.

As the new millennium begins, it is clear that the 20th century was one of industrialized weapons production, unprecedented warfare and genocide. Even if this trend has been reversed, it cannot be stated with confidence that the reversal is permanent. The many conflicts – actual and potential – and

the availability of cheap weapons, particularly small arms like machine guns, mean that the world is still a dangerous place, especially for poor, marginalized and undefended people.

See also **militarism/militarization, pacifism, peace, United Nations.**

ROGER WILLIAMSON

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## DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

THE DISCIPLES of Christ are a worldwide Christian communion whose origins were in the US frontier of the early 19th century. In 1801 Barton W. Stone, a Presbyterian minister, led a revival at Cane Ridge, Kentucky, for a gathering of over 20,000 people. The experience convinced Stone that unity among Christians was essential for the church's mission, evangelism and spiritual renewal. In a landmark document, *The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery* (1804), he set forth a vision in which

the present church structures would “be dissolved, and sink into the body of Christ at large”. Stone and his followers took the name “Christian” for their congregations and members as a sign of inclusiveness and renounced all non-biblical names as they sought to reclaim the faith proclaimed in the New Testament scriptures.

Thomas Campbell and his son Alexander were the primary founders of a second movement, the Disciples of Christ, which joined with Stone’s Christians in 1832 to become the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Thomas Campbell, a Presbyterian minister from Ireland who came to western Pennsylvania in 1807, was soon cast out of his denomination for trying to remove all “fencing of the table” by credal conscriptions and to reconcile the various Presbyterian bodies rooted in events in 17th- and 18th-century Scotland and Ireland which had no relevance in the context of the US frontier in the early 1800s. In his *Declaration and Address* (1809), Campbell proclaimed that “division among Christians is a horrid evil”, and that “the church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally and constitutionally one”.

The early leaders of the two movements, Christians and Disciples, believed that the realization of Christian unity could be achieved through the restoration of the faith and order of the New Testament church. Their call was to return to the apostolic tradition of the earliest church, which they identified as the “ancient order of things”. They thus rejected all doctrinal formulations when used as “tests of fellowship” and opposed as unscriptural the historic creeds\* and authoritarian ecclesiastical government (see **church order**). In response to the concept of restoring the unity of the church, based on the NT witness, many of the characteristic beliefs and practices of the Disciples of Christ took shape and continue today: weekly celebration of the Lord’s supper (see **eucharist**), baptism\* by immersion of individuals upon their own profession of the “good confession of faith” (see Matt. 16:16; Luke 9:20), commitment to the priesthood of all believers, in which lay and ordained share in the ministry of word and sacrament, and an evangelistic zeal in the proclamation of the gospel to the world.

Baptism and the Lord’s supper are accepted by Disciples of Christ as sacraments of the church; indeed, they are the primary elements in shaping the Disciples’ ethos and identity. Baptism marks entrance into membership in the church universal and is administered “in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit” (see **Trinity**). The Lord’s supper, or holy communion, is the central act of each Sunday’s worship service; the invitation is always to an “open table” where all Christians are welcomed to share in the eucharistic meal of memorial, sacrifice and anticipation of the kingdom. For Disciples, Christ is present at each Lord’s supper both in the elements as they are received and within the life of the community itself.

Disciples of Christ believe that the church is a sacramental community, a covenantal fellowship brought into being by God’s initiative of grace\* and sustained in its life by the Holy Spirit.\* The church is both *local* (as the congregation of believers are gathered in Christ’s name and witness to the power of God’s love in each place) and *universal* (as all Christians and Christian communions are bound together to be the community/koinonia\* of God’s people in all places and at all times).

The movement of the Disciples, with its message of freedom, diversity, simplicity of worship and a reasonable faith, grew rapidly on the US frontier; and by 1900 its membership was over 1.1 million, the largest denomination to be born on North American soil. Its message also spread to Canada, Britain and Australia, where the similar themes of Christian unity, restorationism and the congregation’s right to self-governance were already present among different church bodies (often calling themselves by the name “Churches of Christ”). These churches readily acknowledged one another as part of the same worldwide movement.

With the missionary expansion of the churches in the late 1800s and early 1900s, Disciples of Christ communities were established in most regions of the world. Many have subsequently joined with other denominations to form united churches,\* e.g. the Church of North India, the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom, the Kyodan (Japan), the Church of Christ in Zaire.

Disciples of Christ have been prominent in most major ecumenical ventures of this century, including the founding of the WCC and its predecessor bodies, in many national councils of churches and in giving leadership to continuing efforts in church-union negotiations. In the US, Disciples participated in the nine-union Consultation on Church Union\* and are part of the new Churches Uniting in Christ.

The international body that gives expression to the Disciples of Christ in official church-to-church relationships is the Disciples Ecumenical Consultative Council (DECC). (A second organization, the World Convention of Churches of Christ, is an inspirational, global fellowship for individual members of the Disciples of Christ, who gather every four years at international assemblies.) The DECC has three main purposes: (1) to coordinate the appointment of official Disciples representation to international ecumenical events and meetings, (2) to share information on Disciples' ecumenical activities around the world, and (3) to encourage and provide for engaging in international theological dialogue. The three current dialogues of the DECC are with the Roman Catholic Church (1977), the Russian Orthodox Church (1987) and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (1987). The DECC includes membership of Disciples of Christ churches (and united churches which have former Disciples ties) in Argentina, Australia, Canada, Democratic Republic of Congo, Jamaica, Mexico, New Zealand, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, Southern Africa, the United Kingdom, the US and Vanuatu.

ROBERT K. WELSH

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## DISCIPLES-REFORMED DIALOGUE

WHEN THE Disciples of Christ emerged as a distinct movement in the US and Britain in

the early 19th century, many early leaders came from a Presbyterian background. Although the adoption of believers' baptism\* by immersion marked them off from other Reformed churches, Disciples' theological roots lay in the Reformed tradition. Both Disciples and Reformed have been active in the ecumenical movement nationally and internationally and belong to united churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Japan, North India, Southern Africa, Thailand and the United Kingdom. They are involved in union discussions in Jamaica and were formerly involved in New Zealand; in the USA Disciples are involved in an ecumenical partnership with the United Church of Christ and in united congregations with Presbyterians and UCCs.

Following an initial planning meeting in Geneva in 1984, a consultation between representatives of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches\* (WARC) and the Disciples Ecumenical Consultative Council (DECC) took place in Birmingham, England, in March 1987. Four main themes were discussed: the common doctrinal roots of Disciples and Reformed, the sacraments of baptism and communion, ministry, and models of Christian unity. Case studies of Disciples-Reformed relations were presented from Australia, the United Kingdom, India, the US and Japan.

The report of the consultation suggested that "a reconciliation of memories" was needed to overcome past divisions. Common understandings of the church\* and the Lord's supper (see *eucharist*) were affirmed. It was noted that both traditions find it easier to relate their understanding of the church to the local congregation and to the church universal than to ecclesial structures of a national or international kind. On baptism it was agreed that neither tradition could be content with a baptismal theology which excluded children from the Christian community, and that the legitimacy of the theological traditions of both infant baptism and believers' baptism should be acknowledged. Re-baptism should not be practised because it undermined the once-for-all nature of baptism. Within a general agreement on the nature of ministry, the consultation urged further reflection on the meaning of ordination,\* the nature of presbyterial, dia-

conal and oversight ministry, and the significance of the ordination of women.\*

The consultation concluded that there were no theological or ecclesiological issues which needed to divide the two church families and asked the DECC and the WARC to call upon their member churches to say whether or not they could accept this declaration: "The Disciples of Christ and the Reformed Churches recognize and accept each other as visible expressions of the one church of Christ."

On this basis, continued contacts through the 1990s led to a further consultation in January 2002, which recommended that "the goal of relations between the WARC and the DECC should now be the development of comprehensive partnership in pursuit of the vision of the two eventually becoming one". It also offered specific suggestions to help bring the two confessional bodies closer together: collaboration, however and wherever possible; sharing information about the history and current situation of Disciples and Reformed; sharing in governing body meetings; and coordinating approaches to bilateral dialogues. Care should be taken to include the perspective of those uniting and united churches which belong to both the DECC and the WARC.

DAVID M. THOMPSON

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## DISCIPLES-ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUE

IN THE USA the Roman Catholic Church and the Disciples of Christ have been engaged in a dialogue since 1962. Although this conversation began at the national level, it was later transferred to the regional level where, in 1987 after 12 years of discussion, the group based in Louisville, Kentucky, published a document entitled *Ministry – the Whole Church for the Whole World*.

An international commission was set up in September 1977 with meetings alternating between the USA and Europe. The result of the first series of annual meetings (1977-82) has been the publication of the first report, *Apostolicity and Catholicity*, which discusses "Our Life Together", "Spiritual Ecumenism", "Baptism", "Faith and Tradition", "The Unity We Seek" and "Looking to the Future". In their foreword the two co-chairmen declare that this final report "contains not an agreed statement on points of doctrine but an agreed account, written by those commissioned for the dialogue, to record promising developments. The paper describes some convergence in understanding as well as some of the problems which have yet to be faced."

Following changes in the composition of the commission in 1983, it began a second series of annual discussions whose results, completed in 1992, were published as "The Church as Communion in Christ". Bearing in mind the differences and similarities in history and ethos of the two churches, the discussions focused on how the church as communion is linked to the "new creation", the visibility of the church's *koinonia* as revealed in the eucharist, in continuity with the apostolic tradition, and the role of ministry – including the whole church – in maintaining the faith of the apostles.

A third series of annual meetings began in 1993; themes treated up to 2000 included: faith – the individual and the church, the gospel and the church, the content and authority of the early ecumenical councils, the canon and authority of scripture, the teaching office of the church, conscience and community, and evangelization.

This dialogue follows its own distinctive methodology, which gives precedence to a search for lines of convergence and not for the establishing of agreed formulas. For this reason the results of these discussions have aroused the interest of other groups.

J.-M.R. TILLARD

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## DISCIPLES-RUSSIAN ORTHODOX DIALOGUE

THE FIRST contacts between the Disciples of Christ and the Russian Orthodox Church came early in the 20th century. Peter Ainslie of the Disciples, one of the primary architects of Faith and Order,\* attended the preparatory meeting in Geneva in 1920 for the first world conference on F&O. Attending the meeting was the Russian exarch for Western Europe, Archbishop Evlogy of Volynia, who expressed Christian love for all the churches in the young F&O movement. In his address, Ainslie lifted up the Disciples’ vision of a united church that included “the whole House of Christ – Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican and Protestant”. This exchange led to a friendship between these two early ecumenical pioneers.

Specific contacts and relations between the Disciples and the Russian Orthodox grew after the second world war when the member churches of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA braved the cold war\* to join hands with churches in the Soviet Union. One of those delegations was headed by the Disciples lay leader and industrialist J. Irwin Miller, then president of the NCCC. In 1973 pastoral relations found deeper expression when George G. Beazley, Jr, president of the Disciples’ Council on Christian Unity, died in Moscow while on an official visit to the Russian Orthodox Church. Other Disciples leaders made subsequent ecumenical visits to the USSR; and during the mid-1980s more than 200 Disciples regional and local leaders went there under the NCC’s church-to-church programme.

In 1987 official Disciples of Christ-Russian Orthodox dialogue began. Ten Disciples theologians met with leaders in Moscow and with theological faculties at Zagorsk, Leningrad and Odessa. The themes were “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry” and “The Church’s Role in Peace-making” (see

the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, 12, 1987, and *Mid-Stream*, 27, 3, 1988). A second dialogue in 1990 addressed “The Renewal of Parish Life” and “The Church’s Diaconal Ministry in Society”.

The end of the cold war, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the new and fragile social situation in Russia created a situation in which the Russian Orthodox Church was preoccupied with many critical issues, some of which created suspicion of any ecumenical dialogues. As a result this dialogue, like many other contacts between Russian Christians and the churches of the West, was for some time in a holding pattern. However, persistent contacts have enabled resumption, notably through the visit of an official Disciples delegation to St Peterburg and Moscow in 1998. The dialogue emphasized continued growth in mutual respect through a deeper understanding of the historic identity, faith convictions, and current challenges faced by each church.

PAUL A. CROW, Jr

■ *MS*, 37, 3-4, 1988.

## DIVORCE

DIVORCE is the legal act dissolving a marriage. In all cultures, legislators – both civil and religious – have been concerned to ensure the stability of marriage\* and guarantee protection for the persons within it: it cannot be terminated without good reason and due legal process. Some systems allow for repudiation (usually by the husband only, rarely the wife); others insist on official certification of misconduct or mutual consent by the appropriate authority. The subject of divorce is dealt with in the Hebrew Bible and Jesus pronounces on it, but his words are interpreted differently by the churches. This article therefore looks first at the scriptural record before going on to examine the different disciplines established for handling the failure of a marriage and, in some cases, allowing for a second marriage (which the Roman Catholics do not).

## THE WORD OF GOD IN SCRIPTURE

The law of Moses allows for a woman to be repudiated by her husband, who must put in her hand a bill of divorce (*gueth*), giving

the ex-wife social status and the possibility of remarriage (Deut. 24:1-4). Even though legal, vigorous disapproval of divorce is expressed by the prophet Malachi (2:14-16). Questioned on the subject by the Pharisees (Matt. 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12), Jesus continues in the prophetic line but goes beyond the letter of the law written by Moses because of human "hardness of heart". He reminds them of what is said of marriage in Genesis (Gen. 2:24) and concludes, "Therefore what God has joined together let no one separate." He also goes on to draw the conclusion, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her."

However, the account of these words of Jesus is not unanimous: in Matt. 19:7-9 (cf. Matt. 5:31-32) *porneia* seems to warrant an exception to the prohibition of divorce, but this is not mentioned in Mark 10:11-12 and Luke 16:18. Strict scientific exegesis considers the text of Mark to be the most ancient and the insertion in Matthew a later addition. There are differing views on how to understand *porneia* – as "adultery", or "unchastity", or as irregular unions contravening Lev. 18:6-18. But whatever scientific exegesis may say, this insertion and the interpretation of it are at the root of the present divergences among the churches in regard to divorce.

Paul broaches this question in 1 Cor. 7:10-16, reminding Christian couples of the Lord's commandment that the wife should not separate from her husband (but if she does separate she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband) and that the husband should not divorce his wife. Then, speaking of couples in which only one partner is a Christian believer, he reminds them of the permanent nature of their union, but authorizes the Christian to contract a new marriage if the non-believer wishes to separate, for in such a case the (Christian) brother or sister is not bound.

**INTERPRETATIONS OF SCRIPTURE  
BY THE CHURCHES**

For the ancient church, immersed in cultures which allowed divorce by repudiation and also by mutual consent, Jesus' words sounded like a prophetic pronouncement. While many authors of the first six centuries interpret these words as excluding divorce

between Christians, some church fathers and councils seem to allow or at least tolerate remarriage after divorce in some cases.

In the 6th century, the legislation of the Eastern empire (accepted by the church), based on the Matthean exception, decreed that in case of adultery the marriage was broken and the injured spouse could remarry. In the West, the principle of the intrinsic indissolubility of any marriage and the absolute indissolubility of a marriage between Christians, once consummated, came to be affirmed by the theologians and canonists in the course of the middle ages, up to the start of the Reformation.

The reformers considered that scripture did not prohibit divorce in certain cases. Luther accepted it in cases of adultery and the desertion of one spouse by the other. Other reformers accepted divorce in cases of maltreatment or heresy. The council of Trent\* (1563) condemned some of these Reformed theses on the indissolubility of marriage during its 24th session. It thus decreed that marriage could not be annulled for heresy on the part of one spouse, nor for incompatibility of temperament, nor for culpable abandonment. But eager not to declare as heretics the Eastern Christians, whose discipline included divorce on grounds of adultery, while defining Roman Catholic doctrine in the context of the Reformation controversy, it condemned only those who said the church was wrong in teaching that marriage cannot be dissolved for adultery – thus indirectly recognizing the legitimacy of the Eastern practice.

**THE CHURCHES' CURRENT PRACTICE**

Today the Roman Catholic Church teaches that the sacrament of marriage between two baptized Christians, once consummated, cannot be dissolved by any human power, nor by any cause except death. Having thus defined absolute indissolubility, it reserves the right to pronounce the dissolution of other unions in cases where this may promote the life of faith of the individuals concerned.

Hence, it permits a person who has become a Christian after marriage to re-marry during the life-time of his or her former spouse when their union has been broken by the latter. This procedure is called the Pauline privilege because it is based on what Paul said in 1 Cor. 1:12-15.

Furthermore, since the middle ages, the pope has reserved the right to dissolve the sacramental union between two baptized Christians if it has not been consummated, as well as non-sacramental unions (marriages not concluded between two baptized persons). These cases are grouped under the name of the Petrine privilege, as the church refers to the authority vested in it in the person of Peter. The coherence of this discipline is that the consummated sacrament of matrimony symbolizes the unailing union of Christ with the church, which is the model for it and the source of grace. All other unions are also intended to be permanent but, not being sacramental, they can be dissolved by the authority of the church in view of its mission to nurture life in the faith.

The procedure known as "annulment" is not the dissolution of a marriage but the confirmation by the church authorities that the marriage in question was in appearance only because one of the essential conditions for its validity was not fulfilled from the start (e.g. incapacity, lack of consent or requisite form).

The Orthodox consider marriage as a sacrament and indissoluble but, because they interpret the Matthean insertion (except in the case of *porneia*) as referring not only to invalid irregular unions but to adultery, they authorize divorce in this case. By economy (adaptation of the law to a concrete situation), they extend this solution to analogous situations which make it impossible for the couple's union to continue (permanent separation or, in the Russian church, apostasy, serious illness or culpable abandonment). With the permission of the bishop, who is responsible for assessing the cause, the divorced spouse (normally the "injured party" but also the guilty party after a time of penitence) can therefore be authorized to re-marry. Second and third marriages are celebrated with a lesser degree of solemnity as having a lesser degree of sacramentality (they represent the love of Christ more imperfectly than a first marriage). Fourth marriages are never permitted.

As for the Reformation churches, on theological grounds they do not consider marriage as a sacrament like baptism or the Lord's supper, but as a human and social reality within which Christians must live ac-

ording to the gospel. Reformation Christians therefore receive from scripture the call for the permanence of marriage but, concerned to express God's loving kindness towards human beings and their weakness, they allow their members to re-marry after a civil divorce. However, the discipline of several Reformation churches requires that the request for a blessing on a second marriage be examined by a commission which assesses whether or not this is pastorally appropriate. In many cases the re-marriage of divorced clergy is governed by special procedures.

#### PASTORAL CARE OF DIVORCED PERSONS WHO HAVE RE-MARRIED

Pastoral care of divorced persons who have re-married is difficult in the RCC, especially in the West where divorce has become a common occurrence. The RCC considers that the conjugal bond persists beyond separation and the factual termination of the couple's shared life. Official texts clearly distinguish the spouse forced into divorce or separation, who does not re-marry; he or she continues to participate fully in the life of the church. But if the abandoned spouse or the spouse who caused the divorce re-marries, his or her moral responsibility is seriously engaged, albeit in different ways. These Christians are not excommunicated, however. Divorced persons who have re-married should receive "solicitous care to make sure that they do not consider themselves as separated from the church because, as baptized persons they can, and indeed must, share in her life" (John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 1981, 84). However, they cannot be admitted to the sacraments of the eucharist and of penance because "their state and condition of life objectively contradict that union of love between Christ and the church which is signified and effected by the eucharist" (*ibid.*).

Despite the pastoral support and welcome extended to them in their church, the situation of spouses who have been abandoned or compelled to divorce and who have "made a new life" for themselves by forming a new, stable and committed couple has become a growing concern for many bishops and diocesan synods. Some of them would like to draw on Orthodox practice. Faced with the increasing numbers of such cases the RCC feels obliged to witness faithfully to the

Lord's words on the indissolubility of marriage and endeavours to help couples to live up to their vows of faithfulness. At the same time, and without detriment to the latter, it is seeking better theological and pastoral ways to proclaim grace to the men and women, often with children, who have had the misfortune or committed the error of divorcing.

PHILIPPE TOXÉ and HERVÉ LEGRAND

■ H. Crouzel, *L'Église primitive face au divorce*, Paris, Beauchesne, 1971 ■ *Marriage, Divorce and the Church*, report of a commission appointed by the archbishop of Canterbury to prepare a statement on the Christian doctrine of marriage, London, 1972 ■ *Sul Divorzio*, Verona, Arnaldo Mondadori, 1970 ■ L. Wrenn, *Annulments*, Washington DC, Canon Law Society of America, 1996 ■ J. Young, *Ministering to the Divorced*, New York, Paulist, 1979.

## DODD, CHARLES HAROLD

B. 7 April 1884, Wrexham, Wales; d. 1973. Facing social and cultural factors in church divisions, Dodd spoke of the "unavowed motives in ecumenical discussions", which had an impact on the preparations of Faith and Order\* for Lund 1952. He put forward the much-debated conception of "realized eschatology", i.e. that the Old Testament promises of God's kingdom and Christ's own words about the coming of the kingdom were realized through the incarnation, with definitive consequences for humankind. The most influential figure in British New Testament scholarship during the middle decades of the 20th century, Dodd was a Congregational minister educated at Oxford. In 1930 he became Rylands professor of biblical criticism and exegesis at Manchester, and from 1935 to 1949 was Norris-Hulse professor of divinity at Cambridge – the first non-Anglican to hold a chair there since 1660. His publications include over 20 books and some 70 major articles, essays and lectures. He served as the general director of the New English Bible translation.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ P.E. Hughes ed., *Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1966 (includes a bibliography of the works of C.H. Dodd).

## DOGMA

DOGMA refers to communally authoritative truths of revealed faith\* essential to the identity or welfare of Christian community. The concept is objective rather than subjective: it points to the faith which is to be believed (*fides quae*), not to the faith by which one believes (*fides qua*). A belief may be a dogma even when it is not recognized or affirmed as such. Thus the term in its theological sense lacks the subjectivism of popular usage, according to which beliefs are dogmas because of the way they are held and asserted, e.g. arrogantly and groundlessly, rather than because of their community-defining character.

Dogma and theology should also be distinguished. Theology refers to reflection on the Christian faith in both its non-dogmatic and dogmatic aspects. Dogmatic theologians focus on the dogmas of Christian community, but even when they agree on what these are, they may differ greatly in their understanding of them. Dogmatic unity is compatible with theological disagreements between individuals and schools of thought.

None of the rare New Testament occurrences of "dogma" fully corresponds to the present-day meaning. The closest is in Acts 16:4, where the decisions of the Jerusalem church in regard to gentile converts are termed *dogmata*. In other passages, the word refers to governmental decrees (Luke 2:1; Acts 17:7) or Mosaic ordinances (Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14). Later Christian writers often do not use the term at all (e.g. Aquinas) and instead speak of articles, symbols or rules of faith or, most commonly, creeds\* and confessions; but these, while containing what are now called dogmas, often include much material of other kinds. The present technical understanding of "dogma" is largely the product of Protestant as well as Catholic developments in the post-Reformation centuries, but it has acquired official status only in Roman Catholicism and chiefly through the First Vatican Council\* (1870).

## DOGMA AND VATICAN I

For the First Vatican Council, the revealed truths contained in the deposit of faith and transmitted through scripture and Tradition are taught in the dogmatic definitions of the church's supreme teaching authority

(councils and popes) and in the undefined dogmas of the ordinary magisterium. In addition to the threefold reference to revelation,\* community (church\*) and teaching authority\* mentioned above, Vatican I thus introduced a fourth note – the distinction between defined and undefined dogmas.

Undefined dogmas can be understood as including the *lex orandi*,\* the rule of prayer of which patristic authors spoke. In so far as prayer or worship is the centre of Christian life, the dogmas implicit within it guide the practice of the faith in all its aspects and may also be called the *lex agendi*, the rule of action. Even when they are not explicitly recognized, these undefined dogmas contribute to the shaping of scriptural interpretation, worship, proclamation, pastoral care and the communal and individual behaviour of believers. Their explicit recognition develops through theological reflection in the face of heresies (such as the Christological and Trinitarian ones of the first centuries) or is stimulated by new forms of action (such as Paul's gentile mission) or of piety (such as Marian devotion, to cite a controverted case). These theological developments may become part of the *lex credendi*, the rule of believing represented by the church's ordinary preaching and instruction, but this is not yet dogmatic definition.

Definitions usually occur only when they are thought necessary for communal unity or faithfulness. They are serious matters, for they mark the boundaries of full ecclesial communion\* and can be rightly decided on, as the Jerusalem church acknowledged, only with the help of the Holy Spirit (Acts 15:28). This conviction that God is at work as well as human beings when churches properly decide dogmatic questions is a fifth common element in the understanding of dogma. It has been historically present in various forms in all the major Christian traditions.

### CHANGE IN DOGMA?

Disagreements about dogma involve different understandings of revelation and of the three criteria for dogmatic definitions: scripture, Tradition and the teaching authority of the church. In regard to revelation, one view is that the formulations in which dogmatic decisions are expressed are so related to revelation that they cannot be translated into other

conceptualities. If dogmas cannot be reformulated, the statement of Vatican I, for example, that dogmatic definitions are "irreformable" means that they can be articulated only in their original terms and in no others.

Another view is that irreformability applies more to the decisions than to their formulations, and that formulations may change, even though dogmatic decisions are irreversible. Since Vatican II (1962-65) this has become the general opinion among those who hold to irreformability: the substance of the faith remains unchanged but not its articulations. A third possible position is that not only formulations but dogmatic decisions themselves may in some instances be applicable only in restricted contexts. While irreversible in their original settings, changes in situation may make them unnecessary or no longer binding. Dogmas are thought of in this perspective as confessional responses to God's revelatory word uttering different directives to his church in different circumstances. Such views are strongest among Protestants but have gained ground everywhere (as has also the second position) with the weakening of the rationalistically propositional understandings of revelation and of truth which characterized early modern orthodoxies, and with the growth of emphases on historicity and contextuality. Whether these changes will make possible an ecumenically acceptable understanding of the irreformability of dogma remains to be seen.

### CRITERIA FOR DOGMA

In reference to the three criteria for dogmas, the disagreements on teaching authority are the most clear-cut and perhaps the most intractable. In Eastern Orthodoxy, decisions of ecumenical councils received by the church as a whole have full dogmatic authority. There have been seven such councils, the last of which was Nicea II (787). These decisions are "infallible": believers may confidently affirm that they have been arrived at with the assistance of the Holy Spirit. In Roman Catholicism, not only the councils of the undivided church but also the later Roman Catholic ones are competent to define dogma infallibly when acting together with the pope; and the pope can also exercise this infallibility "with which God has endowed his church" (Vatican I) by himself, under the

restricted conditions of *ex cathedra* pronouncements. Reformation churches do not speak of infallibility: one could perhaps say that they “hope and pray” rather than “believe and affirm” that their community-defining decisions are divinely assisted, are truly dogma. Furthermore, they are not committed to any one form of institutionalization of teaching authority, and communal reception\* is proportionately more decisive for them than it has been in Roman Catholicism, though perhaps not in Eastern Orthodoxy. Once again, there has been much theological convergence on these issues of teaching authority in recent times, but it remains unclear how or whether the oppositions can be finally overcome.

In reference to the criterion of Tradition, the historic disputes are perhaps now close to being solved in theological principle, even if not in ecclesial practice. Roman Catholics have generally abandoned the “two-source” theory, according to which tradition is an independent source, supplementary to scripture, of publicly authoritative knowledge of revelation. Reformation Christians, without surrendering the *sola scriptura* in the sense of the supreme authority of scripture, have become much more aware of the inescapable and pervasive influence of Tradition on the communal understanding and use of scripture. They recognize that also for the reformers the traditions of Christ-centred and Trinitarian scriptural interpretation crystallized in the early creeds are essential to reading the Bible as the revelatory word of God – the “cradle of Christ”, as Luther put it. Thus theologians of both Roman Catholic and Protestant allegiance now speak, in effect, of a single source of knowledge of revelation in which the scriptural canon, itself the product of Tradition, is the centre of the ongoing traditioning process. Distinctive of the Eastern Orthodox is their insistence on the unchanging character of Tradition. Tradition has not changed as much for them as in the West. They have not needed to the same degree as Western Christians to decide dogmatically between new and conflicting traditions such as developed during and after the middle ages and became divisive at the time of the Reformation. Even in Eastern Orthodoxy, however, the continuity of Tradition is being threatened by modernity, and the need for

dogmatic decisions going beyond the first seven councils is coming to be recognized.

Such decisions, in the East as in the West, depend chiefly on the Bible, for it, by general agreement, is the primary witness to revelation. The issues here are for the most part hermeneutical (see **hermeneutics**) and cut across the confessional boundaries. Both modern fundamentalist and modern liberal interpretative methods are in disarray, and the retrieval of pre-modern classic methods in combination with historical criticism has not yet progressed to any great extent. But it is perhaps only by such a retrieval that Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Reformation Christians could overcome their respective temptations to exaggerated traditionalism, clerical authoritarianism and biblicism, and thus learn to read scripture together as the primary guide to the dogmatic decisions (such as the recent condemnations of racism\*) which will need to be made in the future as in the past.

One major development in the understanding of dogma is especially promising: the recognition of what Vatican II calls the “hierarchy of truths”\* or, in language more familiar to Reformation Christians, the acknowledgment that some doctrines are closer to the centre of the gospel than others. At the uniquely authoritative summit and centre, by common consent, are the classic Christological and Trinitarian credal affirmations which define the person of Jesus Christ,\* i.e., true God and true man, second person of the Triune deity (see **Trinity**). Those who thus agree on who Jesus is and who God is can join together in what from the beginning of Christianity was the central community-forming acclamation – Jesus is Lord. They can hope to remove the incompatibilities of their dogmatic formulations at lower levels while retaining an enriching diversity. Thus the hierarchy of truths in its Trinitarian and Christological ordering provides a way of understanding and experiencing dogma as primarily unitive, even in the present divided state of the church.

See also **common confession; ecumenical councils; infallibility/indefectibility; Tradition and traditions.**

GEORGE LINDBECK

■ A. Dulles, *The Survival of Dogma*, New York, Doubleday, 1971 ■ N. Lash, *Change in Focus*,

London, Sheed & Ward, 1973 ■ G.A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine*, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1984 ■ B. Lonergan, *The Way to Nicea*, London, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1976 ■ J. Macquarrie, *Twentieth-century Religious Thought*, London, SCM Press, 2001 ■ G. O'Collins, *Has Dogma a Future?*, London, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1975 ■ P. Schrodt, *The Problem of the Beginning of Dogma in Recent Theology*, Frankfurt, Lang, 1978.

## DU PLESSIS, DAVID J.

B. 7 Feb. 1905, South Africa; d. 2 Feb. 1987, Pasadena, CA, USA. Widely known as "Mr Pentecost", Du Plessis was for a generation the leading figure in relations between Pentecostal churches and the ecumenical movement. Born of French Huguenot stock and ordained to the ministry in the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa (1928), he emigrated to the US in 1949. He attended several conferences of the International Missionary Council\* and numerous WCC consultations and assemblies from Evanston 1954 (as a staff member) to Vancouver 1983 (as a delegate of the International Evangelical Church). Du Plessis attended the first Pentecostal World Conference (Zurich 1947) and was organizing secretary for several subsequent ones. He preached in more than 50 countries and was a frequent lecturer on Pentecostal issues at theological schools. A catalyst for the denominational charismatic renewal movement which began in the US in the 1960s, Du Plessis was looked on with suspicion and rejection in many Pentecostal circles because of his relationships with the WCC and the Vatican. His contacts with Rome culminated in the Pentecostal-Roman Catholic dialogue,\* which began in 1972.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ D. Du Plessis, *A Man Called Mr Pentecost*, Plainfield NJ, Logos International, 1977.

## DUPREY, PIERRE

B. 26 Nov. 1922, Croix, France. Widely familiar with historical theology and ecumenical currents and personally acquainted with numerous church leaders, Duprey (bishop, 1990) was a staff member of the Secretariat (now Pontifical Council) for Promoting Christian Unity (SPCU) from 1963 to 1999, becoming its secretary in 1983. He also served as vice-president of the Vatican commission of religious relations with the Jews; from 1965 as a member of the RCC-WCC Joint Working Group;\* as liaison between the SPCU and Faith and Order\* (1971-83); and as a member of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCCIC) and of the dialogue commissions with the Lutheran World Federation,\* the World Alliance of Reformed Churches,\* and the Pentecostal churches.\* In 1980 he became secretary of the international commission for the Orthodox-RCC theological dialogue.\* In 1963 he founded the Catholic Committee of Cultural Collaboration with the Orthodox and Oriental churches, and served on the board of the Tantur Ecumenical Institute\* in Jerusalem.

Duprey left Nazi-occupied France in 1940 for Tunisia, to study theology and Arabic, as a member of the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers). Ordained in 1950 (Carthage), with a doctorate from Rome's Oriental Institute (1953) and further studies in Orthodox theology (Athens) and Arabic literature (Beirut), in 1956 he began to teach dogmatic theology at the Melchite (Greek Catholic) seminary of St Ann in Jerusalem, and to edit *Proche Orient chrétien*. In 1962 he served as SPCU theologian/interpreter to the delegated Orthodox observers at the Second Vatican Council.\*

TOM STRANSKY

■ J.-M. Tillard ed., *Agapè: Etudes en l'honneur de Mgr Pierre Duprey*, Chambésy, Centre orthodoxe du Patriarcat œcuménique, 2000.

# E

## EAST-WEST CONFRONTATION

ORTHODOX participants in the 1927 world conference on Faith and Order\* in Lausanne vigorously expressed the view that the apostolic Tradition\* is the source of all Christian churches and confessions, which thus share a common history. The “undivided church” is not an abstraction, but the church of the apostles, the fathers and the ecumenical councils.\* The schism\* and subsequent tensions between East and West were caused by ecclesiastical and political factors that divided the church into two regions: Rome and Byzantium, East and West, “Old Rome” and “New Rome”.

After centuries of estrangement, hostility and mutual ignorance, described by Henry Chadwick as a “succession of failures in mutual comprehension”, divided Christians are

seeking through the ecumenical movement to speak together about the visible restoration of the one undivided church.\* Without the presence of the Eastern churches, the WCC would represent only the Western fraction of Christianity. Roman Catholicism and the Reformation are often seen by Eastern Christians as two variants of the same theological system, which was initiated by Augustine of Hippo, accepted by the Latin church tradition and continued by the reformers.

Most of the controversial doctrinal, liturgical and canonical issues on the ecumenical agenda are rooted in or related to the broad historic East-West confrontation. They appear most clearly in the bilateral dialogues which the Orthodox churches have established with the Roman Catholic and Reformation churches.

An example is the West's ambiguous reception\* (as the East sees it) of the decrees and decisions of the early ecumenical councils, as exemplified in the discussion concerning the council of Constantinople (381)\* and the attitude of Pope Leo in dealing with the council of Chalcedon (451).\* Rome and the Orthodox take opposing views concerning the status of councils held in 869-70 and in 879-80. Thus the reception of ecumenical councils remains a matter for dialogue.

In Orthodox eyes, the acceptance by both Roman Catholics and the Reformation of the theological system of Augustine shows that the West was largely indifferent to the soteriological presuppositions of the Christological heresies rejected by the ecumenical councils. The Augustinian doctrines that fallen humanity is saved by a created grace, that only justification\* but not glorification (*theosis*) takes place in this life, and of the similarity between the created and the uncreated (*analogia entis*), appear to constitute the basis of Western theology and spirituality. The council of Constantinople in 1341 condemned, in the person of Balaam the Calabrian, the teaching of created grace, and accepted the distinction made by St Gregory Palamas between the ineffable essence of God and the communicated uncreated energies as source of the human being's *theosis*. This correction of Augustinian theology was never received in the West.

The confrontation within Western Christianity itself between the Franco-Latin powers and the Roman popes, which was turned against the New Rome for political reasons, led to the schism between East and West in 1054.

The *sola scriptura* of the Protestant Reformers can be seen as a non-reception of the binding common Tradition\* of the ecumenical councils held in the East. The long conciliar experience of ecumenical interpretations and doctrinal development of the gospel message seems to be devaluated on the basis that the church\* is a sinful and fallible human body. Here modern ecumenical dialogue has played a very positive role. The world conference on Faith and Order in Montreal (1963) declared that "by the *Tradition* is meant the gospel itself, transmitted from generation to generation

in and by the church". *Sola scriptura* is thus placed in the context of the Tradition of the church.

Later the universal primacy\* and jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome and the infallibility\* of the pope were declared matters of divine revelation\* and not of canon law.\* The First Vatican Council\* (1870) demonstrated to the East that the West had lost the conciliar system. The Orthodox continued to maintain the tradition of the pentarchy, according to which the "Old Rome" is equal and in the line with Eastern patriarchates.

For the East the critical issue here is the uncanonical substitution of authorities – the papacy for the ecumenical councils – which had the strange consequence that the Orthodox are seen as heretics and the Uniates\* as orthodox. On this view, the only way for the New Rome to be accepted was Uniatism. Consequently, the dialogue between Orthodoxy and Catholicism is an essential part of the ecumenical movement (see **Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue**). This bilateral dialogue was initiated by the late Pope John XXIII and the late Patriarch Athenagoras I and led to the lifting of the anathemas\* (though communion was not restored) of 1054. The Balamand agreement of 1993 opened a way for the mutual ecclesiological recognition of the sacraments\* and the removal of Uniatism as a legitimate model for restoring unity among "sister" churches. The dialogue initiated by the WCC led to the elaboration of the document on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry\** (1982) with the full participation of the Roman Catholic Church. Patriarch Dimitrios I of Constantinople said on his visit to Geneva in 1987 that "we hope that the complete inclusion [of the Roman Catholic Church] in the Council will be speedy, and that negotiations in this direction will have a happy end". For the Orthodox the East-West confrontation cannot be comprehended fully and rapprochement achieved unless the Roman Catholic Church joins the ecumenical quest for a "conciliar fellowship" of all local churches. In historical terms, the catholicity\* of the church demands a fuller and more organic integration of the Eastern and Western traditions, especially because the serious dangers of deviation in each tradition

can be avoided only if there is integration and synthesis.

ION BRIA

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## EASTER

EASTER is the annual feast of Christ's resurrection\* from the dead – an event that is celebrated on a weekly basis every Sunday, "the first day of the week", when the women discovered the empty tomb (Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1) and the risen Lord appeared to them and to others (also Luke 24:13,36; John 20:19). The annual celebration was at first a unitary celebration of Christ's death and resurrection, a Christian passover, or pasch, corresponding to the fact that Christ's "exodus" (the Greek word in Luke 9:31) for the salvation\* of the world had taken place at the time when the Jewish people commemorated their liberation from Egypt. The 4th century saw the development of "Good Friday" as a commemoration of Christ's passion and crucifixion, leaving Easter Sunday and the ensuing 50 days (see Pentecost) as the feast of Christ's victory over death. Liturgical and sacramental theology in the 20th century rediscovered the unitary character of the "paschal mystery" of Christ's death and resurrection, celebrated pre-eminently in the paschal vigil during the night from Saturday to Easter Sunday.

The dating of Easter has been the object of several controversies during Christian history. The serious remaining difference separates the Eastern and the Western churches. While both sides agree to the principle laid down in 325 by the council of Nicea\* (Easter falls on the annually variable date of

the first Sunday following the full moon after the northern spring equinox), the dates in practice differ because the East dates the equinox by the Julian calendar and the West by the Gregorian calendar (see church calendar). (Exceptions occur in Finland, where the Orthodox keep the Western date, and in parts of the Middle East, where some churches of Western origin have lately agreed to observe the Eastern date.)

The modern ecumenical movement has seen some modest efforts to consider and achieve the practice of a common date for Easter. An early stimulus came from the League of Nations, which in the 1920s proposed the fixed date of the Sunday after the second Saturday in April. This met with some support in the Life and Work\* movement, but the Roman Catholic Church was wary of any semblance of secular control over a religious matter. At Vatican II,\* however, encouragement was given to the search for an agreed date for Easter, whether annually variable because dependent on the moon (as at present) or fixed (by the civil, solar calendar); but no change was to be made until the churches reached a common mind. The WCC pursued the matter through a questionnaire to its member churches (1965-67), a Faith and Order\* consultation (1970), and a report to the Nairobi assembly (1975). The subject was brought back to the agenda of Faith and Order in 1995-96.

While some churches, particularly Western, would be happy with a fixed date (the most favoured being the one originally proposed by the League of Nations), the Orthodox churches stand by the Nicene principle that makes a variable date dependent on the moon. Ecclesiastically, the best hope for a common date appears to reside in continuing to keep an annually variable date while respecting astronomical exactitude for the equinox, from which the first full moon and the ensuing Sunday are counted. This – with the precision that the basis for reckoning be "the meridian of Jerusalem, the place of Christ's death and resurrection" – was the recommendation made by a consultation of the WCC and the Middle East Council of Churches held at Aleppo, Syria, in 1997 under the title "Towards a Common Date for Easter". There have been hints (documented

by Heller) that, failing this solution, the church of Rome might move to a fixed Saturday in April.

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT

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## EASTERN CATHOLIC CHURCHES

THESE CHURCHES, with an estimated total membership of more than 9 million, originated in very diverse circumstances and live in various situations. What they have in common is full communion\* of faith\* and sacraments\* with the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) around the bishop of Rome, while retaining various Eastern liturgical and canonical traditions inherited from the mother churches from which they were separated by their union with the church of Rome. They were disparagingly called Uniates\* by the Orthodox or Oriental churches because of negative memories of their origins and of their type of relationship with Rome or with the Orthodox churches of the same traditions.

On the RC side, these union attempts were generally founded on the principle of the union-council of Florence (1438-45): complete respect of the diversity of traditions within the unity of faith. But no Eastern Catholic church in fact traces its origin back to this council. In the context of the Counter-Reformation, the awareness of the ecclesial character of the Orthodox churches became blurred in the RCC, and the attempts to restore unity between the two churches slowly gave way to the "return" of individuals or small groups to the RCC.

In Eastern Europe, the reunion with Rome of certain communities – at times with their bishops – was strongly influenced by the socio-political situation, especially the changes of frontiers between countries with Catholic or Orthodox predominance. The union of the Ukrainians (Brest-Litovsk

1595-96) concluded at a time when these regions were under Polish authority. The union of the Ruthenians (Uzhorod 1646) and that of a group of Romanians (Transylvania 1700) took place within the Austro-Hungarian empire. Of lesser importance were the Yugoslavian, Bulgarian, Slovak, Hungarian, Belorussian, Albanian, Russian and Greek Catholic churches. All belonged to the Byzantine-Slavonic tradition. The Ukrainian (about 3.7 million members), Ruthenian, Belorussian and Romanian Catholic churches were officially suppressed by force under communist regimes in the late 1940s; they survived only in their homelands underground or outside them, especially in Western Europe and North America.

In the Middle East the circumstances were very different. The Maronite church is a special case. Originating in the territory of Antioch (monastery of Beit-Marun) in the 4th century, it claims no historical consciousness of a formal break with Rome; and it renewed contact at the time of the crusades.\* The Maronite church thus has no "Orthodox" counterpart, but belongs totally to the Catholic communion. All the churches of the Middle East lived in very difficult situations within the Ottoman empire. Under its law, as small minorities amid the Muslims they formed ethnic communities with their own separate legal status. Thus these churches readily welcomed the offer of help from Latin missionaries from the West, particularly since most of their members had no vivid awareness of an existing schism\* with the RCC. The pastoral, intellectual and social activities of these missionaries slowly created, in different places, groups of laity and pastors who favoured union with Rome; eventually the union was proclaimed officially.

Rather than bringing about the union between the RCC and the respective other partners, the *fait accompli* was generally refused by the majority of the Orthodox, and new divisions resulted. With some important differences, this was the case with all the churches of the Middle East when some of their members became united with Rome: the Eastern Syrian or Nestorian tradition (Chaldeans, 1553), the Western Syrian tradition (Syrian Catholics, 1662), the Armenian tradition (Armenian Catholics, 1740), the

Byzantine tradition (Greek Catholics or Melkites, 1724). Later on, the passage of individuals to the RCC led to the creation of Coptic Catholic (1895) and Ethiopian Catholic (1930) hierarchies.

On the Indian coast of Malabar in the 16th century, divisions resulted when the Portuguese tried to impose Latin authority and discipline on the St Thomas Christians. Two groups entered into communion with Rome: the Malabar (1599) and the Malankara (1930) churches.

The canonical ties of all these churches with Rome led in varying degrees to a process of Latinization of their liturgy and thinking, and to a number of encroachments on their discipline and autonomy as local churches. The Orthodox thus sometimes interpret this as a proof that the Roman Catholic Church has no place for a true local church and an original tradition. However, in its Decree on the Eastern Catholic Churches, the Second Vatican Council\* insisted on respect for their particular traditions and on the necessity for these churches to rediscover their authentic heritage. Moreover, in emphasizing the ecumenical vocation of the Eastern Catholic churches, Vatican II stated that all juridical dispositions concerning them are of a provisional nature until the time of full communion with the Orthodox churches.

The Orthodox regard the very existence of the Eastern Catholic churches as *de facto* negation of the ecclesial character of the Orthodox themselves. In their eyes, these churches are instruments of disguised proselytism\* which aim to convert to Catholicism those ignorant faithful who are unable to recognize the differences. The Eastern Catholic churches are an open wound in the side of the Orthodox churches which consistently ask for their suppression. Hence the Eastern Catholic churches cannot act as bridge between Catholics and Orthodox, as they were sometimes expected to do. Orthodox churches now want to dialogue directly with the RCC without the mediation of these churches.

From the side of the Eastern Catholic churches, created by Rome with a view to restoring unity, it is painful to be judged an obstacle to unity, a "thorn in the flesh" of the dialogue. What could be their future vo-

cation? By faithfully reviving their most authentic Eastern traditions, they could bear witness to the Orthodox church that it is possible to be an authentic local Eastern church within the Catholic communion around the bishop of Rome. Within the universal Catholic church, their task is a constant reminder that catholicity\* cannot limit itself to the Latin tradition alone but must be open to all genuine expressions of the fullness of ecclesial life in Christ.

The official Orthodox-Roman Catholic international commission for theological dialogue (see **Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue**), established in 1979 by Pope John Paul II and Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I, began in the mid-1980s to discuss what some on both sides regard as proselytism among vulnerable flocks.

The 1988 session established a special sub-commission to study the question of the Eastern Catholic churches. The topic monopolized the 1990 session, because the rebirth of religious freedom with the sudden political changes in Eastern and Central Europe allowed the resumption of open pastoral activity by the Eastern Catholic churches, including their claim to repossess their former places of worship. The new tensions prompted the holy see in Rome and local Eastern Catholic and Orthodox authorities to begin conversations. Pope John Paul II addressed a letter to the Catholic bishops of Europe (31 May 1991), and the Vatican published general principles and practical norms for "coordinating the evangelizing activity and ecumenical commitment" (1 June 1992). The 1993 international dialogue session (Balamand, Lebanon) adopted a text "Uniatism, Method of Union of the Past, and the Present Search for Full Communion", offering ecclesiological principles and practical rules for a solution. However, this question still weighs heavily on Orthodox-Roman Catholic relations.

The Roman curia\* has a congregation or department for the Eastern churches, created in 1862 within the Propaganda Fide and made autonomous in 1917. John Paul II, as pastor of the universal Catholic church, promulgated in 1990 a *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*.

■ *The Code of Canons for the Eastern Churches*, Latin-English ed., Washington DC, Canon Law Society of America, 1992 ■ “Documentation on Ecumenical Statements and Initiatives of the Holy See in Regard to Central and Eastern Europe in the New Situation. January 1989-October 1992”, *IS*, 81, 1992; for the Balamand text: *ibid.*, 83, pp.95-99 ■ R.G. Roberson, *The Eastern Christian Churches: A Brief Survey*, 5th ed., Rome, Orientalia Christiana, 1995.

## EASTERN ORTHODOXY

IN RECENT times, this term has come to be used, particularly in the ecumenical context, to refer to the “Chalcedonian” Orthodox as distinct from the “non-” or “pre-Chalcedonian” churches, known as “Oriental Orthodox churches”.\*

Eastern Orthodox churches are identified with the East through a series of historical accidents, involving the gradual estrangement between Rome (and Western Christendom) and the other ancient patriarchates. In reality, Orthodoxy\* does not consider itself either Eastern or Western. Until the schism\* between East and West became a final reality, Eastern and Western Christianity, with tensions from time to time, were one conciliar communion\* (with the exception of the pre-Chalcedonians from the 5th century onwards).

The date of 1054, usually given as that of the separation, is that of an exchange of excommunications\* between Rome and Constantinople (the “New Rome” since the first council of Constantinople,\* 381). The process leading to the schism was in fact long and complicated, and in spite of attempts at reunion (councils of Lyons, 1274, and Ferrara-Florence, 1438-39), it still remains unhealed. However, relations have changed considerably in recent decades, particularly in 1965, when Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I mutually lifted the excommunications of 1054. An official international dialogue commission has been at work for some years now (see **Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue**).

The Eastern Orthodox claim a direct, unbroken descent from the church of the apostles. This is expressed in their fidelity to the apostolic faith as developed in the seven ecumenical councils\* and the patristic tradi-

tion (see **apostolic Tradition**, **apostolicity**). Thus, the Eastern Orthodox churches are united in the faith,\* and each one has internal autonomy under the primacy\* of the patriarchate of Constantinople, the “first among equals”.

Orthodoxy also implies a strong attachment to the sacraments,\* the most important being the sacraments of initiation: baptism\* (by immersion), chrismation\* and the eucharist\* (communion in both kinds), to which the newly baptized member is immediately admitted, whatever his or her age.

Since the separation from the Christian West, Eastern Orthodox churches have mainly been using the Syro-Byzantine liturgical tradition (see **liturgy**), whose development owes much to the fathers and the great monastic centres (today, Mt Athos is the most important of these). In this liturgical tradition iconography plays an important part (see **icon/image**).

Structurally, Eastern Orthodox churches currently fall under the following classifications. They represent *four out of the five ancient patriarchates* which, together with Rome, formed the famous pentarchy, i.e. Constantinople (Patriarch Bartholomew I; some 2 million faithful, with only a few thousand in Turkey); Alexandria (Patriarch Peter VII; about 100,000 faithful); Antioch (primatial see, Damascus: Patriarch Ignatius IV; some 450,000 faithful); and Jerusalem (Patriarch Irineos I; about 50,000).

Orthodoxy includes a number of other *autocephalous churches* (i.e. churches that elect their own primate without reference to another autocephalous church). The largest of all is the church of Russia (Patriarch Alexis II; about 100 million faithful in 1917, approximately the same number baptized today). Others are the Romanian church (Patriarch Theoctist; some 14 million); the Serbian church in ex-Yugoslavia (patriarchate in Belgrade: Patriarch Pavle; some 8 million); the Church of Greece, distinct from the patriarchate of Constantinople since 1833, with its own primate, the archbishop of Athens (Christodoulos; about 7.5 million faithful); the Bulgarian church (Patriarch Maximos; some 6 million); the church of Georgia, much more ancient than the Russian church, having been founded in the 5th century as a result of missionary work by a

woman, St Nino, counted as “equal to the apostles” in the Orthodox sanctoral (Patriarch Catholicos Elias II; 2.5 million faithful in 1917); the church of Cyprus, autocephalous since the council of Ephesus in 431 (Archbishop Chrysostomos; some 450,000 faithful).

A third type are *autocephalous churches which represent a minority among other Christians in their territory*, namely, the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia (some 350,000 faithful in 1950); the Orthodox church in Poland (about 350,000); the Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania (about 210,000 faithful in 1944, now developing once again under the leadership of Archbishop Anastasios).

Orthodoxy also includes *autonomous or semi-autonomous churches* (i.e. churches that enjoy internal autonomy but whose primate is elected under the aegis of one of the autocephalous churches. Among them are the church of Finland (some 70,000 faithful, under the jurisdiction of Constantinople); the church of Crete (also under Constantinople); the Orthodox Church of Japan (about 36,000 faithful, under the jurisdiction of Moscow); the Russian Orthodox mission in China (probably some 20,000 faithful).

Another classification is *missions which are not yet autonomous*. These include the Russian mission in Korea (under the jurisdiction of the Greek Archdiocese of North America) and African Orthodoxy (founded in Uganda by dissidents from Anglicanism, now present also in Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana and Zimbabwe, under the jurisdiction of the patriarchate of Alexandria).

Finally, there is the *Orthodox diaspora*.\* In the 19th and 20th centuries, many Orthodox emigrated to Western countries for economic and political reasons. As a result, Orthodox are now to be found in most parts of the world.

Although the principle of identifying Orthodoxy with an ethnic group was condemned as a heresy\* in 1872 under the name of “phyletism” by a synod held in Constantinople (but received by all Orthodox churches), the present situation resembles a complicated jigsaw puzzle of numerous jurisdictions in most countries of the

Western world, where the Orthodox of various origins tend to be claimed by their mother churches according to their ethnicity.\*

According to traditional Orthodox ecclesiology, all the Orthodox in a given place, whatever their ethnic origin, should be gathered in one conciliar communion. Such, for example, was the situation in the US until 1917: all the Orthodox were in one diocese, which had grown from the Russian mission among the Aleutian and Alaskan Indians in the 18th century. At the council of Moscow in 1917, Tikhon, formerly bishop of the American diocese (recently canonized), was elected patriarch. When he was able to send a new bishop to New York a few years later, the latter found that in the meantime all the mother churches of the Orthodox world had claimed their nationals and created their own jurisdictions. In 1970, the Russian church granted autocephaly to the churches of its old diocese in America, thus creating the Orthodox Church in America (primate: Metropolitan Theodosius). However, finding the solution to the problem of the Orthodox diaspora remains one of the main difficulties of present-day Orthodoxy, one that is high on the agenda of the pan-Orthodox council. Recently the churches have moved towards a consensus in this area.

Eastern Orthodox churches have played a part in the ecumenical movement from early in the 20th century. Witness the encyclical\* letter of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople in 1920 to “all the churches of Christ” for “closer intercourse and mutual cooperation”. The Orthodox diaspora has also greatly contributed to an encounter with Western Christendom, to better mutual understanding, and to a common renaissance in patristic theological reflection. Most Eastern Orthodox churches have become members of the WCC and have established bilateral dialogues\* with most Christian churches. Orthodoxy, however, does include a certain anti-ecumenical strain which is largely due to a suspicion on the part of some that ecumenical dialogue necessarily implies a betrayal of the purity of the Orthodox faith. Under the influence of this trend, the Orthodox churches of Georgia and Bulgaria left the WCC in 1998.

Eastern Orthodox churches do not believe in “intercommunion”;<sup>\*</sup> in their view, only full communion<sup>\*</sup> has a meaning. This is the main reason why the Orthodox generally have refused to practise so-called eucharistic hospitality. In their conception of the nature of the church,<sup>\*</sup> communion is only possible when the apostolic faith can be fully confessed together. (Some pastors do practise eucharistic hospitality in specific circumstances, but only as a matter of conscience in their personal pastoral responsibility.) For the time being, Eastern Orthodox churches are not prepared to sanction a generalized eucharistic hospitality, not even as a measure of economy.<sup>\*</sup> Indeed, such a step would amount to establishing a *rule*, and the principle of economy is precisely a pedagogical *exception* to a rule which in no way abolishes the existing rule. In the Orthodox perspective, full communion will quite naturally be restored when it is truly possible to confess the fullness of the apostolic faith together.

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## ECCLESIOLOGY AND ETHICS

FROM THE VERY foundation of the church it has been believed that some styles of behaviour are compatible with discipleship and membership of the church, while notorious immorality, if persisted in, involves exclusion from fellowship. The ecumenical movement has all along wrestled with the relationship between ethics<sup>\*</sup> and the being and unity of the church. Sometimes the distinction between Faith and Order and Life and Work made it possible to treat the issues of ecclesiology and ethics separately, but crises such as the German church struggle of the

1930s and subsequently the question of apartheid made the issue unavoidable: it was clear to most people that the integrity, unity and faith of the church were fundamentally compromised if it took a false stance in relation to the claims and actions of Nazism or the racist system of apartheid. The Barmen theological declaration of 1934, which was a foundation document of the Confessing Church,<sup>\*</sup> challenged both the theology and the ethics of the “German Christians” who supported Hitler. And declarations by the Lutheran World Federation, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches<sup>\*</sup> and the WCC that apartheid was a confessional issue led to the breaking of fellowship with several white churches in South Africa because of their support of the apartheid regime.

W.A. Visser 't Hooft spoke at the WCC's Uppsala assembly in 1968 of “moral heresies” – a reminder that some ethical issues are church-dividing matters, for ethics<sup>\*</sup> and faith are inseparably intertwined. But struggles for justice and peace can also lead to a new and vital sense of being church. Archbishop Desmond Tutu often said that apartheid was too strong for divided churches; but in the struggle against apartheid and in other moral struggles there has often been a new experience of unity, a costly, gracious unity. Some have found that involvement in the conciliar process for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) was for them a rich experience of what it is to be “church”, suggesting that the church grows and finds its unity in and through moral struggle, although paradoxically moral issues can also be church-dividing. Unity is a precious gift which requires a costly response; the world in which the church is called to manifest this unity is full of division, hostility, suspicion and injustice. The road to the true unity in love and truth which is God's purpose is thus sometimes the painful way of division.

The “conciliar process” for JPIC to which the WCC called the churches in 1983 reached its rather confusing culmination in the world convocation on JPIC in Seoul in 1990. The Seoul gathering rested on a strong conviction that ecclesiology and ethics belong together, that the being of the church is implicated in ethical action, but there was continuing uncertainty how this

might best be articulated. As a result, the WCC set up a study on ecclesiology and ethics which sought to clarify the issues involved and reflect on the lessons to be learned from the churches' involvement in struggles for justice, liberation and ecological responsibility. The first meeting at Rønede, Denmark, in 1993 explored ways in which discipleship means costly involvement in the pain, brokenness and struggles of the world and also involvement in a *koinonia* which overcomes divisions and hostilities many of which are ancient and deep-seated. These two commitments are often in acute tension. But the Rønede consultation in its report *Costly Unity* sought to point the way to a fresh approach which "offers new inspiration for the churches' search for unity, and for their costly, reconciling and healing witness in the world". "Costly unity", the report declared, "is discovering the churches' unity as a gift of pursuing justice and peace."

The Rønede consultation had a considerable impact on the fifth world conference on F&O (Santiago de Compostela 1993). The report of section IV affirmed that "in many places and at different levels, *koinonia*-generating involvement in the struggles of humanity is taking place. We recognize in these common involvements an urgent, real, but imperfect *koinonia*, and urge the Faith and Order commission to give priority to lifting up and clarifying their ecclesiological implications." The report also declared that "the being and mission of the church... are at stake in witness through proclamation and concrete actions for justice, peace and integrity of creation. This is a defining mark of *koinonia* and central to our understanding of ecclesiology. The urgency of these issues makes it manifest that our theological reflection on the proper unity of Christ's church is inevitably related to ethics."

Two further consultations on ecclesiology and ethics took place, in Jerusalem in 1994, and in Johannesburg in 1996. Their reports and working papers helped to clarify the issues, which are certain to remain high on the ecumenical agenda for some time to come.

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■ T.F. Best & M. Robra eds, *Ecclesiology and Ethics: Ecumenical Ethical Engagement, Moral Formation and the Nature of the Church*, WCC, 1997 ■ "The Ecumenical Dialogue on Moral Issues: Potential Sources of Common Witness or of Divisions", JWG document, ER, 48, 1996 ■ D. Forrester, *The True Church and Morality: Reflections on Ecclesiology and Ethics*, WCC, 1997.

## ECONOMICS

ECONOMICS deals with the production, distribution and consumption of material goods and services. The second assembly of the WCC (Evanston 1954) summarized the ecumenical concern about economic and social issues as follows: "The church is concerned with economic life because of God's concern for human beings who work to produce goods and services, who use them, and for whom business exists."

A survey of the history of the ecumenical debate about economic issues can be divided into five different periods, though of course many characteristic elements of one period were present in the previous or continued during the following one. During the first period, from 1910 to 1933, awareness of the importance of socio-economic issues emerged. The concept of the responsible society played a major role as a criterion for the assessment of economic problems during the second period from 1934 to 1960. In the third period, between 1960 and 1975, the concept of human development\* became dominant. The fourth period, from around 1975 to the end of the 1980s, was characterized by the use of two different criteria: sustainability, which expresses a concern for nature and human resources, and solidarity with the poor,\* as a key in the struggle against poverty. Reflection in the fifth period, beginning around 1990, has been dominated by the awareness of globalization and its consequences.

### 1. ECONOMICS AND THE CHURCH (1910-33)

In the 1890s the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) had begun to develop its social teaching, for which Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* can be considered as the point of departure (see **encyclicals, Roman Catholic social**). In this encyclical the concept of the common good plays a key role. This notion

was further dealt with by Pius XI in *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), in the context of the rise of fascism. Conservative Protestants, however, approached economic life from a perspective dominated by a sharp distinction between the spiritual and the secular, the eternal and the temporal, based in a traditional understanding of Luther's theology of the two kingdoms. The social gospel movement\* was influential in North America, as was religious socialism in Western and Central Europe, mostly in Reformed circles.

The concern for peace and internationalism became a priority for the churches as they realized how much the problems related to social ethics are interlinked. This awareness informed many of the early discussions and reflections of the Life and Work\* (L&W) movement, which emerged in this period. Its first conference (Stockholm 1925) was an impressive endeavour to create a common basis for discussions on social ethics among Christians of different churches. Although not an exclusively Protestant event, it sought to overcome the over-emphasis on individualism prevalent in Protestant social ethics at that time, stressing that industrial activity should not be undertaken only for the sake of personal profit, but should provide benefits for the whole community. Because the human person is a steward in the service of God, whose will embraces the whole of humanity, private interest and property should be subordinated to social goals.

## 2. THE RESPONSIBLE SOCIETY (1934-60)

This second period was particularly creative. The churches had to face enormous challenges, among them the rise of National Socialism in Germany, the consolidation of Stalinism in the USSR, the consequences of the great depression, the gathering power of authoritarian and totalitarian states, the second world war and its aftermath, the cold war, the birth and development of the world economic order based on the internationalization of capital and labour,\* decolonization\* and the emergence of independent nations, the emergence of the group of non-aligned countries, the beginning of the period of peaceful co-existence, and the Chinese and Cuban revolutions.

These changes, during a period of about 25 years, profoundly influenced the life of the churches. Ecumenically, the second L&W conference met in Oxford (1937) around the theme "Church, Community and State"; the WCC held its first assembly – postponed for seven years by the war – in Amsterdam (1948) and its second in Evanston (1954). Pope John XXIII called the Second Vatican Council,\* which marked the beginning of the official participation of the Vatican in the ecumenical movement.

Three names from these years deserve special mention. J.H. Oldham, the first general secretary of the International Missionary Council and chief organizer of the Oxford conference, was the architect of the concept of the responsible society,\* which was not an alternative social model or system but a criterion for decisions at the level of social ethics. W.A. Visser 't Hooft, the first general secretary of the WCC, had a passion for the *una sancta* and a deep interest in the socio-economic and political problems of the world. Paul Abrecht, director of Church and Society in the WCC for nearly 30 years, introduced concerns of developing countries such as economic growth and development onto the ecumenical agenda and promoted a multidisciplinary, contextual approach to church and society issues.

After the second assembly, an international ecumenical study was launched on "The Common Christian Responsibility towards Areas of Rapid Social Change". Through it the ecumenical movement developed an approach to socio-economic and political matters that was universal as well as culturally and politically pluralistic. Two main lessons were learned. First, it was realized that ecumenical social ethics, in spite of its supranational character, had so far approached economic and political problems from a predominantly Western perspective. The time had come to broaden this perspective to include the concerns of churches and Christians in other parts of the world. This realization marked the beginning of a more inclusive dialogue involving other cultures and people of other faiths. Second, study of rapid social change demonstrated clearly the inadequacy of the simplistic view of the world as divided between two opposite camps: the liberal-capitalist West and the

Marxist-socialist East. This view, which prevailed up to the Evanston assembly, needed to be broadened by including problems related to North-South relationships.

More than before, the ecumenical movement came to pay attention to such important economic issues as migration\* (both domestic and international), economic growth, patterns of consumption, development cooperation, world poverty\* and trade relations. The overarching key of the analysis was the criterion of social justice and its practical implications. It became evident that there cannot be economic growth and development without structural transformation to bring about justice\* and democracy.

Whereas the first period was characterized by a certain idealism, the second period called for greater realism on the part of churches and Christians. In the words of the conference which concluded the "Rapid Social Change" study (Salonika 1959): "It is impossible to foresee an ideal pattern of economic development without difficult problems. Some cost in human hardship and misery is inevitable. It will often be necessary to work out proximate goals and least harmful measures. Christians must accept the hard facts of economic life and be ready to take necessary choices and to run the unavoidable risks."

### 3. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (1960-75)

As the process of political decolonization continued in the 1960s and early 1970s, more and more independent states emerged in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. Peaceful co-existence was followed by detente, and this new path survived until the end of the 1970s, despite some difficult situations (e.g. the Cuban missile crisis in 1962; the Vietnam war from 1965 to 1975; Arab-Israeli wars in 1967 and 1973). The gap between the rich industrialized countries in the North and the poor producers of raw materials or semi-manufactured goods of the South continued to widen. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development was created as a forum to discuss many problems of the so-called third world. A main problem was to see what kinds of national development models and international economic order were required to ensure the real development of the South.

Churches became important partners in this debate. The Second Vatican Council's pastoral constitution on the church's presence in the world (*Gaudium et Spes*) was followed by Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (1967), which stated that "development is the new name of peace". In 1966 the WCC called a world conference on church and society around the theme "Christians in the Technical and Social Revolutions of Our Time". The WCC and the Vatican together organized a conference on world cooperation for development (Beirut 1968). At the fourth assembly of the WCC (Uppsala 1968), "human development" was identified as a major priority for the ecumenical movement. The WCC and the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace jointly established the exploratory committee on Society, Development and Peace (SODEPAX\*), thus highlighting the ecumenical importance of issues such as development, peace and human rights.

In the emerging debate about the quality of life and economic growth, the criterion of the meaning of the human prevailed. A consultation on ecumenical assistance to development projects (Montreux 1970) affirmed that three main elements must characterize human development: social justice, self-reliance and economic growth, the third being a means of promoting the first two. This understanding of development reflected prevailing thoughts of third-world economists and social scientists, promoted ecumenically by Samuel Parmar of India.

The Montreux consultation also proposed creation of an Ecumenical Development Fund (EDF), to which churches were asked to contribute 2% of their annual budgets. The fund would be used to provide seed money for the launching of development programmes and to support development education aimed at increasing awareness of the need for solidarity and human development. The WCC's Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development (CCPD) was created; in addition, other departments of the WCC took part in the development debate, notably Church and Society, Inter-Church Aid, the Christian Medical Commission, SODEPAX, and the Sub-unit on Women.

The Church and Society programme on "The Future of Man and Society in a World

of Science-Based Technology” focused in the early 1970s on the relationship between economic growth and the quality of life. During this period the Club of Rome published its report on *The Limits to Growth*, which argued for a self-imposed limitation to growth in light of the planet’s limited physical resources. Whereas the ecumenical reflections about development emphasized social justice as the highest priority, the debate stimulated by Church and Society underlined the importance of sustainability. That social ethics must deal with both elements became particularly clear at the Church and Society conference in Bucharest (1974) on “Science and Technology for Human Development – the Ambiguous Future and the Christian Hope”, as well as in the CCPD report *Threats to Survival*, approved by the WCC central committee in 1974.

The experience gained by some churches through their involvement in development made them aware that any action in this field requires an exercise of people’s participation if it is to be effective. That neither development nor the future of humankind can be left in the hands of the powerful and specialists alone was underscored in the report of WCC general secretary Philip Potter to the fifth assembly (Nairobi 1975).

By the mid-1970s, both the international community and the ecumenical movement had come to realize that eradicating poverty and transforming world economic and social structures would be far more difficult to achieve than was foreseen earlier. It was hard to implement “human development” and “human economy”. Although a consensus within the churches on economic matters thus seemed almost impossible to achieve, Nairobi called for further reflection on a “Just, Participatory and Sustainable Society”.\*

#### 4. SUSTAINABILITY AND SOLIDARITY (1976-89)

When non-aligned nations introduced the debate around a New International Economic Order at the special session of the general assembly of the UN in 1974, powerful groups manifested great resistance to proposals for structural transformation. The optimism of the late 1950s and the 1960s about transforming the world economic sit-

uation and developing better patterns of growth at the planetary level was no longer evident. The development of African, Asian, Latin American and Pacific countries had not occurred. There was economic growth in many cases, but this was achieved at the cost of increased dependency and a high social toll on the poor sections of the population. The gathering pessimism was reflected in the report of an independent commission on development, chaired by Willy Brandt. The process of internationalization of capital and labour, most clearly evident in the concentration of decision making in transnational corporations\* (TNCs), called for a more careful analysis of the world’s economic situation. As new technologies created new dynamics – especially in the information industry – special attention to technological developments was necessary. Genetic engineering was raising new concerns over food and energy production (see bio-ethics). Global financial instability was becoming increasingly evident – most dramatically in the October 1987 stock market crisis – and led to complex consequences like the increasing foreign debt of developed and developing countries.

The WCC world conference on “Faith, Science and the Future” (MIT 1979) was decisive in highlighting the need for convergence between science and theology, technology and spirituality. Underscoring the unbreakable link between sustainability, social justice and participation, the conference warned against dismembering the concept set forth in Nairobi into “justice for the third world, participation for the second world and sustainability for the first world. We of the human race are all members of one another. We must together struggle to extend participation, develop sustainability and let ‘justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream’.”

In 1977 the WCC had initiated a study programme on churches and TNCs. Attention was given to the need for an integral approach to the issue of the transnationality of business as a unique phenomenon, to the power of TNCs and accountability, to the use of technology and its effects on employment and labour, to the need for building up countervailing power and to the responsibility of churches. A process of consultations

was organized, and a report presented to the WCC central committee in 1982.

Within the framework of CCPD, an Advisory Group on Economic Matters (AGEM) was established in 1979. A CCPD-Church and Society consultation on "Political Economy, Ethics and Theology: Some Contemporary Challenges" (Zurich 1978) emphasized the need to formulate a "new paradigm in political economy", outlined in three propositions: (1) the need to re-instate the historical and spatial dimension in economic thought and praxis; (2) the need to have an integrated view on economics through interdisciplinary research; (3) the need for economics again to become political economy, in which value judgments play an important role. It was argued that the discussion on limits to inequality in terms of maximum and minimum levels should be central.

Meanwhile, the WCC central committee had received the report of the CCPD study programme on "The Church and the Poor", which emphasized that churches should be in solidarity with the underprivileged sectors of society. Building on this perspective, the AGEM organized a series of reflections on various political economic issues.

Much the same concern for social justice and the eradication of poverty was manifested in Roman Catholic social teaching, notably three encyclical letters of Pope John Paul II – on human labour (*Laborem Exercens* 1981), on socio-economic issues that challenge the Christian conscience (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* 1987), and in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum* (*Centesimus Annus* 1991). Similar thinking is reflected in the document of the Pontifical Commission Justice and Peace on foreign debt (see **debt crisis**) in the North and the South (*At the Service of the Human Community: An Ethical Consideration about the International Debt*, 1987). The pastoral letter of the US Roman Catholic bishops on "The Catholic Social Teaching and the US Economy" (1986) made yet another important contribution to the debate.

During this period a new wave of research and publications on economic praxis and theory stimulated fresh thinking in Christian theology and social ethics. Ecumenically influential were Franz Hinkelam-

mert, *Las armas ideológicas de la muerte* (1977), *Crítica de la razón utópica* (1983), *Democracia y totalitarismo* (1987); Arendt T. van Leeuwen, *De Nacht van het Kapitaal* (1985); and Ulrich Duchrow, *Weltwirtschaft Heute: Ein Feld für bekenkende Kirche?* (1986), all anticipated by Helmut Gollwitzer, *Die kapitalistische Revolution* (1974). These publications attempt to show how Christian faith is challenged in economic life by false gods and idols, the Molochs and Mammons of our time. Reflected in the ecumenical debate is the call to resist the totalitarianism of the market through confessing the lordship of Christ.

## 5. GLOBALIZATION (1990-PRESENT)

This period is influenced by the new configuration of the world economic situation characterized by the globalization of financial markets and world trade. In 1992, the WCC central committee commended to WCC member churches a study document produced by the AGEM, "Abundant Life for All: Christian Faith and the World Economy Today". It suggests some criteria for economic policy-making which clearly express the conviction that theology cannot be dissociated from economic realities. They are: (1) the essential goodness of the created order, and the responsibility for it entrusted to humanity; (2) the innate value and freedom of each human being and of all humanity; (3) God's concern with all humankind, breaking through whatever barriers we build between us; (4) God's justice as the overarching standard for human relationships and behaviour, to be discovered through a preferential option for the poor.

## CONCLUSION

The ecumenical approach to economics has been multidisciplinary, aiming above all at developing social ethics to provide churches, Christian communities and individual believers with criteria and guidelines for judgment and action in social and economic matters. In this process, churches have discovered that all ecclesiastical institutions and all religions and ideologies share many common problems; thus, no clear distinctions can be made between the agenda of the churches and the agenda of the world in this area: economic matters are ecumenical

matters; the economic dimension of life touches the whole inhabited world.

The specificity of the ecumenical dialogue lies precisely in the approach, values and criteria applied to the understanding of economics. The ecumenical movement is not called to find one homogeneous and uniform position. What is called for is an intercontextual approach which recognizes that the universality of a given problem needs to be tackled through the diversity of its manifestations in difficult situations. Such an approach demands a multidisciplinary exercise. The ecumenical discussion can be seen as an approach to economic problems through permanent dialogue. This was clear in the discussion on development and economic growth during the 1960s and 1970s, and the current discussion of the debt crisis.

The ecumenical dialogue on economic matters has always underscored the value of social justice, understood as a translation of the commandment of God in Jesus Christ to love one another. Practically, the permanent task of the ecumenical movement to work for social justice has been translated into efforts to eradicate poverty through interchurch channels of cooperation and solidarity.

Another value that has been emphasized is freedom which, since the beginning of the 1970s, has been understood by some Christian communities as liberation. For the ecumenical movement, freedom has never been an absolute value. The second WCC assembly qualified it as "relative", important for the life of the economic enterprise and the regulating role of the price system. Because freedom is not absolute, it calls for the exercise of stewardship in the administration of property and world resources.

In response to the question of how to act in order to give substance to the values of social justice and freedom, four main criteria have prevailed in the ecumenical debate about economics. The first was the concept of the responsible society, which played a key role until the beginning of the 1960s. It was based on the understanding of middle axioms,\* proposed by J.H. Oldham as a basis for the orientation of Christian witness. One of these middle axioms is the responsible society.

Second, from the beginning of the 1960s, the "human" became a prevailing criterion,

especially evident in the world conference on Church and Society in 1966 and the fourth and fifth assemblies of the WCC. The concept of responsible society left room for the practice of a wide humanism. Ecumenical social ethics during the 1960s and 1970s did not look for ready-made norms of conduct but was concerned with the biblical imperative to become full human persons. That goal entails the humanization of science and technology and demands the satisfaction of basic human needs. Justice is a prerequisite because people cannot become fully human when they are victims of injustice. Therefore, the goal of the ecumenical movement was not only "economic growth" but above all "human development". The problem is not only of a quantitative nature; the goal is a better quality of life.

Third, this synthesized reflection process culminated in the proposal that the ecumenical movement should strive for a "sustainable society" which can ensure respect for the human as well as respect for nature and the responsibility towards future generations.

Fourth, the prevailing situation from the mid-1970s did not allow for much hope for the immediate future. The plight of the poor worsened, and the gap between the rich and the poor continued to widen. The foreign debt of many countries in the South, combined with general financial instability everywhere, created conditions favouring the rise of conservative patterns of behaviour. This posed a serious threat to human development, especially because welfare policies were becoming increasingly unpopular. Churches around the world adopted "an evangelical option for the poor", and this choice influenced ecumenical discussions. "Solidarity with the poor" was proposed as a new criterion for economic reflection and action within the ecumenical movement.

See also **ethics; globalization, economic; international order.**

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■ *Christian Faith and the World Economy Today: A Study Document of the World Council of Churches*, WCC, 1992 ■ K.H. Dejung, *Die ökumenische Bewegung im Entwicklungskonflikt, 1910-1968*, Stuttgart, Klett, 1973 ■

E. Duff, *The Social Thought of the World Council of Churches*, London, Longmans, Green, 1956 ■ R. van Drimmelen, *Faith in a Global Economy: A Primer for Christians*, Geneva, WCC, 1998 ■ C.-H. Grenholm, *Christian Social Ethics in a Revolutionary Age*, Uppsala, Verbum, 1973 ■ M. Lundquist, *Economic Growth and the Quality of Life: An Analysis of the Debate within the World Council of Churches, 1966-94*, Helsinki, Finnish Society for Missiology and Ecumenics, 1975 ■ D.J. Wellman, *Sustainable Communities*, WCC, 2002.

## ECONOMY (OIKONOMIA)

THE GREEK word *oikonomia* is used in the New Testament to mean the management of a household (e.g. in Luke 16:2-4) and also to refer to divine providence (1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 1:10, 3:2; Col. 1:25; 1 Tim. 1:4). Its use to indicate flexibility in the enforcement of church disciplinary rules goes back to the 3rd century. The bishop is to interpret and implement canon law,\* and in so doing he can either follow the rules strictly or display flexibility (first council of Constantinople,\* 381). Departure from strictness is praiseworthy if the attitude has a positive effect on the common good of the church (Cyril of Alexandria). By the middle ages, economy clearly characterized a departure, made by competent authorities, from strict conformity with a canonical norm.

Strictness (*akribeia*) does not always mean conformity with only written laws, since Eastern canon law has never been a system which provides answers to every kind of problem. Rather, strictness embraces the observance of the church's standards, whether written in canons or not. And internal criteria limit applications of economy.

Thus, economy does not apply to what directly involves doctrines of faith,\* such as the basic principles which underlie sacramental theology, church order\* and Christian ethics. But one cannot infer that because economy is impossible in these areas, it is unrestricted in all other cases.

Economy can designate either a decision which departs from a strict norm or, more often, the principle by which one has made such a decision (*kat' oikonomian*). For example, the council in Trullo (691) dealt with irregular marriages of clergy. While the

church of Rome keeps that rule strictly, the church of Constantinople introduces "humanity and compassion" as a principle of economy. The explicit mention of "according to economy" indicates that an exceptional non-enforcement of a rule does not imply that the rule itself is considered invalid or obsolete.

In Eastern Orthodox church law several canons have sunk into oblivion, either from changes in the life setting or merely from the disappearance of the specific reasons which had provoked their promulgation. The fact that such laws are not enforced has nothing to do with economy, because the use of economy precisely supposes that normally the law is in effect.

But precedents should not simply be ignored; there is "case law" which leads to generalizations based on past decisions. Otherwise, normative canon law would constitute merely a set of theoretical statements which have no real impact on the life of the church. Resorting to economy implies that a rule in effect is purposely not applied.

However, in several occurrences doubts may arise, since limits between legitimate flexibility and transgression of a rule are not always self-evident. Many decisions "according to economy" have been strongly criticized by the upholders of rigorism. For example, it would be impossible to understand Byzantine church history between the end of the 8th century and the beginning of the 10th century without taking into account the continuous existence of two parties: one favoured leniency, the other consistently advocated strict adherence to ecclesiastical law.

The recurrent controversies of that time involved two sensitive issues: remarriages, which the rigorists held as impermissible (this concerns laypeople, since marriage after ordination is not permissible), and acceptance of irregularly ordained clerics into the Orthodox church. To understand how such controversies were possible, one must bear in mind the very nature of canon law in the Eastern church, and the different views of canon law held by the two halves of Christendom from the early middle ages onward.

In the church of the West, rules which do not belong to the province of "natural law"\*

or do not affect "divine positive law" fall within the competency of the supreme authority of the church. Therefore, the pope is entitled either to abolish laws or temporarily to suspend their enforcement. On these grounds, dispensations may be granted. In the church of the East, the situation is completely different: the concept of fullness of power does not exist. Besides, in the East the idea that church authorities might modify ancient laws and customs is not unconditionally admitted. Consequently, in serious matters the church in the West often questions the use of economy by churches in the Eastern tradition. The most thorny questions on the use of economy bear on issues of sacramental theology, because those questions affect ecclesiology.

There are two intertwined reasons for using economy: the good of the church and pastoral concerns. In patristic literature, therefore, one finds the phrase "excellent measure of economy". With regard to penance, leniency is related to the good dispositions of the repentant sinner. This linkage is in canon 102 of the council in Trullo.

That economy has no creative power is a fundamental principle. Economy is inoperative if there is an essential deficiency in the sacramental rite or a serious disagreement over doctrine. For example, the ancient church did not recognize the baptism of the Eunomians, members of an Arian sect, because they did not believe in the Holy Trinity and had purposely altered the baptismal rite (apostolic canon 49). The first ecumenical council (Nicea 325\*) did not recognize the validity of the baptism conferred by the Paulianists, for although those heretics were using a correct rite, their Paulianist doctrine on the Holy Trinity was completely at variance with the beliefs of the catholic church. On the other hand, the church did not rebaptize other heretics because their doctrine on the Holy Trinity\* – though not completely correct – was not basically at variance with the faith of the church (as expressed in the council of Constantinople 381). Those examples demonstrate that, especially with respect to sacramental theology, one must base the implementation of economy on objective criteria.

It seems that economy which is equated with expediency has wide possibility of ap-

plication in those matters which are loosely related to doctrines of faith. For example, economy can apply to minor impediments of ordination. It may also apply to impediments of marriage. However, in several cases regarding dispensations for marriage, it would be more appropriate to speak of laxity, not of economy.

Decisions on economy fall exclusively within the competency of the hierarchy. According to the nature of the problem, either the ruling bishop or the synod of bishops makes the decisions (see **episcopacy**). Decisions can be made by a church court whose president is not necessarily the ruling bishop himself, but the bishop needs to confirm them. With respect to procedure, there are two kinds of economy: (1) antecedent economy, where an exemption is canonically requested and granted prior to an act; and (2) retroactive economy, which is granted in order to regularize an already existing uncanonical situation. In all cases, internal criteria and moral justification limit the use of economy.

PETER L'HUILLIER

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## ECUMENICAL ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN THEOLOGIAN

FOUNDED IN 1977 with offices in Yaoundé, Cameroon, the EAAT held assemblies and consultations on the word of God and human languages (1980; published in the *African Theology Series*), black theology and liberation in South Africa (1983; published in *Bulletin of African Theology*), dialogue between African and European theologians on the mission of the church today (1984; published in *Bulletin of African Theology*), the liberation of Africa (1985; published in the *African Theology Series*), Africa and the Bible (1987), and inculturation and ecumenical dialogue (1988). After the brutal murder of Pierre Mwang of Cameroon, who

had been the driving force behind EAAT, the association merged with EATWOT.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

## ECUMENICAL ASSOCIATION OF THIRD WORLD THEOLOGIANs

EATWOT was founded in 1976 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, at a meeting of 21 theologians from Africa, Asia and Latin America and one African American theologian. Behind its formation lay a recognition that the political independence from colonial rule of many countries in Africa and Asia since the late 1950s had created a new stage in world and ecclesial history, requiring an exploration of how churches minted in colonial history could become more relevant and indigenous, despite the strength of the colonial heritage. Making connections between the various regions of the world from the perspective of the experience of having been colonized was seen as a viable route to vibrant and relevant theology – and was itself an ecumenical agenda. At the same time, the openness signalled by the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) created an atmosphere conducive to setting up an ecumenical forum in which Protestants and Roman Catholics could engage together in theological pursuits for mutual enrichment, but as third-world persons.

The specification of “third world”\* was essential. Once-colonized third-world people could not be at home in structures and paradigms of theology inherited from those who had colonized them. Moreover, the churches in many third-world nations lived as definite minorities in a predominantly Muslim, Hindu or traditional religious population – a sharp contrast to the context of Christendom in which the inherited theology was moulded. Third-world theology was to be done in a context of pluralism, which helped to underscore the ecumenical perspective.

At the time of EATWOT’s formation, the third world had a certain glamour in ecumenical circles, and many Northern ecumenical agencies were prepared to assist nationalist struggles against oppression and economic exploitation and foster the development of fullness of life and humanity of

all. Theology was seen as an ally in this struggle, which meant EATWOT’s endeavours had liberation as an emphasis and vision, whose development can be traced in the themes of the inaugural meeting and succeeding assemblies: “Ecumenical Dialogue of Third World Theologians” (inaugural meeting, 1976); “The Irruption of the Third World: Challenge to Theology” (first assembly, New Delhi 1981); “Commonalities, Differences and Cross Fertilizations among Third-World Theologians” (second assembly, Oaxtepec, Mexico 1986); “A Cry for Help: The Spirituality of the Third World” (third assembly, Nairobi 1992); “Search for a New Just World Order: Challenge to Theology” (fourth assembly, Tagaytay City, Philippines 1996); “Giving an Account of the Hope That Is in You: Weaving the Threads of Our Contributing Struggles into a Tapestry of Hope in the 21st Century” (2001).

The theme of the inaugural meeting signalled how people who had been strangers one to another, despite their common colonial experience, were beginning to look at each other, share insights and engage one another. The first assembly theme reflected the fact that a minority phenomenon in a sea of powerful church and theology in Christendom society had burst on to the world scene, demanding recognition as partners in dialogue.

The term “cross-fertilization” in the second assembly theme pointed to a growing maturity, involving recognition of the differentiations within the third world, which must be acknowledged but not allowed to be debilitating to the theological and ecumenical imperative and vocation.

The focus of the third assembly on life marked an important step forward. By 1992 African and other third-world countries had lost their glamour. The web of corruption, bureaucratic irrationality, dictatorships and poverty had evoked anguished cries of pain in the third world. This contextual reality could not but recall for Christians that Jesus came that the world may have life in abundance. Besides capturing this mood, the third assembly caught another insight. Theology inherited from the North and West had been judged by rational and intellectual criteria; its mantras were “fact”, “theory”,

“objectivity”. But African scholars, for example, were aware that the theology undergirding apartheid had no sensitivity to the human suffering and pain it engendered. That made third-world scholars very conscious that theological excellence cannot be determined only on intellectual, rational criteria but must also be judged by whether it fosters a spirituality that is both deep, helping people to reach to God the Creator in the depth of being, and broad, helping people in interpersonal life to reach out to all. Spirituality as it was envisaged was holistic.

The fourth assembly emphasized that political-economic issues are matters of faith, so that an ecumenical perspective is not only a matter of church unity but also involves the claiming of all life and all creation for God.

The theme for the fifth assembly linked the concerns of the third and fourth assemblies, and the event marked the 25th anniversary of the association.

Apart from the general assemblies, there have been regional EATWOT meetings. In 1977 an African meeting (published as *African Theology en Route*, 1979) focused on the indigenization of the gospel and the liberation of Africa from the cultural and economic domination of the USA. An Asian conference in Sri Lanka in 1979 (published as *Asia's Struggle for Full Humanity*, 1980) concentrated on doing theology as a Christian minority amid multi-faceted religiosity in a situation of poverty. The focus of a Latin American meeting in Brazil in 1980 (published as *The Challenge of Basic Christian Communities*, 1981) was the role of economic analysis and socio-political transformation in doing theology.

In recent years EATWOT has taken steps to correct its traditional male domination. The Tagaytay assembly decided to recognize and promote women's experience and hermeneutics in order to transform and re-structure EATWOT's concerns and discourse. It also decided to aim at increasing the participation of women to 50%, as well as recruiting younger theologians. These commitments have increasingly been reflected in the number of women in the leadership of EATWOT.

Two characteristics of this whole movement may be highlighted in conclusion. First, it is committed to the ecumenical imperative,

which it understands not only in terms of the unity of the church but also in terms of the *summing up of all things* to God in Christ. Thus, wholesome theology is determined not only by academic criteria but also in terms of obedience to the will of God or spirituality. This is the significance of EATWOT's characteristic style of dialogue between socio-political and religious-cultural structures on the one side and the word of God on the other. In that ecumenical commitment dialogue between all regions and all churches is a necessary method. While some have read this as politics donning the cloak of theology, it is more accurate to see it in terms of the radicalization of faith and theology and the attempt to capture the movement character of the church, the ecumenical movement and theology. Second, theology does not start from absolutes but from social relationships. In this regard EATWOT is committed to the hermeneutical privilege of the poor.

In September 1997 EATWOT was accepted as an international ecumenical organization in association with the WCC.

JOHN S. POBEE

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## ECUMENICAL CHURCH LOAN FUND

ECLOF was formed in Switzerland in 1946 as a non-profit foundation enabling Christians to demonstrate solidarity with the churches of Europe and their congregations in the harsh times immediately after the second world war, by creating a revolving fund to be disbursed in the form of loans and repaid with interest. The capital repayment and surplus income which stay in the fund is lent out again and again. With its international office in the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, ECLOF works in close collaboration with other ecumenical bodies.

The first countries in the ECLOF network were France, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and Hungary. After the situation in Germany and the Netherlands had improved in the 1960s, many of the national ECLOF committees paid back their capital, and these funds in turn helped ECLOF to extend its activities into the southern hemisphere, where it

began to finance small-scale community development projects for the poor and marginalized as well as church building. This wider and more development-oriented involvement led ECLOF to realize that its role was not solely financial. Through its work methods and lending strategy, ECLOF promotes new attitudes in churches and grassroots groups to build community and group cohesiveness, to decrease dependency on donations, to achieve socio-economic self-reliance and to create awareness in people or the grassroots of their right to participate in decision-making processes which affect them.

Following a period of re-organization beginning in 1990, the number of national ECLOF committees was reduced from 59 in 1989 to 38 by 1999. National committees include representatives of churches and non-governmental organizations with professional training in finance and development or in other fields necessary for analyzing projects. At least half the members of the Geneva board and of national committees are women. Many national committees have the authority to disburse funds for projects up to an agreed amount, and about 65% of ECLOF loans are approved in this way. More than 90% of the total activities are in the South.

Out of solidarity with the ECLOF global family, between 1995 and 2001 the following committees returned their capital: Australia, Austria, France, Ireland (partial), Japan (partial) and Singapore. In 2000 lending operations totalled US\$9.8 million, and 5393 loans were granted.

ECLOF has spearheaded small-scale revolving loan-fund lending activities to the marginalized in a unique way: its loans are kept small and given only to needy churches and groups; re-payment is in local currency; local autonomy, not centralization, is encouraged; and the lending policy promotes the development of communities and equips people at the grassroots with the financial means, know-how and a socio-economic awareness to look out for their own needs.

MUHUNGI KANYORO

## ECUMENICAL CONFERENCES

IN THE HISTORY of the ecumenical movement, major international conferences of various

subjects and by various organizations have been held to draw together leading representatives of the churches, to deepen a common understanding of missionary, social or doctrinal issues or to focus on a major contemporary concern of common witness and service. Many of these conferences had a pioneering role concerning key ecumenical themes in their historical context, opening up a new line of thought influencing further conversation for years. Some of them remained single events, others have served as focal points in a continuing series of similar meetings within one of the streams of the ecumenical movement marking its progress and development (as in the case of Faith and Order or world mission conferences).

They have varied considerably in working methodology and participation, but all of them were shaped by their interest in being as inclusive as possible while reflecting the principles of representationalism and official recognition given in the particular historical moment and field of the ecumenical movement. Together, the ecumenical conferences constitute something like the "ecumenical memory" of the ecumenical movement on a global scale.

Most of the ecumenical conferences are referred to by shorthand titles of identification indicating the cities in which the meetings were held and the years.

The following overview reviews 46 major conferences held between 1910 and 1998, listing the stated main themes and briefly summarizing the highlights. Restricting the list to conferences on a global scale imposes a severe limitation, leaving out important ecumenical conferences in various regions of the world which in themselves might have been much more relevant than some of the conferences mentioned here. A separate article deals with WCC assemblies.

**Edinburgh 1910** (*Scotland*), *world missionary conference*. Eight commissions dealt with (1) carrying the gospel to all the non-Christian world, (2) the church in the mission field, (3) education in relation to the Christianization of national life, (4) the missionary message in relation to non-Christian religions, (5) the preparation of missionaries, (6) the home base of missions, (7) missions and governments and (8) cooperation and the promotion of unity.

This conference marked the climax of earlier gatherings through which Protestants had been drawing together in their purpose to bring the gospel to the world. It was in a succession which began with gatherings held in New York and London in 1854, continued in Liverpool in 1860, in London in 1878 and 1888, and especially in New York in 1900.

The conference did more than build on past achievements in evangelism\* and unity:\* it prepared for the turbulent years which lay ahead, blazed new trails in Christian fellowship and cooperation, and inspired and enlisted men and women who later were outstanding leaders in the ecumenical movement. The first report emphasized the worldwide mission\* of the church. The second stressed the development of what later were called the younger churches and made clear that a leading purpose of the missionary enterprise was to bring into being self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating churches in every region. The eighth report was ecumenical in both title and intention.

The conference was, however, overwhelmingly Anglo-American. Representatives from Europe were a small minority, and overall there were very few younger church leaders. In consequence, Edinburgh 1910 did not immediately do as much to spread the ecumenical spirit among the churches of the continent as it did in the British Isles and the US and among British and American missionaries. Representatives of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) and the Orthodox churches were not present at Edinburgh, and indeed had not been invited.

**Stockholm 1925 (Sweden), *universal Christian conference on Life and Work*.\*** Main subjects were (1) the purpose of God for humanity and the duty of the church, (2) the church and economic and industrial problems, (3) the church and moral and social problems, (4) the church and international relations, (5) the church and Christian education, and (6) methods of cooperation and federative efforts by the Christian communions.

Convened by Archbishop Nathan Söderblom of Sweden, this conference was the fruit of a vision earlier seen by church leaders who agonized over a war-torn humanity and the weakness of a divided Chris-

tianity. Although it affirmed in unmistakable terms the responsibility of the churches for the whole life of Christians, it did not produce any ecumenical social creed or solve any controversial problems. Making a rapid survey of the needs of contemporary society, appealing to the conscience of the Christian world and indicating possible lines of advance, Stockholm 1925, in its social idealism, generated a species of optimism that reflected the spirit of the times. Emphasizing the role of the Spirit, it presented a social analysis which could assess the nature of the crisis of post-war Europe. The main achievement of the conference was a fresh discovery of the Christian fellowship which transcends denominational oppositions and national antagonisms. The conference took care not to offend the susceptibilities of the churches by raising divisive confessional issues. Stockholm, which became known for the slogan "doctrine divides, service unites", later through its continuation committee led to the formation of the ecumenical council for Life and Work in 1930 and an international institute for social research.

The final message, the only official conference statement, expressed penitence for the failure of the churches to do their duty and affirmed the obligation of the churches to apply the gospel "in all realms of human life – industrial, social, political and international". But the message limited "the mission of the church"; it "is above all to state principles, and to assert the ideal, while leaving to individual consciences and to communities the duty of applying them with charity, wisdom and courage".

The presence of a strong delegation from the Orthodox churches, led by the patriarchs of Alexandria and Jerusalem, was of great significance. The RCC was represented only through a few unofficial observers. Only six younger churches – from India, China and Japan – sent representatives.

**Lausanne 1927 (Switzerland), *world conference on Faith and Order*.\*** The sections considered (1) the call to unity, (2) the church's message to the world: the gospel, (3) the nature of the church, (4) the church's common confession of faith, (5) the church's ministry, (6) the sacraments, and (7) the unity of Christendom and the relation thereto of existing churches.

Over 400 delegates from 108 churches participated in this first F&O meeting. The majority were officially appointed representatives of their churches. Africa, America and Europe were well represented, but Asia sent only two nationals and some missionaries. Those to whom a conference of this kind was a novel experience felt a certain bewilderment, in spite of repeated clarifications of the purpose of the meeting by the president Charles H. Brent. It was meant as a forum at which "both agreements and disagreements were to be carefully noted... It is not a conference that aims at complete agreement, still less at a united church." The misconceptions of the aim were at least partly responsible for a marked feature of the latter part of the conference – a series of separate declarations on their position by the members of different communions.

The conference accepted the reports of sections 3-6 without negative votes. The report of section 2, accepted also by the Orthodox members, was destined to play an important role in the whole ecumenical movement. Part of it was incorporated into its own message by the Jerusalem meeting of the International Missionary Council\* in 1928, and it was used by the Church of Christ in China in its constitution as its statement of faith. In section 7 some delegates strongly objected to the proposal of collaborating with Life and Work and the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches.\* This approach would commit the conference to a conception of ecumenical relations in which interchurch collaboration would be emphasized at the expense of unity in faith and order. The section report was referred to the continuation committee; the final revision appeared as an appendix to the Lausanne report.

**Jerusalem 1928, *International Missionary Council\** (IMC).** Sections dealt with (1) the Christian message in relation to non-Christian systems of thought and life, (2) religious education, (3) the relation between the younger and the older churches, (4) the Christian mission in the light of the race conflict, (5) the Christian mission in relation to industrial problems; (6) the Christian mission in relation to rural problems, and (7) international missionary cooperation.

This meeting marked noteworthy advances beyond Edinburgh 1910. The preparation was carefully developed through seven volumes of comprehensive studies. The growing worldwide threat of secularism to Christianity was given major attention (see **secularization**). Missions were thus seeking to touch life from more angles than in earlier years. The increased place of the younger churches at Jerusalem was partly due to their rapid growth in numbers and leadership. To follow up the concerns of the problems of industrialization, the meeting authorized what came to be known as the Department of Social and Economic Research and Counsel. Its first head, J. Merle Davis, conducted numerous studies in Africa and Latin America and referred to the problem of obtaining an adequate economic basis for the support of the younger churches. From Jerusalem also came the impetus for the creation of the International Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews, established as a sponsored agency of the IMC in 1930.

**Oxford 1937 (England), *Life and Work*.\*** Sections were (1) church and community, (2) church and state, (3) church, community and state in relation to the economic order, (4) church, community and state in relation to education, and (5) the universal church and the world of nations.

This conference on church, community and state was undertaken with great care and thoroughness. In the face of gathering social crisis, the Stockholm combination of Christian social idealism, spiritual enthusiasm and pacifism had come into question, to be replaced by new tougher trends in Christian thought represented by theologians like Reinhold Niebuhr, Emil Brunner and Karl Barth.

No ecumenically organized reflection on theology and social ethics since Oxford has surpassed it in quality and thoroughness. Among the theological and ethical insights that emerged were the following. First, the liberal notion of a continuity between history\* and the kingdom of God\* is to be rejected. History is not redemptive. Evil will persist until the end. Second, a Christian social order is impossible, as is the solution of social problems by a direct application of Christian "moral principles". The Bible offers no direct solutions for contemporary

political and social problems. The task of the ecumenical movement and of the churches is to outline tentative or approximate ethical positions (Oxford called them "middle axioms"\*) for the encounter of faith\* with social issues. Third, one must acknowledge the place of power\* in the struggle for justice.\* The state\* is necessary, but its dependence on power relativizes its authority. The need for human freedom and the right of the church to resist the state must be emphasized "if obedience would be clearly contrary to the command of God". Fourth, Christians must both critique liberal democracy, without repudiating the democratic principle, and reject atheistic and totalitarian communism, while not joining the Western self-righteous anti-communist crusade. No economic system (capitalism, socialism, communism, etc.) will eliminate injustice; the only recourse for Christians is a pragmatic, discriminating action which maximizes social justice and human welfare within different systems. Fifth, since the church is not of the world but for the world, its action for social justice (as distinct from the response of individual Christians) differs from that of political and social power blocs that defend particular interests (see also **church and state**).

**Edinburgh 1937 (Scotland), Faith and Order.\*** Four sections considered (1) the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, (2) the church of Christ and the word of God, (3) the church of Christ: ministry and sacraments, and (4) the church's unity in life and worship.

This second world conference of Faith and Order marked a definite advance upon that held ten years earlier at Lausanne, which was due chiefly to two factors. Among the 443 delegates appointed by the churches, 95 had already been at Lausanne. Many delegates of different countries and churches were now meeting as old friends who through their contact had grown in the understanding of confessions other than their own. The other change was due to the theological preparation, a new development in the F&O movement. The delegates of the Orthodox churches reiterated the view they had already expressed at Lausanne: "The general reunion of Christian churches may possibly be hastened if union is first achieved

between those churches which present features of great similarity with one another."

Friction arose over the proposal offered by a Life and Work meeting that a world council of churches be formed. After debate, however, the meeting concurred with the proposal, and ultimately a committee of 35 was appointed; it met in London in July 1937. The Edinburgh conference appointed a committee of 60 persons to examine and report to it on the proposals of the committee of 35. After a long and at times heated debate, the recommendation to work towards a world council of churches was carried.

**Utrecht 1938 (Netherlands), special advisory conference of the World Council of Churches\* in formation.** After adoption of resolutions at Oxford and Edinburgh, this advisory conference was convened to define the basis for membership (see **WCC, basis of**) and the constitution of what would become the World Council of Churches. Participation in Utrecht mirrored as nearly as possible the proposed WCC central council (later, committee). Because of the advent of the second world war in September 1939, the WCC remained "in process of formation" until its first assembly in Amsterdam 1948.

**Tamparam 1938 (India), International Missionary Council.\*** Sections comprised (1) the authority of the faith, (2) the growing church, (3) evangelism, (4) the life of the church, (5) the economic basis of the church, and (6) the church and the state.

Larger in numbers and more representative than Jerusalem (1928), the gathering dramatized the fact that the Christian church had become a truly worldwide company. The representatives of the younger churches constituted slightly more than half of the official delegates. A major emphasis at Tamparam was on the church.\* The younger churches, while mostly minorities in their countries, were now strong enough to assume more of the burden not only of their own support and direction but also of the evangelization of their nations. The first section was reinforced by a preliminary book *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, written at the request of the IMC by Hendrik Kraemer. Significant, too, was a large volume, *The Economic and Social Environment of the Younger Churches*, edited

by J. Merle Davis. Tambaram provided a sense of Christian unity on the eve of the war soon to break out. It recommended a full participation of the younger churches in the forthcoming ecumenical council – a demand fulfilled only in the integration between the WCC and the IMC in 1961.

**Amsterdam 1939** (*Netherlands*), *world conference of Christian youth*. The main theme was “Christus Victor”, with seven interest groups: (1) Christian youth in a world of nations, (2) Christian youth in the nation and the state, (3) Christian youth in the economic order, (4) Christian youth and race, (5) Christian youth and education, (6) Christian marriage and family life, and (7) the church: its nature and mission.

This first youth\* conference was sponsored by the World Christian Student Federation,\* the World Alliance of YMCAs,\* the World YWCA,\* the Ecumenical Youth Commission of Life and Work, and the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches. The age of the 1500 delegates ranged from 18 to 35, with one-third over 25. The conference faced the growing menace of war. W.A. Visser 't Hooft was conference chairman, R.H. Edwin Espy secretary, H.L. Henriod and Francis House chairman and secretary for worship services, Suzanne de Diétrich chairwoman for Bible study, and Tracy Strong chairman for discussion groups.

The quality of work and reporting varied from section to section. Those who had concentrated on theological preparation and those who had devoted their energies to the study of practical steps found little common ground for sharing. The two great centres of discovery lay in the Bible studies and worship services, although great difficulty was experienced when the problem of different services of holy communion had to be faced. The conference was an adventure in close cooperation among the various Christian youth movements and reflected the geographical extension of the world Christian community and its cultural varieties more clearly than had any previous ecumenical meeting. Many delegates at this conference were to become leaders of the ecumenical movement in the next decades.

**Oslo 1947** (*Norway*), *conference of Christian youth*. With the main theme “Je-

sus Christ Is Lord”, discussion groups considered (1) freedom and order, (2) Christian responsibility in a secular environment, (3) world order, (4) man and his inventions, (5) the family in community, (6) the Christian congregation's life in the local community, (7) education in the modern world, (8) the Christian faces the situation of the Jew, and (9) the church faces the world.

This second world gathering of young Christians had not quite the same quality of adventure and pioneering which had characterized Amsterdam 1939. It was marked by a new sobriety over the realities of the world situation and the grateful recognition of the lordship of Christ over the whole church and over the world. This conference did not adopt an official message; the delegates themselves were the message as well as the messengers. The very day the meeting began, fighting had broken out between the Netherlands and Indonesia. A joint statement from Dutch and Indonesian youth affirmed “the right of the Indonesian people to liberty and independence”. Also the French delegates issued a declaration on the colonial question. Representatives from Great Britain and India rejoiced that India was on the threshold of independence.

**Whitby 1947** (*Canada*), *International Missionary Council*.\* The general theme was “Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World”. Subjects treated were (1) partners in obedience, (2) the “supranationality” of missions, and (3) the functions of the IMC.

Even during the terrible period of the second world war, the IMC had been able to maintain to a remarkable degree the fabric of cooperation, especially through the vast programme of support for “orphaned missions”. The title of the report of the meeting, *Renewal and Advance*, well indicated the dominant mood of the conference.

It had not yet become clear, however, how drastic the changes were which the world had undergone as a result of the convulsions of the war years. The complete extinction of the colonial pattern, most dramatically in China but also throughout the rest of Asia and Africa, lay still in the future. The extent of the spiritual damage which Christianity had suffered could not yet be assessed. Nevertheless, “expectant evangelism” and “partnership in obedience” were

the two slogans of the meeting. Representatives of older and younger churches met separately to discuss the devolution of responsibility from mission agencies to churches with their own evangelistic tasks.

**Willingen 1952** (*Federal Republic of Germany*), *International Missionary Council*.<sup>\*</sup> Major themes were (1) the missionary obligation of the church, (2) the indigenous church – the universal church in its local setting, (3) the role of the missionary society, and (4) re-shaping the pattern of missionary activity.

The meeting was significant as a first attempt to reformulate Christian mission subsequent to the end of colonialism and the consequences of revolution in China, and to develop a truly missionary understanding of the whole church in the context of a rapidly changing world. Two issues dominated the section which was preparing a statement on the missionary obligation of the church. On the one hand, a sharp attack was launched, primarily by J.C. Hoekendijk of the Netherlands, against the church-centred view of missions which had dominated the thinking of the IMC since Tambaram (1938). On the other hand, and closely related to the first issue, there was a strong effort made, especially by the North American study group which had prepared for the conference, to relate the missionary task to the signs of Christ's present sovereignty in the secular world. While the Willingen meeting could not achieve a reconciliation of all theological tensions, its statement "The Calling of the Church to Mission and Unity" was the first ecumenical document in which the definition of mission as witness and service rooted in a Trinitarian concept of *missio Dei*<sup>\*</sup> was reflected. The *missio Dei* concept paved the way theologically for the integration of church and mission and the later study on the missionary structure of the congregation (1961-67).

**Lund 1952** (*Sweden*), *Faith and Order*.<sup>\*</sup> Section titles were (1) Christ and his church, (2) continuity and unity, (3) ways of worship, and (4) intercommunion.

Already in 1938 and 1939 F&O had appointed three international theological commissions to study the church,<sup>\*</sup> worship<sup>\*</sup> and intercommunion.<sup>\*</sup> Three published volumes provided materials for discussion at this

third world conference. The theme of "outward" unity, introduced at Edinburgh in 1937, was further developed. "We agreed", the conference report stated, "that there are not two churches, one visible and the other invisible, but one church which must find visible expression on earth." While the participants differed on whether certain doctrinal, sacramental and ministerial forms are of the essence of the church, they looked forward to a time when all Christians could have unrestricted communion<sup>\*</sup> in sacrament and fellowship. The message to the churches asked "whether they should not act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately", an approach later called the Lund principle.<sup>\*</sup> For the first time, F&O discussed the social, cultural, political and racial elements and so-called non-theological factors in church divisions and church unity.

**Kottayam 1952** (*India*), *Christian youth*. The main theme was "Jesus Christ the Answer – God Was in Christ Reconciling the World unto Himself". Discussion groups studied (1) interpreting the gospel of Jesus Christ, (2) Jesus Christ and the search for personal freedom, (3) the church's witness to Jesus Christ, (4) the claims of Christ in personal and family relationships, and (5) Christ in a world of tensions.

Two-thirds of the 350 delegates from 55 countries and 28 confessions came from Asia, the Middle East and the Pacific. For the first time, youth from other parts of the world worked at ecumenical questions in an Asian and not a Western setting. Participants struggled with the issues raised by the movements for political independence, the renaissance of other faiths, the challenge of communism and the need to re-think their understanding of the church.<sup>\*</sup> The meeting emphasized that "the church must become a place where human worth and common responsibility are actualized. Creative love must express itself not simply in acts of mercy, genuine and important though they may be, but also in attempts to achieve a more just economic and social order." The theme would recur often and would profoundly influence the work of the WCC.

**Accra 1958** (*Ghana*), *International Missionary Council*. Group discussions pon-

dered (1) Christian witness in society and nation, (2) the Christian church facing its calling to mission, (3) the Christian church and non-Christian religions, (4) the place and function of the missionary, and (5) what "partnership in obedience" means.

An important item on the conference agenda was the draft plan of integration of the IMC and the WCC which the joint committee of the two bodies had prepared. There were serious reservations about this plan, and a great deal of further discussion was needed. The conference accepted a statement on "The Christian Mission at This Hour" which took as its starting point "the Christian world mission is Christ's, not ours". The statement affirmed that the distinction between older and younger churches was no longer valid or helpful because it obscured the fact that every church, because it is a church, has the same missionary calling. Preparations were made to set up the Theological Education Fund, which over the years was to bring about a considerable change in the quality and strength of theological education at various seminaries and schools in the third world.

**Montreal 1963 (Canada), *Faith and Order*.**\* Three sections studied (1) Christ and the church, (2) worship, and (3) Tradition and traditions.

This fourth world conference received the final report of the theological commissions. Section 1 was in two parts, based on a North American and a European contribution. While this report did not contain much that was an advance over previous work, it opened up, through the very disagreements which surfaced in the discussions, new avenues of F&O study. The traditional differences ranged from the insistence on apostolic succession to the view that there is no sufficient New Testament authority to warrant ordination. Increasing consensus on the theological basis of ministry did not lead to greater agreement on matters of order. Section 2 stated that, despite many disagreements regarding holy communion, the churches could agree that the eucharist\* is "a sacrament of the presence of the crucified and glorified Christ, until he come, and a means whereby the sacrifice of the cross, which we proclaim, is operative within the church". Lund had not specifically studied the area of

Tradition and traditions.\* The approaches of the North American and European contributions to section 3 at Montreal were different: the first took a more historical perspective, while the second centred on the dogmatic issue of scripture and Tradition. There was nevertheless a large measure of agreement in the final report: "By the Tradition is meant the gospel itself, transmitted from generation to generation in and by the church, Christ himself present in the life of the church. By tradition is meant the traditory process. The term traditions is used in two senses, to indicate both the diversity of forms of expression and also what we call confessional traditions, for instance the Lutheran tradition or the Reformed tradition."

**Mexico City 1963, *WCC Division on World Mission and Evangelism*.**\* The sections dealt with (1) the witness of Christians to men [sic] of other faiths, (2) the witness of Christians to men in the secular world, (3) the witness of the congregation in its neighbourhood, and (4) the witness of the Christian church across national and confessional boundaries.

This meeting was the first one of the division since the integration of the IMC into the WCC in 1961. With its main theme "Witness in Six Continents", it broke new ground by paying expert attention to the specific problems of mission in Europe and North America. Section 1 did not yield a clear consensus on dialogue with people of living faiths (see *dialogue, interfaith*). Section 4 advocated advance in the direction of more international and ecumenical action in the field of mission. Throughout the meeting there was a vigorous discussion about mission in the context of six continents. The Department on Studies in Evangelism, following the New Delhi assembly (1961), had launched a worldwide study on "The Missionary Structure of the Congregation";\* it raised radical questions concerning the nature of the church\* and evangelism.\* The Department on Missionary Studies had also engaged in several research projects on the missionary situation of the churches in specific areas. Both departments were integrated into the Department on Studies in Mission and Evangelism in 1967.

**Swanwick 1966 (England), *interchurch aid\* (ICA), refugee and world service*.** The

sections were (1) development aid, (2) up-rooted people, (3) the role of ICA in the use and training of the churches' manpower, and (4) criteria for interchurch aid projects (the so-called Herrenalb categories of 1956).

With 239 participants from 78 countries, Swanwick was the first large international ecumenical gathering in which representatives of the RCC took part. This world consultation urged the churches to align themselves more closely to governmental and intergovernmental programmes of development aid. The fact that the WCC had more than 200 churches in its fellowship meant a wholly new relationship between the churches themselves. Within the Council, those churches had equal status; requests for aid and offers of aid had taken on a different connotation. There was no more room for paternalistic charity, only for partnership and sharing. Ecumenical diakonia\* had thus gained significance.

**Geneva 1966** (*Switzerland*), *world conference on Church and Society*.\* Sections considered (1) economic development in a world perspective, (2) the nature and function of the state in a revolutionary age, (3) structures of international cooperation – living together in peace in a pluralistic world society, and (4) man and community in changing societies.

This conference marked the first truly worldwide Christian examination of social issues and responsibility. Under the circumstances, it was bound to have a revolutionary impact on ecumenical social thought, opening up controversy, especially in the Western churches. For the first time, an equal number of participants came from the countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East as from Western Europe and North America. It was the first gathering to which churches of the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries made substantial contributions. Also present were a large number of Roman Catholic theologians and laypersons, most of whom had been active in the preparation of the Second Vatican Council's\* Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (1965). Controversies focused on three ecclesiological points: (1) the appropriate way in Christian social ethics to relate biblical and theological traditions to the fast-changing conditions in

modern societies, (2) the ambiguities of the word "revolution"\* and the need for a clearer statement of the theological ideas which underlie a positive and critical response to the various demands for revolutionary change, and (3) the different ecclesiologies which surface when the church (or some group in the church) becomes involved in political and social action. The demand that the ecumenical movement support the revolutionary struggle for justice\* in the third world intensified and dramatized this old ecclesiological problem.

**Bristol 1967** (*England*), *Faith and Order*.\* The five sections dealt with (1) creation, new creation and the unity of the church, (2) the eucharist, a sacrament of unity, (3) ministry, church union negotiations, (4) Tradition and traditions, and (5) general faith and order problems.

When the F&O commission met at Aarhus (Denmark) in 1964, it had planned a programme for a new period in the light of the numerous recommendations and suggestions from Montreal 1963. Bristol 1967 faced the tasks which had grown out of the constant expansion of the ecumenical movement, of relationships with world confessional families, of the progress and problems of national church unions, and of the cooperation of F&O with other WCC departments. In all these efforts the decisive questions were the understanding of church unity,\* of full communion,\* and of the theological methods of reflection which can best serve the unity of the church. Bristol completed the first stage in the "God in Nature and History" study and authorized the second stage of the "Man in Nature and History" study.

**Notting Hill 1969** (*England*), *international conference on racism*. The WCC assembly in Uppsala 1968 had recommended this conference of international experts on racism which took place in a suburb of London torn by racial problems. The conference highlighted perspectives on the root causes, nature and social consequences of white racism\* and developed recommendations for strengthening resistance against it, even allowing active support for resistance movements against racist oppressive regimes as a last resort when all other means have no results. The conference report changed the

WCC's approach from mere declarations about racism as sin towards ecumenical action in the common struggle against the political forces behind racism. The Notting Hill report informed the major plan and decision of the WCC central committee meeting in Canterbury on 21 August 1969 to form an Ecumenical Programme to Combat Racism\* (PCR).

**Montreux 1970 (Switzerland), *ecumenical assistance to development\* projects.*** The working groups discussed (1) the debate about development, (2) policy and procedures for church support to development projects, (3) structure and organization of ecumenical assistance to development projects, (4) technical assistance for church-sponsored development, and (5) the mobilization of funds.

This world consultation emphasized that all Christian development programmes should promote social justice\* and the self-reliance of the community. They should help to provide new creative patterns of life for groups and communities whose lives have been disrupted by the effects of economic growth, and help to build bridges between separated groups in the interest of a more integrated society. The consultation recommended cooperation with intergovernmental agencies, especially the UN development system. Such cooperation is not a matter of simply supplying church funds but of involving the participation of local churches in planning and cooperation. The conference appealed to the churches to contribute to the promotion of education for development by changing people's attitudes and by mobilizing public opinion towards fundamental changes in the social, economic and political structures on national and international levels.

**Louvain 1971 (Belgium), *Faith and Order.*\*** The various committees were (1a) authority of the Bible, (1b) "giving account of the hope that is in us", (2a) catholicity and apostolicity, (2b) worship today, (2c) participation in and methods of Faith and Order, (3a) "baptism, confirmation and eucharist", (3b) "beyond intercommunion", (3c) the ordained ministry, (4a) study on the council of Chalcedon, (4b) common witness and proselytism, (4c) conciliarity and the future of the ecumenical movement, and (5) church

union negotiations and bilateral conversations.

Besides studying these themes and concerns, this meeting also concentrated on the comprehensive theme "The Unity of the Church – the Unity of Mankind". Problems related to this theme had already become acute, and the commission decided to provide essential clarifications. It was quite clear that confessional differences alone no longer called into question the unity of the church. Churches were urged to bring to fruition the fellowship given to them in Christ, amid the debates of the present. Only thus can they become signs of the presence of Christ today.

**Lima 1971 (Peru), *World Council of Christian Education.*\*** This was the last gathering of an ecumenical federation of national and international bodies involved in Christian education (founded in 1924). After almost ten years of conversations, the union of the WCC and the WCCE was finally consummated. The Lima meeting was in fact dispersed; 17 *encuentros* were held in capital cities of Latin America. The Lima meeting faced up to the important issue that to educate is not so much to teach as it is to become committed to a reality in and with people, that it is to liberate humankind, under God and God's power, from the bonds that prevent the development of God's image.

**Bangkok 1973 (Thailand), *world conference on mission and evangelism.*\*** Under the main theme "Salvation Today", sections considered (1) culture and identity, (2) salvation and social justice in a divided humanity, and (3) churches renewed in mission.

This conference faced the theological theme of liberation,\* affirmed the right of every Christian and every church to cultural identity, and urged them to formulate their own response to God's calling in a theology, a liturgy, a praxis, and a form of community that were rooted in their own culture.\* The Africans, especially, attacked the West's "imperialism over theology". The meeting drew attention to the indissoluble connection between the individual and social aspects of salvation:\* to respond to Christ and his missionary call means to be involved in the struggle for social justice, peace and a fully human life. The conference debated at

length the question of the structure of missionary relationships which would reflect genuine equality between partners. Proposals ranged from a temporary moratorium to new forms of cooperation between churches. Bangkok 1973 was undoubtedly one of the most contextual and interdisciplinary ecumenical missionary conferences.

**Berlin 1974 (Germany), WCC conference on sexism and discrimination against women.** Influenced by the growing vitality of the women's movement in the 1970s, the WCC organized the first international consultation on sexism which brought together 150 women from 54 countries. Dealing with issues like discrimination against women, equality, education for women, role models for women and men, partnership, social injustice, the role of women in the church and women's ordination, the consultation for the first time highlighted women's issues as global issues for all churches. Recommendations of the consultation were taken up in the Nairobi assembly 1975 and later led to the study on the community of women and men in the church\* (since 1976). See **sexual ethics**.

**Bucharest 1974 (Romania), Church and Society.\*** The main theme, "Science and Technology for Human Development", was developed in several sections: (1) the significance for the future of pressures from technology and population on the environment, and of natural limits to growth, (2) self-reliance and the technical options of developing countries, (3) quality of life and the human implications of further technological change, (4) human settlement as a challenge to the churches, (5) world social justice in a technological age, and (6) the theological understanding of humanity and nature in a technological era.

Organized principally by the WCC Sub-unit on Church and Society, this world conference was the last in a series of ecumenical study conferences which the WCC convened for its five-year study of "The Future in a World of Science-based Technology". The study was launched to evaluate from ecumenical perspective the social and human implications of the modern scientific and technological revolution (see **science and technology**). Bucharest was the first major WCC meeting in a communist and predom-

inantly Orthodox setting. The conference sought to state clearly some practical ways in which Christians must re-think their societies in this new historical situation. It also laid the basis for a future ecumenical inquiry on the "just, participatory and sustainable society". This inquiry helped clarify issues for later debate, but it was unable to resolve fundamental differences, for example, between those who emphasize the centrality of justice and those who stress the critical importance of sustainability in any responsible society.

**Accra 1974 (Ghana), Faith and Order.\*** The two main themes were giving account of the hope that is within us, and the unity of the church.

The F&O commission had launched a study on the theme of hope\* on the theory that the churches can overcome their divisions only by starting from the centre of their faith. As long as they continue to deal with inherited differences, they will not be ready to enter the one committed fellowship to which they are called. Only as churches recognize each other as living in and proclaiming the same faith\* will they have the freedom to move forward together to become the one Body of Christ within the world's tensions and conflicts.

But, the conference asked, what does church unity\* require in each region of the world? Theological and ecclesiological debates tend to speak about unity in too general terms, but ultimately, since unity is the committed fellowship of particular people in a particular place, progress can be made only if the specificity of each situation is taken seriously. The conference, finally, discussed the draft statement on baptism, eucharist and ministry (see **Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry**).

**Chiang Mai 1977 (Thailand), dialogue with people of living faiths and ideologies.** The conference theme was "Dialogue in Community".

This world consultation, sponsored by the WCC Sub-unit on Dialogue, continued the difficult discussion of section 3 at the Nairobi assembly (1975): "Seeking Community: The Common Search of People of Various Faiths, Cultures and Ideologies", which expressed fears about the betrayal of mission\* and the danger of syncretism.\* The

consultation sought to clarify the Christian basis for seeking community by focusing theological reflections on specific issues and particular contexts, to indicate the nature of the Christian community in a pluralistic world and to suggest guidelines which may help Christian communities in pluralist situations to become authentic communities of service and witness without diluting their faith or compromising their commitment to Christ. In 1979, the WCC central committee meeting in Kingston, Jamaica, approved the *Guidelines on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies* and recommended it to member churches "for their consideration and discussion, testing and evaluation, and for their elaboration in each specific situation".

**Bangalore 1978 (India), Faith and Order.\*** Main themes were (1) a common account of hope and (2) growing together into unity. Subjects of discussion groups were (1) the meaning of "conciliar fellowship", (2) towards communion in one faith, (3) growing into one eucharistic fellowship, (4) the discipline of communion in a divided world, and (5) new ecumenical experiences and existing ecumenical structures.

The most significant achievement of the Bangalore meeting was the F&O document "A Common Account of Hope". The debates were not easy. One difference in particular had seemed insurmountable. Some wanted to emphasize the hope\* which is above all hopes – Jesus Christ, the risen Lord, who has already overcome the world. But others wanted to state, clearly and strongly, that Christian hope finds expression in concrete human hopes. The final document was seen as doing justice to both positions.

The second theme was intimately connected to the first: the more successful the churches are in giving a common account of their hope in spite of their divisions, the more they will grow in unity.\* Bangalore 1978 also faced the fact that unity is not merely a distant goal; however necessary it may be to stress that the churches still have a long way to go, the fact remains that a good stretch of the road is already behind them.

**MIT 1979 (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts,**

*USA), Church and Society.* Sections were (1) the nature of science and the nature of faith, (2) humanity, nature and God, (3) science and education, (4) ethical issues in the biological manipulation of life, (5) technology, resources, environment and population, (6) energy for the future, (7) restructuring the industrial and urban environment, (8) economics of a just, participatory and sustainable society, (9) science/technology, political power and a more just world order, and (10) towards a new Christian social ethic and new social policies for the churches.

This world conference on "Faith, Science and the Future" faced a situation that was entirely different from the one faced by the 1966 Church and Society meeting. The issues of science and technology\* had become far more complex and controversial, and both church and society were questioning the future of technologically organized and controlled social systems. Science and technology raised those important questions about the relation of faith to science which many churches, in both technologically developed and technologically developing countries, were only beginning to consider. All present political and economic systems have made assumptions about technological and economic planning which now required re-thinking. The scientific-technological world-view had come under challenge and, with it, many previously accepted social goals. Although the 1979 conference highlighted the problems, it could not resolve them. It could, however, help the churches to understand both the promise and the threat posed by modern science and technology and the challenge these present to traditional Christian thinking.

**Melbourne 1980 (Australia), world mission and evangelism.\*** The theme "Your Kingdom Come" was considered in four sections: (1) good news to the poor, (2) the kingdom of God and human struggles, (3) the church witnesses to the kingdom, and (4) Christ – crucified and risen – challenges human power.

The Orthodox churches were involved both in the preparation and holding of this mission conference, and many Roman Catholic theologians, as in the Bangkok conference (1973), participated in the meeting. The main findings were, first, that the king-

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dom\* which Christians pray for is the reign of the One who died outside the gates. Jesus Christ affirmed his centrality by giving it up. He moved towards the periphery in order to seek the marginalized and downtrodden. Second, the poor\* challenge missionary criteria. Jesus established a visible link between the coming of the kingdom and the proclamation of the good news to the poor (see poverty). Third, evangelism\* takes place in the midst of human struggles. There is no evangelism without involvement, and no Christian involvement without evangelism. Fourth, at the centre of church life is the eucharist,\* pilgrim bread and missionary food, for a people on the march. The eucharist is a powerful example of self-emptying. Finally, unless the pilgrimage route leads the churches to visible unity\* in the one God, the one Christ and the one Holy Spirit, the mission entrusted to them will remain incomplete.

**Amsterdam 1981** (*Netherlands*), *hearing on nuclear disarmament*. Facing the increasing danger of nuclear war, the WCC Sub-unit on Church and Society and the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs sponsored a hearing on the challenges of nuclear disarmament attended by 17 church leaders and 40 expert witnesses. The report, *Before It's Too Late*, contains extended treatments of theological and ethical concerns in relation to nuclear weapons, development and introduction of new nuclear weapon systems, strategies of limited nuclear war and deterrence, negotiations for arms control, and multilateral and unilateral disarmament. One of the key affirmations was that nuclear war can never be just or justifiable so that any "limited" nuclear war is unlikely to remain limited, and therefore it should be discouraged from the outset. The report of the conference was very positively received by the central committee meeting in 1982 and also made a major impact on the Vancouver assembly.

**Sheffield 1981** (*Great Britain*), *WCC consultation on the community of women and men in the church*.\* Sections were on (1) identity and relationships in new community, (2) marriage, family, and life-style in new community, (3) scripture in new community, (4) ministry and worship in new community, (4) authority and church struc-

tures in new community, (5) Tradition and traditions, (6) justice and freedom in new community.

The consultation was the culminating point of the four-year study process on the community of women and men in the church between 1978 and 1982 which focused on three major aspects, namely theology, participation and relationships in the complex area related to the community of women and men in the church. The Sheffield report served as a foundational resource on much of what later was taken up in the Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women (1988-98). The community study, jointly pursued by Faith and Order and the WCC Sub-unit on Women in Church and Society and involving hundreds of local study/sharing groups, was one of the most participatory and broad based study processes the WCC ever undertook. Many of its discussions and recommendations raised questions concerning liberation and equality of women, patterns of relationships in partnerships, marriage and family life, images used to describe God and the ordination of women.

**Lima 1982** (*Peru*), *Faith and Order*.\* Sections were (1) the work of F&O, (2) F&O and the WCC, (3) the Latin American context, (4) baptism, eucharist and ministry, (5) towards the common expression of the apostolic faith today, (6) steps towards visible unity, (7) the unity of the church and the renewal of human community, and (8) the community of women and men in the church.

For the first time, the F&O commission met on Latin American soil, where many strands of liberation theology\* and new forms of church community had their origin. Building on the theological convergences formulated in the F&O studies on "Giving Account of the Hope" and the "Common Statement of Our Faith", the Lima conference integrated these understandings in a long-term model for a common affirmation of the faith of the apostolic church, under the title "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today". The final text of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* was unanimously approved as having reached "such a stage of maturity that it is now ready for transmission to the churches"; it

quickly acquired the shorthand title BEM. In deciding to pursue anew the earlier study on "Unity of the Church – Unity of Humankind", the conference agreed to place the classic F&O concern for church unity "on a broadened horizon and to develop its implications for Christian service and mission in the contemporary world".

**Stavanger 1985 (Norway), *Faith and Order*.**\* The three programme areas were (1) baptism, eucharist and ministry, (2) apostolic faith, and (3) unity and renewal.

The conference reviewed the reception\* process of BEM, i.e., how the stated convergences were being received by the churches. The two major projects, "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today" and "The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community", were re-examined. Other continuing concerns were F&O and ecumenical spirituality (Week of Prayer for Christian Unity\* and Ecumenical Prayer Cycle\*), proposals for a fifth consultation of united/uniting churches and church union negotiations, bilateral and multilateral dialogues, and the call to a fifth world conference on Faith and Order. The commission recalled that it was 75 years since Charles Brent had conceived the idea of a world conference on issues of faith and order (see *Faith and Order, history*).

**Larnaca 1986 (Cyprus), *interchurch aid, refugee and world service*.**\* The theme was "Called to Be Neighbours".

Since the first world consultation on interchurch aid (Swanwick 1966), far-reaching changes had taken place in the world situation. By 1986 the optimism of the mid-1960s about the possibilities of development\* had given way to a mood of frustration and an awareness that the people and the churches were losing in the global struggle for justice.\* It was against this backdrop that this second world consultation on ICA, refugee and world service took place. There was relatively little discussion of development or projects; rather, discussions centred on the struggle for life and the need to be in solidarity with people. The emphasis was on a comprehensive, preventive and liberating diakonia\* in the discipleship of Jesus Christ (see *refugees*).

**El Escorial 1987 (Spain), *sharing of ecumenical resources*.** The theme was

"Koinonia: Sharing Life in a World Community".

This world meeting climaxed a ten-year ecumenical discussion of "resource sharing" that had been initiated by the Nairobi assembly (1975). A central emphasis was that the resources to be shared ecumenically are not only the material wealth and power which a few control but also the churches' rich theological understandings, spiritualities, cultures, expressions through music, prayer, song and dance and, perhaps most important of all, the testimonies of those who are suffering. It raised serious questions about ecumenical relief and development programmes, including those of the WCC.

**San Antonio 1989 (Texas, USA), *world mission and evangelism*.**\* Under the theme "Your Will Be Done: Mission in Christ's Way", sections studied the topics (1) turning to the living God, (2) participating in suffering and struggle, (3) the earth is the Lord's, and (4) towards renewed communities in mission.

With its great diversity of participants (including, for the first time, consultants of other faiths) and a wide-ranging agenda, San Antonio was planned not to feature authoritative ecumenists instructing the delegates but to create a context in which persons active in mission could address each other. Its two significant trends, said the conference message, were "the spirit of universality (catholicity) of the gathering, and its concern for the fullness of the gospel", holding "in creative tension spiritual and material needs, prayer and action, evangelism and social responsibility, dialogue and witness, power and vulnerability, local and universal". Especially extensive were discussions of the tension between dialogue\* and witness\* which, a section report said, "we appreciate... and do not attempt to resolve".

**Budapest 1989 (Hungary), *Faith and Order*.**\* A major item on the agenda was the responses to BEM, the 1982 F&O text on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*.\* In a statement to the churches on BEM, the commission said the text has "created a new ecumenical situation. It expressed broad convergence on basic Christian affirmations, and revealed sometimes surprising agreements." But, it added, "we still have far to go" in terms of "further growth into unity".

It noted serious disagreements which persist on “the relation of word and sacrament, the understanding of sacrament and sacramentality, the threefold ministry, succession in ministry, the ministry of men and women, the relation of men and women, the relation of scripture and Tradition, and ecclesiology”.

The meeting also reviewed plans for the fifth world conference on F&O, projected for 1993, and received a report which suggested, as part of future F&O work, a consultation on “unresolved ecumenical issues concerning ministry, especially the ordination of women”, and more attention to “the gifts of the Holy Spirit within the church”. Another report urged a major study on ecumenical perspectives on ecclesiology, concentrating on “basic perspectives of unity and diversity” (see **church**).

**Seoul 1990 (Korea), world convocation on justice, peace and the integrity of creation.\*** Coming after regional consultations, the convocation completed the first stage of a process initiated by a decision at the WCC assembly in Vancouver (1983) “to engage member churches in a conciliar process of mutual commitment (covenant) to justice, peace and the integrity of all creation” (JPIC). A report of the convocation’s responses to a preparatory document examining contemporary threats to JPIC and offering a “faith perspective” by which Christians may “reflect upon the world” was not fully covered because of unexpectedly long discussion of its first section. Ten affirmations – on power as accountable to God, God’s option for the poor, the equal value of all races and peoples, the creation of male and female in God’s image, truth as the foundation of community, the peace of Jesus Christ, creation as beloved of God, the earth as the Lord’s, the dignity and commitment of the younger generation, and human rights as given by God – provided a “basic direction” for Christian commitment to JPIC. An “Act of Covenanting” (see **covenant**) provided specific examples of “faithful action” in relation to a just economic order, demilitarization of international relations, preservation of the atmosphere from the threat of global warming, and the eradication of racism\* and discrimination.

**Santiago de Compostela 1993 (Spain), Faith and Order.\*** The four major sections

of this F&O world conference were (1) the understanding of koinonia and its implications, (2) confessing the one faith to the glory of God, (3) sharing a common life in Christ, and (4) called to common witness for a renewed world.

With its 400 delegates amongst whom could be found many young theologians, more than 30% women and an official delegation of the Roman Catholic Church, the conference reflected the widening and changing participation in the work of Faith and Order. One key task was to receive and review the three major F&O studies since Montreal 1963, namely “Confessing the Apostolic Faith Today”, “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry” and “Church and World”. Following the WCC assembly in Canberra the earlier concept of “unity”, which too easily could be misunderstood as a term enforcing uniformity and a static monocultural approach, was replaced by the biblical concept of “koinonia” in which the church was understood as God’s privileged instrument for the restoration of community with all of creation and which was said to emphasize the relational and the multidimensional character of church unity. A question present in most of the sections concerned common structures of leadership, decision making and mutual accountability between the churches; these were understood as consequences of the concept of koinonia if taken seriously. Among the recommendations was the invitation to work for a mutual recognition of baptism and a common baptismal formula, a study on a universal, reconciled ministry for the church as well as wider attention to the implications of ecclesiology and ethics.

**Mendes 1993 (Brazil), Ecumenical Global Gathering of Youth and Students (EGGYS).** Some 524 young people from 81 countries representing ten international Christian youth organizations came together to discuss how to strengthen youth participation in the ecumenical movement and to reflect on common mission of Christian youth and student organizations worldwide. Reports were presented on themes such as economy, society and alternative models; violation of women’s rights; education for life; environment and development; unity in a fragmented world. The global youth gather-

ing called for a new vision concerning the involvement of youth in the life and renewal of churches.

**Salvador 1996 (Brazil), world mission and evangelism.\*** Under the theme “Called To One Hope – the Gospel in Diverse Cultures”, sections studied the following sub-themes: (1) authentic witness within each culture, (2) gospel and identity in community, (3) local congregations in pluralist societies, (4) one gospel – diverse expressions.

At the close of nearly a century of debate, study and cooperation in mission which began in 1910 at Edinburgh, this conference clearly demonstrated the fact that the gospel has been proclaimed around the world and that the centre of gravity in Christianity had shifted towards the South. The 574 participants represented the largest ecumenical conference to date on the key issues of inculturation, gospel and culture, and culture-sensitive evangelism. Major challenges were addressed, including the negative effects of economic globalization,\* mission in a Western culture, accountability in mission and equipping local congregations for mission (ecumenical renewal of local congregational life).

**Moshi 1996 (Tanzania), Faith and Order.\*** Major themes of this first plenary commission meeting after Santiago (1993) were the ongoing studies on ecclesiology (the church as koinonia), ecumenical hermeneutics, ecclesiology and ethics (costly obedience – towards a global communion of moral witnessing), worship and confessing the apostolic faith today. A main theme was highlighted in a keynote address on the “hermeneutics of unity”, demanding an inter-relation between a coherent ecumenical hermeneutics inspired by the four essential marks of the church (unity, holiness, apostolicity, catholicity) and visible structures of mutual accountability.

**Harare 1998 (Zimbabwe), festival of the Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women.** Held prior to the WCC assembly in Harare, the festival was the culminating point for the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women\* (1988-98). More than 1000 women and 70 men from all churches and regions in the world underlined the importance of the key issues

of the Decade and its ongoing significance for the life and renewal of the churches. For the first time, violence against women and violence within the church was made the main topic. Participants composed a letter to churches and other concerned communities in which violence against women was portrayed as sin against humanity and the earth as well as a violation of the Body of Christ. Ethical and ecclesial issues like the ordination of women, abortion, divorce and different sexual orientations were intensely debated but remained controversial. The festival was notable for the strong and rich contributions of African women.

See also **bibliographies, WCC assemblies.**

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## ECUMENICAL COUNCILS

ENGLISH has only one word to render two different realities which Latin, French and German, for example, designate by two words: *consilium* (*conseil, Rat*), as in *World Council of Churches*; and *concilium* (*concile, Konzil*), as in the ecumenical *councils* of the church.

The idea of an ecumenical council and its fundamental role in the church is deeply rooted in almost every Christian tradition. In the ecumenical movement, the ideal of a truly ecumenical council as the most significant way to manifest and to seal the unity of the churches constantly re-emerges but there are considerable differences concerning the conditions required to convene such a council.

## ORIGIN

The fundamental reference for every council is the Jerusalem assembly of Acts 15, with its essential elements of representation of the whole ecclesial community, special assistance of the Holy Spirit,\* and unanimity in the decisions to be applied in the life of the church. Early church writers refer to Matt. 18:20 – “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them” – suggesting an inseparable link between the councils and the liturgy in the life of the one undivided church.

The institution of the ecumenical council as such developed in the framework of the Roman-Byzantine empire. In the presence of grave questions of faith\* or church order\* that threatened to divide the church\* and the Christian world, the emperor took the initiative to convene the bishops of the oikoumene, the inhabited world identified with the empire. This is the precise origin of “ecumenical”, meaning “universal”. Personally or through his delegates, the emperor also supervised the debates without direct interference in the discussions – at least in principle. He left to the bishops alone the theological decisions, which he then confirmed and gave the force of law throughout the empire.

### CONDITIONS

The early councils themselves did not determine the conditions for a council to be received (see **reception**) as ecumenical. These developed gradually in history, sometimes through long confrontations and when it was necessary to refute those assemblies which claimed to be ecumenical but could not be received as such because their decisions did not conform with the scriptures and the ancient Tradition. Docility to the Holy Spirit and strict fidelity to the scriptures are obviously primary requirements.

Only at the seventh ecumenical council (Nicaea II 787), in order to invalidate the iconoclastic council of Hieria (754), were the criteria clarified. The presidents of the main churches must be in agreement; in particular, the five patriarchs (the “pentarchy” of Chalcedon 451) of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem and above all the bishop of Rome must collaborate and participate, at least through representatives. The decisions should be coherent with previous councils and reach out beyond the regional to the ends of the earth: the whole church must be able to identify with the council and its decisions. Representatives of all situations and vocations in the church can be invited, but according to Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions, only the bishops have the right to vote.

The Roman Catholic Church (RCC) has strongly emphasized the essential role of the bishop of Rome (see **primacy**): for a council to be ecumenical, the pope must convene it, preside over it (personally or through his

delegates) and approve its decisions (1983 canon laws, 338-41). This later Western development cannot be applied strictly to those first seven councils celebrated in common by the East and the West. The majority view in the Orthodox church is that a council is in fact ecumenical only if the whole church accepts its decision, although some hold that this does not correspond entirely to the self-awareness of the ancient councils. This is the primary reason why the future pan-Orthodox “holy and great council”, in preparation since the 1960s, does not want to appropriate the adjective “ecumenical”, but leave that to the later judgment of the whole church.

The aim of a council is the safeguarding and growth of communion\* in the faith and the sacraments.\* Therefore the normal way of proceeding is not to settle for a mere majority vote but to seek as much unanimity as possible. An ecumenical council has reached its final objective only when it results in a strengthening of full communion.

### AUTHORITY

The authority of the council is no more than the authority of truth, and truth is guaranteed when it is proclaimed in conformity with scripture\* and in accordance with the faith of the whole church, throughout the world and history.

For the RCC, the Second Vatican Council\* (1962-65) stipulates that in the ecumenical council the college of bishops exercises in a solemn way the supreme power it enjoys over the universal church, in union with the bishop of Rome, its head (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church 22); this emphasis on the essential and organic role of the pope is characteristic of the RCC. In the Orthodox church the ecumenical council also represents the supreme authority of teaching and decision making: once a council has been received as ecumenical, its authority is final and its decisions are binding for everyone everywhere (see **teaching authority**). For Luther, the authority belongs only to scripture, and the councils have no other authority than results from their conformity with scripture. For Calvin, the authority of a council depends on its docility to the Spirit, its faithfulness to scripture and its expression of the unity\* of the church.

The Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions speak of the infallibility\* of the ecumenical council as the official expression of the infallibility of the church itself. But it would not be historically correct to project this notion back to the first councils, whose consciousness of being an infallible authority was not explicit; rather, they had the assurance of being in the truth whenever they were united in spirit and heart with the universal church in direct line with the apostolic Tradition.\* Luther rejects the infallibility of the ecumenical councils by virtue of the *sola scriptura*; in his view, councils can and did err (Leipzig disputation 1519).

### LIST

The first four general councils occupy a privileged place in most Christian traditions because of their importance in the formulation of Christological and Trinitarian dogmas. Several ancient writers compared them to the four gospels. The first (Nicea I\* 325) condemned Arianism and defined Christ as being of one essence (*homoousios*) with the Father; the second (Constantinople I\* 381) proclaimed the divinity of the Holy Spirit; the third (Ephesus 431) condemned Nestorianism and defined the unity of the person of Christ; the fourth (Chalcedon\* 451) condemned monophysitism and defined two natures (divine and human) in the one person of Christ.

The Assyrian Church of the East\* has built its own tradition on the first two councils, and ignores the following ones. The Oriental Orthodox churches\* recognize the first three councils but reject the fourth (Chalcedon), mainly for reasons of terminology and political circumstances. Luther recognized the special status of the first four councils because of their Christological importance, but allowed them no other authority than that of their faithfulness to scriptures. Calvin wrote: "We readily receive the ancient councils like those of Nicea, Constantinople, Ephesus, Chalcedon, and those similar we honour and reverence" (*Institutes* 4.9.8), but he is almost silent about the councils that followed. The Anglican formularies accept the first four councils.

The churches of the East and West held three other councils together – Constantinople II (553), Constantinople III (680-81) and

Nicea II (787) – which the RC and Eastern Orthodox churches unanimously recognize as ecumenical. These seven councils, often called the councils of the undivided church, are so high in Orthodox consciousness that the Eastern Orthodox church calls itself "the church of the seven ecumenical councils". In the Eastern church no council after the separation from the West (1054) receives the title "ecumenical".

The Latin church continued to convene other general councils in the middle ages and later. Afterwards, in the RCC some of them came to be entitled "ecumenical", but without any official decision to that effect: Constantinople IV (869-70), Lateran I (1123), Lateran II (1139), Lateran III (1179), Lateran IV (1215), Lyons I (1245), Lyons II (1274), Vienne (1311-12), Constance (1414-18), Basel-Ferrara-Florence (1431-45), Lateran V (1512-17), Trent\* (1545-63), Vatican I (1869-70), Vatican II\* (1962-65). A possible response to the question of whether this constitutes an obstacle on the road to unity may be the formula of Pope Paul VI on the 700th anniversary of Lyons II in 1974: he never used the term "ecumenical" but instead, "the sixth of the general synods held in the West".

### THE CONCILIAR MOVEMENT OF THE LATE MIDDLE AGES

At a time of great tensions and profound divisions in the Western church (e.g., the so-called great Western schism, 1378-1417), the conciliar movement gained considerable strength (see **conciliarity**), since a general council was considered the only authority capable of restoring unity to the church and introducing the radical reforms needed. Already in the 12th century some canonists who did not question the principle of the primacy of Rome nevertheless held that the general council constituted the supreme authority in the church, to which the pope himself was subject. The council of Constance (1414-18) proclaimed that the pope owed obedience to the general council in everything concerning the faith, the extirpation of schism and the reform of the church; it also fixed a periodic meeting of the future councils which would govern the church. In response to this provoked crisis of papal authority, the council of Basel (1431) was con-

voked. Anti-papal sentiment and extreme conciliarism prevailed, but that was short-lived and the papacy emerged reinforced. The ineffective fifth Lateran council (1512-17) practically marked the end of the conciliar movement. Internal quarrels prevented the application of its urgent reforms, while the fear of a resurgence of the conciliar movement made the papacy reluctant to convene a new council. All this had far-reaching consequences for the events surrounding the Reformation of the 16th century.

### TOWARDS A "GENUINELY UNIVERSAL COUNCIL"

In the course of a gradual clarification of the aim of the ecumenical movement ("the nature of the unity we seek"), the WCC New Delhi assembly (1961) expressed the conviction that the time had come seriously to study the role, methods and influence of the ancient seven ecumenical councils. Faith and Order\* (1964-67) studied the nature and structure of those councils and the significance of the conciliar process in general for the ecumenical movement. The Uppsala assembly (1968) asked the churches "to work for the time when a genuinely universal council may once more speak for all Christians". The Nairobi assembly's description of the unity we seek as a "conciliar fellowship" (1975) must be seen in the same perspective: the 1961 New Delhi approach (the unity of all Christians "in each place") was thereby enlarged to a confession of faith and a life of communion on the universal level; and conciliarity was regarded as an integral part of the essence of the church.

After the Vancouver assembly (1983) "conciliar process" designated the common commitment to "justice, peace and integrity of creation". Within the WCC the Orthodox especially objected to the term "conciliar", since for them as for the RCC a genuine council already presupposes unity in faith and must meet some precise criteria. The WCC then abandoned the term, though Christians in some places continued to use it and to consider the different convocations on the local, regional or global level as provisional stages on the long road to unity. One day they would like to celebrate this unity together in a gathering that would represent all Christians and would be a visible

sign of communion among all churches scattered around the world. New voices in that sense were heard as the third millennium drew near, including the first draft (1996) of the WCC's policy statement "Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the World Council of Churches" – though this reference was not included in the final version (1997).

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### ECUMENICAL DECADE: CHURCHES IN SOLIDARITY WITH WOMEN (1988-98)

FROM THE OUTSET the World Council of Churches was visibly committed to women and to providing a space for their voices and concerns. The first assembly (Amsterdam 1948) commended a report on "The Life and Work of Women in the Church" to the churches for serious reflection and action; and each subsequent assembly also made specific reference to the participation of women and called for special focus on their concerns and struggles in church and society.

The conference on "Sexism in the 1970s" (Berlin 1974) shifted the focus of work from "cooperation between women and men" to issues of social and economic justice for women. The fifth assembly (Nairobi 1975), taking place during the UN International Women's Year, called for a theological and biblical enquiry into the insights and experiences of women, leading to the worldwide study process on the "Community of Women and Men in the Church".\* This study drew on and encouraged the emerging women's movements in churches of all regions of the world, which were raising questions regarding women's

participation and representation. Yet a report to the WCC central committee in 1985, at the end of the UN Decade for Women, established the need for more focused attention by the churches. The UN Decade had not addressed the churches in a direct way, and a questionnaire sent to the churches to assess the impact of the UN process on the status and place of women in the church met with little response.

At its next meeting in January 1987, the central committee decided to observe an Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women (1988-98) so that the energy generated by the UN Decade could be sustained. The Decade was officially launched at Easter 1988 with the following objectives: (1) empowering women to challenge oppressive structures in the global community, their churches and communities; (2) affirming – through shared leadership and decision making, theology and spirituality – the decisive contributions of women in churches and communities; (3) giving visibility to women's perspectives and actions in the work and struggle for justice, peace and the integrity of creation; (4) enabling the churches to free themselves of racism, sexism and classism, and from teachings and practices that discriminate against women; and (5) encouraging the churches to take actions in solidarity with women.

The Decade was described by a woman in India as “a gift from God to the churches”, an opportunity for the churches and the ecumenical movement to transform into action the many commitments they had made to women since the WCC came into being. There is no doubt that there was a burst of enthusiasm when the Decade was launched and many plans were made to act in solidarity with women. But what is more significant is that particularly the women of the churches grasped the moment to articulate some of their deepest aspirations and longings in an attempt to ensure responsive action by the churches.

At the mid-point of the Decade in 1992, a group of women from all regions decided that rather than evaluation of the churches, critical reflection with them was needed, in order to affirm the progress made towards becoming a truly inclusive community of women and men. Such a process could also

provide an opportunity for churches to analyze the obstacles in the way of change and to plan strategies for action in the remaining years of the Decade.

An ambitious plan of ecumenical visits to all the member churches of WCC was proposed as a means of engaging the churches in this dialogue, using the image of the apostle Paul of “living letters”. Over 70 teams, each composed of two women and two men from member churches of WCC, visited more than 330 churches, 68 national councils of churches and 650 women's groups in all regions of the world. While sensitive to the context of each member church and listening carefully to the concerns they raised, the “living letters” also challenged the churches to greater and more concerted action. Each team prepared a report, shared with the churches visited and subsequently reviewed by an ecumenical group of readers, who drew out common issues facing women and the churches as well as recording the specificities in particular churches and contexts.

Their composite report highlighted the deep love women have for the church and their willingness to commit themselves to work in the church. But in many churches, women who are active, strong and ready to carry forward the church's mission are not recognized nor given leadership for their ministries, nor are they admitted into key areas of participation. The report also exposed the many obstacles remaining: “As ‘living letters’ we encountered three issues of deep concern to women in all regions: violence against women, even within the ‘safe womb’ of family and church; the impact of increasing racism and xenophobia; and the effect of the global economic crisis on women's lives.”

Summing up the vision after ten years, the report noted that the Decade and the visits “have raised tremendous expectations among women for real change... We have expressed our vision of the Decade... as an unfolding process, a movement for transformation that will continue to build momentum beyond 1998 and into the new millennium.”

The Decade officially concluded in December 1998 with a festival held in Harare, Zimbabwe, just before the WCC's eighth as-

sembly. More than a thousand women, joined by about 30 men, assessed what the Decade had and had not achieved, outlined the tasks remaining, and urged that the churches move in the new millennium “from solidarity to accountability”. The Festival challenged the ecumenical movement to continue to raise the many issues women wrestle with: questions related to the participation of women in the life of the church and their various ministries, including the ordination of women; violence against women and children; economic discrimination; and racial violence and exclusion. There was also the strong call to deal more consistently with the ecclesiological and theological challenges that are at the heart of a true community of women and men. To achieve the unity the churches seek calls on them to roll away the stones of violence and injustice, and the obstacles to participation that women had identified through the Decade process. The Decade merely opened the way for the churches to move into deeper commitments and more resolute actions.

ARUNA GNANADASON

■ *Living Letters*, WCC, 1997 ■ M. Oduyoye, *Who will Roll the Stone Away?*, WCC, 1990 ■ G. Paterson, *Still Flowing: Women, God and Church*, WCC, 1999 ■ E. Raiser and B. Robra, eds, *With Love and with Passion: Women's Life and Work in the Worldwide Church*, Geneva, WCC, 2001.

## ECUMENICAL DIRECTORIES

DURING the Second Vatican Council\* discussions of the Decree on Ecumenism,\* many bishops asked for detailed directives and guidelines for pastoral practices. In response, the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (SPCU) – since 1989, a Pontifical Council (Pcpcu)\* – has released a series of such documents.

The 1967 *Directory, Part One* treated the setting up of diocesan and national ecumenical commissions, the validity of baptisms conferred in other Christian communions, and “spiritual ecumenism” and the “sharing of spiritual activities”, including liturgical worship and occasional eucharistic hospitality. *Part Two* (1969) outlined ecumenical principles and practices for seminar-

ies, colleges and universities. In 1970 the SPCU published reflections and suggestions concerning ecumenical dialogue; and in 1975, a study on forms of ecumenical collaboration at regional, national and local levels. SPCU officers also were consulted for the Vatican's new norms in mixed (and interchurch) marriages (1970), the reception of adult baptized Christians into the RCC (1972), and the celebration of the eucharist for deceased non-Catholics (1976).

While the RCC was developing an ecumenical tradition of reflective experience, John Paul II promulgated new codes of canon law for the Western Catholic church (1983) and in 1990 the code of canons of the Eastern (Catholic) churches\* (1990) and the universal catechism of the RCC (1993). Many of the canons legislate ecumenical concerns, for “it pertains especially to the entire college of bishops and to the apostolic see to foster among Catholics the ecumenical movement” (CCL, 755.1).

So after 20 years of RC ecumenical thought and practices, and after consultation with all the bishops' conferences, the Pcpcu in 1993 promulgated a comprehensive, coherent *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms of Ecumenism* (ED), “approved and confirmed by the authority of Pope John Paul II”. “While fully respecting the competence of local and territorial church authorities, and recognizing that many judgments... can best be made at the local level”, the Directory “gives general norms of universal application to guide Catholic participation in ecumenical activity”, so as to guarantee that it “is in accordance with the unity of faith and discipline that binds Catholics together” (n.7).

The Directory presents the RC theological foundations for ecumenical life and action (teaching, attitudes, motivations and spirituality); the ecumenical formation of all clergy and laity (studying the scriptures, preaching, catechesis, liturgy) in various settings (family, parish, schools, seminaries, theology faculties, Catholic universities, pastoral ministers' continuing education, hospitals, lay associations and institutes); “spiritual activities” (prayer in common, baptismal celebrations, sharing in sacramental life, especially the eucharist, marriages and mixed marriages, funerals); ecumenical co-

operation and common witness (social and cultural life; peace, justice and stewardship of creation; missionary activities; common Bible translation and distribution; catechetics; medical work, relief and development work, communications media); and church structures (college of bishops, bishops' conferences, patriarchal synods, dioceses and their ecumenical commissions; religious communities and lay organizations; the PCPCU).

While reactions to the Directory from other churches have lamented certain rules seen as too restrictive (e.g. on mixed marriages, liturgical celebrations and the role of women in the church), many praised the seriousness of the RC pastoral commitment to the ecumenical movement; as one of them wrote, "Would that many of the Protestant churches took their ecumenical life seriously enough to produce such comprehensive guidelines... in the light of their own ecclesial self-understanding!"

TOM STRANSKY

- "Ecumenical Directory", *IS*, 84, 1993
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**ECUMENICAL LEARNING**

ECUMENICAL learning has always been considered an important task through which Christians and churches have come together to work towards visible Christian unity\* and the renewal\* of the human community. It is only possible to discern, acknowledge and if necessary overcome existing theological, denominational, historical and cultural differences among Christians and churches when comprehensive learning takes place. Ecumenical learning has long been seen as an outcome of anything done in an ecumenical spirit or context (meetings, visits, joint services, interchurch aid, etc.) – a "learning by experience, by a direct encounter and confrontation with situations in a world horizon" (Werner Simpfendörfer). Since the mid-1950s it has been identi-

fied as a fundamental task and a distinctive programme within the ecumenical movement and the churches.

The WCC central committee in 1957 described ecumenical learning as "fostering understanding of, commitment to and informed participation in the whole ecumenical process. The vision of the one, missionary church in process of renewal, when it is apprehended by Christians, leads them to an ecumenical commitment, i.e. to participation in the process of letting the churches be more truly the church." Ecumenical learning (or "ecumenical education" or "education for ecumenism" or "ecumenical formation") thus cannot be limited to the communication of facts (history, background, structures and functions of the ecumenical movement) as part of an educational curriculum. Even imparting information about differences between Christians and their churches or about convergences being achieved is only part of a much more comprehensive task of equipping Christians to live as a liberating and reconciling community in a divided world. To be sure, ecumenical learning must incorporate this kind of information if ecumenism is to be more than a sort of sentimental "being together". Roman Catholic participants in ecumenical discussions about ecumenical learning (e.g. in the Joint Working Group\*) have emphasized sharing knowledge about others as integral for the formation of priests and laypeople.

Equally important for ecumenical learning is an involvement in the deeper levels of ecumenical experience in the life of the Christian community – for example, at worship, in service and witness, by sharing life with others and becoming vulnerable to their suffering, by becoming neighbours to strangers. Ecumenical learning should thus be described as a dimension rather than a segment of the whole educational task of the church, although it also appears in particular learning projects or programmes, such as development education or education for mission. Its pedagogical approach moves from *teaching about* to *learning together with*.

A more precise description of the task of ecumenical learning requires identifying three elements in the understanding of "ecu-

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menical”: the *ecclesiological* element, which gives rise to the question of how Christians of different churches, confessions and denominations can move towards more visible unity (see **church**); the *missionary* element, which requires a global awareness and a new understanding of the inter-relatedness of the proclamation of the gospel and social commitment, of evangelism and humanization (see **evangelism, mission**); and the *social-ethical* element, which, by linking the unity of Christians and the renewal of humankind, stresses commitment to the cause of justice, peace and the integrity of creation in a world seen as a dwelling place for all. One or another of these factors may predominate in a particular learning project but none can be completely lacking. This distinguishes ecumenical learning from the global learning, or international learning or multi-cultural learning programmes initiated by UNESCO and other organizations, which have much in common with it.

In the early 1960s the call for a theory of ecumenical learning and for new content, methods and experiments became more distinct. The need for substantial curricular materials for theological, Christian and religious education enabling children, young people, adults, clergy and laity to understand and take part in the ecumenical process became increasingly evident. Ernst Lange argued for a theory and methodology which enabled people, while remaining rooted in a specific denominational, cultural, historical and socio-political context, to become ecumenically committed and share the experiences of others.

Further discussions led the WCC's sixth assembly Vancouver 1983) to describe learning as “a constitutive dimension for the church as church” and to enumerate several characteristics of ecumenical learning: (1) it *transcends barriers* – of origin and biography, individual as well as community limitations, because it responds to the exhortation of the word of God\* and the far-reaching horizons of God's promise; (2) it is *action-oriented*, not satisfied with information but seeking to enable Christians to act in order to learn, to be right with God and with one another in word and deed; (3) it is done *in community*, in which people are asked to establish rela-

tionships with one another and also with those who are far away and with what is unfamiliar; (4) it means *learning together*, detecting the global in the local, the unfamiliar in the context of one's own environment, in order to become aware of one's own conditions and implications; (5) it is *inter-cultural*, promoting the encounter of different cultures, traditions and forms of life because only a widening of perspectives will bring about an experience of the riches of creation\* in nature,\* history\* and culture;\* (6) it is a *total process*: social and religious learning are not separated from one another but constitute a unity.

ULRICH BECKER

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## ECUMENICAL NEWS INTERNATIONAL

THE ROOTS of ENI and its predecessor, Ecumenical Press Service (EPS), lie in “ecumenical journalism” which began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In the wake of the Stockholm conference of 1925, and under the umbrella of the Life and Work movement launched by that gathering, the International Christian Press Commission began its work. Among other things, it circulated “ecumenical letters” among church leaders and journalists.

Towards the end of 1933, this ecumenical communication activity was named the International Christian Press Information Service (ICPIS). In the 1930s the situation of the church in Germany in the face of Nazism was a major focus of attention. The first in

the ICPIIS “information series” appeared in March 1934. Eventually the name was changed to EPS.

Although EPS was officially a service of the WCC and several other ecumenical bodies, the WCC alone funded EPS and its French-language counterpart, Service oecuménique de presse et d’information (SOEPI). EPS and SOEPI gained high credibility in ecumenical circles, but throughout the 1980s there was talk of a more ambitious news service, with a wider sponsorship, a wider news range and aimed at a much wider audience.

In 1994 this project came to fruition with the establishment of ENI, which replaced EPS and SOEPI and was sponsored by the WCC, LWF, WARC and CEC. ENI was set up, initially within the WCC structures, as an editorially independent news service to disseminate ecumenical and Christian news to the secular and religious media. From the start, ENI published news rather than information, and subscribers were required to pay.

During the late 1990s ENI built a strong image, thanks largely to its network of “stringers” around the world and to rigorous editing by the Geneva staff. As its establishment coincided with the growth of the Internet, ENI was able to use new technology to produce a daily news service in English and French. In 2001 ENI was established as an independent association under Swiss law.

See also **communication in the ecumenical movement**.

THOMAS HARTLEY DORRIS and  
EDMUND DOOGUE

## ECUMENICAL PRAYER CYCLE

THE ECUMENICAL Prayer Cycle (EPC), a book of prayers for each area of the world, was produced initially in response to a request made by the WCC fifth assembly (Nairobi 1975) that ways be found of deepening spiritual bonds among the churches of the world. First published in 1978 under the title *For All God’s People*, a subsequent edition, authorized by the central committee in 1984, became available under the slightly

revised title *With All God’s People*, in 1989.

Arising out of the long-standing practice in the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva of praying regularly for member churches around the world, the EPC represents a systematic attempt to make available for wider use a cycle of prayer which ensures that peoples and churches all over the world are prayed for on a regular basis during the course of the 52 weeks of the year. It has been described by one user as “the only satisfying way of praying in this kind of interdependent world”.

Consisting of maps, information and appropriate prayers, translated into a number of different languages and in some instances considerably subsidized, the first EPC was welcomed as a significant contribution to ecumenical prayer. It has been used in a variety of different situations: in Sunday worship, in theological colleges, by religious orders, in lay training academies, by Christian councils and by many individuals. It seemed a natural choice for Christians to use in worship in a well-known Indian teaching hospital already devoted to healing and wholeness and in the setting of a church committed to unity. The use of the cycle imparted a sense of support and solidarity to hard-pressed pastors in a particularly isolated part of Africa, and it also provided a focus of intercession in the course of a weekly celebration of the eucharist in a Lutheran parish in New York. It has been available, in a number of different languages, in the chapel of a well-known international airport, giving travellers a global picture of the church, present in every part of the world.

The change of title for the second edition was reflected in its contents, with an increase of prayer material from the regions themselves, thus giving users a better opportunity worldwide to pray *with* their sisters and brothers using, wherever possible, the words they themselves might use on matters about which they would be most concerned to pray. Many concerns – unity, peace, justice, cities, refugees, young people, unemployment – are held in common by Christians nearly everywhere, while others, very specific to an area and situation, call for special understanding and sensitivity. Differences in circumstances and of temperament result in

a wide variety of collects, litanies, creeds, lamentations and thanksgivings.

In keeping with the underlying theme of interdependence, the current EPC moves from one yearly cycle to the next with the closing prayer of the Vancouver assembly: "As the earth keeps turning, hurtling through space; and night falls and day breaks from land to land; let us remember people – waking, sleeping, being born, and dying – of one world and of one humanity. Let us go from here in peace." The cycle in the 1989 edition has expired and a new edition is in preparation. Meanwhile, amendments and updates have been made by individuals and regional ecumenical councils for their own use.

See also **prayer in the ecumenical movement, spirituality in the ecumenical movement.**

JOHN CARDEN

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## ECUMENICAL SHARING OF RESOURCES

FOR MANY churches, involvement in sending and receiving personnel and funds for mission,\* interchurch aid\* and development\* has had a considerable effect on their international relationships and ecumenical participation. The WCC in turn has played an active role in fostering reflection on relationships in mission and promoting sharing of personnel ecumenically. Against this background, the Ecumenical Sharing of Resources (ESR) emerged as a conceptual framework for new relationships that would free the churches from traditional roles of being either a sending (giving) or a receiving body and enable them to overcome structures of inequality and dependency between

rich and poor. In some countries the issues of ESR are often taken up under the term "partnership".

The vision of ESR implies a broad understanding of what is meant by "resources", including spirituality, culture and human resources as well as finance and material goods. It calls for just relationships based on equality, which allow for mutual accountability, sharing of power and true interdependence. It requires holding together mission, development and service, which are often treated separately, both in theology and in church organizational structures.

*The study process.* Ecumenical reflection on resource sharing has been a consultative process involving a gradually widening range of participants: first, the church-related agencies for world service and development in the North and churches and national councils of churches in the South; later, agencies for world mission, regional ecumenical organizations and network groups related to the WCC.

ESR began in 1976 as a WCC study after the Nairobi assembly, where interchurch aid, mission and development had been discussed in the wake of the debate on the moratorium proposal by some church leaders in Africa and Asia. This had raised fundamental questions about the selfhood of the receiving churches and the self-understanding of churches accustomed to seeing themselves solely as senders or givers. A report was made to the central committee in 1980; it issued a message to the churches and a study guide, *Empty Hands*, reflecting the basic concept of ESR described above.

Attention then shifted to elaborating a new "resource-sharing system" for the WCC, implementing the ESR principles. The sixth assembly (Vancouver 1983) emphasized ESR as a priority for WCC programmes and insisted on a "comprehensive understanding... as part of a continuing dialogue on the mission and service of the church... to facilitate models..., not a heavy, centralized structure". In response, a third phase in the process began, aiming to formulate an ecumenical discipline for the sharing of resources to which all participants, including the WCC, would be called to commit themselves, in the recognition that translating the concept of ESR into structural

changes of the existing project system and relationships of giving and receiving would require such a commitment.

The world consultation on ESR in October 1987 in El Escorial, Spain, adopted the commitment text "Guidelines for Sharing", including recommendations regarding women and youth, and formulated a "Common Discipline of Ecumenical Sharing" which spelled out its biblical-theological basis and steps for implementing ecumenical sharing locally, regionally and globally. In August 1988 the central committee received the guidelines and recommendations, affirmed the WCC's own commitment and called on the churches to implement the discipline in their own situation.

The ESR discussion related to the broader process of continuing reflection on ecumenical diakonia\* within the WCC's interchurch aid\* section (CICARWS until 1992, then the Unit on Sharing and Service) and its partners, especially the large church-related development agencies in the West. The world consultation on interchurch aid (Larnaca 1986) placed the vision of ESR at the centre of the WCC's diaconal agenda, as reflected in the call of the Larnaca declaration for a "comprehensive diakonia", i.e. a prophetic, pastoral and reconciling service, not simply charity, which involves the whole people of God in the context of local churches in every place and continent.

*Theological perspectives.* The close link between ESR and the quest for unity\* was reflected in the theme of the El Escorial meeting: "Koinonia – Sharing Life in a World Community". It belongs to the essence of the local church\* to be a sharing community, rooted in the eucharist,\* from where it is sent out to be Christ's body, broken and shared in the world. Similarly, the global fellowship of churches engaged in the ecumenical movement should reflect the image of the body. The search for the real meaning of the eucharist as the body broken for the world and for eucharistic unity is therefore closely related to the task of building the ecumenical community of sharing.

During the latter part of the 1990s, the approach of the year 2000 and the 50th anniversary of the WCC (1998) stimulated ecumenical reflection on sharing in terms of the biblical jubilee tradition, and the WCC Unit on Sharing and Service adopted a systematic

framework for its work entitled "Strategy for Jubilee". The spirituality of the jubilee tradition brought to the ESR process a challenge which was both theological and practical. From a Christological perspective, the jubilee was seen as calling churches and Christians to live with the rhythms of liberation and to proclaim good news to the poor at the particular points of pain, oppression and alienation in the world, and thus to confess Jesus as the Christ who is the herald of the jubilee, messenger and enactor of liberation.

This challenge from the jubilee tradition to the ESR process was significant in the broader ecumenical debate about how to realize the vision of the WCC as a fellowship of churches. The jubilee images require setting koinonia side by side with diakonia, fellowship with costly discipleship, church order with gospel risk.

ESR is thus seen as a concept with significant implications for the fellowship of the churches but also reaching beyond to sharing life with all people. In response to the biblical imperative of compassion and justice, it confronts the injustices of the prevailing world order with its unequal distribution of resources and power, calling for the empowerment of the powerless and for solidarity with the poor.

HUIBERT VAN BEEK

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- M. Taylor, *Not Angels but Agencies: The Ecumenical Response to Poverty – A Primer*, WCC, 1995
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## EDUCATION, ADULT

LEARNING was all-pervasive in communities until it was institutionalized in formal education and ultimately identified with it in the West. That model was exported to other countries during colonial times. In that context, "adult education" was first used for organized learning outside the school system, either for adults who had not finished school

or for those who needed specific skills for jobs. Education was functional and was clearly linked to development (understood as economic needs).

In the late 1960s a strong movement emerged criticizing the school system. Ivan Illich would later speak of “deschooling society”. In the early 1970s, Paulo Freire, a Brazilian known for his work in literacy and author of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, a reflection on his experience, was invited to set up the adult education desk at the WCC. From the start, the thrust of the desk was what he called “liberating education” as against “banking” or “domesticating” education. The aim of education was “conscientization”, imperfectly rendered by “awareness raising”. People should be able to read critically their world, understand their situation in order to transform it through a process of action and reflection. At its core was what would later be called “the option for the poor”, the oppressed, the marginalized to become subjects of their own history\* and not objects of the various powers in society. Dom Helder Camara popularized the word “conscientization”, and Freire’s ideas caught on first in and then outside churches. In Persepolis in 1975, UNESCO recognized the shift in education and came up with the concept of “lifelong learning”, which integrated formal, informal and non-formal education and linked literacy with people’s participation in decision making. Freire’s intuitions inspired a number of community-based programmes and accounted at one time, mostly in third-world countries, for much of the practical involvement of churches in education and the struggles for justice, preparing the way for a theology of liberation.

Some of those intuitions expressed in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* can be summarized as follows: (1) education is never neutral; (2) learners should be involved in selecting the subject matter of the learning; (3) pedagogy should be problem posing and not merely transfer of knowledge from those who know to those who do not; (4) education is not an academic exercise but should contribute to the radical transformation of society so that people should take their destiny in their own hands; (5) learning happens in a dialogue situation.

A wealth of experiences of “adult education” can be found most of all in social movements. Movements of peasants, urban poor, women, and indigenous peoples have affirmed and developed the orientations sensed by Freire. In January 1990, the International Council of Adult Education, presided over by Nita Barrow, a member of the executive committee of the WCC, chose as the theme of its world assembly “Literacy, Popular Education, Democracy: Building the Movement”. In March of the same year the World Conference on Education for All, organized by UN agencies, recognized the overall failure of the formal educational systems and the contribution of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the creative rethinking of basic education. For most of these, education must give access to the bases of social power. Several approaches have developed, and adult education is being covered in participatory research, participatory evaluation, participatory training, development education, peace education, environmental education, workers’ education, women’s education and global education. Many of the pioneering NGOs are either church-based or church-related.

We can say that adult education for lifelong learning today is a process of collective production and diffusion of knowledge involving world-view, vision, values, understanding, attitudes, practices, strategies, skills and tools, as people struggle to survive, to resist oppression and dehumanization, and to build a more human world through communities of solidarity.

PHILIPPE FANCHETTE

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## EDUCATION

EDUCATION and renewal\* have been emphasized in the church from its beginnings. Acts

2:42 attests that the earliest Christians found their unity\* among other things by devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching. Indeed, Luke's task was to pass on the content of the apostles' teaching (Luke 1:1-3; Acts 1:1-2); and the church through the ages has continued to be concerned to teach and learn the Tradition\* for the renewal of the faithful. Timothy is exhorted to "continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:14-15). Here Tradition is stressed – what has been learned from forebears and teachers, including in particular the scriptures, which are inspired and are therefore useful in enabling human beings to come to wisdom (vv.16-17).

By the 2nd century the catechetical school of Alexandria in Egypt was a centre of the intellectual life of the Christian church as well as instructing candidates for church membership in the principles of the Christian faith.\* Emperor Justinian I sought to promote an exclusively Christian form of education, regulating the belief of Christians and removing all traces of pagan philosophy and practices. In 529 he published a decree excluding pagans from positions of public education financed by city councils. The result was a narrower focus of the Christian faith, and the emphasis on correct teaching and doctrine served the imperial idea of total mastery. But Cassiodorus in the West saw the study of the seven liberal arts as the best preparation for higher studies in Christian theology as well as the best defence against non-Christian attacks on the church. The education of the clergy was very much on the agenda of Emperor Charlemagne, who wanted Christian service, including prayers and rituals, to be correctly understood and properly performed (*Admonitio Generalis*, 789; *De Litteris Colendis*, c.781-91).

From the 12th century onwards, scholasticism dominated theology and theological education. In its preoccupation with the relationship between faith and reason and with the nature and attributes of God, scholasticism became so erudite that it neglected the needs of the churches, and the aridity of theology set the stage for the work

of the reformers and thus contributed to the divisions of the church.

**THE REFORMERS**

Martin Luther's emphasis on education was linked to his re-discovery of the priesthood of all believers. Convinced that the entire body of Christian believers is called to be intelligent in the faith, Luther published his small catechism\* for children and a large catechism for adults. Family education received considerable emphasis in his ministry. John Calvin also emphasized education, and his successor Theodore Beza established what eventually became the university of Geneva. The founding of educational institutions was rooted in the conviction that the church needed learned ministers who could set forth the true faith, as well as an educated laity.

The Reformation stimulated fresh approaches to education by broadening the base and scope of learning and devising new methods to quicken and train the human mind and spirit. Philipp Melanchthon and John Higenkegin developed *Volksschule* and reconstructed university education. John Amos Comenius (1592-1670) of Unitas Fratrum pioneered an educational theory which influenced the education of the child as a child. The Catholic Reformation also produced new approaches to education. The Jesuits developed the *ratio studiorum*, and congregations of women (e.g. the Ursulines) arose to pursue education of the masses (see **religious communities**).

Thus education, Christian and theological, was seen as an important element in the renewal of the church. In general, it was oriented to serving the needs of the church; it was not education for its own sake. The view of education was democratic, in the sense that it was for all the faithful, not just the clergy. This foreshadowed the later ecumenical emphases on ministry by all God's people (see **people of God**) and theology by the people.\*

**18TH- AND 19TH-CENTURY DEVELOPMENT**

In 19th-century Europe, education became a function of the state, aimed at preparing young people for service of the state rather than rearing them specifically in the Christian faith. Not only did this reflect

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the distancing of the state from the church but it also led to a distancing of theology faculties from the church (see **church and state**).

Already the Reformers had protested that they were not themselves educated enough in theological matters to be entrusted with the Christian education of the faithful. This concern – and the desire to promote Christian education among the young, particularly the unschooled poor – led to the formation of Sunday schools, the first founded by Hannah Ball in High Wycombe, England, in the 1760s. In 1780 the Sunday School Movement was pioneered by Robert Raikes of Gloucester. It grew around the world, and in 1889 was re-named the World Sunday School Convention (later Association), headquartered in London. Its main work was producing materials for Sunday schools. In 1924, the World Sunday School Association became a federation, with an interdenominational and international board, committed to Christian education and to drawing churches together. In 1947 it was re-named World Council of Christian Education\* (WCCE); its activities included providing resources for effective educational leadership and programmes, and ecumenical curriculum development for church and day schools in all continents. In 1971 it was integrated into the WCC.

Education was also emphasized by the Christian social action movement arising in the 19th century. Workers in trade unions were educated for political consciousness. The World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches\* was founded in 1914 to promote education for peace. The first Life and Work\* conference (Stockholm 1925) included a section on “the church and education”; and the Life and Work movement continued this emphasis, holding annual ecumenical seminars in Geneva from 1933 to explore ecumenical education. Its 1937 Oxford conference explored the subject of “Church, Community and State in Relation to Education”.

The YMCA\* (1855), the YWCA\* (1894) and the World Student Christian Federation\* (1895) addressed matters of faith and the world’s agenda through prayer, Bible study and practical missionary and socio-political involvement. The lay, youth and

student movements dealt with general and Christian education as well as the renewal of educational institutions and theories.

### EDUCATION IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

A strong ecumenical perspective on education had thus developed from a number of 19th-century sources. Against this background, the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey,\* near Geneva, was founded in 1946. Its expressed objective was the formation of an apostolic type of leadership “which not only aims at changing the life of individuals, but also seeks to achieve a peaceful penetration into the various sections of the community and the various areas of life”.

Before the integration of the WCCE in 1971, the WCC in 1969 had set up an Office of Education. Earlier, the mandate of the Division of Ecumenical Action established by the Evanston assembly (1954), had included helping churches to “relate ecumenical thinking to Christian education in all its aspects”, a task shared by the Ecumenical Institute and the Laity and Youth departments. A joint study commission on education was formed with the WCCE in 1961. The Office of Education established in 1969 had sub-sections on basic adult education (see **education, adult**), theological education and church education, and administered a fund which financed curriculum projects and initiatives in religious education among children and adults. Several assumptions have governed WCC work in education. One is that all of life is a learning experience – from the cradle to the grave. This has tended to produce a proliferation in the work of the WCC sector dealing with education. Another is the need to pay attention to the roles of both teachers and pupils. What may adults learn from children? What may literates learn from non-literates? What may be learned from peoples with disabilities about true values and the good life? How can a two-way process of teaching and learning in a learning community be fostered? A third assumption is that education in the church context should be not only learning about the faith but also discovering its implications of the faith for personal and social ethical attitudes and decisions.

*Theological education.* Although theological issues, particularly those related di-

rectly to the church, have in the ecumenical movement typically been the province of Faith and Order,\* it was the International Missionary Council\* (IMC) which took the first steps to structure the concern for theological education programmatically. When the missionary movement gathered momentum early in the 20th century, the churches of the North provided the leadership and set the agenda for church life, style and theology in the South. But some missionaries, notably Charles Ranson, a missionary to India, were convinced that improving the training of indigenous persons was essential for the future of the church. Ranson was tireless in communicating this vision to the IMC, and on the basis of its study of theological education in the South, its 1958 assembly created the Theological Education Fund (TEF), both to promote theological excellence (then still measured by exclusively Western standards) and to develop creative indigenous theological education. The three marks of TEF's work were *quality*, combining intellectual rigour, spiritual maturity and commitment; *authenticity*, involving critical encounter with each cultural context in the design, content and purpose of theological education; and *creativity*, leading to new approaches and deepening the churches' understanding and obedience in mission. As a fund, it enabled the churches of the South to share in decision making about the training of their pastors. After the IMC was integrated into the WCC in 1961, TEF was part of the WCC's Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME); and when theological education later became a separate programme, CWME retained a desk for education and mission.

In 1977 TEF became the Programme on Theological Education (PTE), whose central mandate was "to assist the churches in the reform and renewal of theological education". The understanding of assistance to the *churches*, who are seen as the principal actors, includes the role of catalyst, challenging them to reform and renew their theological education and ministerial formation. PTE's partners also include other funding agencies, mission boards and regional associations of theological schools.

The PTE mandate called for it to give attention to: "(1) the influence of the context

and culture in theology and ministerial training and practices; (2) the need to liberate theological education and ministerial formation and practices from bondages which hamper faithfulness in their life and witness; and (3) cross-cultural discussion of key aspects of theological education". These guidelines led to two special programmatic emphases after the Vancouver assembly (1983): theology by the people and the place of spiritual formation in ministerial formation. The former, rooted in an understanding of the church as the people of God, asks how the people of God are to be equipped for mission and ministry in today's world. What lessons may be learned, for example, from the basic Christian communities, which actually live out the idea of church as the people of God?

The viability of ecumenical theological education today was the theme of a three-year WCC study in the 1990s. This culminated in a consultation in Oslo in 1996 which emphasized the need for greater integration and wholeness within theological education and ministerial formation, and pointed out that such education is a catalyst for renewal.

The Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE) programme, successor to PTE, supports a range of activities, including innovative and alternative programmes in theological education, original and contextual reflection in curriculum development, the programmes of regional bodies of theological education, training of theological educators, and intra- and inter-regional exchange of students and faculty.

*Other initiatives in Christian education.* Important ecumenical educational work was carried out in the 1970s and 1980s by the WCC Portfolio for Biblical Studies, established in 1971 to explore ways in which Christians "can more faithfully live, witness and worship in accordance with the scriptures" (see *Bible, its role in the ecumenical movement*). In addressing the questions of how Bible study can become operative for Christian obedience in everyday life and how Christians can be helped to mediate the biblical message in light of their own personal, political and cultural situation, the programme developed extensive training and networking of Bible-study en-

ablers around the world, drawing on and teaching a great variety of Bible-study methods.

For a number of years beginning in 1978 the WCC's Church-Related Educational Institutions Programme (CREIP) evaluated the role played by church-sponsored schools, colleges, universities and institutions, including in human development and nation-building. Among the issues it grappled with were elitism, the influence of governments on Christian education, the relationship between institutional church and private Christian institutions, and the access to education of racial and religious minorities. Another concern was the churches' development of leaders for church and society. This concern became a growing emphasis in the work of the WCC scholarships programme, as it sought increasingly to ensure that the provision of ecumenical financial support for the advanced education and training of individuals took account of the need to meet the future human resources requirements of the churches from which the recipients came.

The concern for ecumenical learning\* and the exploration with churches of how their curricula and educational programmes might be revised to promote education for ecumenism, particularly at the local level, involved cooperative initiatives with other sectors of the WCC and with external networks. One such initiative, for example, was a multi-year study of education in a multi-faith environment.

*The work of lay academies.* The growth of various types of lay centres (see **academies, lay**) reflects the conviction that the church is called to a dynamic concern for social welfare, and is a sign of a larger renewal of the church's life and structures. This movement resulted in the establishment in 1972 of a worldwide ecumenical network of persons and centres, the World Collaboration Committee for Christian Lay Centres, Academies and Movements for Social Concern (re-named Oikosnet in 1997). Structurally, the concern for laity\* – and relations with lay centres and academies – has been variously located in the WCC, reflecting both the breadth of approaches to the issues and the strong lay involvement in many of the activities and organizations that went

into the creation of the WCC. Between the Canberra (1991) and Harare (1998) assemblies, it was located in the Unit on Unity and Renewal, and theological reflection on the laity as the whole people of God was given particular attention. With the 1999 restructuring, it returned to its earlier location in the Education team – within an overall understanding of working collaboratively as part of the new structure. The WCCCLC was built on autonomous regional associations, developments and priorities, but its 1993 convention, on the theme "Weaving Communities of Hope", put new emphasis on the worldwide coordination of a movement – strengthening networks, developing concepts of the laity and laity formation and planning common action.

The centre of the lay movement thus seems to have shifted from Europe, allowing the church to see more clearly its proper location with the poor and disestablished. The ecumenical focus on laity has had consequences for reforms of theological education and the continuing education of clergy, reflecting the need to overcome the persistent dichotomy between clergy and laity.

*Education and liberation.* In the early 1970s the WCC invited the Brazilian philosopher of education Paolo Freire to set up an adult education desk, drawing on the experiences and insights summarized in his book *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and related closely to liberation theology.\* Under Freire and his successors over the next 25 years, this WCC programme carried out pioneering work in education that was firmly rooted in the churches' "option for the poor". The central goal of education was seen as enabling those who are poor, oppressed or otherwise marginalized to become the subjects of their own history. Literacy was thus linked with people's participation in decision-making, and formal, informal and non-formal education were integrated. Pedagogy was understood as posing problems in dialogue, rather than a merely monological transfer of knowledge from those who know to those who do not know.

As Freire's ideas and work – especially in Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking countries of Africa – became more widely known, many of his ideas were taken up by governments,

universities, community groups and international and non-governmental bodies involved in education, development and social change.

*Women and education.* James Kwegyir Aggrey of Africa is quoted as saying, "Educate a man and you educate an individual; educate a woman and you educate a tribe and a nation." But despite the crucial role of women in the family, the wider community and the church which his statement highlights, women have often been discriminated against and marginalized in education activities. In response, WCC programmes in laity education have collaborated with the Council's women's desk to raise awareness of women and the churches regarding the impoverishment of the total community life by the marginalization of women in the community, the causes of their oppression and possible positive actions to eliminate this. Locally and nationally women have been enabled to come together to share stories of struggle and analyze problems, thus promoting the cross-fertilization of ideas, shared leadership and strengthened linkages among groups of women. Among creative educational methods used have been biblical and theological reflection through drama, artwork or sharing stories. Two publications record this experience: *By Our Lives* (1985), an attempt to relate the experiences of women today and those in the Bible and thus call people to read the Bible with new eyes; and *New Eyes for Reading* (1986), a collection of biblical and theological reflections by women from the third world.

The continuous recognition within the ecumenical movement of the critical importance of education for the renewal of the church has thus been reflected in the WCC, especially since the 1960s. While taking a variety of different forms, it has always emphasized community and the participation of all. Education which not only trains individuals and makes them whole but also prepares them to serve the community and the renewal of the church will continue to be a key dimension of ecumenical work. Prince Thompson, an Anglican bishop in Sierra Leone, has said that "theological education is our nerve centre, and our willingness to shoulder it is an indication of our growing maturity in Christ". What he said of theo-

logical education in Africa is true of *all* education in churches from all regions of the world.

JOHN S. POBEE

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## ELECTRONIC CHURCH

THE ORIGINS of what would later come to be known as the electronic church were in the 1920s, when individual preachers in the US such as Aimee Semple McPherson and Charles E. Fuller discovered the power of radio. In the 1950s Billy Graham brought TV cameras to his mass meetings, and radio healer Oral Roberts brought his tent meetings to the screen. Today's electronic church programmes are syndicated throughout the USA, Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa. Most depend on a single highly visible charismatic leader, exhibit high-budget "slick" production qualities and consistently solicit money over the air and through telephone calls and computerized "personal" letters to viewers.

Although "televangelism" represents only a small part of all religious broadcasting, it attracted considerable interest during the 1970s and 1980s. However, in mass media terms, its audience is not large. According to A.C. Nielsen studies, the US viewing public probably peaked around 1978, held steady for a few years and subsequently decreased. An Annenberg-Gallup study in 1985 revealed that the total number of US viewers who watch one hour or more of re-

ligious programmes per week was under 5 million, about 2% of the population.

The basic message of the electronic church is found not so much in its rhetoric as in its overall images. The programmes are authoritative, built on a strong authority figure (almost always male). They stress the need to change individuals as the key to changing society. They present every issue in simple terms, often as a duality – good versus evil, God versus the devil – and they propose correspondingly simple solutions. They affirm the values of reward for effort, equal opportunity of all to achieve success and the free-enterprise system. They pose a concrete eschatology which simultaneously proclaims the imminent end of the world and endorses symbols of success in this world – wealth, power, prestige and beauty, the essence of American secularism.

Electronic church programmes have made some positive contributions to religious outreach. They have identified the alienation of a segment of the population who feel their local churches do not meet their needs. They have met the specialized needs of some people, particularly the ill and elderly who are confined to their homes and those who cannot relate to their community in other ways. And they have made contact with people whom the mainline churches have not been successful in reaching.

There are also serious shortcomings. While televangelists identify with remarkable accuracy the sense of alienation in people, they are all too ready to take advantage of this alienation and to use it to their own advantage. Many televangelists systematically exacerbate and implant viewer self-doubt.

Fund-raising is the central activity. In 1986 Jim Bakker's programme took in US\$129 million, Jimmy Swaggart US\$140 million. Pat Robertson claimed in 1985 that the overall operations of his Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) took in US\$230 million. In 1983, during a single hour the average televangelist asked the viewer to donate an average of US\$328. Several televangelists have been accused of diverting money collected for mission projects to pay ongoing expenses. In 1983 CBN gave less than 8% of its total income to mission ministries, and Swaggart spent more than

80% of his income just keeping his programme on the air.

During the 1980s the televangelists' international influence was considerable. Jerry Falwell generated US political support for the role of Israel during the Palestinian crisis. Robertson's CBN was deeply involved in raising funds in support of the contras during the Nicaraguan war. Swaggart held huge rallies in Latin America and was accused of preaching virulent anti-Catholicism and of starting churches with a promise of funds and staff – which never materialized. Many such evangelists considered their chief mission to be the exportation of US-style fundamentalism overseas.

By 1987 the electronic church encountered serious difficulties. As more televangelists sought a share of the relatively small audience, appeals became more desperate. Several leading figures ran afoul of their own puritan ethic. By 1988 scandals and controversies had caused all the major televangelists to suffer a decline, in some cases by as much as one-third to one-half, of their funding and audience. However, though the phenomenon of the electronic church has currently faltered, it seems certain that in the future new forms of electronically expressed evangelistic fervour will emerge in broadcasting.

WILLIAM F. FORE

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## ELLUL, JACQUES

B. 6 Jan. 1912, Bordeaux, France; d. 19 May 1994, Bordeaux. Ellul participated in several conferences of Church and Society and in consultations at Bossey,\* and frequently lectured there. After gaining a doctorate in 1936, Ellul became professor of law at the university of Bordeaux in 1943 and was professor at the Institute of Political Studies in that city from 1947 until his retirement. Ac-



tive in the French resistance movement, 1940-44, he was secretary of the regional movement for national liberation, 1944-46. He was a member of the national council of the Reformed Church of France, 1951-70, and of the national synod, and was director of *Foi et vie*. He co-authored *Social and Cultural Factors in Church Divisions* (WCC, 1952).

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## ENCYCLICALS

AN ENCYCLICAL was originally a circular letter (Greek *enkyklos*) on matters of faith\* or church discipline,\* usually from a bishop to some Christian local churches\* (e.g. 1 Pet.) or to all. In the 2nd century, Ignatius of Antioch, who found it “impossible to write to all the churches”, urged Polycarp of Smyrna to bring the far-flung early Christian communities in touch with one another through the exchange of encyclicals. The letter from the Christians of Smyrna on Polycarp’s mar-

tyrdom was addressed “to all the congregations of the holy and catholic church in every place”. Between the 3rd and 5th centuries, the bishops of Alexandria customarily addressed all the other bishops. It became usual for the Eastern patriarchs to send encyclicals to fellow bishops of “sister churches”.\*

In modern times, both Constantinople and Rome have issued encyclicals on the restoration of Christian unity\* (see **encyclicals**, **Orthodox**; **encyclicals**, **Roman Catholic**). The bishops of Rome have also issued ecumenically significant letters on social questions (see **encyclicals**, **Roman Catholic social**).

TOM STRANSKY

## ENCYCLICALS, ORTHODOX

THE IMPORTANCE of the encyclicals and other comparable statements of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople dealing with Christian unity\* stems from the recognition of the “primacy of honour” which the patriarch of Constantinople has among the hierarchs of the Orthodox church. This entry treats the 20th-century statements of the church of Constantinople on ecumenical topics, which have been a particular source of guidance for those Orthodox engaged in interchurch dialogue.

On 12 June 1902 Patriarch Joachim addressed the first encyclical to the other autocephalous Orthodox churches which raised the question of theological dialogue with the West. Following responses to this letter, another encyclical was issued on 12 May 1904. While lamenting proselytism,\* the letter expressed the real possibility of discussion with the Old Catholics and the Anglicans, who had already made overtures. The letter concluded by calling for meetings of Orthodox theologians of the various churches and by noting opposition at that time to a change in the calendar (see **church calendar**).

The historic encyclical of January 1920 – addressed “unto all the churches of Christ, wheresoever they be”, frequently regarded as one of the founding documents of the contemporary ecumenical movement – called for the establishment of a “fellowship of churches” which would work for charitable cooperation and theological dialogue. Calling

for an end to mistrust and proselytism, the letter claimed that rapprochement could begin despite doctrinal differences, and it listed areas of potential cooperation and dialogue.

On the eve of the establishment of the WCC in 1948, the patriarchate addressed an encyclical to the other autocephalous Orthodox churches on 4 February 1947 soliciting opinions regarding the nature of Orthodox participation. Another encyclical followed on 31 January 1952 in advance of the third world conference on Faith and Order. In this letter the patriarchate advocated representation from all Orthodox churches in the WCC, cautious participation in the meetings of F&O, and very prudent participation in ecumenical services of prayer. The letter also urged the Orthodox churches to cooperate in common studies of themes to be discussed by the WCC and to encourage their theologians to examine issues related to ecumenism. Eight Orthodox jurisdictions were among the founding members of the WCC, and Orthodox theologians had been involved in F&O from its beginning.

The patriarchal tome of 7 December 1965 lifted and removed from memory the anathemas\* pronounced in 1054 against those who had excommunicated Patriarch Michael. The "Lifting of the Anathemas of 1054" proclaimed in this document by Patriarch Athenagoras and the synod and also in the brief *Ambulate in Dilectione* issued by Pope Paul VI is frequently regarded as the beginning of a new phase in the relationship between Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism marked by episcopal visits, the return of relics and theological discussions.

In the midst of such dramatic developments, the patriarchate issued the encyclical of 14 March 1967 addressed to bishops of the church of Constantinople. The text affirmed that intercommunion\* between Orthodox and other churches did not exist as yet. While commending the progress of the ecumenical movement, the encyclical reaffirmed the view that full sacramental communion\* can follow only from doctrinal agreement.

Noting the 25th anniversary of the WCC, a "Declaration of the Ecumenical Patriarchate" was published on 16 August 1973. The text acknowledged the many advances in interchurch relations and commended the ac-

tivity of the WCC. Note was also taken of the valuable contributions of the Orthodox to the work of the WCC. Mindful of the difficulties of the time, the text also challenged the WCC to avoid the dangers of "secular ecumenism", to be in service to the churches in their quest for unity and to remain faithful to its constitution, which emphasized the goal of Christian reconciliation.\* The text also called for the full inclusion of the Roman Catholic Church into the WCC.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople addressed a significant letter to the WCC on 30 November 1998 in anticipation of the eighth assembly in Harare. He noted that "a series of liberal theological and moral positions" had entered the life of the Council and stated that one of the major tasks of the assembly was to "re-define the nature of the WCC and re-orient its work, continuing the debate on the churches' common vision and understanding of the WCC". He favoured the option of the churches "shaping the WCC as a fellowship in which, through being, working, reflecting theologically and witnessing together, and above all by sharing a common vision of what the church is, they will come to a point confessing not only the one Lord but also the one church". The patriarch recognized the difficulties of this "eclesiological challenge" and, at the same time, affirmed "the imperative of an Orthodox participation in the WCC 'on an equal footing'".

See also **encyclicals; encyclicals, Roman Catholic; encyclicals, Roman Catholic social.**

THOMAS FITZGERALD

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## ENCYCLICALS, ROMAN CATHOLIC

IN THE Roman Catholic Church, a papal encyclical is a formal letter, signed by the pope,

on doctrinal, ethical, social or disciplinary matters, written for the entire RCC as a means of maintaining unity\* of “faith and morals”. The letters are identified by the opening words, usually in Latin. From the first modern one, Benedict XIV’s *Ubi Primum* on bishops’ duties (1740), until those of John XXIII (1958-63), the letters were directed to “patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops and other local ordinaries in peace and communion with the apostolic see” (of Rome). Beginning with John XXIII’s *Pacem in Terris* (1963), recent popes have addressed social encyclicals on justice and peace not only to the RCC but also to “all people of good will”.

The popes’ use of encyclicals varies. Pius VIII wrote only one, in 1829. John Paul I, pope for only one month in 1978, wrote none; his successor John Paul II had written 13 by the end of 2000. The topics also vary, from Clement XIII’s *Christianae Reipublicae* (1766), which condemned all publications not in line with Catholic dogma; to Pius XI’s bitter condemnation of Nazism in *Mit Brennender Sorge* (1937); to Pius XII’s *Munificentissimus Deus* (1950) which declared the bodily assumption of Mary as a dogma of faith; to Paul VI’s insistence on celibacy for all Latin-rite priests in *Sacerdotalis Coelibatus* (1967); to John Paul II’s on faith and reason, *Fides et Ratio* (1998).

Although the Second Vatican Council\* acknowledged that “in writing such letters, the popes do not exercise the supreme power of their teaching authority” (*Lumen Gentium* 25), it is impossible to generalize about the exact degree of authority\* encyclicals bear and about the quality of consent to their contents they require of Catholics. Each encyclical and its sections must be evaluated in terms of what is proposed and how, in the context of the teachings of Vatican II, the writings of theologians and other papal pronouncements. No matter how different his approach and content may be, each pope likes to present his teaching as being in direct continuity with his predecessors; to challenge that earlier teaching would call in question his own authority.

In the 19th century popes used encyclicals as appeals “to the Orientals” to re-unite with Rome, and they were answered by Orthodox patriarchal encyclicals. Such an ap-

peal in Pius IX’s *In Suprema Petri Apostoli Sede* (1848) received the united response of the Orthodox patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, whose encyclical defined “papism” as a heresy\* and expressed the hope that Pius IX would himself be “converted” to “the true catholic, apostolic and Orthodox church”. In 1894 Leo XIII addressed a new appeal to “return” in *Praeclara Gratulationis*. Anthimos, ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople, responded negatively; he envisaged reunion, but only on the basis of the undivided faith of the first centuries.

From its side, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1920 issued an encyclical to “all the churches of Christ everywhere”. Despite their doctrinal differences, the churches should come closer to one another by “the removal and abolition of all mutual mistrust and bitterness” and in frank exchange of Christian thought and love, “for the preparation and advancement of that blessed union which would be completed in the future in accordance with the will of God”. On the side of Rome, Pius XI’s *Mortalium Animos* (1928) forbade RCs to participate in ecumenical gatherings and pleaded for “the return to the one true church of Christ of those who are separated from it” (see RCC and pre-Vatican II ecumenism).

In many ways, the first positive papal response to the 1920 letter of the Patriarchate of Constantinople was John XXIII’s first encyclical, *Ad Petri Cathedram* (June 1959). He outlined the ecumenical intentions of the forthcoming Vatican II with no appeals to one-way return to the see of Rome but with a call for the renewal of the RCC as an “example of truth, unity and love”. Paul VI’s first encyclical, *Ecclesiam Suam* (Aug. 1964), greeted all Christians “with love and reverence, in the hope that we may promote together, even more effectively, the cause of Christ and the unity which he desired for his church, in the dialogue of sincerity and love”.

In many encyclicals Paul VI and John Paul II at least mentioned the ecumenical dimension of a specific topic, and Paul VI highlighted the scandal of Christian divisions and the urgency of common witness\* in his magisterial *Evangelii Nuntiandi* on

evangelization (Dec. 1975). But the first encyclical devoted entirely to the RCC as an active participant in the ecumenical movement is John Paul II's *Ut Unum Sint*,\* on commitment to ecumenism (1995).

See also **encyclicals; encyclicals, Orthodox; encyclicals, Roman Catholic social.**

TOM STRANSKY

■ C. Carlen, *Papal Pronouncements, 1740-1978: A Guide*, 2 vols, Ann Arbor MI, Pierian, 1990.

## ENCYCLICALS, ROMAN CATHOLIC SOCIAL

ENCYCLICALS,\* or solemn letters which popes write for the universal Roman Catholic Church, are the major means by which the modern papacy directly proposes teachings on the political, social, economic and international order. The RCC has never elaborated a complete doctrinal system in social matters, but has responded to new issues and to the religious and secular controversies surrounding them. But one can discern in hindsight a developing and coherent Catholic social teaching in the more than 100 papal social documents from Leo XIII (1878-1903) to John Paul II (1978-). This categorization should not be applied too rigidly, for papal texts which would not be classified as social encyclicals may include elements relevant to Catholic social teaching, e.g. the papal teachings regarding conjugal love and responsibility (no artificial contraception) in *Humanae Vitae* (Paul VI, 1968) and *Evangelium Vitae* (John Paul II, 1995) directly challenge certain governments' population policies.

Until Vatican II\* (1962-65), the popes and RC ethicists structured social teachings principally in philosophical categories, drawing on the long tradition of natural law,\* e.g. the theory of justice, rooted in Aristotle and reshaped by Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274). The language explicated the broad biblical vision, and the terms could appeal to the wider civil society. For example, the United Nations sponsored two forums on John XXIII's *Pacem in Terris* (1963), in which the pope quoted scripture only nine times. Only after Vatican II do biblical categories and language comple-

ment social philosophy, especially in the writings of John Paul II.

Vatican Council II's "The Church in the Modern World" (*Gaudium et Spes*) could not have been promulgated without the previous encyclicals and their generative influence on the interdisciplinary reflection and experiences of Catholics. Nor could Paul VI and John Paul II have written their social encyclicals without Vatican II's *Gaudium et Spes* and *Dignitatis Humanae* (on religious freedom), and without the "Justice in the World" statement of the 1971 bishops' synod. These two popes have used departments of the Roman curia,\* in particular the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, for more detailed documents on specific issues, such as nuclear disarmament and the arms race, international banking and the disparity between the wealthy and the poor nations. Among the social encyclicals from Leo XIII to John Paul II, this entry highlights those which introduce key themes.

Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* (1891) outlined the fundamental principles regarding the nature of the modern secular state: it has positive moral responsibilities and is the ultimate guarantor of the rights of the person in society. Aware of the loss of the working classes to the church in the context of the wage economy emerging in the industrial society of Europe and North America, Leo XIII began the papal teaching tradition on the rights and duties of management, workers and the state, the protection of workers against exploitation, their right to just wages and their right to organize themselves for protection and representation. He also introduced into social ethics the principle of subsidiarity\* in the society-state relationship: to preserve as much freedom as possible, the responsibility for social needs should begin with the local or smallest institutional authority, and be referred to the state only when other institutions cannot meet those needs.

Forty years later (1931) *Quadragesimo Anno* of Pius XI introduced the concepts of social justice\* and social charity as essential to the reconstruction of society, with stress on the role of the Christian laity\* in such an apostolate.

On the eve of the second world war, *Summi Pontificatus* (1939) of Pius XII called

the denial of the unity and solidarity\* of the human race one of the major modern heresies. Various addresses of the pope towards the end of the war recognized that a juridically established international organization would be a necessary condition for world peace. Thus began a noticeable shift of focus in papal teachings from the nation to the international community.

John XXIII issued *Mater et Magistra* (1961) and *Pacem in Terris* (1963). The former developed social teaching on the balance between state-regulated activities and the freedom of individual and group enterprises. True prosperity is not only a matter of total national or international wealth but also of its just distribution. The imbalance between wealthy industrial nations and less-developed ones calls for richer nations to aid the others, but not to impose their way of life or seek political advantages from this, which would be "another form of colonialism". *Pacem in Terris* advocated human freedom\* and dignity as the basis for world order\* and peace, and proposed that a proper philosophy of law\* be based on conformity between human legislation and the laws of God. The pope pleaded for the cessation of the arms race, the banning of nuclear weapons and the negotiating of a general disarmament.

As a direct consequence of Vatican II's declaration on religious freedom, Paul VI took almost for granted an explicit shift in the RCC's public posture – "from a claim to favouritism to a claim for freedom" (J. Bryan Hehir). The ecclesiological shift guaranteed the transcendence of the church in the face of any and all political regimes, and at the same time depoliticized the social role of the church by withdrawing it from dependence on or alliance with any specific civil power.

*Populorum Progressio* (1967) expressed the RC social conscience in regard to poverty and wealth. It dealt with "development of those peoples who are striving to escape from hunger, misery, endemic disease and ignorance; of those who are looking for a wider share in the benefits of civilization and a more active improvement of their human qualities; of those who are aiming purposefully at their complete fulfilment". Denouncing "the scandal of glaring inequalities

not merely in the enjoyment of possession, but even more in the exercise of power", Paul VI declared that "the superfluous wealth of rich countries should be placed at the service of poor nations. The new name for peace is development."

The development\* theme, dominant in the 1960s, began to be eclipsed in the mid-1970s by the emergence of human rights\* issues, so that John Paul II could say in 1979: "After all, peace comes down to respect for man's inviolable rights" (*Redemptor Hominis*). John Paul II's *Laborem Exercens* (1981) reflects the pope's extended, critical dialogue with Marxism. Labour\* is the key for understanding people's historical vocation\* and societal projects; through labour people create their social world, and in so doing they in some sense create themselves. The pope offers a critical analysis of Western capitalism\* and Eastern collectivism by spelling out the principle of "the priority of labour over capital". If capital does not serve the whole of working society, the economic system will generate injustices, exclude some from the very wealth they produce and create hardships among the majority. The violation of the principle of labour over capital is the reason for the crises of unemployment, inflation, insecurity and growing poverty in most societies.

The uniqueness of John Paul II's social writings is his entering into the Marxist perspective of understanding society and history largely in terms of human labour. But by insisting that for the unity of nations one must move "from class war to solidarity", he plays down class conflict by recommending the widest diffusion of power throughout society and repeats Paul VI's warning that "the most revolutionary ideologies lead only to a change of masters" (*Octagesimo Adveniens*, 1971). After Rome's nervous criticisms of Latin American liberation theology, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987) adopted some of its language in speaking of "structural sin" and "a preferential but not exclusive option for the poor".

In papal teaching, persons are necessarily the "foundation, cause and end of all social institutions" (John XXIII), because the human person is a divinely created social being and raised to an order of existence that transcends nature. Authority,\* required by God's

moral law, must strive for the respectful recognition and caring promotion of the individual's basic rights in the context of the common good – the total of those conditions of social life by which persons are enabled more fully to achieve their own authentic fulfillment. Justice demands respect for human rights, but rights are always relative; they can be neither specified nor understood apart from the web of social interdependence, which involves mutual duties and responsibilities in human relationships, whether economic, social, cultural or political.

This understanding of justice joins a Christian morality of love in “solidarity” – the willing acceptance, support and promotion of the selfhood and freedom of others. Love does not substitute for justice, but without love justice becomes a lifeless theory and can neither be adequately conceptualized nor effectively realized in action. “Justice alone can even lead to the negation and destruction of itself, if that deeper power of love is not allowed to shape human life in its various dimensions” (*Dives in Misericordia*, 1980).

*Centisimus Annus* (1991), written to mark the 100th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, is John Paul II's synthesis of RC social teaching as “an essential part of the Christian message” and thus directly relevant to the church's evangelizing mission. This encyclical clearly shifts away from an “ideology of answers” to social, political and economic crises, to a pragmatic recognition that all issues are laden with diverse, imperfect historical and circumstantial contingencies. Former papal claims to identify concrete demands for social justice with precision have now ceded to an “epistemological humility”. The church has “something to say about specific human situations”, “its message gives direction”, but “its analysis is not meant to pass definitive judgments, since this does not fall as such (per se) within the magisterium's specific domain”. Finally, the church's “social message will gain credibility more immediately from the witness of actions than as a result of its internal logic and consistency”.

See also **encyclicals; encyclicals, Orthodox; encyclicals, Roman Catholic.**

■ M.-D. Chenu, *La “doctrine sociale” de l'Église comme idéologie*, Paris, Cerf, 1979 ■ J. Bryan Hehir, “Catholic Social Teaching”, *The Harper Collins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, San Francisco, Harper, 1995 ■ J. Miguez Bonino, *Towards a Christian Political Ethics*, London, SCM Press, 1984 ■ E. Walsh & B. Davies eds, *Proclaiming Justice and Peace*, London, Collins, 1991 (main social encyclical texts, 1891-1991) ■ O. Williams & J. Houck eds, *Catholic Social Thought and the New World Order*, Notre Dame IN, Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1993, esp. R. McBrien, “An Ecclesiological Analysis”.

## ENVIRONMENT/ECOLOGY

“THE EARTH is the Lord's and all that is in it” (Ps. 24:1a). Familiar as this passage is, only in the relatively recent past have Christian theology and the ecumenical movement come to recognize threats to the well-being of the earth as posing fundamental issues of faith. As the urgency of environmental problems is increasingly recognized, Christians and persons of other faiths around the world are responding in various ways.

The origins of the current ecological crisis can be traced to the scientific and industrial revolutions. Perceptions of the relationship between human beings and the rest of creation changed as science and technology\* found new ways to manipulate the natural world. No longer were humans viewed as exclusively at the mercy of the forces of nature. Now, humankind was seen as gaining power to control aspects of nature and to reconstitute them for human purposes. In many ways, Western Christian theology, scientific endeavour and industrial development reinforced each other in elevating the image of the human as the pinnacle of God's creation.\* The natural world lost its mystery and sacredness and came to be perceived only as a resource for human exploitation.

As the 20th century progressed, Western industrial development produced not only material benefits for human communities but also by-products with unanticipated destructive consequences for the environment, including toxic wastes, acid rain and greenhouse gases leading to climate change. Energy production has been a source of particular environmental problems related to nuclear power, fossil-fuel use and large-scale hydro-electric dams. Colonialism\* and sub-

sequent forms of economic exploitation led to serious environmental problems in developing countries as natural and human resources were exploited to meet the material demands of Europe and North America and the servicing of international debt.

While there have always been some religiously-motivated acts of resistance to the industrial exploitation of nature, it is only over the past 30 years that serious concern has emerged within the ecumenical movement about the environmental impacts of technology and economic development. Discussion began surfacing in some denominations and theological institutions in the 1960s. At a consultation in Bucharest in 1974, organized as part of a WCC study on science and technology, scientists, economists and theologians discussed implications of the recently-published study of the Club of Rome, *Limits to Growth*. Out of this meeting came the concept of "sustainability"\* – the idea that the future of the world requires a vision of development that can be sustained for the long-term, both economically and environmentally – which would later become prominent in international discussions. The next year the WCC assembly in Nairobi initiated a programme on the just, participatory and sustainable society\* (JPSS). Within the JPSS focus, the "Energy for My Neighbour" programme sought to sensitize churches about energy problems faced by developing countries and to activate practical steps to ameliorate the energy situation of those in need. Environmental issues were further highlighted at the 1979 world conference on "Faith, Science and the Future" at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

In 1983, the WCC assembly in Vancouver called for a conciliar process on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation\* (JPIC), through which churches were encouraged to work together on these three themes in recognition of their inter-relatedness. A growing number of churches became increasingly attentive to environmental concerns, adopting policy statements and initiating education and advocacy on specific issues. The JPIC process culminated in a world convocation (Seoul 1990), which adopted ten theological affirmations and four specific covenants for action, providing

an overview of the inter-relatedness of economic inequity, militarism, ecological destruction and racial injustice, as well as a theological, ethical and spiritual basis for affirming and sustaining life in its fullness.

From the early 1970s on, a growing number of theologians and ethicists began reflecting about creation and the place of humans within it, propelled in part by criticism from environmentalists that the Judaeo-Christian heritage, with its traditional teachings of human dominion over creation, bore a significant degree of responsibility for the ecological crisis. While this theological work may have begun by re-analyzing these teachings, it moved on to articulate a new understanding of the place of humans within the natural world, emphasizing an appreciation of human dependence on nature and of the need to respect and protect it. Insights from Orthodoxy, drawing on patristic sources often unknown or forgotten in Western Christian theology, were re-discovered as part of the Christian theological heritage with particular contemporary relevance. Orthodox churches began to mark the first day of September each year as a day on the church calendar set aside for special prayers asking for the preservation of God's creation and "the adoption of the attitude to nature involved in the eucharist and the ascetic tradition of the church". Important contributions to the ecumenical debate were also made by process theologians such as John Cobb Jr and Charles Birch, stewardship theologians such as Douglas John Hall, and creation theologians, including Thomas Berry and Matthew Fox. Feminist theologians (e.g. Rosemary Radford Ruether, Elizabeth Dobson Gray, Sallie McFague, Chung Hyun Kyung) moved the reflection deeper by analyzing the connections between oppression of nature and oppression of women and by developing ecologically sensitive models for organizing human relationships and societies. Indigenous theologians such as George Tinker and Stan McKay also had an important influence on the development of Christian ecological theology through their writings on Native spirituality. The direction of the most adventurous thinking in ecological theology is towards an understanding of humans as an inter-related species within the totality of God's creation, an appreciation of

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the inherent worth of other species not just in terms of their value to humans and an awareness of the presence of the Spirit of God throughout creation.

Christian theologians also met with leaders of other religions to explore elements from within their faith traditions and sacred writings which could contribute to moving human societies towards greater respect for the natural world. One such occasion was an interfaith consultation hosted by the WCC in 1991 to develop proposals for inclusion in an "Earth Charter" in connection with the 1992 UN conference on environment and development in Rio de Janeiro.

The Rio Earth Summit was an opportunity for witnessing to the spiritual dimensions of the ecological crisis, and many faiths were represented there, holding joint vigils, ceremonies and workshops. The WCC sponsored a major ecumenical gathering, which brought 150 representatives of churches from more than 100 countries for two weeks of prayer, worship, study and involvement in events around the UN conference. Important connections were made with many other non-governmental organizations representing environmental groups, development bodies and women's networks. As a follow-up, the WCC published in 1994 *Ecotheology: Voices from South and North*, an anthology of creative theological and ethical thinking from around the world on the themes of environment and development. In 2002 on the 10th anniversary of the Rio Earth Summit, the WCC participated actively in the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in collaboration with the South African Council of Churches.

As part of the longer history of ecumenical socio-economic thought, the analysis of environment and development themes has led to a serious critique of current theories and policies which promote unlimited economic growth. Many believe that such economic systems simultaneously exacerbate economic inequities in the world and precipitate serious environmental destruction – a view succinctly summarized in the theme of a 1993 consultation sponsored by the WCC-related Visser 't Hooft Fund: "Sustainable Growth: A Contradiction in Terms?"

An environmental problem which illustrates well this interconnection of economics

and ecology is climate change. The emissions from industrial processes, energy production through fossil fuels, transportation and various agricultural practices are gradually warming the atmosphere, leading to climatic changes such as increased storm activity, droughts in some areas and floods in others, and rising sea levels. The pressures for increased material consumption and globalized trade steadily increase the rate of emissions. Not only does climate change represent a threat to the well-being of God's earth but it is also a profoundly ethical issue, since it is largely precipitated by the rich industrialized countries while its consequences will be suffered disproportionately by the poorer developing countries and by future generations.

Climate change thus became a major focus for international ecumenical activity on ecological issues. The ecumenical community through the WCC has participated in the UN negotiations on climate change treaties. In 1996-97, the WCC sponsored an international petition campaign to build greater public pressure on the governments of industrialized countries to take action to reduce their emissions. Churches in many countries have organized education and advocacy and have sponsored ethical reflections on climate change within the context of models for sustainable societies.

DAVID G. HALLMAN

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## EPICLESIS

IN THEOLOGICAL language, epiclesis (from the Greek *epikalein*, "to call upon", "to invoke") is a special invocation asking for the Holy Spirit\* to be sent. It finds a place

within a variety of liturgical celebrations, especially in the eucharistic formulas (see **eucharist**).

The eucharistic liturgy is addressed to the Father and asks for the Holy Spirit to be sent down either upon the elements (the bread and wine) so that they can be transformed into the body and blood of Christ, or on those partaking of the eucharist so that they can be sanctified and united by communion, or on both, with the same results.

In the Eastern tradition this invocation comes at the end of the anamnesis – the relatively detailed account of the institution of the Last Supper by Christ, which also recalls the main stages in the work of salvation\* (cross, resurrection, ascension, etc.). The epiclesis thus represents a conclusion or climax to the anamnesis. A sequence of this kind is found in the early documents, especially those from Antioch (end of the 4th century).

In the West most current eucharistic formulas have two epicleses, in line with a custom attested in a document from Alexandria from the mid-4th century. The first, which comes before the words of institution of the supper, asks for the Holy Spirit to be sent down upon the species to transform them; the second, at the end of the anamnesis (as in the Eastern documents), asks for the Spirit to be sent down on the members of the congregation to sanctify and unite them.

Controversies have taken place between East and West, mainly from the 14th to the 17th centuries, regarding the part played by the epiclesis and its function in relation to the words of institution of the supper. More recently, this has yielded to an overall view that it is the eucharistic anaphora as a whole which, among other things, has the effect of transforming the gifts and sanctifying those taking part. This idea is more in accord with a view which pre-dated any controversy, since the epiclesis is bound up with the element that precedes it within the eucharistic prayer; it displays the reality according to which every liturgical action is carried out in and by the Holy Spirit. The place of the epiclesis in the eucharistic prayer as a whole has not changed through the ages, but both the meaning given to that prayer and the theology of the Holy Spirit underlying it have been the subject of clarifying statements.

The controversy about the epiclesis related to whether that prayer was or was not one of consecration, and this prompted the parties in the dispute to look for a particular moment in the anaphora at which the consecration of the gifts might be said to take place. The polemical atmosphere led them to a hardening of positions, each side defining its position in opposition or reaction to the other's. Thus in the West the words of institution alone, pronounced by the celebrant, were affirmed to have consecrating force. Those in the East then thought it necessary to look for another element in the eucharistic anaphora which would fulfill the same function; they believed they could find it in the epiclesis. The doctrinal disadvantage of such a confrontation lies in its reductionist character: on the one hand, the consecration of the gifts is not the sole aim or effect of the eucharistic celebration, which contains an infinite number of other riches (sanctification of those taking part, re-presentation of the work of salvation, participation in anticipation in the benefits of the coming kingdom, to mention only a few), only in part accounted for in the theological statements (see 1 Cor. 11:26); on the other hand, to look for a specific moment in the anaphora at which the transformation is effected is inevitably to fragment the liturgical elements which go to make up this celebration and thus to lose the indissoluble link that binds them together.

Thus anamnesis, the recapitulation of the work of the Son, is of no avail without epiclesis, the invocation of the Holy Spirit as the Power which re-presents. The Son has fulfilled the Father's will on earth and has ascended again into heaven (see John 14:31b, 16:5a); since then the Spirit has been at work and will be to the end of the age (Rom. 8:22,26), re-presenting (John 16:13) the work of the Son, which has been accomplished once for all (Heb. 10:12). The process of re-presentation by the Holy Spirit is effected particularly during each eucharistic celebration, and it is the epiclesis which expresses and displays this reality.

The contribution of the ecumenical movement in this field consists first of all in abandoning the controversy about consecration: it appears that most now accept the transformation of the eucharistic species

into the body and blood of the Lord as one of the effects of celebrating the eucharist as a whole – but not as the sole effect. The text on the eucharist in the Faith and Order Lima document on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* stresses the “intrinsic link” between the words of institution and the epiclesis, as expressing in each celebration the complementary role of the Son and the Spirit. The old idea that it is the whole eucharistic prayer which brings about the reality promised by Christ is recalled as a model to be followed (E14 comm.). The argument about a particular moment for the consecration is thus transcended in this document.

Ecumenical encounters have made it possible to improve the enunciation of the doctrine on the Holy Spirit, a doctrine closely related to the presence of the epiclesis within the eucharistic anaphora. The role of the Holy Spirit makes the work of the Son present in every liturgical celebration; it is the invoked Holy Spirit who guarantees the sanctification,\* empowering and unification sought for the congregation meeting together (E17). According to another text, the eucharistic epiclesis exhibits the presence of the Holy Spirit, who through the perceptible gestures and words alone accomplishes an eschatological reality which remains invisible (*Pour la communion des Eglises*, 152-53). This text thus stresses the personal, active character of the Holy Spirit in eucharistic celebration, a character clearly expressed in the petitions of the epiclesis.

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■ *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, WCC, 1982 ■ *Pour la communion des Eglises: L'apport du Groupe des Dombes, 1937-1987*, Paris, Centurion, 1988 ■ A. Schmemmann, *L'eucharistie, sacrement du royaume* (ET *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, Crestwood NY, St Vladimir's Seminary, 1987) ■ R. Taft, “The Epiclesis Question in the Light of the Orthodox and Catholic Lex Orandi Traditions”, in *New Perspectives on Historical Theology: Essays in Memory of John Meyendorff*, B. Nassif ed., Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1996.

## EPISCOPACY

SINCE THE beginning of ecumenical conversations, the episcopacy has proved a difficult topic to tackle, both in theory and in prac-

tice. The Lambeth Quadrilateral\* of 1888 included “the historic episcopate, locally adapted in the method of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of his church”. On the other hand, Lutheran churches showed reserve towards restoration of the episcopacy as a condition of unity,\* either among themselves or with other churches, because of their commitment to the principle of the one ministry of word and sacrament. Congregationalists, for their part, did not wish to see the episcopacy undermine the autonomy of local congregations. When the Orthodox churches and later the Roman Catholic Church eventually entered ecumenical conversations, they did so with the presuppositions that the episcopacy is of divine origin and cannot be called into question. This was a stronger position than that of the Anglicans, who wished to retain it in any church unification, without necessarily having to resolve the matter of its doctrinal foundations.

Concrete union schemes involving churches of different origins and polity had to decide on what was to be done about the episcopate. Most significant ecumenically was that of the Church of South India, which united in 1947 after many years of preparation. This plan brought together the local Anglican church and some non-episcopal churches into one episcopal church, but without calling into question the authenticity of the previously exercised ministry of the non-episcopal churches and without demanding re-ordination. A somewhat different plan was followed in North India in 1971. There the mutual recognition of ministries and their assumption into one episcopally structured church involved a mutual laying on of hands. Also to be noted in this connection are discussions within Lutheran churches about the possible restoration of the episcopacy in synods which did not retain it after the Reformation, both for unification of Lutheran churches themselves and for their communion with other bodies.

The section on ministry in the Lima text on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* (BEM) presents the theoretical foundations of these discussions and reflects a policy that is widely talked of even if it is not to the satisfaction of all. It gives precedence to the one

ministry over the issue of its structure and gives priority to the apostolic succession of churches over the position of the episcopacy in the church as its sign ("serving, symbolizing and guarding the continuity of the apostolic faith and communion"). In asking for the possible restoration of the episcopacy in churches that have not maintained it, as key to the tripartite form of ministry, BEM presents it as an historical phenomenon of quite early origins and of some significance to the life of the church, rather than as something that dates from the apostles or that is absolutely essential to the church. It also admits a possible diversity in the forms which episcopate could take.

A number of bilateral statements within recent years have emphasized that the historical episcopal ministry serves the continuity of churches within the apostolic Tradition.\* They have chosen to relate this ministry to the *koinonia*\* which is a participation of the whole church,\* beginning with the local church,\* in the communion\* of the Trinity.\* They also relate the apostolic succession of the episcopacy to the apostolic Tradition of the whole church, so that its relation to the communion of churches stands out clearly. In like manner, whatever institutional and historic importance is given to the historic episcopacy, they make it clear that it does not stand by itself but is there to serve the ministry of word and sacrament.

In agreements intended to serve the full communion of Anglican and Lutheran churches in Europe (Porvoo communion\*) and the USA (see **Anglican-Lutheran dialogue**), the understanding of the historic episcopacy has been clarified. Communion must include the recognition of the role of the historic episcopacy, and its value as a sign. In acknowledgment of the relation of the historic episcopacy to the intention of Christ and to the work of the Spirit, its inclusion in the structures of all the uniting churches is stated as a condition of full communion. The point that the continuity in succession of the historic episcopacy could be visibly restored while acknowledging the reality of God's gift of ministry to the churches in their separation had already been made in 1984 by the Anglican-Reformed International Commission; hence, these more recent moves towards full communion give recog-

niton to the ministries, past and present, of those churches in which at some point and under special circumstances the historic succession was broken, thereby asserting the nature of the episcopacy in its service to the primacy of word and sacrament in justification.\* As far as the essential constitution of the church is concerned, the episcopacy must not seem to have the same place in the church as the gospel and the dominical sacraments, even while its visible reality as a sign of unity is affirmed.

In the conversations between the Anglican communion and the Roman Catholic Church (see **Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue**), ARCIC II responded to problems raised about the place of the episcopacy in the documents of ARCIC I by affirming that ordained ministry is an essential element of the church and that only the episcopally ordained priest presides at the eucharist.\* ARCIC II affirmed the role of episcopal succession in the church in maintaining the communion of churches in the open apostolic Tradition. However, it further expressed the importance of the sacramental continuity of the episcopacy which expresses the communion of churches across time and space.

Some other churches have not given the reclaiming of the historic episcopacy the same importance in their efforts to move towards full communion. The consultation on united and uniting churches in Jamaica in 1995 saw the need to embody their unity in a recognition of structures within congregational churches, but did not give the primacy to episcopal structures found in other dialogues. The 1992 report on the dialogue between the Disciples of Christ and the Roman Catholic Church noted their differences on ministry: the Disciples of Christ continue to affirm the work of ministry shared in local congregations by ordained ministers and ordained elders, while the Roman Catholic Church adheres to the relation of all ministry to the essential episcopacy. The report, however, affirms the shared view of the importance of apostolic community and salvation\* within this community.

As their respective responses to BEM show, the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches are satisfied with nothing less than sacramental continuity of the episcopacy, however much it needs to be related to the

apostolic Tradition of communities and to the service of word and sacrament. In the joint statement on the sacrament of order issued at Valamo, Finland, in 1988, the Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue\* commission bluntly stated that the bishops are the successors of the apostles and that the episcopacy is the fullness of the priesthood, by which the ministry of Christ himself is exercised in the church. While this sacramental continuity is affirmed, the statement likewise concurs that episcopal succession is not independent of the apostolic succession of the church as such, and that it includes a succession in teaching and apostolic witness, as well as in sacramental ministry. While these churches recognize some development of church ministry in the early period of the church, they teach that the eventual form of the episcopacy is divinely intended and belongs to the essential constitution of the church.

All ecumenical discussion on the episcopacy keeps certain historical realities in mind. The plurality of church structures in NT times is widely acknowledged, as is the uncertainty about the meaning of the word "episcopos" where it occurs. Also recognized is the diversity in the form of the episcopacy in earliest apostolic times, as evidenced for example in the difference between the episcopate as portrayed in the letters of Ignatius of Antioch and the more collegiate form practised in Alexandria. It is also quite clear that there is considerable difference between the role of the bishop in early centuries as minister of the eucharist, teacher and judge in local communities, and that of the medieval episcopacy, with its characteristic of juridical authority over a broader domain. It was on this account that scholastic theologians often described the episcopacy as an office rather than an order and sacrament.

Historical enquiries have also probed the reasons why parts of the Lutheran Reformation rejected or abandoned the historic episcopate. It is clear that the fundamental Lutheran commitment was to the work of ministry and dominical sacrament in the work of justification, and that questions of ministerial structure would not allow of any obstacle to this ministry. It was in this context that the council of Trent,\* in its decree on order, pronounced on the divine origin of

the episcopacy and its superiority to the presbyterate.\* On the other hand, although Trent rejected the legitimacy of ordinations performed outside the historic episcopal succession, it did not assert their invalidity. The Anglican communion on its side kept the episcopacy, but without any confessional commitment to its sacramental nature, to priesthood or to notions of linear succession.

Several characteristics of current ecumenical conversation pave the way to further agreement and communion. Beginning with the teaching on the sacramental nature of the episcopacy and its role within the communion of other ministries and charisms at the Second Vatican Council,\* the Roman Catholic Church places the episcopacy within a communion of eucharist and word that is shared by all the faithful. The Valamo Orthodox-Roman Catholic statement expresses a clear ecclesial perception of apostolic succession that puts the notion of historic succession in fuller context. Some theologians have even questioned the possibility of more collegiate forms of episcopate than those presently known.

In bilateral agreements the image of *koinonia* that serves to express a communion in faith, baptism and eucharist, which is itself a communion in the life of the Trinity, qualifies the discussion of the episcopacy. In this context, there seems to be more ready acceptance of the episcopacy as what BEM calls "a sign, though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the church" (M38). With this view of the nature of church communion, episcopally ordered churches have also left more room to recognize what has been, or is, done by a different form of episcopate or oversight. While there is thus still a lack of consensus on how the episcopacy belongs to the constitution of the church and on the extent of communion between episcopally and non-episcopally ordered churches, the question of the episcopacy allows of some further development. It is not an obstacle to the recognition that churches can give each other within a *koinonia* of faith, worship and Christian witness, however structurally limited this may be.

See also **apostolicity; church order; ministry in the church; ministry, threefold.**

■ P. Bouteneff & A. Falconer eds, *Episkopé and Episcopacy and the Quest for Visible Unity*, WCC, 1999 ■ R. Brown, *Priest and Bishop: Biblical Reflections*, Paramus NJ, Paulist, 1970 ■ H. von Campenhausen, *Kirchliches Amt und geistliche Vollmacht (ET Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries)*, London, Black, 1969) ■ *Episkopé and Episcopate in Ecumenical Perspective*, WCC, 1980 ■ International dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox church, "The Sacrament of Order in the Sacramental Structure of the Church", *Origins*, 18, 1988 ■ K.E. Kirk ed., *The Apostolic Ministry: Essays on the History and the Doctrine of Episcopacy*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1947 ■ J.H.P. Reumann, *Ministries Examined: Laity, Clergy, Women and Bishops in a Time of Change*, Minneapolis, Augsburg, 1987 ■ F.A. Sullivan, *From Apostles to Bishops – The Development of the Episcopacy in the Early Church*, New York, Newman, 2001.

## ESCHATOLOGY

ESCHATOLOGY as logos (discourse) about the eschaton (the end) explicates the doctrine of "the last things". It presents the Christian understanding of future events, such as death (see **life and death**) and resurrection,\* the last judgment and the end of the world, eternal damnation (hell) and eternal life (heaven). In scholastic textbooks of theology eschatology was the last chapter of dogmatics, and it stood in a certain discontinuity with its main corpus. Today, a consensus has developed among the various schools of theology that the eschatological perspective is basic to the understanding of the Christian faith, and Christian theology from beginning to end is considered eschatological.

The principal reasons for the contemporary emphasis on eschatology are the rediscovery by biblical scholars of the eschatological nature of the Christian gospel and the philosophical appreciation of the role of hope\* in human existence. The recovery of biblical eschatology began in Protestant circles at the turn into the 20th century with the seminal studies of Johannes Weiss and Albert Schweitzer investigating the nature of God's kingdom\* in the New Testament. They argued that Jesus' message about the imminent coming of God's kingdom should be understood in continuity with the Jewish apocalyptic world-view, and that Jesus ex-

pected the establishment of God's kingdom to take place in the immediate future not as a result of human endeavours but as the final and decisive intervention of God in history.\* C.H. Dodd further advanced the discussion on the nature of God's kingdom by examining the time factor in the coming of the kingdom in the teaching of Jesus. He argued that for Jesus the kingdom of God was realized in his own ministry and therefore his eschatology was already "realized". The fact that the kingdom of God was already present in the ministry of Jesus was then recognized by biblical scholarship, but it was also noticed that in some sayings of Jesus – especially in the parables – the coming kingdom of God is both a present and a future event. Joachim Jeremias modified the concept of realized eschatology into "inaugurated eschatology", or eschatology in the process of being realized. This view implied that the salvation\* and the judgment already begun in the ministry of Jesus will come to a future climax.

Eschatology as the starting point of all theology inevitably affected the understanding of the Christian gospel and consequently the understanding of the church's nature and mission.\* In the context of the ecumenical movement, this influence helped the churches to understand themselves as dynamic communities of God's presence in the world, which find their true nature and fulfilment in the coming reality of God's kingdom.

As early as the first conference of the Faith and Order\* movement (Lausanne 1927), participating theologians urged the divided Christians to discover their unity\* in the future, in proclaiming the coming kingdom of God. Such exhortations were immediately criticized for not giving adequate attention to what the church\* had already become through the power of the Holy Spirit and its identification with Jesus Christ. The second world conference on F&O (Edinburgh 1937) tried to synthesize these two views but could not draw any systematic conclusions as to their meaning for divided Christianity. It was agreed that the church, although it intrinsically relates to God's kingdom, cannot be fully identified with it, since the fullness of the kingdom is a future reality. This theme was further developed in

the ongoing theological reflections of the WCC; and the biblical image of “the people of God”<sup>\*</sup> was used to describe the eschatological dimension of the church, while the concept “Body of Christ” signified what the people of God had already become through baptism<sup>\*</sup> and participation in the eucharist.<sup>\*</sup>

The third world conference on F&O (Lund 1952) suggested that eschatology could help the churches to change and move from disunity into unity. This belief put eschatology at the centre of WCC theological reflection. The Evanston assembly of the WCC (1954), for which the theme was “Christ – the Hope of the World”, invited a detailed study of Christian eschatology in its relation to the unity and the witness<sup>\*</sup> of God’s church. In the preparatory documents as well as in the actual proceedings of the assembly, a variety of opinions were expressed on the nature of Christian hope. It was suggested that history should be understood from its relation to its Lord, the crucified and risen Christ. Christian hope was understood as the confident affirmation that God is faithful and will complete what God has begun for the salvation of creation.<sup>\*</sup> There was no speculation or agreement concerning the manner and the time of God’s final victory, but it was affirmed that the completion of God’s divine will for creation is not an abrogation of history but a redemption.<sup>\*</sup> In Christ people are given a new mode of life which already constitutes the new age in process of fulfilment. It was also suggested that the correct balance of what has been given and what is still expected can be apprehended and experienced only in the Lord’s supper. The eschatological and ecclesiological significance of the eucharist received the attention of the F&O commission at Louvain (1971) and reached its climax in Lima (1982). The Lima text, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*,<sup>\*</sup> treats the eucharist as “meal of the kingdom” (E22).

Evanston had further stated that the main task of the church, as the community of those who have identified themselves with Jesus Christ, is to be both the instrument of God’s purpose in history and the first realization of the life of his kingdom on earth. It testifies to the nature of the end towards which its hope is set as the promised climax

of what God has done and still continues to do for the created world. From this perspective the oneness of the church is a result of Christ’s eschatological and saving presence in the lives of various Christian communities, and it will become visibly manifested when the Lord will return in his glory to judge the living and the dead.

The fact that Christian hope is founded on God’s presence and action in history does not mean that Christians should abandon the world and its problems (see **church and world**). On the contrary, Evanston affirmed that the world, despite its fallen nature, continues to be a world created and sustained by God and that the vocation<sup>\*</sup> of the church is to work for the realization in the world of the basic principles of justice,<sup>\*</sup> peace<sup>\*</sup> and freedom, realities that reflect the grace<sup>\*</sup> of God in history. Concerning the theological significance of these endeavours, the preparatory documents emphasized that all human achievements are fragmentary, all responsibilities are subject to frustration and all hopes based on human power and wisdom alone are self-defeating. It was emphasized that whatever Christians accomplish in their involvement against the maladies of this world must not be considered as the manifestation of God’s perfect world. It is not known exactly how God will use the efforts of his people, or what degree of visible success he will grant to them in any particular project. Through their belief in God’s lordship over history, they are secure against despair, for they know that what they commit into God’s hands is safe. Thus Christians were challenged never to rest with any existent state of affairs, but rather to press unremittingly on towards a better and worthier future as it is destined to be by the merciful God.

At Evanston it was also stated that futurist eschatology could help the churches recognize the ambiguity and imperfection of all historical existence and knowledge. Since God cannot be fully identified with any historical institution or event, Christians must live by faith and hope without giving their historical understandings of truth an absoluteness which will be granted to them in the future by God. Orthodox theologians agreed that futurist eschatology could help the churches to move beyond their present divisions, but they insisted that it had to be

balanced with what God has already done in history for the salvation of humankind. This insight made the churches aware that no escape into the future could heal the church's divisions if it ignored the serious ecumenical problem of lack of a common mind and language by which Christians could discover and express their God-given unity.

These concerns were taken seriously and discussed at the fourth world conference on F&O (Montreal 1963). There it was recognized that the Tradition (see **Tradition and traditions**) of the church is Jesus Christ himself, who is known to Christians through their traditions, which are expressions and manifestations in diverse historical forms of the one truth, which is Christ. Yet the churches could not agree whether all traditions which claim to be Christian contain undistorted the totality of Tradition. However, they continued to agree that the church, despite its possession of history and tradition, of settled institutions and abiding forms, is still characterized by an anticipation of the Saviour and the final reign of God. While the churches recognized the transcendental and the temporal aspects of God's kingdom, they continue to be vague or rather uncertain about its exact relation to the church.

After Evanston, eschatology was never ignored in the theological deliberations of the WCC and particularly the discussions of the F&O commission. Either the assembly themes of the WCC and of the F&O commission were eschatological, or their particular subjects were discussed from an eschatological perspective. The Second Vatican Council,\* with the publication of its Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, affirmed the intrinsically eschatological nature of the church. It is important to note, however, that the WCC carefully avoided developing a systematic view of the nature of the church; thus, there are only occasional fragmentary – and sometimes confessional and repetitive – presentations of how eschatology affects the life and the witness of the church and advances the cause of the church's unity. For example, at Montreal the F&O commission, and more generally the WCC at New Delhi and Uppsala, suggested that the structures of the church, conceived eschatologically, are changeable, but this view was not accepted

by the Orthodox and other churches which considered the structures of the church sacramentally as divinely given and therefore unchangeable.

A more careful study of such divergence, however, would reveal an emerging ecumenical convergence that some elements of the church's life can be considered permanent because of the eschatological significance which they gain as a result of God's grace, through which the church already participates in the eschaton. Although there is no complete agreement among the churches on what elements of the church's life can be considered as permanent because of their eschatological significance, the F&O commission, in agreement with the Vancouver assembly of 1983, considers as prerequisites of the church's unity the confession of the apostolic faith, the mutual recognition of baptism, eucharist and ministry, and the development of structures that make possible authoritative teaching (see **teaching authority**) by the united church. In the studies that F&O has produced towards this goal, the impact of eschatology can be discerned as the common ground of a new theology that makes the church a charismatic institution deriving its existence from the coming reality of God's kingdom. Finally, by making the idea of God's coming kingdom the most appropriate starting point for a theological understanding of the church, the factual inseparability of the church from the life of the world has been affirmed, since the reality of God's kingdom reveals the ultimate destiny of the world intended by God. This combining is reflected in the F&O studies, especially after Uppsala (1968), which deal with the unity of the church and renewal of the world – particularly the Bangalore statement "A Common Account of Hope" and the subsequent study of "The Church as Mystery and Prophetic Sign". An eschatological perspective is theologically indispensable to the WCC's concern for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.\*

See also **salvation history**.

EMMANUEL CLAPSIS

■ Anglican-Reformed International Commission, *God's Reign and Our Unity*, London, SPCK, 1984 ■ *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, WCC, 1982 ■ E. Clapsis, *Eschatology*

*and the Unity of the Church: The Impact of Eschatology in Ecumenical Thought*, Ann Arbor MI, UMI, 1989 ■ G. Limouris ed., *Church, Kingdom, World: The Church as Mystery and Prophetic Sign*, WCC, 1986 ■ J. Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*, London, SCM Press, 1996 ■ J. Moltmann, *Theologie der Hoffnung* (ET *Theology of Hope*, London, SCM Press, 1967) ■ G. Wainwright, *Eucharist and Eschatology*, London, Epworth, 1971 ■ J.D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, London, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985.

## ETHICS

IT IS NOT surprising that the ecumenical movement has been deeply involved in the consideration of ethical issues. Changes in the relations of production and political organization, new cultural trends and the ideological struggles of the modern world raised a number of questions for which the traditional theological and ethical repertoire of the confessional churches had no ready-made answers and frequently not even the instruments or disposition for understanding. In fact, one could argue that the ecumenical movement developed in large measure as a response to the challenges presented to Christians and churches by the complexity of the modern world.

Such a hypothesis is strengthened by the recognition that some of the early forms of ecumenical encounter that appeared towards the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century represent an attempt by individual Christians to tackle problems or respond to opportunities presented by changes in the modern world. Thus the three important youth organizations – YMCA,\* YWCA\* and the Student Christian Movement (see **World Student Christian Federation**) – born in an evangelical milieu and with an evangelistic concern, were soon engaging in social action and concerns. The International Missionary Council,\* which gathered missionary boards and societies in an effort to cooperate and to avoid the scandal of missionary competition, was soon trying to find answers to the ethical, social and later political questions raised in transcultural and international relations. More specifically, the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through

the Churches\* and its successors reflected the need to respond to the inevitable and conflictive globalization of human life. While apart from some individuals the Roman Catholic Church did not participate in the ecumenical dialogue until the mid-20th century, Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* (see **encyclicals, RC social**) (1891) developed a social doctrine inspired by the traditional Catholic theological understanding of humans and society – but it did so in the face of the same questions that were then engaging the attention of the emerging ecumenical movement.

As these trends began to flow together (if not organizationally, at least in dialogue and overlapping of constituencies), and as the churches began to participate institutionally in dialogue and cooperation through the creation of organizations like national councils or the Faith and Order\* and the Life and Work\* movements, some of the traditional theological and ethical distinctions used by the churches, while retaining a certain analytical value, began to blur. The distinction between individual and social ethics lost all precision in ever more complex societies, where many face-to-face relations became institutionalized and bureaucratized and personal decisions frequently can be reached and implemented only by means of collective action. Social sciences, on the other hand, made clear the social nature of individual life. How should one respond to this new situation? Casuistry would have to include so many variables as to become an impossible game; pure principle ethics has to be worked through infinite mediations, which present their own ethical ambiguities; purely agapaic or situational/contextual proposals seem too subjective. A new discussion of these different directions can make sense only if it begins by recognizing the impossibility of separating an individual and a social ethics.

The 18th- and 19th-century distinction of dogmatics and ethics is also challenged by the realization that there is no ethical decision which does not imply a theological understanding and no dogmatic formulation which is independent of the historical conditions and the actual practice of those who create it. Moreover, some burning issues, for instance race and nationhood, are indissolubly tied to understandings of creation and

redemption.\* In fact, certain political or social decisions are discovered to be in themselves an act of heresy or a confession of faith (the cases of apartheid\* and of the Confessing Church\* have become typical).

Finally, and in the same direction, the distinction between social issues that belong within the sphere of religious ethics and those that belong to autonomous realms is clearly artificial. Secularization\* claims all realms of human life as a field for human debate and decision; faith\* claims for the sovereignty of Jesus Christ\* all of reality. A distinction between areas where the church has something to say (e.g. public morality, marriage, family, education) and others which must be left as wholly autonomous (mainly politics and economics) is totally untenable. The question becomes one of finding an adequate understanding of how the sovereignty of Christ is exercised in these relatively autonomous realms and how the Christian retains a freedom in obedience.

The sociology of religion, developed mainly since Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch, also poses critical questions to the churches by showing how they are themselves subject to social conditionings and can act on society only through the mediation of social relations. As Troeltsch put it, "the question of the inward influence of Christianity upon... ethical mutual relationships" can be investigated only in "the concrete effects of its influence in different social groups", and such investigation makes it clear that "great tracts of social life, like that of the economic order, throw a great deal of light upon the general fundamental tendency of Christian sociology". The churches and the ecumenical movement are only slowly and reluctantly incorporating such insights into their self-understanding and action, but some efforts to understand institutionality (see **church as institution**) or the nature of conflict\* or to examine the actual praxis of the churches are already part of the ecumenical movement.

This dialogue and cooperation of Christians and churches on ethical questions have revealed coincidences both in relation to concrete questions and on general theological affirmations. At the same time, some of the differences in theological traditions have become visible in their approach to ethical

questions. Edward Duff, for instance, finds in the ecumenical discussion a tension between a Catholic ethics of ends, with a more optimistic anthropology and an affirmation of a natural law that reason can know, and a Protestant ethics of inspiration, with a more pessimistic anthropology and a sense of the discontinuity between reason and revelation. C.-H. Grenholm, on the other hand, discerns in the WCC a "pure humanistic ethics", for which the Christian faith does not add any criterion which is not already available in human thought; a "pure theological ethics", for which the Christian ideal of love is specific, only to be known through revelation and totally different from all non-Christian conceptions of love; and a mediating "mixed theological ethics", for which there are certain normative criteria common to all human beings and Christian faith operates as motivation but also as offering some specific insights. Although such distinctions have the approximate character of all typologies, the differences to which they point will be seen in the discussion of specific ethical questions. Different positions on hermeneutical questions concerning the nature of biblical authority for ethical questions and the hermeneutical principles in the interpretation of scripture in this respect are not unrelated to these differences in theological tradition. They can also be discerned in their understanding of eschatology\* and the role that it plays in relation to ethics. Finally, churches differ in the way they understand the authority of the church on ethical questions and the modes of exercise of such authority, particularly in relation to social and political issues. It is striking that the international bilateral dialogues\* should have so far devoted so little attention to ethical questions.

These deep differences, however, should not be seen simply as a liability or a hindrance for ecumenical dialogue and cooperation. They do create tensions and make the road to united witness and action a difficult one. But they also have helped to see the richness of the common Christian heritage, to correct the one-sidedness or misunderstandings of each tradition as it has developed in particular historical circumstances and to find complementary relations. The frequently quoted slogan "doctrine divides,

service unites” proves to be only partially true: service also reveals deep differences, but the urgency for common action leads to a deeper doctrinal unity. Faith and Order and Life and Work are not competitors for ecumenical priority but the necessary presupposition and consequence of each other.

### ETHICS IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

The history of the ecumenical movement in the 20th century, particularly the tradition that developed in the WCC, manifests the points of insertion of the issues mentioned in previous paragraphs. Both continuity and new developments are apparent in that history. It can be developed internally, in the sense of a process that follows the theological and ecclesiastical changes in the churches. But it can also be seen externally as changes in society, geographical expansion of the ecumenical movement, new cultural trends and the deep issues raised by suppressed or muted ecclesial or social subjects – women, racial and ethnic groups, people with disabilities – condition the problematics that the churches must assume. The following considers some of these developments, which are dealt with more specifically in the corresponding entries.

The first Life and Work conference (Stockholm 1925), deeply concerned with the question of reconstruction in the aftermath of the first world war, and reflecting the beginning of the crisis of liberal theology and the rise of dialectical theology, centred theologically on the relation between the kingdom of God\* and society. Can the relation between them be seen in terms of continuity (can we therefore discern in history\* the signs of the presence of the kingdom?), or is the kingdom an eschatological reality which is exclusively God’s work, whose presence in history remains hidden until the end? While the social gospel movement\* and *Christianisme social* (see **socialism**) moved in the first direction, neo-orthodoxy and the Lutheran tradition were more inclined to emphasize discontinuity. While all would agree that questions of peace\* and international order\* were fundamental and should engage Christians, the approach to them was seen by the former as a means of preparing the way for the kingdom, a cooperation with God’s action, by the latter as an act of obe-

dience to the lordship of Christ (more in the Reformed tradition) or of the exercise of love in the secular realm (more in the Lutheran tradition). The WCC study on “The Authority of the Bible for Today”, begun before Amsterdam and culminating in an Oxford meeting in 1949 with some principles of biblical interpretation for social and political issues, hinges on this question. It tried to find a common ground that recognizes the autonomy of the worldly realm (a concern of the “two-kingdoms doctrine”) as well as the lordship of Christ over both church and world (and therefore the relevance of the testimony of scripture for society).

Between Stockholm and the next Life and Work conference 12 years later (Oxford 1937), some things had changed. On the one hand, it had become clearer that Christian concern could not be left to individual Christians alone but had to engage the churches as such. The title of the conference already indicates this: “Church, Community and State”. But that title indicates also the new challenge that had emerged with the rise of nationalism in the forms of fascism\* and totalitarianism.\* The more tragic dimensions of human life became visible. Theologically, the centrality of the lordship of Christ became a main theme that dominated the ecumenical approach to social and political ethics for several decades. It was on this basis that the Confessing Church\* would carry on its struggle with National Socialism in Germany.

But while such an approach was fruitful for a critical position, it was also necessary to find guidelines for Christian action. What kind of society could Christians envisage in order to define their understanding of the state, economy or political action? The concept of middle axioms\* was here introduced as a bridge between a principle ethics which could not find its way into concrete reality and a casuistry that could transform the gospel into a law. For a more liberal tradition, middle axioms could be seen as an encounter between the Christian revelation\* and human wisdom and experience; from a more eschatologically oriented theology, they could be understood as “concrete utopia”, signs or analogies of the kingdom of Christ. In both, however, the preference

for a form of democratic political organization, human rights and freedoms and a mixed economic system was clearly visible.

To provide a vision of society that could give some concrete guidance to Christians in the political and social realm has been a permanent concern of the WCC since its beginning. Its first expression was the responsible society,\* seen in Amsterdam 1948 as an instrument for assessing both critically and positively the claims and achievements of both the liberal democratic and the communist ideologies and societies. The dominant Christological approach of Amsterdam was enlarged at Evanston 1954 with an eschatological dimension which had already been explored, from an ethical perspective, in the studies of "Eschatology and Ethics" (Bossey 1951). A global perspective began to appear, and it increased after the third assembly (New Delhi 1961) with the growing presence of third-world churches, Eastern Orthodoxy and the merger of the International Missionary Council. But the quest for some picture of society, a diacritical instrument, would recur again in the attempt to define the traits of a just, participatory and sustainable society\* (after Nairobi 1975) and of justice, peace and the integrity of creation\* (since Vancouver 1983).

Between Amsterdam and Vancouver, however, certain fundamental issues had engaged ecumenical interest and enlarged the ethical concerns. Churches from Asia and Africa had raised the political issue of decolonization,\* their struggles for liberation\* and the problems of nation-building. Theological understandings warned against a confusion of God's kingdom and human struggles, but could not respond to the questions raised by the new peoples and nations, races and classes who, struggling against centuries-old oppressions, began to build their own world. The idea of a responsible society had to be corrected and expanded to include the concern for necessarily revolutionary change (see **revolution**), the concern for rapid social change and development,\* the struggle against racism\* and the legitimacy of certain forms of nationalism (see **nation**). At the Geneva 1966 conference on Church and Society, a development of the neo-orthodox theology, coming mainly from Latin America, was concerned with the le-

gitimacy of revolution, looking for ways to identify the signs of God's presence in our history, vindicating the positive role of ideologies as the way in which people\* define their goals and project their action in the quest for freedom and justice. Some themes had to be explored: on the one hand, the significance of ideology\* for social ethics; on the other hand, the meaning of the humanum as a criterion for Christian reflection (see **Humanum Studies**).

Struggles against colonialism as well as development and nation building could not be discussed without taking account of omnipresent economic determinations. Oppressed nations, races and peoples are poor, economically and therefore also socially. The ethical agenda had to include an understanding of the economic mechanisms of poverty (see **economics**) and a theological as well as a social and political understanding of the poor.\* Such demands led to programmes on transnational corporations,\* questions of investment,\* capitalism\* and socialism, concrete issues like land reform (see **land**), trade unions (see **labour**) and the New International Economic Order. Oppression, however, is also related to political and military situations. Hence issues such as human rights\* and militarism/militarization\*, the doctrine of national security\* and specific repressive policies such as torture\* or the ill treatment of refugees\* presented challenges which could not be ignored. It has to be admitted, however, that often an immediate response to critical situations has not been followed by a theological reflection that could have enriched the theologico-ethical understanding and critical evaluation of these immediate responses.

Geneva 1966 was concerned not only with the political but also the scientific revolutions of our time. While one may dispute the use of the term "revolution" in this context, there can be little doubt that scientific and technological changes had raised new challenges for the churches. Questions of environment/ecology,\* bio-ethics\* and genetic engineering, the sources and use of energy, the relation of science and technology,\* and pollution (most of them already mentioned though not developed at Geneva) demanded a practical approach as specific questions, a relational analysis to see them within the to-

tal functioning of society and a theological reflection that would undergird and inform the position to be taken by the WCC and the churches on these issues. The 1979 MIT conference was both a gathering point of many studies carried out in the WCC and in many member churches and a point of departure for further theological and practical work. Theologically such issues as the understanding of nature,\* and consequently the relation between creation and redemption (see **creation**, **Trinity**), faith and science,\* which in different contexts have been already on the theological agenda of the ecumenical movement, have now become urgent also from the point of view of ethical reflection and decision.

The ecumenical movement has not broken much new ground on ethical issues which have figured prominently in the ethical concerns of the churches in the past, such as marriage,\* family\* and sexual ethics.\* The classical consideration of these subjects under "orders of creation" or "the mandates" or, in the Catholic tradition, natural law\* was somewhat alien to the Christological perspective dominant in the ecumenical movement for many decades. But traditional issues now presented new challenges, partly because of changes in culture related to social, economic and political developments, partly because of new human possibilities opened by science and technology, both resulting in the erosion of traditional patterns of behaviour, tacitly or explicitly accepted and supported by the churches. The struggle of women for a new understanding and experience of their role in church and society (see **women in church and society**, **feminism**) required a new discussion of both marriage and family and of power in church and society.\* The debate about homosexuality,\* birth control\* and abortion\* could not be postponed. Some traditional issues such as divorce\* and euthanasia\* demanded new consideration. The ecumenical movement is far from having developed a coherent theological approach or clear ethical criteria for facing such issues, but they will undoubtedly figure prominently in the future.

An issue traditionally related to what was seen as "personal ethics" occupied the ecumenical movement in its early stages. The reflection on the meaning of work\* and vo-

cation\* was part of the attempt to develop a theology of the laity\* that would enlarge the understanding of ecclesiology and enrich the life of the churches. In this context Evanston 1954 (sec. 6) took up a theme raised at Amsterdam, i.e. assuming responsibility in terms of the struggle for justice, viewing one's specific place in society as a service (see **diakonia**) of love, while respecting the autonomy of the secular realm. Another traditional Christian concern, that of health and healing,\* has entered the ecumenical agenda and generated a theological reflection of health as wholeness, both in the personal and communal sense and in understanding healing as much wider than the cure of specific physical malfunctioning. The consideration of these two classic themes, while not prominent in the ecumenical movement, points to an important goal: to recover for ecumenical thinking areas of human life that were seen as self-contained and individual and to insert them in a more holistic approach to human life in our complex world society without losing sight of the personal centre, where all these lines converge. Ethical and pastoral concerns should be seen as intimately related.

### PROSPECTS FOR ECUMENICAL ETHICS

Ethics remains a touchstone of ecumenicity, not in isolation from other concerns, nor as a one-sided lobby, but as Christian personal and community praxis, as a doctrine that is aware of the practice from which it springs and to which it leads, and as action that acknowledges the doctrine that is implicit in it and its responsibility to the ecumenical Christian community in time and space. It has fulfilled that function to some extent in the period surveyed here, and the prospects that can be envisaged for the future make it necessary to continue and to strengthen that service.

Ethics makes the ecumenical movement ever aware of the world in which it operates, both in the sense of the reality from which it emerges and of the influence it exerts and should exert on it. At the beginning of a new century, that reality is rapidly moving: the growing pauperization of the majority of the human population (both in third-world countries and in significant numbers in the "developed" world) reaches a point where it

verges on massive genocide, while the expansion of economic, scientific-technological and communication media endeavours to create a homogeneous world market from which the majority will be excluded. At the same time, the geopolitical and ideological frontiers of East and West, which defined the world from the beginnings of the modern ecumenical movement, are becoming fluid in a movement whose direction we cannot anticipate. Such a situation presents to ecumenical ethics a twofold task. On the one side is the question of priority and commitment: Will the Christian *oikoumene* be simply integrated in this "world market" as its religious legitimation and "accompanying music", or will it make of the poor of the land the object and subject of its reflection and action? On the other hand, will it engage the rigorous analytical work that is necessary to mediate that fundamental option effectively and to help Christians and churches make the concrete decisions that correspond to it in their different circumstances and possibilities?

Since the 1960s the Roman Catholic Church and the non-Catholic ecumenical movement have entered an ecumenical dialogue in which ethics has occupied a central place, both as an area of cooperation and as a place where differences become explicit. Experiments like *SODEPAX*\* are a good example of both. This dialogue is not easy: there are deep differences in theological tradition, in self-conception, in the understanding of authority and in the role of the magisterium in ethical questions. There are differences of approach to some of the burning issues of today. For all these reasons discussion and, even more, cooperation on ethical questions become at times almost impossible. But there are also other signs. Theologically, Protestants are learning (not so much through theological discussion as by looking at the practice of the Catholic church in certain areas) that notions of natural law and of the common good and classic principles such as *solidarity*\* or *subsidiarity*\* can offer significant guidance for tackling issues and deserve more careful attention than they have usually received. On the other hand, Roman Catholic encyclicals and ethical statements of the last half century have more and more combined the traditional natural-law ap-

proach with an appeal to revelation that creatively and carefully incorporates the insights of ecumenical biblical studies of the last half century or more in which Catholics have been active partners. Finally, the increasingly significant presence of Eastern Orthodoxy, of people's base communities of prayer and action and of a growing Pentecostal movement, each with its own approach to ethics deeply related to spirituality, both relativize and correct the more intellectualistic and nomic character of Western Christianity. To make this encounter fruitful for ethics is one of the opportunities for the ecumenical movement.

We have already alluded to the fact that the ecumenical movement has not yet properly developed the theological undergirding of its ethical commitments or profitably developed the theological insights implicit in them. Such shortcomings may be partly due to the pressing nature of the challenges and to the intensity of the commitments that they evoke. But they may also be a result of theological one-sidedness. It seems that the ecumenical movement is led both by the total confessional and geographical scope of participation and by the nature of the global problems that it faces to develop a theological reflection deeply rooted in a Trinitarian faith, responsive to and responsible for the actual praxis of the Christian community in the world and in permanent critical and integrative dialogue with human sciences and ideologies. Such theology could help the churches to be faithful to their mission, not as masters or pioneers of a new world, but as salt in the world that God is creating through human thinking and action and as a permanent reminder of that new earth of promise for which we pray and hope.

See also **church and state, ecclesiology and ethics.**

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## ETHICS, SEXUAL

THE BASIS of any Christian sexual ethics can be Gen. 1:27. It is apparent, not controversial or even "mythical", that the human race comes in two kinds, male and female. Those who believe in God the Creator believe that God intended it so. Sexual ethics is concerned with the interpretation of this fact.

Biology and theology are not at odds in understanding that sexual differentiation is primarily "for" reproduction. Nor need science and religion quarrel over the role of the "pair-bond" in the nurturing and protecting of human young through their long childhood. So in Gen. 1:28 human sexuality is immediately linked with procreation and God's blessing upon fertility. The human race has indeed multiplied exceedingly and has filled and subdued the earth, though not always in innocent ways. (The fall is also an evident though not easily interpreted fact about humankind [see **sin**].)

The Yahwist account of the creation of men and women (Gen. 2) is more complex, and anyone who takes it seriously faces questions both of interpretation and of the authority of the Old Testament for today. It may well be characterized, though not of course written off, as a myth. Whatever other meanings can be drawn from it, this story leads up to the key concept of the "one flesh" union. Human pair-bonding is able to transcend its biological function. The Christian churches have been unanimous, both that in the purpose of God men and women

are meant to form faithful unions and that human progeny are meant to be brought to birth and nurtured in this context.

Much scope for differences of opinion remains, and from these foundations the argument has gone in diverse and controversial ways. At one extreme is the view (for which Augustine must take some responsibility) that the fall is all-important and that human sexuality has gone so wrong that the only justification for sexual union is the plain intent by a married pair to raise a family. At the other extreme is the view that sexual pleasure is worthwhile for its own sake, is even a human right, apart from any intention of procreation or even of a lasting relationship. Most Christians in all the churches would repudiate both these extremes, though often with some leaning towards one or the other.

Each extreme in turn can be seen as a way of coming to terms with current human common sense. It is fair to point out that in societies without efficient contraception and with high maternal mortality, it is hardly surprising that sexual pleasure should be feared. Nor is it surprising that when, for a few years, the dangers of uncommitted sexual encounters seemed to be overcome, the view that sex can be just a "healthy form of sport" should come into fashion. Before AIDS\* arrived, many Christians were finding the defence of traditional chastity a thankless task, knowing what negative lines the churches have frequently taken.

People expect Catholic Christians to uphold tradition and Protestants to sit loose to it. It has been too easy in the West to see Catholics as rigid, Protestants as antinomian and Anglicans as trying to hold a balance, forgetting the Orthodox meanwhile or drawing upon them belatedly for support. But the arguments are by no means tidily denominational, though two well-trodden controversies, contraception and the divorce issue (see **birth control**, **divorce**), have lately lent themselves to such over-simplification. Neither Catholicism nor Protestantism is neatly monolithic, especially not Protestantism, which has given rise both to "situation ethics" and to "fundamentalism" as well as to the monumental contribution of Karl Barth. To set, for instance, *Towards a Quaker View of Sex* (1963) against such a

Roman pronouncement as *Casti Connubii* (1930) as representatives of the two sides in a straightforward controversy can only darken counsel. Indeed, at times the case could be put the other way round, with “puritans” denying the goodness of sexuality in the name of an ethic of respectability, while Roman casuists shocked Protestants by finding ways round moral demands.

Somewhat paradoxically it has been suggested (e.g. O’Donovan) that, after all, there is no great difference between Catholic and Protestant over *sexuality*. Their evident divergence is at least partly a matter of their division over authority.\* Protestantism has no clear way of “making up its mind” and may tend to follow public opinion, but Roman Catholicism has great difficulty in publicly changing its made-up mind when understanding develops, as has conspicuously happened over contraception (see *Humanae Vitae* 1968 and the discussions before and since).

There is another way in which a real Catholic/Protestant division can be denied. When Orthodoxy is brought into the picture, the besetting tendency of Western churches towards *legalism*, of which antinomianism is only the reverse image, is shown up. The choice between prohibitions and permissions has more to do with bureaucracy than with the love of God. The Eastern churches in their teaching on sexuality have put more emphasis upon love both human and divine, and this understanding is beginning to be appreciated by Western Christians (e.g. Church of England).

The teaching of Christ in the gospels in fact includes not much about sexuality, but what there is does not let the majesty or the mercy of God be forgotten. In applying his teaching today, we may find it more constructive to look at problems in the light of traditions, rather than traditions in the light of problems. There is convergence for which we may be grateful and outstanding differences about which one must be honest. It has to be said that the ancient Christian emphasis on celibacy as better than marriage\* as carried over into Roman Catholicism – whether or not Protestants have been right to consider it an over-emphasis in itself – has had the practical result that unmarried priests have been responsible for Catholic

teaching on sexuality, with inevitably unbalanced results.

No doubt the moralist’s task would look simpler if sexual relationship and procreation had not been made separable by human skills. The development of first contraception and then in vitro fertilization (see *bio-ethics*) has laid upon human beings the obligation to consider more deeply the meaning of both sexuality and parenthood.

The need is to encourage the expectation that a Christian view will turn out to be, not some arbitrary set of commandments, but the gracious purpose of the Creator for human beings. A Christian at the beginning of the 21st century, respecting tradition and in touch with contemporary developments, will surely be inclined towards an understanding of sexuality which gives great importance to the faithful relationship between a man and a woman. Of course this emphasis is helped, some would say made possible, by greater longevity, smaller families, less pressure simply to keep alive. But, after all, the Christian tradition does have encouragement for such a relational understanding of sexuality, not least in the concept of the “one flesh” union which the Lord picked up and quoted in his teaching on marriage (Mark 10:6-8).

A “relational” understanding of sexuality, at its best, neither belittles procreation nor makes fidelity an optional extra dependent on people’s whims. In all the churches there has been an increasing appreciation that physical sexual union can be a kind of human “means of grace” in effecting, developing and sustaining the unity between a man and a woman. The point of permanent fidelity is neither the disgracefulness nor the danger of unlegalized sex but the need for time for real union to develop.

Such a view sheds light on old problems. It is able to honour both marriage and celibacy as particular vocations without setting either up against the other. It can value procreation as truly pro-creation without making children the rationale of marriage. To believe that human beings are, so to say, relational animals can be a way of talking about natural law\* without the finicky legalism of which natural-law theories are suspected. The “hard cases” of this view will be people’s real troubles, to be handled with

mercy and imagination, rather than artificial dilemmas imposed by recalcitrant theory.

That is not to say that relational views of sexuality are free from difficulties or create no problems of their own. A characteristic weakness is a tendency to idolize "relationship": either permissively, treating relationship, however transient, as self-justifying and as justifying everything done in its name; or smugly, rejecting and blaming people with unsatisfactory relationships. Christians of different persuasions have thought in slogans here and need each other's balance. In particular, "personalism" has become a word with almost contrary moral implications, suggesting to some people truly Christian encouragement of personal fulfilment, but signifying to others the selfish pursuit of atomistic individualism.

An insidious trap for the liberal-minded is to allow sexuality to colonize, as it were, all loving relationships. It is true that the contrast between agape and eros has been overworked, but it does not follow that all relationship is what is ordinarily called erotic. It has been too easy, in deploring the so-called puritan tradition of prudery and trying to learn from Freud, to seem to imply that "relationship" just means "sexual relationship", needing and deserving physical expression. So the subtleties of human and Christian love go by default.

The outstanding problem, which is by no means fully resolved, is the right understanding of maleness and femaleness. When procreation is allowed to matter less and relationship more, why do we forbid love-making between members of the same sex, at least as a *faute de mieux*? When women are set free from perpetual child-bearing, can they begin to do everything men can do? If not, why not? (See **homosexuality, feminism.**)

The question of women priests bids fair to be as divisive ecumenically as contraception and more essentially recalcitrant. It is not easily solved one way or the other, partly because of prejudices, but partly because behind it lie deep questions about the meaning of the fact that there are two sexes (see **women in church and society**).

Are men and women "equal", and what would that mean? Are they complementary, with different natures and roles? The more

we care about fairness and make them equal, the more we seem to make them merely interchangeable. The more we stress complementarity, the more tendency there is to devalue or patronize women as "the fair sex" or as mother-goddesses, and to be cruel to those of both sexes who cannot or will not conform to stereotype.

The arguments in these matters do not, yet, cut neatly across denominational lines. In other words, Christians are still at an early stage of what could become a fresh and deep schism.\* Hindsight may show how too much legalism and too little listening, on both sides, is a recipe for bitterness as the cost of reformation. The silliness of some of the arguments masks the importance of the problem. Women in all the churches are learning not to take for granted the time-honoured assumption that real human beings are all men: pernicious just because it is an assumption, not an argued refutable belief. They are being urged to learn "to say 'I', to accept themselves... as good, whole and beautiful"; and beyond "I" to go on and say "we" (Reinhild Traitler). If nobody listens but other women, the "we" will not be men and women together, but ramifying forms of apartheid between the aggrieved and the complacent. Christians who believe that God made human beings for union must have something better to say than feminism or anti-feminism.

See also **family**.

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## ETHNIC CONFLICT

ALTHOUGH ethnicity derives etymologically from the Greek *ethnos* (*ethnikos*), people or nation, its use is of recent origin. An ethnic community is a group of individuals who are bound together by language, historical and cultural tradition and religion, which identifies itself and/or is identified by others as such and, but not always, by a well-defined territory. In some cases, ethnic territorial boundaries coincide with the frontiers of a nation state, but most of the time they do not. Ethnic groups can constitute minorities or majorities within a nation state or across boundaries. They can be politically and economically dominant or dominated.

The tensions arising out of ethnicity\* have multiple causes, and they have troubled humanity ever since the dawn of history. But the 20th century seems to have witnessed an increase, so much so that some researchers believe that since 1900 internal ethnic conflicts have resulted in more victims than all of the interstate wars together, including the first and second world wars. Several of these ethnic conflicts have degenerated into genocide, for example Cambodia, Sudan, Rwanda, Congo, Maluccas, Chechenya, Tibet and Afghanistan. A number of factors usually contribute: (1) social revolution (e.g. Russia and China); (2) the break-up of multi-ethnic states, such as the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in 1989 (in addition to Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman empire, de-

stroyed in 1918); (3) unwanted new national frontiers; (4) the imposition of the national security state; (5) increased competition over land and diminishing resources resulting from population pressures; (6) weakening of the democratic nation state due to (a) a globalized economy, (b) instant worldwide communication, (c) transnational migration and intermingling of populations, (d) sub-regional self-assertion within national borders; (7) weakening influence of traditional religion and ideology, coupled with a growth of new religions and of fundamentalism;\* (8) positively speaking, oppressed ethnic groups are sometimes awakened culturally and politically, through the influence of international and regional organizations, by new methods of "doing" history (oral history, studies of neglected social groups, women's rights, understanding mechanisms of oppression and "poverty creation", local self-help actions); (9) new forms of "networking" based on modern forms of communication and travel; (10) improved legal standards for the protection of minorities and ethnic groups, both at international (UN and regional) and national levels, which provide legitimacy to the disfavoured. Ethnicity can mean liberation, peaceful and creative co-existence. It can also mean violent repression.

Ethnic conflicts are a troublesome factor to the ecumenical movement and to inter-religious dialogue, because in many situations religion is itself a source of tension. There are memories of past wars of religion, forced conversion or genocide (e.g., crusades,\* colonial conquest, antisemitism\* leading to the holocaust). While racism was long a major ecumenical concern, ethnicity has rapidly become a central issue (the two elements cannot, at any rate, be readily distinguished), especially as churches are often identified with *their* ethnic communities at the expense of universal conceptions of faith. Under the impact of ethnic wars in Bosnia and Rwanda, an ecumenical consultation held in 1994 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on "Ethnicity and Nationalism: A Challenge to the Churches" judged the role of the churches to be "difficult and often ambiguous". The consultation suggested that the theological concept of the kingdom of God in the various church traditions be explored afresh, because it might provide a key to

help the churches reassess their history critically and to evaluate their own inadvertent support for nationalist/ethnicist ambitions. During a 1996 encounter of the WCC working group in Berlin on "Racism, Indigenous Peoples and Ethnicity" it was stated that while the support of churches to nations under oppression was fully appreciated, the undue legitimation given to certain ethnic and national values and dominant elites was seriously questioned, especially if these became the pretext for threatening other ethnicities. Such religious involvement has often contributed to the fragmentation of nation states, to oppression and to the disruption of community.

If religion, with Christianity bearing a major historic share, has been a source of ethnic conflict, it can also become an instrument for peace and reconciliation. Some of the principal elements for such re-thinking are: (1) religion demands unconditional obedience to a supreme and universal deity; (2) this deity is not limited to one single territory or to certain ethnic groups; (3) the Creator of the universe is the father and the mother of *all* human beings; (4) this implies that all human beings are called upon to treat each other and the life-giving earth with love and respect; (5) the organization of life together has to be structured by justice, the respect for human rights, ecological sustainability and life in community; (6) its basis cannot but be in accord with a profound understanding of life's origins (creation) and history's fulfilment (kingdom of God, eternity), which provide meaning for life above and beyond geographical, ethnic and other temporary confines.

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## ETHNICITY

THE VALUE of patriotism and of ethnic or national identity is assessed in widely varying ways in the text of the Bible and in the course of Christian history. In the Old Testament the Israelites, by virtue of God's special election, constitute "a holy nation" (Ex. 19:6), "a people holy to the Lord... chosen out of all the peoples on earth to be his people" (Deut. 7:6). Ethnicity, so far as the Hebrews are concerned, forms part of God's saving plan (see *salvation history*). But, more particularly in later strands of the OT, a place is allowed in the divine purpose for other nations as well. In the last days "all the nations" will come to the temple at Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2); "all the nations" are invited to praise and worship God (Ps. 86:9, 117:1); a guardian angel is assigned to each nation (Dan. 10:13,21, 12:1).

In the New Testament the titles previously applied to Israel are now used to describe the church: "a holy nation, God's own people" (1 Pet. 2:9). But this implies a transformation of the concept of nationhood, since the church\* is essentially universal; within the community of the baptized all ethnic boundaries are transcended, and "there is no longer Jew or Greek... for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). This supranational approach was evident in the structuring of the early church, which was organized not on a national but on a territorial basis. The term "church" was in no way applied to an ethnic entity but referred to the entire community of the faithful gathered locally in each place for the eucharist, whatever their nationality (see *local church, unity of "all in each place"*). In the ancient canons the powers of each bishop extended not to an ethnic group but to a defined geographical area; all Christians in a given city are under the same bishop.

Yet this did not imply that nationhood lost all meaning within the Christian dispensation. It is symbolically significant that at Pentecost\* the Holy Spirit\* descended in the tongues of the different nations. Ethnic vari-

ety was not obliterated, but it ceased to be a dividing barrier; those present spoke different languages, yet each understood the other (Acts 2:3-11). Nationhood is seen, not just as transitory, but as part of the age to come (see **kingdom of God**): it is not just individuals but “the nations” that enter the kingdom (Rev. 21:24), in all their variety and with their distinctive treasures. Canon 34 of the 4th-century apostolic canons insists that the “bishops of each nation” are to meet together. Of course it is necessary to ask how far, in passages such as those quoted above, the word “nation” bears the same sense as it does today.

The church of the East Roman or Byzantine empire was multinational in character, although with Greek culture as the prevailing influence, while in the Roman Catholic West the papacy has always emphasized the supranational, universal nature of the church. But the churches founded by Orthodox missionaries in Bulgaria, Serbia and Russia (9th-10th centuries) possessed from the start a markedly national spirit, and the same was true of the leading Protestant groups at the Reformation. So strong has nationalism proved in modern Orthodoxy that in 1872 the Ecumenical Patriarchate even issued a formal condemnation of the heresy\* of “phyletism” (the view that the church should be structured on ethnic, not territorial, principles). But this has had little effect, as the multi-jurisdictional situation of the Orthodox church in the West shows only too clearly.

The ecumenical movement, while combating religious, ethnic and racial intolerance, has always taken unity\* as its ideal, not uniformity. Patriotism and ethnicity, while they need to undergo a searching *metanoia*, need not be totally rejected. Within a re-united Christendom there is room for the utmost diversity in styles of theology, ways of worship and forms of church government; likewise, a commitment to world peace does not exclude a strong sense of local loyalty. In the words of the Russian writer Vadim Borisov: “The nation is a level in the hierarchy of the Christian cosmos, a part of God’s immutable purpose.” “Nations”, as Alexander Solzhenitsyn observes, “are the wealth of humankind, its collective personalities; the very least of

them wears its own special colours, and bears within itself a special facet of divine intention.”

See also **diaspora, nation**.

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## EUCCHARIST

“EUCCHARIST” has become the most widely used name ecumenically for the rite which almost all Christian communities believe to have been instituted by Jesus at the Last Supper: “Do this in remembrance of me” (see 1 Cor. 11:23-25; cf. Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20). Coming from the Greek word for “thanksgiving”, the name “eucharist” refers to the central prayer in the rite, in which God is above all thanked for the works of creation\* and redemption\* accomplished through Christ and in the Holy Spirit. Other names pick up other features or meanings of the complex rite: thus the Lord’s supper, the breaking of bread, the holy communion, the divine liturgy, the offering, and the mass (though nobody quite knows the etymology of this last).

The various names carry to some extent particular confessional associations, and differences in the understanding and practice of the eucharist have often been a cause, symptom or result of wider doctrinal and spiritual differences among the churches. In the 16th century, for example, differences over the sacrificial character of the eucharist expressed differences between Catholics and Protestants over the roles of God and the human being in the achievement of redemption and the appropriation of salvation.\* Differences among Lutherans, Zwinglians and Calvinists over the presence of Christ at the Lord’s supper were connected with differences in Christology as such. Arguments between East and West over the moment and agency of the consecration of the bread and wine – Christ’s words of institution and/or the invocation of the Holy Spirit\* – reflect controversies over the relations among the persons of the Trinity.\* And participation in the eucharist of

other churches, or lack thereof, has usually been the measure of communion among the churches or of its rupture.

The modern ecumenical movement has realized that the restoration of Christian unity\* entails a necessary and sufficient agreement in eucharistic doctrine and practice (see **communion, intercommunion**). While, on the one hand, what is necessary and sufficient are themselves matters of debate with regard to the eucharist itself, it may, on the other hand, legitimately be hoped that agreements attained in this focal area will have wider consequences for unity in faith and life among the churches. Thus agreement on the Lord's supper was at the heart of the Leuenberg concordat, which established new relations among the Lutheran and Reformed churches of Europe (1973). Nor is it accidental that several worldwide bilateral dialogues\* from an early stage devoted their attention to the eucharist (e.g. the Windsor statement of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission I, 1971; *Das Herrenmahl* of the Lutheran-RC dialogue, 1978; sections of the Denver and Dublin reports of the Methodist-RC dialogue 1971 and 1976; the Orthodox-RC text from Munich 1982, "The Mystery of the Church and of the Eucharist in the Light of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity"). In the international, multilateral Faith and Order movement, the eucharist was never lost from sight between Lausanne 1927 and Lima 1982. The Lima text itself (the "E" of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\*), the responses of the churches to it, and some directions pointed by the report of Faith and Order in coordinating these responses (*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry 1982-1990: Report on the Process and Responses*, 1990) may be taken as the measure of eucharistic agreement up to this point.

### THE MEANING OF THE EUCHARIST

It begins with a Christological and soteriological concentration. In conformity with strong themes in the biblical scholarship of the past two or three generations, Christ's institution of the eucharist is seen to be "pre-figured in the Passover memorial of Israel's deliverance from the land of bondage and in the meal of the covenant on Mount Sinai (Ex. 24)", surrounded by the significant

meals of Jesus' earthly ministry and after his resurrection, and intended as "the anticipation of the supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9)". The eucharist is "essentially the sacrament of the gift which God makes to us in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Every Christian receives this gift of salvation through communion in the body and blood of Christ" (E2).

Lima then expounds the meaning of the eucharist according to a Trinitarian pattern and the fivefold sequences of the ancient creeds, as (1) "thanksgiving to the Father", (2) "memorial of Christ", (3) "invocation of the Spirit", (4) "communion of the faithful", and (5) "meal of the kingdom". In general terms, this arrangement meets with the practically unanimous approval of the churches.

In more detail, (1) is welcomed for its inclusion of creation and its recognition of the cosmic scope of redemption, features which had long been eclipsed in many Western liturgies. All recognize that thanksgiving is the appropriate human response to God's work, but some Lutheran responses fear that an emphasis on "the sacrifice of praise" might obscure the fact that the Lord's supper is first and foremost a divine "benefit" towards humankind.

Regarding (2), the two historically most controversial points have been the mode(s) of Christ's presence in the eucharist and the relation of the eucharist to Christ's sacrifice on the cross. The churches rejoice in the confession of "Christ's real, living and active presence" made in E13, and many responses would remain content with that. But some do not believe that the "convergence [so] formulated" suffices to "accommodate" remaining differences concerning the connection of Christ's presence with the bread and wine (E13 comm.). In particular, Roman Catholic and Orthodox responses want a less-guarded acknowledgment that the elements *become* the body and blood of Christ, while a few Protestant responses ask that precisely some forms of that claim be excluded. This in fact probably remains the single most divisive issue in eucharistic faith, doctrine and theology. The relation to Calvary does not provoke nearly so much comment. There is widespread agreement that Lima adequately protected the uniqueness of the cross; but the Roman Catholic response

is doubtful whether the category of Christ's continuing intercession, and the church's participation in it, is sufficient "to explain the sacrificial nature of the eucharist", and several Orthodox responses question whether Christ's sacrifice is sufficiently "actualized" according to the Lima text.

As to the "invocation of the Spirit" (3), the churches welcome this feature as a prayerful recognition that God's gift and the church's action remain entirely dependent on grace.\* The traditional Orthodox insistence on the pneumatological dimensions of the Lord's supper has now been largely received by the Western churches, although some Protestant responses continue to question whether the Holy Spirit is appropriately invoked not only on the whole assembly and its action but more particularly upon the bread and wine. The sharpest criticism of Lima's pneumatology comes from some Lutherans who fear for the adequacy of the Word himself and "his promise in the words of institution" (Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Netherlands).

Positively put, there is a very widespread recognition that – even if Lima does not always have the relation quite right – anamnesis and epiclesis (memorial and invocation) do in fact belong together, since Christ and the Spirit belong together in an "indissoluble union" (E14 comm.). The F&O report on the churches' responses suggests that more progress is yet to be made on remaining difficulties over Christ's presence and sacrifice by a deepened reflection, within an acknowledged Trinitarian context, on the biblical realities of "memorial" and "Spirit". Greater development is needed of Lima's recognition that the crucified and risen Christ is the living and active *content* of the memorial in word and meal (E5-6,12), and that the Spirit is "called upon" in order to make the eucharistic event *possible, real and effective* (E14). In the Holy Spirit, Christ comes to us, clothed in his mighty acts, and gathers us into his self-offering as Son to the Father, in whom is eternal life (cf. Eph. 2:18).

The ecclesiological dimension of the eucharist (4) includes "communion with all the saints and martyrs" (E11). E19 establishes a link between "each local eucharistic celebration" and "the whole church". This is

widely acknowledged in principle, but as Old Catholic, Roman Catholic and Orthodox responses to Lima most evidently recognize, this point raises the question of "catholicity"\* and the concrete identification of "the church": what does it take to make a eucharist the eucharist, or what constitutes a eucharistic assembly?

Many responses welcomed the association made in E20 between the eucharist and "appropriate relationships in social, economic and political life"; some asked for more precision as to whether "reconciliation and sharing among all those regarded as brothers and sisters in the one family of God" is meant as a *condition* or as a *consequence* of the eucharistic celebration and communion.

Lima's acknowledgment of the eschatological dimension (5) of the Lord's supper finds very widespread approval, whether the accent be placed on joy and hope, or on mission and service, or on the anticipation of the parousia and the feast of the kingdom. The responses of the churches reveal the same tensions between present realization and future consummation as are present in E and as indeed mark the scriptural and traditional material concerning the End and the eucharist's relation to it.

All in all, the reception given to E suggests that the convergence of the churches regarding the meaning of the eucharist is stronger than on almost any other topic of dogma. The United Church of Christ in Japan considers E to be "the best section of BEM and the richest in content"; and the (Anglican) Church of Ireland specifies: "Drawing its inspiration from recent biblical, patristic and liturgical scholarship, it [E] is irenic in approach and successfully transcends the old divisive controversies." It will be important to draw on the agreements here achieved as F&O pursues the wider task of helping the churches "Towards a Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today" (see **common confession**).

## THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCCHARIST

E3 declares that the eucharist "always includes both word and sacrament", and the features which the Lima text (E27) lists as belonging to the "single whole" of the eucharistic liturgy – hymns, prayers and procla-

mation as well as the action with the bread and wine – correspond remarkably, even as far as detailed sequence, to the orders now found in the current service books of almost all confessional families (see **liturgical reforms**). Nevertheless, some Protestant respondents have received the impression that BEM “sacramentalizes” worship, to the detriment of “the word”. Liturgically speaking, the National Alliance of the Lutheran Churches of France prefers to consider word and sacrament as “two foci of an ellipse”. Almost all responses to BEM in fact recognize that it is wrong to *oppose* word and sacrament to each other. The 1990 report of F&O formulates the matter thus: “Using the term ‘sacramental’ in a general sense, i.e. referring to God’s salvific action in history, the proclamation of the word is a sacramental action just as the celebration of baptism and supper are an event of God’s word.” In its response to BEM, the United Methodist Church (USA) had already declared: “God’s effectual word is there [in the eucharistic service of word and sacrament] revealed, proclaimed, heard, seen and tasted.”

“As the eucharist celebrates the resurrection of Christ, it is appropriate”, declared Lima (E31), “that it should take place at least every Sunday.” The principle of “the supper of the Lord every Lord’s day” (John Wesley) had in fact been the practice of the whole church in the early centuries. Dating from about A.D. 150, Justin Martyr’s classic description records that “on the day called sun-day an assembly is held in one place of all who live in town or country”; “the records of the apostles or writings of the prophets are read”; a sermon is followed by prayers; bread and wine are brought up, and the presider says the prayer of thanksgiving, to which the people assent by their amen; then “everyone partakes of the elements over which thanks have been given”. With the mass conversions to Christianity from the 4th century onwards, the frequency of popular communion declined, although in the middle ages, especially in the West, the mass itself came to be celebrated more and more often, with an emphasis on its propitiatory power.

The Protestant reformers stopped the “multiplication of masses”, but they were unable to establish the regular weekly com-

munion of the faithful which most of the leaders desired, and so the service of prayers, preaching and psalmody became the normal Sunday fare in their churches. In the 20th century, the Roman Catholic Church has been remarkably successful in increasing the frequency of popular communion; and responses from several Orthodox churches to BEM indicate that they share the same goal, provided adequate spiritual and moral preparation is made. On the Protestant side, the Swiss Protestant Church Federation, for instance, recognizes that “celebration [of the Lord’s supper] every Sunday”, understood as a service of word and sacrament, “is in line with the biblical tradition”; and the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar reports that “at present, thanks to BEM, CJCM accepts the principle of celebrating the eucharist every Sunday”. Many Protestant responses express this as a more or less firm desideratum, having attained a greater or less degree of fulfilment.

In the commentary to E28, Lima noted that “in certain parts of the world, where bread and wine are not customary or obtainable, it is now sometimes held that local food and drink serve better to anchor the eucharist in everyday life”. The responses of churches in the South Pacific showed most interest in this question, although it is also much discussed in Africa. The Church of South India commented: “The symbol should be obvious and meaningful. We have no problem with any type of bread; but it may be difficult to take the coconut water and say, ‘This is the blood of Christ.’” The Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East observes that “the matter of this sacrament Christ ordained to be of wheat and wine as being most fit to represent body and blood”. The Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches, as well as responses from some Lutheran and Anglican churches, share that view.

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT

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## EUROPE: CENTRAL AND EASTERN

ESPECIALLY since the end of the cold war,\* it has become common to distinguish Central and Eastern Europe: the former being the zone of the smaller nations between Germany and Russia, influenced and shaped by Western Christendom, the latter being the nations which received and assimilated the Byzantine tradition. In broad cultural (and not strictly geographical) terms, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia, Poland and Lithuania may be considered as part of Central Europe; Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Armenia, Georgia, Bulgaria, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Romania (except for the Hungarian minority) as part of Eastern Europe.

Ecumenically speaking, during the period of the cold war, all these countries (as well as Estonia, Latvia and the German Democratic Republic, but not including Austria) tended to be considered together as "Eastern Europe". The determinative factor for this designation was their communist

governments (in the case of Russia since 1917), the participation of most of them in Comecon and the Warsaw Pact, and their consequent identification in cold-war geopolitical terms as belonging to one of the two super-power "blocs". With the radical changes beginning in 1989, the individual nations in this area re-affirmed their specific identity and their distinct cultural heritages, relating in a new way to their historical consciousness, myths, religiosity, folk songs and fairy tales, and their mother tongues. Central Europe in particular has been profoundly marked by the unique contribution in social and cultural life made by the Jewish people; however, they were almost completely eliminated during the holocaust. The advance of globalization during the 1990s and, at the European level, the aspirations of integration into the European Union have raised questions about how well the nations of Central and Eastern Europe will be able to maintain their distinct cultural identity.

Certain parts of Central Europe received Christian faith in the 9th century through the missionaries Cyril and Methodius. Although later the influence of Western Christendom prevailed for some time, the region was a crossroad for both streams.

The Hussite Reformation in the 15th century aimed at reforming the church universal. Waldensians and Hussites represented a new type of ecumenical cooperation. The Hussite manifestos reached centres such as Venice, Vienna, Barcelona, Paris, Cambridge, Heidelberg and Kraków, and were a challenging factor in Europe for many years. Waldensians and Hussites together with the Unity of Brethren (Unitas Fratrum) represent the first (or radical) Reformation (see **first and radical Reformation churches**). They emphasized the gospel, especially the sermon on the mount, and lived by the eschatological expectation of Christ's kingdom. Not only the practice of the church but also human society should be governed by the law of the gospel.

The second (or magisterial) Reformation of Luther, Zwingli and Calvin thus laboured in a field prepared in the preceding epoch. These later Reformers discovered the importance of the epistles and deepened biblical interpretation and theological reflection. The first Reformation was a popular move-

ment; the second spread to the middle stratum of society and was therefore socially more conservative.

John Amos Comenius (1592-1670) stressed the complementarity of both trends, embodying in his life and work the continuing dialogue between the two streams that made up the Reformation. For Comenius the church plays a crucial role in the process of renewal. The necessary prerequisite for universal unity and harmony is unity among Christians. Christians are called to introduce a church order such that "you may see all churches if you see a single one". One of his dreams was the convocation of a universal council. Comenius regretted that the Reformers were not able to achieve the full renewal of the churches and that the Reformation remained an incomplete and unfinished task.

In 1570 the consensus of Sandomir in Poland offered a hopeful sign of tolerance and ecumenical cooperation among Protestants. In Czech lands, Protestants achieved religious freedom and equal legal status on the basis of the *Confessio Bohemica* (1575). The freedom of religion introduced by the emperor's decree was unique in Europe at that time, and it facilitated creation of a united Protestant church directed by a common consistory. Unfortunately, this hopeful development was interrupted after the battle of White Mountain (1620), when a Counter-Reformation was introduced which lasted until 1781. The measures against Protestants were introduced in all parts of Central Europe under the control of the Habsburg monarchy. Peasants and small artisans who could not emigrate were forced to accept the Roman Catholic faith.

During these difficult times some members of the Unity of Brethren from Moravia went to Saxony, where in 1722 they founded Herrnhut on the land owned by Count Zinzendorf. The Moravian Church, led by Zinzendorf and under the influence of pietism, became famous for its diaconal and missionary activity in Greenland, Africa and the Caribbean.

The Edict of Toleration (1781) did not yet put Protestants on an equal footing with the Roman Catholic Church, and it was only with the emperor's decree of 1861 that their situation improved. This enabled contacts

with sister churches abroad, especially in Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Scotland; and when the World Alliance of Reformed Churches was founded in 1875, the Reformed churches of Hungary and of Bohemia and Moravia were among the first to join. A Protestant ecumenical weekly (*Kostnické jiskry*) began publication in Prague in 1903 and it still exists.

By the end of the 19th century the Russian Orthodox Church and the Anglican church were discussing intercommunion. There was a correspondence between the archbishop of Canterbury and Metropolitan Platon of Kiev. An Anglican-Orthodox student conference at St Albans, England, was instrumental in founding the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius in 1928, which contributed to extending and deepening ecumenical awareness of the Eastern Orthodox tradition.

Most of the major conferences of the two streams of the early 20th-century ecumenical movement – the Faith and Order and Life and Work movements – were attended by church leaders and theologians from Central and Eastern Europe and became the platform on which the Protestant representatives entered into dialogue with their Orthodox colleagues. Especially significant was the conference of the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches\* in Prague in 1928. National Student Christian Movements, organized in the WSCF since 1895, played a crucial ecumenical role. Such movements existed in Russia (until 1917), Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Bulgaria. Retreats, regional gatherings and the meeting of the WSCF general committee in Chamcoria, Bulgaria, in 1935 deepened the exchange of mutual knowledge and cooperation between the Orthodox and Protestant worlds. Articles in the WSCF quarterly *Student World* prepared the atmosphere for more sustained ecumenical cooperation also in Eastern Europe. Several Christian student leaders were involved in the resistance movement against Nazism during the second world war. Some of them (J. © imsa, K. Valenta) perished in prisons and concentration camps.

As in many other regions, ecumenical concerns were represented by charismatic

leaders who were at the same time outstanding theologians: Stefan Zankov (Bulgaria), Josef L. Hromádka (Czechoslovakia), Vasile Ispir (Romania) and János Victor (Hungary).

After the second world war it was possible for the Orthodox churches to enter into closer cooperation in spite of the new political and ideological division. At the conference of these churches in Moscow in 1948 it was decided not to join the ecumenical movement. However, the Russian Orthodox Church established a link with the WCC, a WCC delegation visited the Moscow Patriarchate, and the Russian Orthodox Church and other churches of Eastern Europe eventually joined the WCC at its assembly in New Delhi in 1961 and later.

The impact of the cold war on the ecumenical movement was foreshadowed by the confrontation between John Foster Dulles (USA) and Josef L. Hromádka at the first WCC assembly held in Amsterdam (1948). Hromádka warned the ecumenical fellowship against the temptation in a world divided into two power blocs to side with one ideological option. The integrity of the WCC was put to the test at the central committee meeting in Toronto in 1950, when the issue of the Korean war was discussed, and with the uprising in Hungary (October 1956) soon after the WCC central committee met in that country. It would be worthwhile to examine how the meetings of the Christian Peace Conference,\* founded by Hromádka and others in Prague in 1958 and attended by many church representatives from the East and West, contributed to more open attitudes on the part of the Eastern churches.

For some 40 years the churches in Central and Eastern Europe lived in a frontier situation, on the battle line between two blocs. In this particular context they were called to bring witness to Jesus Christ, to be prophetic without being arrogant or self-righteous. Because of the contribution of Hromádka and others, the ecumenical movement did not fall into the trap of blind, uncritical anti-communism. The awareness of belonging to a worldwide fellowship of Christians helped the churches to endure trials and difficult times. Some have claimed that the witness of the churches was weakened by the "soft" stance which some

church leaders took on Marxism and communism. Such soul-searching questions should be discussed in the framework of ecumenical dialogue, not forgetting the remark of Gustav Heinemann that Jesus of Nazareth did not die *in opposition to* Karl Marx but *for* Karl Marx.

After the second world war the churches in Central and Eastern Europe lived in societies guided by a Marxist ideology which considered religion a human product arising from a situation of oppression and injustice. Some churches, particularly in Albania, were persecuted and decimated; others were more tolerated and came up with a new convincing witness. Despite interference by socialist governments, many insights and experiences, which have implications for the church universal, were accumulated; and it is regrettable that Christians in East Germany, for example, had no possibility to carry through their own specific achievements after reunification with the West.

From the perspective of Christian faith, the years from 1945 to 1989 should not be considered lost or wasted. It was a time of difficulties and temptations, but also of challenges and new opportunities. Without glorification or demonization, this period, as any other epoch, stood under both the judgment and promise of God. Christian communities living without their earlier privileges and power discovered that their powerlessness was often the source of a new authority and credibility. The churches learned to keep their distance from the corridors of power and to remain close to simple people. It was confirmed again that a well-organized minority can play an important and decisive role, that Christian existence is always a costly discipleship, that a truly Christian life is not possible without the fellowship of sustaining community. In a situation of censorship and self-censorship, Christian local congregations often became places of free speech. Preaching about God's freedom, righteousness and peace prepared the ground for the eventual radical change. Pastors understood anew that each sermon is a political action. A church can be politically relevant without having direct access to political structures. God-talk renders every political power and institution penultimate and provisional. The living God challenges the

totalitarian claims of secular rulers. A Christian existence is vulnerable but it ultimately does not depend on a social system and external safeguards. In the dialogue with Marxists Christians learned to take Marxism seriously. Marxist atheism challenged Christians to question whether they were not sometimes practical atheists.

After the changes in 1989-90 many Christians soon realized that the messianic age had not arrived with the advent of democracy, privatization and the free market. Although the new situation seems more friendly and conducive to the witness and presence of Christian churches, it is necessary to distinguish between God and the idol of consumerism. In an atmosphere of neo-liberalism and post-modernism issues of injustice, exclusion, exploitation, unemployment, poverty, hunger and violence should not disappear from the churches' agenda. Also in the new situation the church is called to be prophetic.

Uniatism remains a complex and difficult issue affecting the relationship between the Eastern Orthodox churches and the Roman Catholic Church. Historically the problem stems from the efforts to overcome the split between Eastern and Western Christianity. Groups of Eastern Christians were persuaded to acknowledge the primacy of the pope while retaining Eastern liturgical practices. During communist rule, in some places the Greek Catholics were forced to become members of the Orthodox churches. Memories need to be healed, and the outstanding unsolved questions, often arising in a new situation, need to be approached in a spirit of reconciliation and ecumenical cooperation.

See also **Conference of European Churches, Eastern Catholic Churches.**

MILAN OPO»ENSKÝ

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## EUROPE: NORTHERN

GEOGRAPHICALLY, Northern Europe extends from Iceland and the Scandinavian peninsula to the northern part of the Ural mountains. Politically, it covers Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, including the autonomous areas of Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland Islands. Northern Europe is a homogeneous ethnological and cultural region with relatively slight national differences, although there are some special characteristics.

Christian missions reached Northern Europe in the 9th century, mainly from the West. Only some eastern parts of Finland were Christianized from the Eastern church. By the 13th century even the most remote districts were evangelized. Multiple historical, cultural and ethnological links to Germany brought the Lutheran reformation quickly to Northern Europe; and the nationalistic tendencies of the Reformation found fertile soil in Scandinavia, where national profiles were emerging. From the very beginning the Lutheran faith thus strengthened the position of the crown and laid the groundwork for the state-church system (still in existence in Norway and Denmark, and the situation until recently in Finland and Sweden: see **church and state**).

Historically, the Scandinavian countries resisted non-Lutheran churches and any deviation in the form of their people's worship. However, the first part of the 18th century saw some concessions to other faiths and denominations, often for economic reasons. At the end of the 19th century the influence of the French Enlightenment and German Idealism led, on the one hand, to a less dogmatic Lutheranism but, on the other, to a certain alienation between church and culture.\* At the same time, strong pietistic revival movements spread through the Nordic countries. National churches could not welcome such movements, especially as they

were led by the laity.\* Consequently, Free congregations and churches were formed, especially in Sweden. In Finland, Norway and to some extent Denmark, the pietistic tradition entered the Lutheran churches and soon became a spiritual force, which still prevails in large areas of the region.

In all Nordic countries the church-going rates are very low, but Christian values are still generally accepted as a foundation for life. Such a setting is not particularly encouraging for ecumenism. However, Nordic Lutheran churches have traditionally been active in the international ecumenical movement since the Life and Work\* conference in Stockholm in 1925, convened by Archbishop Nathan Söderblom of Uppsala. All the national Lutheran churches in Northern Europe are active members of the Lutheran World Federation\* (LWF), the WCC and the Conference of European Churches (CEC), in most cases from the very beginning. Since the 1920s the Nordic Lutheran churches and the Church of England have organized Anglo-Scandinavian theological conferences. The growing immigration and influx of refugees to the region has also greatly encouraged ecumenical attitudes.

The Nordic missionary societies maintain widespread international relations and have significantly advanced the ecumenical interaction of the Nordic churches, as have the growing church-aid organizations in Northern Europe. As an expression of Scandinavian solidarity in ecumenism, Northern European churches created in 1940 the Nordic Ecumenical Institute (NEI), now located in Uppsala under the name Nordic Ecumenical Council (NEC), a study and information centre for ecumenical and interchurch activities. Twenty-two Nordic churches and national ecumenical organizations are represented.

All the Lutheran churches in the Nordic and Baltic region participated in 1989-92 in remarkable theological conversations with the Anglican churches in Britain and Ireland, leading to the Porvoo declaration (see **Porvoo communion**), subsequently signed by 10 of the 12 participating churches (the Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Denmark and Latvia did not sign). The signatory churches undertake to consider baptized members of another church in the communion as their own mem-

bers and to welcome episcopally ordained ministers to officiate in other churches, on invitation. The agreement also calls the member churches to work and pray for a further strengthening of visible unity of the church.

Lutheran-Catholic dialogue in the region is in the course of preparation.

KAJ ENGSTRÖM

## DENMARK

In the year 960, the Danish king "Harald the Bluetooth made the Danes Christian" – so says the inscription on a stone in the town of Jelling. Christianity, as the predominant religion ever since, has left its mark on many aspects of Danish life and society. Christian symbols are often used to represent the Danish nationality, such as the cross on the national flag and the picture of the Jelling Stone in the Danish passport.

Today, 84.7% of the population are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark (ELCD). There are more than 15 Christian denominations in Denmark, but the churches outside the ELCD only claim around 1% of the population. The Roman Catholic Church is the second largest church in Denmark with about 35,000 members. Immigration is introducing more Christian denominations and also Islam, which since the 1980s has become the second largest religion in the country with about 200,000 adherents.

The significant role of the ELCD and the dominance of Lutheran Christianity in the country since 1536 have resulted in some ambiguity regarding ecumenical involvement. The ELCD has always participated in ecumenical work, and has been a founding member of international church organizations. It has also taken an active part in commissions and conferences, but has not always found it possible to sign ecumenical documents such as the Porvoo declaration and the Joint Declaration on Justification. In 2001, however, the ELCD signed the Leuenberg agreement and became a full member of the Leuenberg church fellowship.

The ELCD is a member of the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches, and the Nordic Ecumenical Council. At the national level, it is a member of the Ecumenical Council of Denmark.

The Ecumenical Council was established in 1939, and is an associate council of the WCC. The Council has been involved in Faith and Order work and in projects on refugees, human rights, peace, poverty, and so on.

In 1989, the Council on International Relations of the ELCD was established by law. It is responsible for relations between the ELCD and other churches and church organizations, both nationally and internationally. The members of the Council are elected every four years and represent the ten dioceses in Denmark; the minister of church affairs appoints two bishops, and the Faroe Islands and Greenland, independent dioceses with their own legislation, each nominate an observer.

In recent years, many contacts have been made between Danish parishes and congregations in other countries, especially in Eastern Europe. These relationships have had a positive effect on local interchurch work in Denmark.

A number of religious organizations, such as the missionary societies, do ecumenical and interchurch work. DanChurchAid, an ecumenical organization related to the ELCD, is involved in relief and development work all over the world, in close cooperation with local churches as well as with the LWF, the WCC and Action by Churches Together. In 1992, the entire Bible was again translated into Danish by the Danish Bible Society, and all the churches now use the same text.

ESKIL DICKMEISS

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## FINLAND

More than 90% of the 5.2 million Finns belong to Christian churches or communities: the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland has 4.4 million members; the Orthodox Church of Finland has 56,000 members and the Pentecostals some 50,000 members. Smaller churches and communities are the Evangelical Free Church of Finland, the Catholic church in Finland, Baptist churches, the Seventh-day Adventists and Methodist churches.

In ten years the number of Muslims has grown from 1000 to 20,000. The Jewish community numbers about 1100, most of them descendants of immigrants from Russia in the 19th century.

The Lutheran church is in dialogue with the Evangelical Free Church of Finland, the Pentecostal movement, the Baptist churches and the Orthodox Church of Finland. Since 1970 dialogue has been going on with the Russian Orthodox Church.

The body responsible for ecumenical relations in the Lutheran church of Finland is the department for international relations, which has offices for theology, ministry to Finns abroad, and global mission, and operates Finnchurchaid for international diakonia.

Ecumenical education is given in the theological faculties in Helsinki and Turku. The ecumenical faculty of theology in Joensuu with departments for Eastern and Western theology is to be set up in 2002.

The Finnish Ecumenical Council, founded in 1917, has 12 member churches and communities; 18 Christian communities and ecumenical organizations are observers. The council works through committees such as faith and order, local ecumenism, education and evangelism, and pays special attention to the training of young adults.

HEIKKI JÄÄSKELÄINEN

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## ICELAND

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland (ELCI) is predominant, with a membership of 87.8% of the population. Other groups include the Evangelical Lutheran Free churches (3.9%), Roman Catholics (1.5%), Seventh-day Adventists (0.3%), Pentecostals (0.5%), and some charismatic and/or Calvinistic churches (0.1-0.3%). More and more people are giving up membership of the national church, and most of them have instead registered in one of the Evangelical Lutheran Free churches.

Local ecumenism is rather uncomplicated, as the number of adherents of other churches is very low and church leaders know each other and can work as bridge-builders. Confessional discussions seldom arise, and ecumenical questions are handled by a task-force for promoting interchurch relations.

Icelandic society is becoming increasingly plural. Based on developments in the last decade of the 20th century, membership of the ELCI will probably drop to 80% in the first decade of the 21st, and membership of the Lutheran Free churches is likely to continue to grow. Because of increased immigration, the membership of the Catholic church and of some non-Christian religious groups, especially the Muslim communities, will also grow. For two decades indifference to religion and the church was quite noticeable, but this is changing and interest in religious matters is growing. This will bring more tension between different interpretations and traditions, but also greater attendance at church services and meetings. The prospects for religion in Iceland are bright, but theology, religious interpretation and practices at the local level need to adapt to the times.

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## NORWAY

Norway has 4.5 million inhabitants, 87% of whom belong to the Lutheran folk state church, the Church of Norway. Of the other churches, the two largest are the Pentecostal church and the Catholic church, both with approximately 45,000 members. There are also small United Methodist, Baptist, Mission Covenant and Free Lutheran churches, and the Salvation Army and Orthodox congregations.

During the last 30 years, the number of Muslims increased to approximately 50,000; there are small communities of

Jews, Hindus, Buddhists and Baha'is. The Humanist Association has 70,000 members.

The Christian Council of Norway has 14 member churches including Catholic, Orthodox, the Church of Norway and other Protestant churches. They work at all levels, including internationally, and ecumenical relations and cooperation are good.

The Council has a commission on theology and is also responsible for the national coordination of the Decade to Overcome Violence.

Several dialogues are ongoing. There is an agreement between the Church of Norway and the United Methodist Church called "Fellowship of Grace". The Church of Norway is in continuous dialogue with the Catholic church and the Muslim and Jewish communities. The International Humanist and Ethical Union brings together the ten largest faith and life-stance communities.

The Church of Norway has always cooperated actively with the foreign ministry in the areas of justice, peace and integrity of creation, and human rights.

The Bible Society is the broadest ecumenical forum in the country and Norwegian Church Aid is the Protestant churches aid organization. Theological education is given in several institutions of the Lutheran, Baptist and Mission Covenant churches.

INGRID VAD NILSEN

- *Studia Theologica: Scandinavian Journal of Theology*, Oslo, 1948-.

## SWEDEN

The largest church in Northern Europe is the Church of Sweden (Lutheran) with a membership of about 83% of the population. Also present in the country are the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox and Oriental churches, the Pentecostal movement, the Mission Covenant Church, the Salvation Army, different denominations of the Baptist tradition, Jehovah's Witnesses, and a recent separatist movement called Livets Ord (The word of life). Following the disestablishment of the Church of Sweden in 2000, they all have equal legal status.

Through immigration, the fastest growing churches are the Orthodox and Oriental;

the Muslim community numbers about 90,000 adherents, the Jewish some 20,000. Sweden is fast becoming a multireligious and multicultural society, and consequently a major challenge is to foster inter-religious dialogue in order to increase understanding and further social cohesion, as well as prevent conflict.

Swedish ecumenical history is marked by two key international ecumenical gatherings: the Life and Work conference in Stockholm (1925), and the WCC's fourth assembly in Uppsala (1968), which inspired an ongoing popular series of national ecumenical assemblies representing a wide range of churches.

The Church of Sweden maintains international relations through the secretariat for ecumenism. In addition to current international ecumenical dialogue, many churches are involved in several bilateral theological conversations. Many of the Free churches have conducted bilateral talks with the Church of Sweden on questions of doctrine and practical cooperation at the congregational level.

The faculties of theology at the state universities of Uppsala and Lund and seven theological seminaries of the Free churches teach education on ecumenism.

Most denominations are represented in the Christian Council of Sweden, including the Roman Catholic Church and the immigrant churches, and three have observer status (Pentecostals, Adventists and Free Baptists). Since 1972 a development forum of the Swedish churches has emphasized the churches' responsibility for world economic development, peace and justice, and this work is now integrated in the Christian Council.

The Life and Peace Institute in Uppsala, founded in 1985, is an international centre for peace efforts and peace research on an ecumenical basis. The Swedish Missionary Council coordinates the work of 19 missionary organizations. Other interdenominational organizations include the Student Christian Movement, the Swedish Women's Ecumenical Council, the Swedish Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Association for Christian Humanism and Social Concern.

SVEN-BERNHARD FAST

See also **Conference of European Churches.**

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COORDINATED BY GUNNEL BORGEGÅRD

## EUROPE: SOUTHERN

WHILE THE term "Southern Europe" includes, from a geographical point of view, the three great peninsulas – the Iberian, the Italian and the Balkan – the countries ruled by communist parties after the second world war (Albania, Bulgaria, Romania and the former Yugoslavia) are generally considered as belonging to Eastern Europe; at the same time, southern France is culturally part of the Mediterranean world. Ecumenically, Southern Europe is normally considered to include Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece and Malta.

Italy, Spain, Portugal and to a large extent Malta have in common a Latin and Mediterranean cultural heritage; they include to a greater or lesser degree some of the poorest regions of Europe. In recent decades Southern Europe experienced the consequences of massive internal migration from countryside to town, and external migration to the industrialized countries of Central Europe. All countries are now facing the new phenomenon of immigration from Africa and Eastern Europe.

The three Latin countries are overwhelmingly dominated by Roman Catholicism, even if some show a large degree of secularization.\* Greece is mostly Orthodox, though it is not entirely under the jurisdiction of the Greek Orthodox church; Crete has an autocephalous Orthodox church, and some continental areas and Aegean islands are under the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

In the 16th century the religious ideas of the Reformation reached both the Iberian and the Italian peninsulas, producing a number of groups, congregations and individuals utterly Protestant in their faith. With the ex-

ception of the Waldensians, however, this movement was eventually crushed by the Inquisition. The Waldensians were a medieval movement which joined the Calvinistic Reformation and survived until the 19th century in a tiny area of the western Alps, later expanding to other Italian regions. Otherwise, all the Protestant churches in this area, including Greece, are the result of 19th-century missionary endeavours by Methodists, Baptists, Brethren, Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Lutherans and Presbyterians, and by efforts in the 20th century of Pentecostals, Adventists and a number of US-based denominations. In many cases, the mission was initiated by indigenous believers, who often had become Protestant while living as migrants in Anglo-Saxon countries, and who had returned to their country of origin. Protestantism remains a tiny minority. Orthodoxy outside Greece was until recently confined to small ethnic groups, which are now growing because of immigration. In 1991 the Ecumenical Patriarchate established the Orthodox archdiocese of Italy, with seat in Venice.

Until the Second Vatican Council and the fall of the dictatorships in Spain and Portugal, Protestantism was (and often still is) considered as something suspicious and alien in the Latin countries, and the same attitude prevails in Greece to this day. In the wake of Vatican II a large number of German and English Protestant theological works were translated into Spanish and Italian. Some exchanges of students and visiting professors among Roman Catholic and Protestant theological seminaries do take place.

Local ecumenism has two aspects: among Protestant denominations and between these and the majority church (Roman Catholic or Orthodox). In the Latin countries ecumenical bodies are formed by Protestant and Anglican churches: the Portuguese Council of Christian Churches includes Presbyterians, Methodists and the Lusitanian Church (Anglican); the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy groups Waldensians, Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans, Salvation Army and a few smaller churches. In Spain ecumenical impulses are represented by the Spanish Committee of Cooperation between the Churches, formed

by the Spanish Evangelical Church and the Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church; a broader evangelical federation, FEREDE, includes also the various evangelical churches. In Greece there is no ecumenical structure.

In all the countries of the area, with specific peculiarities for each one of them, the minority-majority ecumenism faces several difficulties. First, the mere numerical disproportion (1% or less Protestants) prevents any encounter among churches as equal partners except under special circumstances. Nevertheless, at the local level ecumenical encounters, dialogue, Bible study and common engagement do take place. In Italy, an official dialogue between the bishops conference and the Waldensian and Methodist churches began in 1988 on the issue of mixed marriages and finally resulted in a common declaration in 1998.

Second, this sense of Protestants as "second-class" Christians is reinforced by the theological and cultural tradition according to which the average clergy and laypersons in these countries call their church *the* church and often regard Protestant churches as sects.\* There is no full mutual recognition among all the churches.

Third, especially for the Orthodox, the issue of proselytism\* is a sensitive one. While all are opposed to it, majority and minority churches understand it differently. Minorities tend to consider "proselytism" as bribing or putting psychological pressure on people to lure them into changing allegiances, but admit as perfectly legitimate and honest any theologically grounded invitation to join their faith and, consequently, their congregation. Majority churches tend to consider any invitation to join a denomination different from the one in which the person (even a totally secularized person) was baptized as proselytism, but do not consider as such the pressure put on members of minority churches by the sociological and cultural weight of their large majority, which they often identify, with little ecumenical sensitivity, as *the* religion of the country.

In areas where the minorities are scarcely present, it is difficult to have any ecumenism in the sense of dialogue or joint action with people of other confessions or denominations. But dialogues and joint actions exist where circumstances make it possible, e.g.

the monthly Italian *Confronti*, jointly sponsored by progressive Protestants and Roman Catholics since 1974. The term “ecumenical” appears in the title of several Protestant centres (the most prominent being Agape in Italy, Los Rubios in Spain, Figueira da Foz in Portugal) and in organizations such as the Secretariat for Ecumenical Activities, an Italian movement led by Roman Catholic and Protestant laypeople, founded by Catholic laywoman Maria Vingiani in 1949.

Relationships with the WCC, the Conference of European Churches and other international ecumenical organizations vary. The Church of Greece is a member of the WCC and CEC, as are most historic Protestant denominations in Southern Europe. Several fundamentalist denominations contrast “evangelical” with “ecumenical”, considering the latter as inclined to blur unduly the theological discrepancies between confessions, and therefore refrain from participating in ecumenical activities.

Established in 1982, the Ecumenical Forum of European Christian Women is active in all Southern European countries, promoting ecumenical links and commitment among Protestant, Orthodox and RC women’s organizations and groups, especially in the fields of justice for women and of women’s theological creativity.

An interesting process is the integration between Waldensian and Methodist churches in Italy, implemented in 1979. The numerical imbalance (6 to 1) would normally have made traditional church union difficult; integration implies joint government, joint activities and the same confession of faith while preserving denominational identity and separate fellowship in Christian World Communions.\* Close cooperation between Waldensian/Methodist and Baptist churches in Italy has developed since 1990: it includes mutual recognition of members, exchange of ministers, and a common weekly newspaper, *Riforma*.

Protestant mainline churches in Italy, Spain and Portugal (as well as those of France, Belgium and French-speaking Switzerland) belong to the Conference of Protestant Churches of Latin Countries in Europe (CEPPL). Up to the 1960s it was engaged in the defence of religious liberty\* for Protestant minorities in Italy, Portugal,

Spain and Belgium. Later it developed a keen interest in “diaspora”\* issues concerning the problems of Protestant minorities scattered over large areas. It also sponsored seminars for radio preachers. In the three Latin countries of Southern Europe, Protestant churches have developed considerable social programmes (e.g. with refugees and migrants) for which they have received financial help from stronger churches, and lately from state funds.

Besides these institutional ecumenical relations a number of informal movements or groups gathered around themes such as peace, justice, anti-racism, human rights, etc., which are fundamentally ecumenical in nature – they take their inspiration from Christian impulses and forget or largely disregard traditional confessional boundaries. Their number and importance are difficult to assess and are different from country to country and between urban and rural areas.

Events such as the European Ecumenical Assemblies, in Basel on peace and justice in 1989 and in Graz on reconciliation in 1997, revealed a keen ecumenical commitment by interested groups, even if the follow-up back home was limited. The “Charta Oecumenica: Guidelines for the Growing Cooperation among the Churches in Europe”, launched in April 2001 by the Conference of European Churches and its Roman Catholic counterpart, the Council of European Bishops Conferences, has been widely translated and discussed in Southern Europe. The minority churches in this area particularly value the commitment, proposed by the Charta, to “defend the rights of minorities and to help reduce misunderstandings and prejudices between majority and minority churches in our countries”.

See also **Conference of European Churches**.

ALDO COMBA and LUCA NEGRO

■ G. Tourn et al., *You Are My Witnesses: The Waldensians across 800 Years*, Turin, Claudiana, 1989.

## EUROPE: WESTERN

FOR THE purposes of this entry, Western Europe comprises Belgium, the British Isles, France, Germany, Luxemburg, the Netherlands and Switzerland. The political bound-

aries have not changed: e.g., Belgium and Holland were united in one kingdom until 1831, when Belgium split off again; Germany was divided after the second world war and re-united in 1990. In any case, the contemporary geographical boundaries of Western Europe re-group older kingdoms or nations\* such as Alemans, Frisians, Saxons, Angles, Picts and Gauls.

Christianity was in Europe already by the 2nd century. In France church history mentions the martyrs of Lyons, c.180 and the council of Arles in 314. The re-Christianization of Europe became necessary after the fall of the Roman empire and the barbarian invasions. In 6th-century Europe the primary evangelists were women, especially Christian princesses who married pagan kings and then influenced them to become Christians; when the kings were baptized so were their subjects. For example, Clothilde played a large part in the conversion of her husband Clovis and so brought about the conversion of the Franks. Later, Justinian I and II made Christianity their concern, suppressing those who would not convert.

While the Roman pattern of conversion was urban, the pattern of the Celtic missionaries, rooted in monasteries, was rural. The Celtic mission began from Rome, spread through southern France and northern Spain into Ireland and from there to Scotland and northern England. The synod of Whitby in 664 settled for Roman traditions but the Celtic spirituality lived on (and has recently been revived in such places as the Iona community). Germany, Holland and Belgium were evangelized by Willibrord, later called Clement (739), and Winifrid, later called Boniface (854).

From the 7th century Islam became a threat. Its impact was not uniform in the world, but it is arguable that the threat contributed to the intensification of monastic life with stress on celibacy, education, copying of manuscripts and the spread of Latin. By the end of the 8th century there was decisive re-alignment of forces within the Christian world under the impact of Islam. Authority was divided between secular and religious powers. But the pope exercised independent moral strength.

Although the power of the pope was strong in Western Europe until the end of the

15th century and unity seemed to exist, there was very considerable dissidence within the church. The activity of John Wycliffe (1330-84) and Jan Hus (c.1370-1415) heralded the Reformation\* which came with Luther (1483-1546), Zwingli (1484-1531) and Calvin (1509-64). Lutheranism became strong in Germany and the Scandinavian countries; the Reformed church was strong in Switzerland, Scotland and the Dutch Republic, as well as in Bohemia and Hungary in Central Europe. In 1566 Holland saw the *Beeldenstorm*, or iconoclastic tempest.

The Reformation followed different patterns. For example, it had its impact in the cities of Holland in the 1570s, while the countryside was not "purged" until early in the 17th century. At around this time, disputes in the church of the Reformation led to the birth of other groups such as the Mennonites. In any case, the Dutch Reformed Church, which was Calvinist, was a "privileged church" (to be distinguished from the established church) until the French occupation (1795), when Napoleon decided that no denomination should be disadvantaged. But when the privileged church was alive, Catholics and other suppressed Protestants were in *hidden* churches. The Reformation in Holland was not so violent after 1600, and so substantial groups of other churches became signs of a fragmented Christianity which has continued till today. The year 1723 saw the birth of the church of Utrecht, also called the Old Catholic schism.

In England Henry VIII broke with the pope, and his daughter Elizabeth established a religious settlement which brought as many Puritans and Catholics as possible within the Anglican church. All the churches of the Reformation laid stress on the Bible and the vernacular liturgy. The Anglican church also kept the threefold ministry\* of bishop, priest and deacon. Attempts at reconciliation\* by the Roman Catholic Church failed, as did attempts to bring the churches of the Reformation into a closer unity, partly because of the growth of nationalism.

#### THE ISSUE OF UNITY

In the 17th and 18th centuries, people spoke of three parts of the divided church, i.e. Lutheran, Reformed and Roman

Catholic. In the 17th century there was a search for the unity\* of the church through discussion and theological exploration. The growth of pietism led to a desire for ecumenical exchange of fellowship. Hugo Grotius (1583-1645), who saw the connection between ecumenism and mission,\* tried to organize an ecumenical synod of all churches except the Roman Catholic Church. His effort failed, as did that of Daniel Jablonski (1660-1741), for whom the cornerstone of the unity of the evangelical churches was to be the biblical orthodoxy of the Brethren and Anglican tradition.

The search for Christian unity, both moral and organizational, continued in the 18th century, and the end of the century saw the formation of the German Christian fellowship, a developed idea of the "spiritual society". Established in Basel, it spread rapidly and gave rise to the Basel Mission House, the Basel Missionary Society, and Bible Tract Societies in Switzerland, Germany and Britain. Throughout the 18th century the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, an Anglican society founded in 1689, kept close contact with the continental Lutheran and Reformed churches and supported Lutheran and Reformed ministers in the mission field.

### ECUMENICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN WESTERN EUROPE

As ecumenical interest in the 19th century slowly turned towards ecclesiology (see church), worldwide fellowships of churches arose: the first meeting of the Alliance of Reformed Churches was in 1875, the first Methodist ecumenical conference in 1881, the first Baptist world congress in 1905. Old Catholic churches of the world joined in 1889 in the Union of Utrecht. There were also parallel movements within countries: in 1848 a diet of German churches held in Wittenberg marked the beginning of steps which led eventually to the formation of the Evangelical Church in Germany in 1922.

In the Church of England the "high church" wing sought closer union with Roman Catholics, the "evangelical" wing better relationships with the non-conformists (one result of which was the formation of the [World's] Evangelical Alliance\* in 1846) and the "broad church" group a compre-

hensive church that would bring in as many non-conformists as possible to a re-constituted Church of England.

The voluntary movements associated with the evangelical awakening in the 19th century also gave fresh impetus to the ecumenical movement. The driving force of these movements was mission, both evangelism\* and social reform. Most churches founded their own missionary societies, but there were also joint ventures such as the British and Foreign Bible Society. Two great Christian youth movements were founded in England: the Young Men's Christian Association\* (1844) and the Young Women's Christian Association\* (1855). The same period also saw the emergence of the Student Christian Movements, which in 1895 coalesced in the World Student Christian Federation.\* Together, the three movements nurtured many leaders of the ecumenical movement.

In most nations of Western Europe, national councils of churches\* were set up: in Britain in 1942, in the Netherlands in 1946, in Germany in 1822 (re-founded 1948). The growing involvement of the Roman Catholic Church in ecumenical activities at the European level was reflected in conversations in a number of countries of Western Europe in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The most extensive alteration of institutional ecumenical arrangements was in the British Isles. In 1990 the British Council of Churches was re-constituted as the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland (in 1999 re-named Churches Together in Britain and Ireland); it has full Roman Catholic membership. At the same time new national ecumenical bodies were set up in England, Wales and Scotland. The aim of these instruments is to set a new pattern of ecumenical relationships, responding to a sense that councils of churches had acquired a life of their own outside the mainstream of churches and that the decisions they made were largely ignored. The new ecumenical bodies have no decision-making powers of their own; decisions are instead made by the relevant bodies in the member churches, which seek to ensure that there is more genuine ecumenical cooperation at every level. The political process of devolution, with the establishment of the Scottish parliament and the Welsh assembly,

has strengthened the role of the national ecumenical instruments.

In the rest of Europe the issue of finding ways to work with the Roman Catholic Church continues. New frictions have also developed between the Orthodox church and the Evangelical churches.

The proliferation of theological dialogue, both multilateral and bilateral, at the global and regional levels during the last third of the 20th century has challenged churches to harvest the fruit of these discussions in agreements at the regional, national and local levels. Notable examples of binding agreements between churches across national boundaries which included churches in Western Europe are the Leuenberg agreement (Reformation churches), the Meissen agreement (Evangelical Church in Germany and the Church of England) and the Porvoo\* agreement (Anglican and Lutheran churches).

### THE CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

In the 18th and 19th centuries many Christian organizations for women were founded, among them the Mothers' Union (Anglican), the Union of Catholic Mothers (RC) and the Baptist Women's League. In the second half of the 20th century a new phenomenon emerged, the Christian feminist movement with a feminist theology.\* An important role in this has been played by the Ecumenical Forum of European Christian Women, growing out of a discussion in Brussels in 1978. The forum links together Christian women and Christian women's organizations throughout Europe, both traditional and radical; its members come from all European churches including Roman Catholic. It seeks to bring about the greater participation of women in church and society and also to promote the unity of the churches and the unity and peace of Europe. The fourth assembly of the forum was held in Budapest in 1994 around the theme "Be Not Afraid – Remember the Future"; the fifth assembly, in Madrid in 1998, met under the theme "Facing the New Millennium with Promise".

Another initiative arising in Europe during the 1990s was the Women's Synod Movement. The idea for such a synod at the European level came from Christian femi-

nists concerned about the quality of their own lives and the lives of others in Europe today. From 1990 to 1995 national synods were held in the Netherlands, Austria, Germany and Switzerland; in July 1997 the first European women's synod was held in Gmunden, Austria, under the theme "Women for Change in the 21st Century". It was ecumenical and inter-religious and had no principle of delegation. More than 1000 women attended, many of them Roman Catholic. More regional and European-wide synods are planned.

Women were also present in large numbers at the second European Ecumenical Assembly, held in Graz, Austria, in June 1997, under the theme "Reconciliation – Gift of God and Source of New Life"; they still felt that their issues were marginalized and they were given insufficient leadership positions.

### NEW VISIONS FOR EUROPE

After the enthusiasm of the early years, ecumenical life in Europe seems in many ways to have been at a low ebb for some time. Genuine progress in Christian unity has been difficult to achieve. The year 1989 saw tremendous political change in Europe. Along with new political freedom in Central and Eastern Europe came economic collapse and new problems and threats. Ecumenical organizations have sought to respond to these challenges and possibilities in various ways. At a special church leaders meeting in Geneva in March 1990, great emphasis was laid on the mission of the churches in a secularized Europe, a theme also taken up by the Roman Catholic synod of bishops in 1992. While this challenge could give new life to the ecumenical movement in Europe, there are also dangers to be avoided, such as fundamentalism, over-simplification of the gospel and renewed tensions between Orthodox and Catholics over the Eastern Catholic churches\* (Uniates). In all this ferment in Europe women must be enabled to play a full part, and the Roman Catholic Church has an indispensable role. The unity and peace of Europe can be a great contribution to the unity and peace of the world; and this perhaps poses a particular challenge in Western Europe, given its historical role in both the divisions of the church and the two global wars of the 20th century.

Divisions in Europe can have widespread harmful effects: the pain and conflict in the former Yugoslavia, for example, pinpoints yet again the importance of Christian cooperation and understanding. The ethnic and religious conflicts also indicate that dialogue with people of other faiths, as well as dialogue between different Christian churches, is vitally important. Since the CEC assembly in Graz, which immediately followed the second European Ecumenical Assembly, more emphasis has been laid on the importance of dialogue and a churches in dialogue commission has been established.

See also **Conference of European Churches.**

JEAN MAYLAND

■ R.A. Fletcher, *The Conversion of Europe*, London, Harper Collins, 1997 ■ C.L.W. Halifax ed., *The Conversations at Malines: Original Documents*, London, Philip Alan, 1930 ■ L. Herrin, *The Formation of Christendom*, Princeton NJ, Princeton UP, 1987 ■ J. Matthews, *The Unity Scene*, London, BCC, 1985 ■ S. Neill, *The Church and Christian Union: The Bampton Lectures for 1964*, London, Oxford UP, 1968 ■ *The Next Steps for Churches Together in Pilgrimage, Including Definitive Proposals for Ecumenical Instruments*, London, BCC, 1989 ■ C. Parvey, *The Community of Women and Men in the Church*, WCC, 1983 ■ J. Rossel, *The Roots of Western Europe: An Essay on Interpretation of Cultures during the First Nine Centuries A.D.: With an Epilogue Covering Cultural Developments from the 10th to the 20th Century*, Basel, Basilea, 1995 ■ R. Rouse & S.C. Neill eds, *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, vol. 1: 1517-1948, London, SPCK, 1954.

## EUROPEAN UNITY

EUROPE, with its eastern end at the Ural mountains, has always been the home of different peoples and cultures, whether of Graeco-Roman, Germanic or Slavonic origin. No single bond has united them more than their adoption of the Christian gospel. In the early Christian era, Rome and Constantinople were influential centres. In their cultural and ecclesiastical spheres these centres represented the different practical expressions of the gospel, with their respective theologies, liturgies, forms of spirituality and structures.

Equally important in each centre, however, is the relationship between church and state,\* bishop and monarch. Gradually, the East and West of Europe grew apart until the 1054 formal break in church fellowship between Rome and Constantinople. Thereafter, and still in many instances, East and West each has gone its own way – ecclesiastically, politically and culturally. Thus, one can place the boundaries between the East and West of Europe at the point where peoples and countries of Byzantine heritage meet those influenced by Rome.

At the end of the 1980s, a non-violent revolution brought about the disappearance of the communist system of Eastern-bloc states. These states are slowly developing a new political and cultural profile, and East and West are reaching a new form of living and working together. Whatever the outcome, the churches in Europe, affected by these developments, are taking steps to make their own contribution to the development of this continent. For this purpose, the churches together maintain institutions in the centres of the new united Europe, above all in Brussels and Strasbourg, and take part in the work of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

As other continents re-discover their independence and free themselves of European tutelage, Europe has to take stock of its own identity and how to assume in a new way responsibility for itself and towards other continents. The churches are finding it difficult to respond adequately to the high expectations now being made of them. In varying ways they have been affected by historical developments which have weakened their spiritual life and the vigour of their witness, in particular (1) the fragmentation of the Western church into confessional churches and, in the Eastern church, the rivalry between the patriarchates; and (2) the growing secularization\* affecting all areas of life as a consequence of the Enlightenment.

The churches in Europe have banded together to fulfill their common responsibility. In 1959 the majority of non-Roman Catholic churches in Europe joined together to form the Conference of European Churches\* (CEC). Formally founded in 1964, its self-understanding corresponds to that of the WCC. CEC brings together Re-

formation and Orthodox churches. Its activities cross all East-West boundaries and make themselves felt in the political as well as in the church sphere. Europe itself is a central theme in its work. The conference speaks publicly through conferences and documents.

Corresponding to CEC on the Roman Catholic side is the Council of European Bishops Conferences (CCEE = Consilium Conferentiarum Episcopaliū Europae). The council was founded in 1971 and canonically approved by Pope Paul VI in 1977. Each national bishops conference sends a representative to the CCEE annual general assembly, as well as to the triennial European bishops symposium. In general, the tasks of the CCEE resemble those of CEC.

Five joint CCEE/CEC European meetings have been held (Chantilly 1978, Logumkloster 1981, Riva del Garda 1984, Erfurt 1988, Santiago de Compostela 1991). Both ecumenically and politically these meetings attracted wide interest. In May 1989 the two bodies sponsored the European Ecumenical Assembly on "Peace with Justice" in Basel, dealing with the specifically European dimension of these problems. A second assembly, on the theme of reconciliation, was held in 1997 (Graz, Austria).

In the European context, Reformation churches have come together in a new way. They have done this on the basis either of the Leuenberg\* concord (Central Europe, 1973) or of the theological declaration of Porvoo\* (Northern Europe, 1992).

WERNER LÖSER

■ J. Beutler & W. Löser eds, *Europa - Aufgabe für Christen*, Frankfurt, Knecht, 1992 ■ F. König & K. Rahner eds, *Europa - Horizonte der Hoffnung*, Graz, Styria, 1983.

## EUTHANASIA

THE TERM "euthanasia" (literally "good" or "gentle" death or "dying well") covers a wide range of issues, depending upon whether the patient is conscious/competent or not and whether the physician's conduct is active or passive. Many people distinguish simply between voluntary euthanasia (where a competent, informed person asks another

to end his or her life and is not coerced into doing so) and involuntary euthanasia where the life of a terminally ill person, who does not have the capacity for informed choice, is brought to an end. Since many believe that the person taking the life should be a trained physician, voluntary euthanasia is increasingly termed "physician-assisted suicide".

However, there are other acts or omissions that may also be seen as forms of euthanasia. A physician may withdraw treatment or medical intervention knowing that this will shorten a comatose patient's life. Or a conscious patient may refuse life-sustaining treatment even though the physician is willing to continue treatment. Or again, a patient might leave a Living Will to the effect that he or she does not wish to be treated in the event of serious illness. Given this wide range of possibilities, very few people remain wholly for or against every form of euthanasia. Even among advocates of "direct" or "active" euthanasia few recommend that the lives of *all* of those who are permanently comatose or have severe learning disabilities should be actively terminated.

Among Christians there is no unanimity on euthanasia. On this ethical issue, as on many others, there is a range of beliefs across denominations and within denominations. Even when a particular church takes a firm line against, for example, physician assisted suicide, some of its regular church-goers will conclude otherwise.

One recent survey (in the United Kingdom) revealed an increased support over the last two decades for physician-assisted suicide both among church-goers and the population as a whole, although support for euthanasia among regularly attending Roman Catholics was lower than in other churches.

It might once have been sufficient simply to argue that human life is God-given and should never be taken by human beings outside a context of a just war or just punishment. However, the dilemmas created by modern medicine seem to make such a clear-cut position increasingly difficult to hold. Is withdrawing life-sustaining medical treatment or intensive nursing care from a patient whose cortex is destroyed tantamount to euthanasia or not? Is withholding life-prolonging treatment with the agreement of conscious but terminally ill patients tantamount

to assisted suicide or not? Modern medicine makes such questions unavoidable.

It is often argued by theologians in this context that human life is a gift from a loving God made known in Jesus Christ. The analogy of the gift-relationship finds its foundation in God's gift of the Logos and continues in the Logos's gift of life to us. We, in turn, should respond to this gift with gratitude, thanksgiving and deep responsibility. In contrast, those who lack this faith may see human life, not as a gracious gift, but as a chance by-product of a world that has meaning only if we choose to give it meaning. In theory at least, this second position allows human beings to shape human life as they will. If people decide to opt for euthanasia, then that is their autonomous choice: life can be shaped as they will. Conversely, for Christians life is God-given and is not simply to be shaped by humans as they will, but to be approached gratefully and responsibly.

Yet in the context of modern medicine the contrast between these two positions is not nearly so clear-cut. Christian doctors, committed to the belief that life is God-given, still face the same dilemmas about prolonging the lives of the terminally ill or permanently comatose. Gift-relationships are by no means all gracious – some can be highly manipulative, especially the required gifts of submission. Gracious gifts should be treated with gratitude and responsibility, but they may not bind the one to whom they are given – it is manipulative gifts that do that. Gracious gifts can be enjoyed for a while and then shared with, or even returned with gratitude to, the giver. Gracious gifts leave both giver and receiver free. Indeed when God-given life becomes nothing but a burden, it might seem appropriate to return that life prayerfully and humbly to the giver.

The WCC has not made any specific statements on euthanasia. The document of the Joint Working Group between the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church on "The Ecumenical Dialogue on Moral Issues" sought to offer general guidance on ethical approaches to such issues as euthanasia.

The 1998 Lambeth conference of Anglican bishops identified five "bedrock principles" which are crucial to this issue from a Christian perspective: (1) life is God-given

and therefore has intrinsic sanctity, significance and worth; (2) human beings are in relationship with the created order and that relationship is characterized by such words as respect, enjoyment and responsibility; (3) human beings, while flawed by sin, nevertheless have the capacity to make free and responsible moral choices; (4) human meaning and purpose is found in our relationship with God, in the exercise of freedom, critical self-knowledge, and in our relationship with one another and the wider community; (5) this life is not the sum total of human existence; we find our ultimate fulfilment in eternity with God through Christ.

The bishops argued that a combination of the first, second and fourth principles precludes either voluntary or involuntary euthanasia. They also worried about the consequential dangers of legalizing such forms of euthanasia – especially the danger of abuse, the danger of diminution of respect for human life, and the danger of damaging the doctor-patient relationship. They summarized the dangers as follows: the virtual impossibility of framing and implementing legislation that would prevent abuse by the unscrupulous; a diminution of respect for all human life, especially of the marginalized and those who may be regarded as "unproductive" members of society; the potential devaluing of worth, in their own eyes, of the elderly, the sick and of those who are dependent on others for their well-being; the potential destruction of the important and delicate trust of the doctor-patient relationship.

However, they argued that the following *are* consonant with their Christian principles: to withhold or withdraw excessive medical treatment or intervention (e.g. life support) may be appropriate where there is no reasonable prospect of recovery; when the primary intent is to relieve suffering and not to bring about death, to provide supportive care for the alleviation of intolerable pain and suffering may be appropriate even if the side effect of that care is to hasten the dying process (i.e. the doctrine of double effect); to refuse or terminate medical treatment (such as declining to undertake a course of chemotherapy for cancer) is a legitimate individual moral choice; when the person is in a permanent vegetative state to

sustain him or her with artificial nutrition and hydration may indeed be seen as constituting medical intervention.

The catechism of the Catholic Church (1992) states that “whatever its motives and means, direct euthanasia... is morally unacceptable... An act or omission which, in itself or by intention, causes death to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder gravely contrary to the dignity of the human person and to the respect due to the living God, (the) Creator.” However, it goes on to recognize that “discontinuing medical procedures that are burdensome, dangerous, extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be legitimate... Here one does not will to cause death; one’s inability to impede it is merely accepted” (2277).

Euthanasia has not been an object of significant ecumenical debate, although in several countries (e.g., Australia) attempts to legislate for it have found the churches united in their opposition.

In April 2001 the Netherlands became the first country to legalize euthanasia, but only after considerable national debate. The legislation sets down very strict medical guidelines for euthanasia and only permits this practice for patients who are terminally ill and in a situation of desperate suffering. An explicit and well-considered request by the patient is necessary. Among the opposing voices was that of the Vatican which expressed its concern that the bill “violated human dignity” and that euthanasia “opposes the natural law of human conscience”. The Dutch churches reflect the broad variety of opinions found in secular society. The bishops conference of the Roman Catholic Church and the general secretary of the Uniting Reformed Churches, together with more orthodox Reformed churches and evangelical groups, protested against the law, while at the same time a group of 125 local pastors of the Uniting Reformed Churches supported it, emphasizing the very careful way in which doctors and families come to the decision to agree with the patient’s request to end his/her inhuman suffering, and stressing the wish to die with dignity. Many members of more liberal churches also supported the law, by canvassing members of parliament, and arguing in favour of human dignity – also in the termi-

nal phase – human autonomy and free choice.

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## EVANGELICAL ECUMENICAL CONCERNS

WHILE “evangelical” and “ecumenical” are often used as mutually exclusive labels, Evangelicalism was originally ecumenical, though limited to inter-Protestant. Already in 1846 the World’s Evangelical Alliance\* was born, “a new thing in church history – a definite organization for the expression of unity among Christian individuals belonging to different churches” (Ruth Rouse). Thus before Evangelicalism *had* ecumenical concerns, it *was* an ecumenical concern.

Nor do “Evangelicals”\* and “ecumenicals” occupy two isolated worlds today. Many members of the World Evangelical Fellowship\* (WEF), the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization,\* and evangelical para-church organizations belong to churches that are members of the WCC and of national and regional councils of churches.\* The WEF participates in the annual conference of secretaries of Christian World Communions,\* and its theological commission has a task force on ecumenical issues which responded to the WCC Faith and Order documents on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* and *Confessing the One Faith*.

Commitment to ecumenism on the part of Evangelicals is also evident in the newly developing Evangelical-Roman Catholic relations\* of various kinds and at various levels. Furthermore, if one takes into account the ecumenical involvement of Pentecostals\* who in many countries are members of na-

tional evangelical alliances, it is obvious that a simple disjunction between “evangelical” and “ecumenical” is a myth. The 1985 Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue on Mission (ERCDOM) statement sums up the ecumenical commitment of many Evangelicals: “Fidelity to Jesus Christ today requires that we take his will for his followers with new seriousness. He prayed for the truth, holiness, mission and unity of his people. We believe that these dimensions of the church’s renewal belong together” (see *Evangelical-Roman Catholic relations*).

Yet, the common use of “evangelical” and “ecumenical” as mutually exclusive is not without ground. For many Evangelicals ecumenism has become a pejorative term. They associate the ecumenical movement with the implicit goal of a “super-church”, and are convinced that in the dominant quest for the visible unity of the church, institutional and structural issues are displacing the confession and propagation of the central message of the gospel of salvation.

The association of modern ecumenism with a “super-church” strikes at the very heart of Evangelicalism and its origins in spiritual revivals or awakenings. Inherent in most of these was a critique of established (sometimes state) churches for perpetuating a form of godliness without its power, and for eclipsing the power of the gospel by hoary traditions, staid rites and clerical privilege. Evangelicalism continues to rejoice in the recovery of the central truths of the faith, such as the supreme authority of the infallible scriptures, the vicarious and atoning death of Jesus Christ and his bodily resurrection, the salvation of the lost through the shed blood of Christ and personal regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

These apprehensions about institutional forms of church unity run very deep when coupled with what is perceived as an affirmation of sacramental efficacy at the expense of the gospel call for personal conversion. Corollary to the Evangelicals’ emphasis on personal regeneration (“born-again”) and the experience of conversion that comes to expression in a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord is a pointed critique of the role of “evangelism”\* in the ecumenical movement. This critique is twofold: the urgency

to reach the “lost” with the gospel and the priority of evangelism over social responsibility.

Evangelical ecumenical engagement directly relates to the understanding and role of mission\* and evangelism in WCC circles. Many Evangelicals had mixed feelings about the 1961 integration into the WCC of the International Missionary Council (IMC).<sup>\*</sup> While this was seen as a golden opportunity for the WCC to recover and incorporate the passion for mission, the danger was real that absorption into the complex and multi-pronged WCC structure would blunt the IMC’s missionary-evangelistic edge. Ironically, to the degree that the merger did dissipate the missionary thrust of the former IMC, these evangelical fears may have been self-fulfilling: the decision of many Evangelicals not to participate in the WCC’s department for world mission and evangelism – which carried on the IMC’s work – significantly weakened its evangelical missionary insight and fervour.

Instead, much of the evangelical passion for mission came to be diverted into the alternative “Lausanne movement”. The Lausanne covenant\* (1974) laid the theological foundation and framework for evangelization in affirming “the authority and power of the Bible” (art. 2), “the uniqueness and universality of Christ” who is “the only mediator” (3), and “the return of Christ” (15). But as the full name of the Lausanne Committee makes clear, these evangelical dynamics converge in a single thrust: “for world evangelization”. The term “evangelism” was deliberately chosen over “mission” because of the perception that when all activities of the church in the world are called “mission” (see *missio Dei*), the specific meaning, urgency and primacy of evangelism is lost: “the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and to be reconciled to God” (4).

This insistence on the primacy of evangelism, and its urgency “in the church’s mission of sacrificial service”, implicitly stands in critique of the perceived penchant for social, political activism by the ecumenical movement in general and by the WCC in particular. True, “evangelism and socio-political involve-

ment are both part of our Christian duty” as “necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and man, our love for our neighbour and our obedience to Jesus Christ” (Lausanne, 5). But they are not on a par, they relate as “root” and “fruit” (H. Berkhof). “World evangelization requires the whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole world” (6). From this perspective, wholeness is subverted at every point if the centre of gravity of the church’s mission shifts away from evangelization to social action.

Nevertheless, in part as the result of the evangelical critique and the permanence of the Lausanne movement, a degree of convergence between Evangelicals and ecumenicals appears, reaching its high point in the statement “Confessing Christ Today” of the WCC assembly in Nairobi, 1975, and in the 1982 WCC landmark “Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation”. Simultaneously, the evangelical movement embarked on a journey that moves beyond the incipient dualism that lurks in juxtaposing “evangelism” to “social responsibility”, coupling them with an “and”, while giving primacy to the former. For a deepened sense of the integrity of holistic mission, the evangelical movement is indebted to insights gained in the ecumenical movement.

These mutual learnings and convergences have not yet laid to rest the concerns of Evangelicals about the nature and place of evangelism among ecumenicals. This can be demonstrated by the continuing tension within the WCC between its two major forming tributaries: the Faith and Order\* stream which bends all its efforts to the visible unity of the church – at the expense, some charge, of service in and to the world; and the Life and Work\* stream which concentrates its energies on the struggle for justice and peace – at the expense, others claim, of theological and ecclesiological depth. Although the major WCC study project on ecclesiology and ethics\* (1993-96) sought to address this debilitating internal tension, it may be irresolvable as long as the major source from which all of the ecumenical tributaries spring remains hidden from view: mission and evangelism.

The evangelical ecumenical concern, both within and outside the WCC, points to the transcendental dimension of the message

of good news in Jesus Christ. Authentic missionary evangelism fundamentally names this Name and calls all people, with their cultures and institutions, to find shalom, true peace, in his name. It moves into the highways and byways of daily life and breaks through the intramural encapsulation of church and world, ecclesiology and ethics. As good news-telling, evangelism reaches into life that has run stuck and into human lives that are at a loss and lost in an often bewildering and pain-wracked world.

The WCC’s “Mission and Evangelism” statement affirms the church’s task to “call all people to repentance, to announce forgiveness of sin and a new beginning in relations with God and with neighbours through Jesus Christ”. This evangelistic task is intrinsically linked to the social dimensions of the good news of Christ’s reign, which calls for conversion. Similar emphases are in evangelical documents such as the WEF Wheaton statement, “Transformation: The Church in Response to Human Need” (1983).

Yet for Evangelicals, the crux remains the universal call to all people to believe in Jesus Christ as the only way of salvation. Evangelicals are heartened by the pledge made at the 1996 conference on world mission and evangelism (Salvador, Brazil): “We... commit ourselves to unequivocal and cooperative witness to the gospel of hope in Jesus Christ in all contexts.” At the same time, Evangelicals ask whether this commitment is amenable to the addition suggested by an Evangelical ecumenist at this conference, “so that all may come to know and love Jesus”.

Expressed in terms of conversion,\* evangelical concern about the ecumenical movement is inextricably *ecumenical*. Vatican Council II’s Decree on Ecumenism\* rightly discerned that “there can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart”, *metanoia*, conversion. Conversely, there can be no true conversion to Jesus Christ without a re-discovery of his indivisible body, his church, and thus a conversion to its unity. As Evangelicals acknowledge, the needed emphasis on personal conversion has come needlessly at the cost of a weak ecclesiology, undermined as it is by “our evangelical tendency to individualism and em-

pire-building" (J. Stott). Conversion cuts deeply – in all directions.

To express evangelical ecumenical concerns is not to repudiate but to engage the ecumenical movement. The costs of lack of such engagement are inestimable. "If this ecumenical/non-ecumenical divide is not addressed and bridged, the Christian world could end up as divided as ever, even if major headway is made between churches within the ecumenical camp" (P. Hocken).

GEORGE VANDERVELDE

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## EVANGELICAL MISSIONS

DURING the last third of the 20th century, "evangelical" missions grew to surpass "mainline" Protestant missions by far – especially in North America, where the ratio of overseas missionary personnel from evangelical agencies to those from mainline agencies is 13 to 1.

A number of interdenominational evangelical agencies were founded in the 19th century, often to pioneer in non-Christian "inland" areas, e.g. China Inland Mission (1865), Sudan Interior Mission (1893), Africa Inland Mission (1895). Avoiding identification with any specific tradition, such agencies attracted personnel from across the Protestant spectrum. While international, they originally accepted members only from Western nations, but this has broadened in recent years, and in some agencies nearly half of the personnel are third-world missionaries serving outside their own countries. The Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association (IFMA, 1917) links the North American branches of these agencies.

The Evangelical Fellowship of Mission Agencies (EFMA, before 1945 Evangelical Foreign Missions Association) links evangelical *denominational* agencies in North America, including some Pentecostal. A new network (1985), the Association of International Mission Services (AIMS), serves Pentecostal and charismatic agencies. However, IFMA/EFMA/AIMS personnel account for less than half the total evangelical missionaries sent from North America; the majority serve in agencies unrelated to any mission association, such as the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (1845), Wycliffe Bible Translators (1934), and New Tribes Mission (1942). Only recently have the Southern Baptists, under their newly named International Mission Board, joined the EFMA (1995).

In the United Kingdom, Europe, India, Singapore, Korea, Nigeria and elsewhere, similar mission associations serve scores of evangelical mission agencies. Worldwide evangelical missionaries and their agencies are informally represented by the Missions Commission of the World's Evangelical Fellowship.\* As of 1997 there were an estimated 50,000 third-world missionaries; the large majority of these would be classified as evangelical.

See also **mission, missionary societies.**

ROBERT T. COOTE

## EVANGELICAL-ROMAN CATHOLIC RELATIONS

THE INCREASE in contacts between Evangelicals\* and Roman Catholics is not only rather recent but also rather startling. For these developments mark a 180 degree turn from the hostile stance that characterized earlier periods (and continues in many sectors of Evangelicalism today).

Even past unitive efforts by Evangelicals stopped well short of RCC doors. The World's Evangelical Alliance\* was founded in 1846, designed in large part to form a united front against the RCC. *Evangelical Christendom*, a journal closely associated with the new Alliance, articulated the anti-theological front of evangelical consolidation in an editorial in its first issue (1847): "[*Evangelical Christendom*] enters upon the theatre

of public life, the friend of all truly Christian communions and the adversary of none. Its only controversy will be with Romanism and Infidelity” – identified in the next sentence as “these common foes”. From the RC side the developing contacts with Evangelicals and Pentecostals\* (see **Pentecostal-Roman Catholic dialogue**) was equally surprising. Although in 1964 the Second Vatican Council’s Decree on Ecumenism\* opened the windows to all other willing churches and ecclesial communities, it did not envision on the horizon any positive relations with Pentecostal and Evangelical communions.

Rather than regarding Catholicism as its chief opponent, Evangelicals increasingly look to the RC communion as an ally and preferred discussion partner. Despite the many significant differences between the two groups, considerable affinity exists on many ethical issues (e.g., abortion, euthanasia, genetic engineering and justice). Accordingly, in many countries, regional or national Roman Catholic and Evangelical bodies cooperate directly in the public sphere. Similarly, confronted with many historic Protestant churches that appear to call into question central tenets of the faith, Evangelicals welcome the unswerving commitment by the RCC to the core of orthodoxy as expressed in the historic creeds, as well as to the continuing mandate for mission, as expressed, for example, in papal encyclicals – Paul VI’s *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975) and John Paul II’s *Redemptoris Missio* (1990).

At the international level, the first significant evidence of the changed attitude on the part of Evangelicals towards Roman Catholicism took the form of a dialogue. In a series of three meetings, held from 1977 to 1984, theologians and missiologists named by the Vatican Secretariat (now Pontifical Council) for Promoting Christian Unity\* and Evangelical participants from denominations both within and outside the WCC and from para-church mission organizations took part in an Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue on Mission (ERCDOM). Although the Evangelicals did not officially represent any international body, all were associated with the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization.\* Moreover, they were convened by John Stott of the Church of Eng-

land, a chief drafter of the 1974 Lausanne covenant.\*

The topics on which the ERCDOM report outlined both agreement and serious, sometimes contradictory, understandings of biblical teaching were (1) revelation,\* the Bible, the formulation of truth; the Bible vis-a-vis the teaching authority\* of the church; (2) the basis and authority of mission, direct evangelism\* and socio-political responsibility; (3) God’s workings “outside” the Christian community; (4) the gospel of salvation\* and the uniqueness\* and universality of Jesus Christ; the role of Mary\* in salvation; (5) conversion\* and baptism,\* church membership and the assurance of salvation; (6) the church\* as part, fruit, embodiment and agent of the gospel; (7) the gospel and culture;\* (8) our unity\* and disunity, possibilities of common witness\* and avoidance of “unworthy witness” or proselytism.\*

Especially the issue of “proselytism” presents considerable difficulty. Evangelical constituencies range from those who appear to regard all RCs as unbelievers in need of conversion to those who desire a very full cooperation with RCs in mission efforts. Since the ERCDOM report, the rapid growth of evangelical churches in predominantly RC areas such as Latin America, the Philippines, Spain, Italy, Poland and France has made the pastoral and missionary issues of worthy and unworthy witness and of cooperation or common witness more critical, as well as more divisive among Evangelicals themselves.

More fundamentally, the many points of consensus\* are linked with deep differences, particularly around the nature and purpose of the church. The ERCDOM report acknowledged that further conversations would be required before it would be possible “to arrive at greater clarity and common terms of ecclesiological discourse”.

The international dialogue in which Evangelicals are currently engaged with the RCC paradoxically has its roots in controversy with and about that church. At the general assembly of the World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF),\* held in Hoddesdon, England, in 1980, two RCC representatives were invited as observers and brought greetings to the assembly. As a result of the controversy arising from their presence, the

WEF theological commission created a 17-member ecumenical issues task force, which developed a statement that was published in 1988 as *Roman Catholicism: A Contemporary Evangelical Perspective*. It dealt with topics such as other churches, religious liberty, the place of Mary, authority in the church, the pope and infallibility, justification by faith, and the sacraments. The publication of this product of what was a monologue demonstrated the need for dialogue. For the first time, Evangelicals representing an international body, the WEF, would engage RC representatives to seek greater understanding and to develop better relations.

After preparatory work by a small group of Evangelicals and RC representatives at the secretaries of Christian World Communions\* meetings in 1988 and 1990, the first consultation took place in Venice in 1993. This meeting focused on scripture and Tradition and on justification by faith, exploring both serious differences and significant commonalities. The consultation engaged the reciprocal challenge entailed, on the one hand, in the privileged role Roman Catholicism overtly attributes to Tradition and the official teaching authority (magisterium), and, on the other, the role that Tradition covertly plays in Evangelicalism, as evidenced in the place accorded to justification by faith in the interpretation of the scriptures. At the Venice meeting, it became clear that issues surrounding the nature and mission of the church required further exploration. These issues were taken up at the next meeting, which was held in 1997 at the Tantar Ecumenical Institute\* in Jerusalem.

At the Tantar meeting the question of "real but imperfect communion", which the RCC says exists between it and other Christian communities, became prominent, as well as the issue of evangelism and proselytism. Discussion of these themes continued at Williams Bay, Wisconsin, in 1999, and at Mundelein, Illinois, in 2001. In fact, these themes proved to be at once fruitful fields worthy of deeper probing, as well as areas of major differences. While both sides share the conviction that all who are in Christ are one, and thus share a deep communion, rather divergent understandings of what it means to be in communion with Christ as well as di-

verse criteria of determining the marks of belonging to Christ prove to be operative. As a result, subsequent meetings of the consultation continue to work on these issues.

While the differences between Evangelicals and RCs on the issues discussed in this consultation have by no means vanished, marked progress may be noted in the mode and regularity of the discussions. In the initial phase of this consultation, the meetings took place somewhat sporadically. Unlike the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, the WEF task force was unable to commit itself to annual or even bi-annual meetings. Slowly this began to change, until at the most recent meetings annual sessions of the consultation have been planned. In addition to the increased frequency of the meetings changes in the manner of preparation and type of product of the consultation shifted. Not until the second and subsequent meetings were joint communiques issued. As to preparation, for the first three meetings, representatives of each team prepared parallel papers on the assigned topics. At the third meeting, in Williams Bay, a beginning was made on the collaborative preparation of papers. These papers probe for a deeper understanding of what is shared in common, while at the same time exploring the nature and degree of the differences that divide the two traditions. The consultation is now moving into a phase at which an attempt will be made to prepare joint statements. The focus of these consultations, however, is not the quest for unity as such, but better mutual understanding of, and improved relations between, RCs and Evangelicals.

Another international development in which Evangelicals are informally involved is the exploration of a global forum of churches and ecumenical organizations. This venture is of course broader than Evangelical and Roman Catholic communions. Yet, the RC and Evangelical (together with the Pentecostal) groups are the most prominent, since their involvement is crucial for the viability of a venture that seeks to be more inclusive than the WCC.

In addition to these international developments, significant movement in the last three decades is also evident at the regional level. In the USA, the National Council of Catholic Bishops and the Southern Baptist Convention

were involved for some thirty years in official consultations on topics such as grace, scripture and mission. This was a conversation with no intention to produce unity or even convergence but rather to clarify commonalities and differences in the faith.

At a regional level, another venture sparked both enthusiasm and controversy. In 1994 a North American group of Evangelicals and RCs, who had been cooperating informally for some time on the social-political front, issued the declaration *Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium*. While recognizing important differences, this statement focused on significant areas of convergence: "We Affirm Together" (the content of the faith as expressed in the Apostolic Creed), "We Hope Together" (for greater unity and commitment to mission), "We Search Together" (for a deeper and clearer discernment of nature and weight of differences), "We Contend Together" (for the role of truth in the public arena), and "We Witness Together" (evangelism that avoids proselytism). Although this collaborative effort was entirely unofficial, both the content of the statement and the ensuing controversy, especially among Evangelicals and Pentecostals, gave it a prominence that belied its informal character. Furthermore, rather than retreating from the controversial and controverted sections regarding theological convergences, this same group produced a statement focusing entirely on theological matters. In the 1998 statement, *The Gift of Salvation*, the Evangelicals-and-Catholics-together group delineated areas of agreement and disagreement regarding salvation and, more specifically, justification by faith. These statements have caused considerable debate among Evangelicals and precipitated internal dialogue and statements of Evangelical solidarity.

While Evangelical-Roman Catholic relations continue to be surrounded by tension, even turbulence and setbacks (in 2001, for example, the Southern Baptist Convention terminated the official conversations with the Roman Catholic Church, in which it had been engaged for thirty years), the steps taken in dialogue and collaboration are unlikely to be reversed in the present century.

See also **evangelical ecumenical concerns**.

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## EVANGELICALS

THE TERMS "evangelical" and "evangelicalism" had scant use until Erasmus and others derisively aimed them at what they saw as Lutheran narrowness and fanaticism. Luther used the terms for all Christians who accepted the doctrine of *sola gratia*, which he saw as the heart of the gospel (*evangelion*). The treaty of Westphalia (1648) denominated both the Lutheran and the Reformed churches "evangelical". By 1700 the term seems to have become in Europe a simple synonym for "Protestant" or, in German-speaking areas, "Lutheran". In Protestant Britain, however, the religious awakening led by the Wesleys and George Whitefield seems to have been called the evangelical revival from around 1750. Slightly later, advocates of revival in Britain, both in the Anglican and Free churches, called themselves evangelicals. Their trademarks were deep moral earnestness, commitment to strict personal piety, faithfulness in private and corporate devotion and vigorous philanthropic enterprise. Since the introduction of Protestantism in Latin America during the 1800s, its adherents have preferred to call their churches and themselves evangelicals (*evangélicos*) rather than Protestant.

In London, in 1846, some 800 Europeans and North Americans formed the Evangelical Alliance to counter the political and spiritual revival of Roman Catholicism then in progress and, more positively, to coordinate various Protestant enterprises in missions, publishing and social reform. Its nine conservative theological tenets summarize the contents of the historic Protestant confessions of faith, but its implicit understanding of Christianity in practice rested on the religious bases developed in early pietism and in the evangelical revival.

In British North America, the first great awakening (1730s and 1740s) had emphasized the necessity for a graciously given personal experience of redemption\* in Christ, for personal piety, including social concern, and for confessional orthodoxy. The second great awakening (early 1800s) intensified the experiential element, reduced and simplified dogmatic requirements, slowly institutionalized social concern and made the revivalistic mode normative for the 19th century. The formation of a branch of the alliance in the United States in 1867 simply reflected a context already practising the style of Christianity which the alliance advocated.

Between about 1865 and 1900, however, many came gradually to understand the personal evangelical experience central to all evangelical thought and action as a personal moment of spiritual illumination. This understanding encouraged an internalizing of the evangelical experience. The old language remained, but by the 1920s social action and theological reflection were suffering benign neglect among Evangelicals. They sought only a "clean heart and right spirit".

By about 1900, American Methodism had divided into three parties, each seeing itself as "evangelical". The liberals, bent on social action and theological modernity, were evangelical but with the accents of the social sciences. The conservatives, including the Holiness movement,\* were evangelical in the sense of the word before the civil war. The mainstream insisted on a highly individualistic and private faith,\* which meant that traditional terms and doctrines might carry non-traditional connotations. Thus the Wesleyan tradition as a whole made the very idea of evangelical equivocal.

Calvin's progeny in the US had also divided into three major parties in the late 1800s. The conservative party, with its centre at Princeton, owed much to Charles Hodge and considered US evangelicalism, especially revivalism, theologically and culturally suspect. A mildly activist liberal party, rooted in the work of Nathaniel Taylor at Yale, spoke the language of Evangelicalism, but its deeper concern was to reconcile the Reformed tradition and modern thought and culture.\* The revivalist party, which claimed the mantle of Charles Finney, Asa Mahan and William Boardman, was led at the end of the century by D.L. Moody, R.A. Torrey and J.W. Chapman. But these later revivalists, who now inherited the name "evangelical", displaced the radical social concern and perfectionism of their predecessors with a very different agenda: "conversion", understood first and last as an internal religious experience; maintaining the authority of the Bible as the inerrant divine revelation;\* and restoring Evangelicalism as the normative form of Christianity.

From the late 1890s, increasing liberal critiques compelled these Evangelicals to explain their position theologically. Here, they found the methods and categories of the conservatives congenial, though they resisted the Calvinist dogmatism and rationalism of the conservatives' systems. A new coalition would soon produce a new definition of "evangelical" among the Reformed.

By the late 1910s, the Reformed tradition fell into civil war, and it drew other traditions in. On one side was the liberal tradition; on the other was the revivalist-confessional coalition, under the names "conservative", "evangelical" and "fundamentalist". The revivalist party became increasingly Reformed and less inclined to revivalism; the conservatives opened up to Evangelicalism.

Conservative Wesleyanism, still evangelical in the 19th-century sense, recognized that its theological method and understanding of the Bible had more in common with the spirit of liberalism than with that of the Reformed Evangelicals. But certain liberal theological conclusions contradicted their deepest commitments. Often, then, they rejected specific theological insistences of the Reformed Evangelicals but joined them in

the war against the liberal secularizing of Christ, the Bible and the work of the church. And, little by little, they muted their commitment to social involvement, in part for fear of identification with the social gospel of the liberals. But most also rejected the name "fundamentalist", especially as the theological bases and separatist ethos of fundamentalism became clear (see **fundamentalists**).

In the mid-1940s, Harold J. Ockenga, a Congregationalist evangelical with Methodist roots, criticized fundamentalism for its theological paranoia, its separatism and its contentiousness and led a number of Reformed Evangelicals in the creation of an anti-fundamentalist "new Evangelicalism". Hence the establishment of the National Association of Evangelicals, Fuller Theological Seminary and the magazine *Christianity Today*. Doctrinally, the new Evangelicals confessed the infallibility of the Bible, the Trinity,\* the deity of Christ, vicarious atonement, the personality and work of the Holy Spirit,\* and the personal return of Christ; religiously, they revived the coalitional ethos of the early 1900s.

In the 1960s, the Reformed Evangelicals debated the meaning of "the infallibility of the Bible" as the question at the heart of their faith. The debate led to a clear separation of new Evangelicals from fundamentalists. Also clear was the intention of the former to claim near-exclusive right to the title "evangelical". The large numbers of persons in the Methodist, Baptist and other traditions whose current expressions were more directly rooted in 19th-century Evangelicalism than those of the Reformed new Evangelicals were simply left off the evangelical map by the new evangelical cartographers.

At the same time, the social dimensions of the gospel were coming under study and were being tested in practice by Evangelicals in several traditions. For example, Sherwood Wirt's *The Social Conscience of the Evangelical* and several of the works of Carl Henry called Reformed Evangelicals to work actively in the world around them. But works such as Donald Dayton's *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage* revived awareness that the evangelical tradition had originally seen itself as essentially quite radical (although not novel), socially and theologically – a da-

tum somehow lost in the coalitional ethos of new Evangelicalism. Dayton and others insist that the (Reformed) new evangelical model, with its primary concern for doctrinal orthodoxy, cannot produce a historically and theologically consistent definition of "evangelicalism". Rather, the model will have to be based on clear and direct lines back to the period 1830-60, the time of the maturing of the second awakening, with its institutionalizing of revivalism and its insistence on a grace-given experience of redemption as the heart of all true Christianity.

On the international scene, those Christians who call themselves Evangelicals are among the fastest-growing groups within the Christian family, especially in Latin America. They are finding institutional forums for cooperation, such as the World Evangelical Fellowship\* and the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization,\* and those Evangelicals among the member churches of the WCC are becoming more articulate in voicing their concerns, especially in the area of world mission and evangelism.

See also **evangelical ecumenical concerns**, **Evangelical-Roman Catholic relations**.

PAUL MERRITT BASSETT

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## EVANGELISM

ONE OF THE main roots of the contemporary ecumenical movement was the commitment to the evangelization of the world which culminated in the world missionary conference in Edinburgh in 1910. Out of this and other

manifestations of God's Spirit, not just within Protestantism but also in the Orthodox world, developed a calling to unity\* which found its biblical reference and devotional inspiration in the prayer of our Lord "that they may all be one... that the world may believe" (John 17:21).

The WCC basis\* itself points to the gospel message, defining the Council as a fellowship of churches "which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit". To true ecumenism belongs the awareness of being part of the missionary movement of God's own self who, in the fullness of time, sent the Son to redeem us and sent the Holy Spirit to gather together a people to be the bearers of the revelation\* of God's liberating will in Jesus Christ (see **Trinity**). As Philip Potter has said: "Evangelism is the test of true ecumenism."

According to the WCC constitution, the churches through the Council "facilitate common witness of the churches in each place and in all places, and support each other in their work for mission and evangelism". This function has been addressed in a wide variety of ways during the WCC's history, especially after its merger with the International Missionary Council in 1961: studies on evangelism, conferences on world mission every seven or eight years, publications such as the *International Review of Mission* and the *Monthly Letter on Evangelism*, national or regional consultations on witnessing to the faith, publication of "Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation" (1982). In cooperation with the Bible societies,\* the WCC has been associated with the translation, production and distribution of Bibles throughout the world. The worship services and Bible studies which play such an important part in all ecumenical gatherings are ways of reminding people of the gospel and the challenge of its proclamation today.

The responsibility for evangelism and support for common witness\* in each place are, then, an integral part of all aspects of the WCC's work. Just as unity is essential to the struggle for justice\* in the light of God's promise of reconciliation\* in Jesus Christ, so

the proclamation of justice and an attitude of service are a testimony to the common faith in Jesus Christ\* which has brought together the ecumenical family.

### THE EVANGELISM DEBATE

Evangelism has been a major subject of discussion in all WCC assemblies. A point of crisis came at the fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968), where the section debating "Renewal in Mission" sought to understand God's own missionary activity in the whole world and the particular role of churches and Christians in accompanying the action of the Spirit of God. Some saw this approach as a secularization\* of faith; for others, it was a kingdom (see **kingdom of God**) perspective that challenged them to work for justice and development.\*

This debate obliged the WCC to concentrate on the substance of the evangelistic message, and that was done first in the world mission conference in Bangkok (1973) on "Salvation Today" and later in the fifth assembly (Nairobi 1975) under the theme "Jesus Christ Frees and Unites". Nairobi affirmed: "The gospel is good news from God, our Creator and Redeemer. On its way from Jerusalem to Galilee and to the ends of the earth, the Spirit discloses ever-new aspects and dimensions of God's decisive revelation in Jesus Christ. The gospel always includes the announcement of God's kingdom and love through Jesus Christ, the offer of grace and forgiveness of sins, the invitation to repentance and faith in him, the summons to fellowship in God's church, the command to witness to God's saving words and deeds, the responsibility to participate in the struggle for justice and human dignity, the obligation to denounce all that hinders human wholeness, and a commitment to risk life itself."

### THE EVANGELICAL CONGRESSES

The debate among Evangelicals started long before Uppsala. The series of congresses called by US evangelist Billy Graham deserves special mention. In 1966 he invited people of evangelical persuasion to a congress in Berlin to consider the situation of world evangelism. This was followed in 1974 by a second congress attended by 4000 people, in Lausanne, Switzerland, around the

theme “Let the Earth Hear His Voice”. The Lausanne covenant,\* drafted by the congress and signed by the majority of the participants, pointed out that “more than 2700 million people had yet to be evangelized”. “Reaching the unreached” – a term coined to refer to all those who have had no chance to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ – became the main slogan with which to mobilize the church.\* Lausanne affirmed evangelism as an independent category related to, but independent of, the demand for social justice: “Social justice is not evangelization, but social justice belongs to our mandate.” The awareness of the close relation between these two dimensions of the Christian gospel has been growing in all sectors of the Christian family. So a consultation in Grand Rapids, USA, in June 1982, called by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization\* and the World Evangelical Fellowship,\* was able to affirm that evangelism and social responsibility, while distinct from one another, are integrally related in the proclamation of and obedience to the gospel: “the partnership is in reality a marriage”.

### THE ROMAN CATHOLIC UNDERSTANDING OF EVANGELISM

Philip Potter was one of the contributors to a special synod of Roman Catholic bishops in 1974 on evangelization in the modern world. The subsequent encyclical of Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, which drew on the results of the synod, affirmed Christ as the supreme evangelist and the task of evangelizing as the essential mission of the church. It declared that “it is impossible to accept that in evangelization one could or should ignore the importance of the problems so much discussed today concerning justice, liberation, development and peace in the world”, going on to say that the church “re-affirmed the primacy of her spiritual vocation and refused to replace the proclamation of the kingdom by the proclamation of forms of human liberation. She even states that her contribution to liberation is incomplete if she neglects to proclaim salvation in Christ Jesus.”

In his 1985 encyclical commemorating the 11th centenary of the evangelizing work of Cyril and Methodius, *Slavorum Apostoli*, Pope John Paul II commended the two saints

as authentic precursors of ecumenism and underlined the impact of the gospel on the various cultures of humankind (see **culture, gospel and culture**). The encyclical dwells at length on the relation between evangelism and inculturation.

John Paul’s encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*, as well as statements from several bishops conferences, called for a battle for the soul of the contemporary world. Referring to St Paul’s encounter with the Athenians (Acts 17:16-34), the encyclical speaks of the modern *Areopagi* found in the worlds of science, culture, media. Following *Evangelii Nuntiandi* in the use of the expression “new evangelization”, it goes on to speak of re-evangelization, especially for Europe and Latin America. This touched off a critical debate about the actual meaning of that expression “re-evangelization”, with some seeing in it a new call for Christendom. In his book *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* (1995), John Paul II says with a certain vehemence that “the new evangelization has nothing in common with what various publications have insinuated when speaking of *restoration*, or when advancing the accusation of proselytism... fears that some are attempting to stir up, perhaps with the aim of depriving the church of its courage and enthusiasm in taking up the mission of evangelization” (p.115). The ecumenical challenge and responsibility posed by this debate here is to encourage a common re-reading of missionary history and a common search for a joint testimony today.

### EVANGELISM AND ORTHODOXY

Within Orthodoxy,\* too, new developments and a re-assessment of the church’s obligation to render witness (martyria) to Christ have taken place. The Orthodox churches have a long experience of evangelism; through the centuries, they have been telling the story of Jesus Christ through all aspects of family life, and uniquely through the celebration of the liturgy.\* Several Orthodox missionary consultations were organized by the WCC’s Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) between 1974 and 1982. They stressed that evangelism is rooted in Trinitarian theology. Christ’s sending of the apostles stems from his having been sent by the Father in the

Holy Spirit (John 20:21-23). The Orthodox consultations articulated the evangelistic significance of the liturgical celebration and the priestly role of the congregation in interceding for the whole of the human community. The evangelistic experience of the Orthodox churches gives special importance to monastic communities (see **religious communities**) as centres of popular religiosity and of communicative spirituality.\*

The radical changes in the political situation in Eastern Europe after 1989 confronted the Orthodox churches with a tremendous missionary challenge: re-building the life of the church, monasteries, parishes, theological schools. They need a re-affirmation and re-consideration of the traditional role of their churches as bearers and expressions of the identity and unity of the people. Their evangelistic and educational task after as many decades of atheistic indoctrination has been made more difficult by the presence of many churches and missionary groups from the West engaging in what they see as evangelism but the Orthodox regard as proselytizing. There are serious ecclesiological and pastoral questions at stake here, but it is obvious that a genuine evangelism in this context calls for a new affirmation of a common witness that will give credibility to the gospel being proclaimed.

It was in recognition of this need that in 1995 the Roman Catholic Church/WCC Joint Working Group\* produced a study document on "The Challenge of Proselytism and the Calling to Common Witness". Two years later, in 1997, the WCC central committee approved a document which explored the same issues, "Towards Common Witness: A Call to Adopt Responsible Relationships in Mission and to Renounce Proselytism". The document echoed the call of the Salvador world mission conference (1996), decrying "the practice of those who carry out their endeavours in mission and evangelism in ways which destroy the unity of the Body of Christ, human dignity and the very lives and cultures of those being evangelized; we call on them to confess their participation in and to renounce proselytism". The document made a number of recommendations to the churches and called on the WCC to strengthen its emphasis on ecumenical formation, to undertake a study on ecclesi-

ology and mission, and to facilitate dialogue within and among the churches on these issues. These responses were a further recognition of how essential ecumenism is to the whole mission of the church.

### THE CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT OF EVANGELISM

Years of ecumenical reflection on evangelism culminated in the document "Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation", adopted by the WCC central committee in 1982. It makes clear that the spiritual gospel and the material gospel are one and the same gospel of Jesus. Liberation, development, humanization and evangelization are all integral parts of mission.

The 1989 world conference on mission and evangelism in San Antonio, USA, confirmed the perspectives of the ecumenical affirmation and said: "We are called to exercise our mission in this context of human struggle, and challenged to keep the earth alive and to promote human dignity, since the living God is both Creator of heaven and earth and Protector of the cause of the widow, the orphan, the poor and the stranger. To respond to all this is part of our mission, just as inviting people to put their trust in God is part of that mission. The 'material gospel' and the 'spiritual gospel' have to be one, as was true of the ministry of Jesus. Frequently the world's poor are also those who have not yet heard the good news of the gospel; to withhold from them justice as well as the good news of life in Christ is to commit a 'double injustice'."

The presence of Christians practising liberating diakonia\* in the life of society and proclaiming the gospel as they participate in the search for new models of society is a concrete announcement of good news. All ethical reflection and social action must be done in constant lively dialogue and interchange between real situations and the gospel history, expressed in theological insights which open up the radiant perspective of the eternal, the "numinous" and the new. In thinking of the future of the ecumenical movement and its evangelistic calling, it is essential to emphasize the need for a greater capacity to relate to the widest possible diversity of churches in local situations, so that links can be created which will enable the churches increasingly to benefit from and

contribute to similar experiences in other parts of the world.

Proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ may ring strangely in the world of genes and mutations and phenomena evolving over billions of years. But the name of Jesus Christ speaks of an historic action in which human limitations, sin\* and aggressiveness are not simply accepted as the destined limits of the human condition, but are actively assumed as a responsibility, assumed as guilt, and find historic response in his redemptive death on the cross. The new life offered in Jesus Christ is a process of sanctification,\* opening the way for the transformation of the whole of reality as a purpose intrinsically present in the creative energies of creation and as a vocation to which all human beings, including scientists, are called. Developments in biotechnology call the churches to re-examine the fundamental Christian understandings of the creation and the relationship between God, humanity and the created world (see **bio-ethics**). In the process, the fresh resources of biblical witness and the declaration of the churches' ancient creeds\* – all beginning with faith in God as the Creator and Maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible – must be re-affirmed to give a foundation for addressing the challenges of biotechnology.

If the gospel of love is to permeate all human relations, it is absolutely essential for ecumenical structures to maintain a living link between the scholars and the meek of the earth, between the wisdom of the humble and scientific research (see **science and technology**). The affirmation of new life in Christ and of the dimension of spirituality in the middle of a genetic chain that only seemed to be affected by chance but is now subject to the influence of technological power is an evangelizing vocation that challenges Christians and calls for cooperative effort.

Fulfilling the calling to preach the gospel brings Christians into contact with people and organizations of other religious faiths or of no faith. This encounter is witness. In view of the missionary nature of God's message in Jesus Christ, Christians should approach others in the same spirit of love, sharing and communication that ruled the life of the man from Nazareth. The attitude thus is not only one of respect but of accept-

ance of the other. Jesus does not hesitate to point to a Samaritan as setting the example of love for his Jewish disciples. In Christ, God offers God's self; God does not impose. The outstretched arms of the cross are perhaps the best symbol of God's attitude towards all humankind – the offering of God's self in an attitude of total powerlessness, and from the depths of despair appealing for and inviting to a free decision. The witness owed to the other is the witness to God's love made manifest in Jesus Christ – a love to which one can testify only in a loving relationship which implies acceptance of the neighbour and co-responsibility for the whole human predicament.

At another level, evangelism in a world of many faiths opens up the issue of the theological value to be recognized in non-Christian religious experience. After an extensive debate, the WCC's sixth assembly (Vancouver 1983) could only state, in terms that left the question open: "While affirming the uniqueness of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus, to which we bear witness, we recognize God's creative work in the seeking for religious truth among peoples of other faiths."

Ecumenical experience regarding the role and place of other faiths does not question the central Christian tenet: that God was in Christ reconciling the world to God's own self. The spirit of dialogue, friendship and encounter with the neighbour provides the ideal context for witness. To accept the questions raised by other religious faiths is to adopt the attitude urged by the apostle: "Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you" (1 Pet. 3:15). When Paul affirmed his faith and hope in an eschatological understanding of the role attributed to Israel after the coming of Christ, he did so not as an excuse for not bearing witness to his people but out of passionate concern that they should all come to know Jesus (Rom. 9:1-3, 10:1). The missionary conviction of the Christian faith is not called into question but rather purified, strengthened and deepened when we place ourselves alongside our neighbours of other faiths in an attitude of respect, listening and appreciation of the cultural and spiritual treasures belonging to them.

The San Antonio mission conference summarized the situation well: "We cannot point to any other way of salvation than Jesus Christ; at the same time we cannot set limits to the saving power of God. At times the debate about salvation focuses itself only on the fate of the individual's soul in the hereafter, whereas the will of God is life in its fullness even here and now. We therefore state: (1) that our witness to others concerning salvation in Christ springs from the fact that we have encountered him as our Lord and Saviour and are hence urged to share this with others, and (2) that in calling people to faith in Christ, we are not only offering personal salvation but also calling them to follow Jesus in the service of God's kingdom."

### EVANGELISM AND CULTURE

The theme of the WCC's seventh assembly (Canberra 1991), "Come, Holy Spirit – Renew the Whole Creation", raised the question of how far Christians may celebrate the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in events, persons and cultures shaped by other religious convictions. Could those cultures challenge and enrich our Christian perspectives? At one level, this debate focused on the Christian validity of appropriating other religious figures or people's experiences as part and parcel of the Christian tradition. What are the limits to diversity?

At a second level the debate concerned evangelism. How does a fresh appreciation of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the diverse cultures affect our evangelistic approach, our missionary being? This became the central issue for the WCC's world mission conference in Salvador, Brazil, in December 1996. At that time, the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the colonial and missionary expansion of the West provided an occasion for a critical look at the history of evangelism and led to an affirmation of autonomous cultures and traditional religious practices. Similarly, the expansion of the African Independent Churches,\* who read the Bible from within their traditional practices, the vitality of the Pentecostal emphasis on the powerful action of the Spirit and the new awareness in many places of ethnic and religious identity fed into what will be one of the key ecumenical debates of the early 21st century.

Section IV of the Salvador conference report offers a helpful overview of the central issues here: "The gospel is the word of God communicated to all humanity in the incarnate Christ, testified to in the biblical scripture and proclaimed by the church; it is not limited to an interpretation of particular biblical texts. Gospel values are present in all cultures in the form of life, justice, freedom, reciprocity and holistic relations with creation. Therefore the gospel is not the property of any particular culture. The spirituality of different people must be respected as an expression of their integral faith. As such, particular language, interpretative devices, symbol systems or forms of Christian worship in one culture are not binding in other cultures. However, in mutual respect and in a transparent act of communion and love, these may be shared among cultures without coercion, enriching the expression of the gospel..."

"Some practices and customs which were once negated and rejected as 'pagan' and 'superstitious' are now recognized as authentic elements of people's spirituality. The use of certain musical instruments and forms of traditional worship are cases in point. The profound need of many peoples to include the living presence of their ancestors in an organic and holistic vision of reality is not seriously considered in some Christian churches. Other Christian traditions, however, provide for this need through commemorative feasts, prayers, liturgical celebrations or visual arts. It is the task of the church to give theological meaning to this profound need through the incarnate Lord, crucified and risen from the dead, who gives the promise of eternal life.

"In re-discovering the catholicity of the church in each cultural context it is the incarnation, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that together constitute the known standard for such discernment. Destructive and death-dealing elements in every culture are judged in the light of that standard."

### SUMMING UP

The dimension of evangelism is fundamental to the ecumenical calling. Clarity in confessing Jesus Christ as God and Saviour and calling others to faith and Christian dis-

cipleship is the guarantee of Christian authenticity and ecumenical work. The only valid theological method for evangelism is conscious participation in the whole of human life and its problems. For the great mass of people, evangelism is a question not of apologetics but of life. What Gustavo Gutiérrez has said about Latin America – that the people are “poor and believing” – applies to the vast deprived masses throughout the world. The discussion is about explaining the faith in terms of joy, faithfulness, justice and solidarity.

The poor\* peoples of the world have recognized the gospel message in the solidarity of the WCC’s Programme to Combat Racism\* or in the home the WCC offers to groups fighting for justice, peace and responsible care for the environment. In addressing the call and the opportunity to proclaim in situations of oppression the good news of the transforming power which God in Christ brings to every human situation, the San Antonio conference said: “In some parts of the world people face a total system of death, of monstrous false gods, of exploitative economic systems, of violence, of the disintegration of the fundamental bonds of society, of the destruction of human life, of helplessness of persons in the face of impersonal forces. We are called to exercise our mission in this context of human struggle... There is no evangelism without solidarity; there is no Christian solidarity that does not involve sharing the message of God’s coming reign.”

See also **mission, salvation, uniqueness of Christ.**

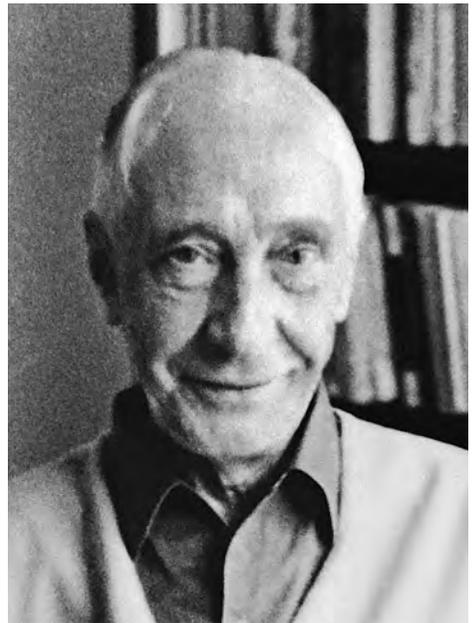
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## EVDOKIMOV, PAUL

B. 2 Aug. 1901, St Petersburg, Russia; d. 16 Sept. 1970, Meudon, France. Evdokimov participated actively in the ecumenical movement and in the WCC, particularly as a member of the board of the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey,\* 1950-68, where he gave many lectures and was one of the professors of the first graduate school, 1953-



54. Teaching at the Orthodox faculty of theology of St Sergius, Paris, from 1953 onwards, he was also involved in the work of Faith and Order.\* He studied in Kiev and at St Sergius, and obtained a PhD in philosophy at the University of Aix-Marseille in 1942. In 1921 he left Russia for Constantinople; he arrived in France in 1923, where he worked night shifts at the Citroen automobile factory in order to pay for his studies. From 1943 he worked with CIMADE,\* an

ecumenical organization set up to help displaced persons and refugees, later the inter-church aid organization of the churches in France. He directed a centre for refugees in Bièvres, near Paris, 1946-47, and the CIMADE students hostel in Sèvres and Massy for refugee students from Eastern Europe and later for WCC scholarship students from third-world countries, 1948-68. Evdokimov was also active in setting up Orthodox student movements and meetings for young Orthodox theologians.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## EXCOMMUNICATION

AS OFTEN with questions of church order\* and church discipline,\* the practice of excommunication is attested prior to the emergence of canonical enactments and even fixed terminology.

The first recorded case of excommunication was pronounced by Paul against a member of the Christian community in Corinth accused of sexual immorality (1 Cor. 5:1-5). Paul uses such terminology as "be removed from" and "pronounce judgment" or "condemn", and states that he is acting "in the name of the Lord Jesus". Later, Matthew attributes to Jesus a saying bearing on the procedure of excommunication (Matt. 18:15-17). The concept of exclusion from the community is expressed in terms reminiscent of Palestinian Judaism: "If the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a gentile and a tax collector." Luke 6:22 uses the verb *aphorizein*, later used to designate the fact of excommunicating, for the exclusion of Christians from the Jewish community.

Patristic literature usually uses *aphorizein* (and the noun *aphorismos*) with the meaning "casting out"; however, the ancient church expressed the concept of excommunication by several basically synonymous terms. Thus, regarding the first centuries of Christianity, the real significance and seriousness of excommunication must be inferred from the context in each case.

Taking into account data and canonical materials from both East and West, one may distinguish several kinds of excommunication: (1) *minor excommunication* – a temporary deprivation of holy communion; (2) *excommunication with ecclesiastical censure* – a temporary deprivation of holy communion and involvement in communal activities; (3) *major excommunication* – complete exclusion from the church; and (4) pronouncement of a *break of ecclesiastical communion* with a segment of the church universal as a consequence of serious disagreement bearing on matters of faith\* or church order.

*Minor excommunication* is related to penance,\* and as such it is imposed on those who have committed transgressions which do not require a more severe kind of excommunication. It implies a temporary abstinence from holy communion. Since there was no private sacramental confession in the early church, one must speak in such cases of "self-excommunication": the sinner was encouraged to abstain voluntarily from holy communion for a short time. This suggestion was made by Denys of Alexandria (d.264) in his letter to Basilides; Augustine expressed the same view throughout his works. Resumption of communion took place without necessarily implying a rite of reconciliation.

After private confession appeared in the church during the middle ages, minor excommunication was imposed by the confessor, who usually based the terms of excommunication on indications provided by "penitential books". It is noteworthy that from late antiquity onward there was a continual tendency to relax disciplinary rules regarding penance. In the 3rd and 4th centuries this attitude was opposed by rigorist groups which separated from the church.

*Ecclesiastical censure* applies to transgressions including aggravating circumstances. In such cases the sentence is to be pronounced either by the diocesan bishop or by a church court with subsequent approval of the diocesan bishop. In the case of a cleric, the penalty is not excommunication but rather suspension (preventing a cleric from exercising his ministry for a determined period of time) or deposition (permanent withdrawal from clerical status). A

cleric reduced to the rank of the laity can subsequently be excommunicated.

*Major excommunication* is the most severe penalty which can be imposed on a Christian, regardless of his or her status in the church. Because of its nature and consequences, imposing this censure does not fall within the competency of a single bishop. It must be pronounced or at least confirmed by a synod of bishops. (During the first centuries a bishop had this power, but at that time every bishop acted in close connection with the presbyterium.) From the 4th century, conciliar legislation established the right of appeal. Later, this censure tended to fall within the exclusive competency of synods.

It is difficult to determine to what extent "anathema"\* related to major excommunication in the early church. Paul, for example, uses this phrase in order to express a malediction against anyone who "has no love for the Lord" or preaches a different gospel (1 Cor. 16:22; Gal. 1:8-9). In the East during the 4th century, councils pronounced anathematization against groups accused of doctrinal deviations. The council of Nicea (325), for example, took such a stand against Arius and his supporters. Those who disagreed with the Nicene Creed were subject to major excommunication and were no longer considered members of the church.

Sometimes anathematization is simply equated with excommunication. A canon adopted at the first Constantinopolitan council (381) contains the following specification: "By heretics we mean both those who have been previously cast out and those whom we ourselves have anathematized." The ancient church also used to anathematize persons for ethical reasons inasmuch as deviant conduct was based on doctrine at variance with ecclesiastical teaching. So, the council assembled at Gangra (c.340) anathematized those who condemned marriage and social order. However, the members of this council specified that if those sectarians repented and rejected their false doctrine, they would be re-instated to communion in the church. In the ancient church there was only one exception to the canonical principle relating directly or indirectly anathematization with heresy: the council at Elvira in Spain at the beginning of the 4th century (309?) anathematized various categories of sinners.

The pronouncement of a *break of communion* with a segment of the universal church has the most general historical consequences. For example, at the end of the 2nd century, Victor, bishop of Rome, broke communion with the church of Asia Minor because of a disagreement bearing on the date of Easter. In such a case, this kind of excommunication affects all the followers and supporters of the bishops or priests specifically excommunicated and anathematized. It is obvious that such an excommunication does not necessarily imply that a simple follower is excluded from the church in a direct, personal sense. It simply means that such an individual is excluded from church membership because he or she is for the time being a member of a dissident community. In cases of schisms\* involving no doctrinal issue, the excommunication is automatically lifted if a reconciliation\* is achieved at the highest hierarchical level.

See also **canon law, communion.**

PETER L'HUILLIER

## EXEGESIS, METHODS OF

THE MODES of interpreting the Bible have varied over the centuries, from the patristic harmonizing interpretation, to the medieval "four senses" of scripture, to the literal (non-allegorical) interpretation of the Reformation, to the contemporary historical-critical method of exegesis. Though isolated patristic interpreters such as Origen, Augustine and Jerome used primitive forms of historical criticism, the method that is widely used today by Protestants and Roman Catholics is traced to the pre-Christian Alexandrian school of interpretation of Greek literature and to the Renaissance, with its "return to the sources" and the study of the Bible in its original languages.

Such interpretation of the Bible further developed at the time of the Enlightenment and of the rise of 19th-century German historicism. Leopold von Ranke and his "objective historiography" (seeking to present the past "as it really was") affected the interpretation of the Bible. Similarly, the "life of Jesus research" of H.S. Reimarus, F.C. Baur, H.E.G. Paulus, D.F. Strauss, Bruno Bauer and Ernest Renan also gave impetus to that development, as they adopted the

methods of historical and literary criticism from classical philology, which had grown from the Renaissance study of Greek and Roman literature.

The historical and archaeological discoveries of the 18th and 19th centuries likewise contributed to the development of the historical-critical method. The decipherment of the Rosetta Stone (by Jean François Champollion in 1827) and of the ancient Bisitun Inscription (by H.C. Rawlinson and G.R. Grotefend in 1835-46) opened the literature of Israel's neighbours to the west (ancient Egypt) and to the east (ancient Assyria and Babylonia), making it possible to understand the Old Testament against the literary background of neighbouring cultures. Again, in the 19th century thousands of Greek letters and documents recovered from the sands of Egypt cast unexpected light on the language of the Septuagint and of the New Testament. Such historical discoveries made it no longer possible to interpret the Bible naively, without regard for the ancient world in which it came into being.

Similarly, the 20th-century discoveries of Ugaritic and of the Dead Sea Scrolls had a substantial impact on the historical-critical study of the Bible. Palestinian Judaism of the 1st century is now understood in a way that it had never been known before; this Palestinian Jewish matrix of Christianity cannot be ignored, even if most of the NT writings were composed outside Palestine.

All these factors have influenced the understanding of the Bible and have made the historical-critical method the basic mode of interconfessional interpretation of scripture. Such historical development in the interpretation of the Bible cannot be neglected.

Initially, Roman Catholic interpreters did not use this method, largely because Pope Leo XIII set up a biblical commission to act as a watchdog over biblical interpretation and to guard against the excesses of rationalism associated with the historical-critical method. *Vigilantiae* was the first word of Pope Leo's apostolic letter (1902-1903) which set the tone for the activity of the commission in the first third of the 20th century, casting a cloud of fear and reactionism over Roman Catholic interpreters of the Bible. That was changed, however, when Pope Pius XII issued his encyclical *Divino*

*Afflante Spiritu* (1943), insisting on the study of the Bible in its original languages and according to the forms of ancient literature in which the biblical writings had been composed. In 1964 the biblical commission issued an instruction, "On the Historical Truth of the Gospels" (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 56, 712-18), which explicitly espoused form criticism and recognized three stages of the gospel tradition: what Jesus of Nazareth did and said (A.D. 1-33), what the apostles and disciples preached about his words and deeds (A.D. 33-65), and what the evangelists culled from such preaching, as they synthesized, explicated and ordered it in their gospels (A.D. 65-95). This freed Roman Catholic interpreters from the form of fundamentalism which had prevailed for centuries during the post-Tridentine period. On the Protestant side, meanwhile, form criticism in particular called attention to the pre-scriptural life of material that was eventually consigned to the scriptures;\* it thus enabled scripture to be seen as an internal, though still privileged, part of an older and continuing tradition (see **Tradition and traditions**).

The historical-critical method uses two preliminary steps: consideration of *introductory questions* (authenticity of the writing, its integrity or unity, date and place of composition, content or outline, literary or cultural background); and *textual criticism* (the best manuscripts, the best form of the transmitted text, ancient versions). Along with such preliminary questions, certain forms of criticism affect the historical judgment about a biblical text: (1) *literary criticism* – the genres or forms of the text and its narrative and rhetorical character, e.g. the use of *inclusio*, chiasmus, catchword bonds, argument; (2) *source criticism* – origin of often parallel accounts, stereotyped phraseology, documentary differences, synoptic counterparts, all of which affect the historical judgment in an interpretation of a biblical book; (3) *form criticism* – the kind of psalm, historical, prophetic, apocalyptic or sapiential writings; sayings, parables, pronouncement stories, miracle stories, poetry, letters, exhortations; (4) *redaction criticism* – the way in which biblical authors have edited or redacted their sources or what they have inherited from the earlier tradition. All these kinds of criticism are aimed at one goal: to

determine the meaning of the text as it was intended and expressed by the human author moved long ago to compose it. The truth which has been enshrined in the ancient biblical text corresponds to the form adopted, and the historical-critical method teaches us that that text cannot be properly read without an appreciation of the particular form in which the truth has been expressed.

Problems that the historical-critical method have encountered stem not from the method itself (which, being borrowed from Alexandrian classical philology, is basically neutral) but from the presuppositions with which it has often been used. Thus, when it emerged in modern full-blown form in the "life of Jesus research", it was linked with a rationalistic, anti-dogmatic prejudice that tainted it. As Albert Schweitzer recognized in *The Quest for the Historical Jesus*, such an approach had sprung not from a purely historical interest in Jesus of Nazareth but from a "struggle against the tyranny of dogma"; he noted that these accounts had been "written with hate", not of the person of Jesus, but of "the supernatural nimbus with which it was so easy to surround him". The association of such an attitude with the method itself made it suspect in the eyes of many.

Somewhat later in the 20th century, the pioneering NT form critics (K.L. Schmidt, Martin Dibelius and Rudolf Bultmann) used the historical-critical method with other presuppositions. Bultmann's emphasis on kerygmatic theology (heavily influenced by Luther's justification\* by faith alone) and on Heideggerian existentialism led to demythologization and a lack of concern for the historical Jesus. Again, it is evident that such attitudes coloured the use of the method itself.

Today, the historical-critical method is widely used with other presuppositions. Among Christian interpreters it is recognized that exegesis is not merely philology but "philology plus", and that the "plus" is an empathy of Christian faith\* which traces its roots back to the Jesus of history in some fashion. That "plus" reckons with the Bible as the word of God,\* as an inspired or authoritative record in which God's revelation\* is enshrined, and as a canonical collec-

tion (see **canon**). Hence the historical-critical method does not aim merely at analyzing the Bible according to the various forms of criticism that emerged in the 19th and 20th centuries; rather, all of these must lead to some form of biblical theology.

Such a historical-critical method is interested in the *textual* meaning of words and phrases, but also in their *contextual* meaning in a paragraph, chapter or book as a whole, and above all in the *relational* meaning of such words, phrases and parts to the complex of theological or religious ideas of the sacred writer. The quest for these meanings must dominate the method itself so that its goal is "biblical theology", the synthetic presentation of the religious teaching of the author, an understanding of how he has enshrined God's word (or revelation) in his composition. If this goal does not dominate the method, then it is not the historical-critical method properly understood or properly used in biblical interpretation.

The method is open to still further minor adjustments, and exegetical techniques emerging in recent decades have played a role in this respect: the criticisms called canonical, feminist, narrative, psychological, rhetorical, sociological, semiotic, structural. Although proponents of these techniques sometimes give the impression that these aspects have not been part of the method before, they are in fact refinements of the existing method, and none of them is or can be a substitute for the basic method developed especially since the Renaissance.

What ultimately lies behind such a critical approach to the Bible in the church is the conviction that God's revelation in Christ took place *in the past* and that the ancient record of that self-manifestion of God is disclosed to the church above all in the Bible, in the word of God couched in ancient human writings and in the Tradition that grew out of them under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.\*

Rightly understood and rightly employed (with the empathy of Christian faith), the historical-critical method has thus contributed significantly to the 20th-century ecumenical movement. It is used in the interpretation of the Bible in seminaries of all the major Christian churches of the West (Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and

Roman Catholic). Through it Protestants and Roman Catholics use the same mode of interpretation and can agree on the biblical basis of Christian faith or at least dispute an interpretation on more or less agreed principles. If ultra-conservative groups in each church are sceptical of its use, that is largely because they misunderstand it and fail to see how it can be used with a proper sense of biblical inspiration\* and inerrancy.

The churches of the East have been slow to adopt the historical-critical method, not because of a suspicion about it, but because their tradition has been more tied to the patristic, harmonizing and allegorical interpretation, and especially because they did not share the experience of the Renaissance, the Reformation and the Enlightenment. However, the method is beginning to make its appearance among the Greek Orthodox, some of whose scholars share the experience of the international and interconfessional societies of OT and NT interpretation.

See also **hermeneutics, New Testament and Christian unity, Old Testament and Christian unity.**

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# F

## FAITH

FAITH has been and is the source, driving force and common goal of the ecumenical movement. The ecumenical movement aims at “visible unity in one faith” (WCC constitution, art. 3); it is based on the confession of “the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures”, and by participating in it churches are seeking “to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit” (WCC constitution 1, art. 1). Without faith as a God-given reality, there would not be a Christian ecumenical movement. Without that movement, however, the Christian faith could not find its proper identity.

Though most participants in the ecumenical movement would agree on this general affirmation, they have different and still

divisive understandings of the form and content of the Christian faith. Disputes remain about the character of that faith as both gift and task, the role of the tradition (*paradosis*) of faith (see **Tradition and traditions**) and the authoritative teaching of it (see **teaching authority**), the relation of personal faith to the faith of the church\* community, the intermediary role of scripture,\* Tradition, sacraments\* and ministry in the development of faith, the relation of faith and practice, faith and doctrinal formulations, faith and science, etc.

The older comparative study of the various confessions and churches considered such differences as fundamental, a sufficient explanation or legitimation of schisms\* and divisions. While this debate is still going on, many contextual factors have led to a radi-

cal osmosis of various “models of faith”, which are now considered to be more like “modalities” within a legitimate pluralism\* of expressions of faith.

### FIDES QUA/FIDES QUAE

At a Faith and Order\* consultation in Rome (1983) on “The Biblical Roots of the Ancient Creeds”, a tentative definition of faith was proposed as follows: “The term faith indicates at the same time a decisive act and a continuing attitude of believing (*fides qua creditur*) as well as a set of beliefs and convictions (*fides quae creditur*). The Old and the New Testament witness that faith in God is expressed by an existential, personal and communal act and attitude of acceptance, decision, trust, confidence, confessing, hope and obedience. This *fides qua* can never be without or separated from the content of faith (*fides quae*). Otherwise the act of faith would be an empty or a purely self-generated act. The content of faith is determined by the one towards whom it is directed. This *fides quae* can be expressed in a great plurality of forms, ranging from short biblical affirmations such as ‘Jesus is Lord’ to massive theological expositions” (*The Roots*, 20).

A personal act or attitude of faith (= confessing, trust in someone or something) can never be without some clear assertion and decision about God and the works of God, as the prophets of Israel and the gospel of Jesus have shown. The Hebrew word for faith (*’emunah*) echoes a fundamental trust in God’s presence and care, guidance and sovereignty, as becomes clear from the faith of Abraham, Moses and the prophets (see Heb. 11). A confession of faith is never a conceptual statement about the faith only, but always a doxology, involving a personal commitment of life, structuring the consensus\* of a community and inviting, persuading others to assent and to adhere. In the words of the Joint Working Group\* between the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church in *Towards a Confession of the Common Faith*: “The apostolic texts present the faith to us as a vital dynamism by which the whole person (spirit, heart, will), recognizing in Jesus Christ his God and his Saviour, welcomes him through the Holy Spirit and in doing so yields himself to him in all that

his mystery admits of and promises. For in giving himself to us, he enables us, always in the Holy Spirit, to give ourselves to him also. Conversion and docility to the Spirit find their source here. And this explains the coming together of the churches in efforts to enable the new creation, of which the Risen Christ is the Lord, to shine forth even now.”

### FAITH AND WORSHIP

In the words of Faith and Order at Montreal 1963, this faith is transmitted in a process of tradition, “not only as a sum of tenets, but as a living reality transmitted through the operation of the Holy Spirit” (para. 46). In the worship and liturgy, in the prayer and commitment of the church community, this tradition of faith becomes a corporate reality, directly related to the salvific work of Christ and to the actual situation of humanity in nature\* and history.\* To quote Montreal again: “Christian worship, set forth in baptism and celebrated in the eucharist, is grounded and centred in the historical ministry of Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection, and his exalted and continuing ministry. Such worship always includes the gathering of Christ’s people, the preaching of the word of God, participation in Christ’s self-offering and intercession for all men, and thanksgiving with joy” (paras 108-109).

The Second Vatican Council\* was thinking much along the same lines when it stated in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (1963): “The church is essentially both human and divine, visible but endowed with invisible realities, zealous in action and dedicated to contemplation, present in the world, but as a pilgrim, so constituted that in her the human is directed towards and subordinated to the divine, the visible to the invisible, action to contemplation, and this present world to that city to come, the object of our quest” (*Sacrosanctum Concilium* 2).

In the tradition of the Orthodox churches, faith as such is enacted within the divine liturgy\* and in the eucharistic community of the church. In a study document of F&O on the explication of the Nicene Creed,\* the matter is put this way: “The individual’s confession of faith, however, is made in communion with the faith of the whole church. Where baptism is conferred

within the context of the liturgy of a local church, the community responds: 'This is the faith of the church, this is our faith.' The Nicene Creed is the confession of faith which belongs to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church. In the Nicene Creed the individual joins with all the baptized gathered together in each and every place, now and throughout the ages, in the church's proclamation of faith: 'We believe in.' The confession 'we believe in' articulates not only the trust of individuals in God's grace, but it also affirms the trust of the whole church in God. There is a bond of communion between those who join together in making a common confession of their faith" (*Confessing the One Faith*, paras 2-3).

### FAITH AND PRACTICE

The biblical terminology for the act of faith (*'emunah, pistis*) implies a faithful practice, even while, in its character as adherence to the living God and participation in divine life (see Vatican II, *Dei Verbum* 1), it transcends the concrete works and deeds of sinful human beings. The old controversy over "faith and (meritorious) works" has been superseded in the modern ecumenical movement by a new awareness of the practical implications of faith. From the WCC's first assembly (Amsterdam 1948) onwards, the inter-relatedness of faith and hope,\* faith and charity, faith and prophetic confession over against all false ideologies has been stressed. The very first sections of the successive WCC assembly reports form a consistent chain of arguments for the unity of faith and practice. "Confessing Christ and being converted to his discipleship belong inseparably together" (Nairobi, 1.13). "Christians witness in word and deed to the in-breaking reign of God. We experience the power of the Holy Spirit to confess Christ in a life marked by both suffering and joy. Christ's decisive battle has been won at Easter, and we are baptized into his death that we might walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4). Yet, we must still battle daily against those already dethroned, but not yet destroyed, 'principalities and powers' of this rebellious age. The Holy Spirit leads us into all truth, engrafting persons into the Body of Christ in which all things are being restored by God" (*ibid.*, 1.5).

At the F&O plenary meeting in Bangalore 1978, this idea of faith was expressed in a "Common Account of Hope", echoing the worldwide struggle of people for liberation and renewal as part of their faith. The Vancouver assembly's call for a worldwide conciliar process for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation\* and the world convocation on JPIC in Seoul 1990 demonstrate once more the necessity of relating the Trinitarian faith of the church to the problems of suffering humanity and groaning nature.

### THE TRINITARIAN BASIS OF FAITH

Faith is not a mere human form of belief, not an epistemological or ethical "thought-form" or "imperative" only. It refers to the reality of the living God in history and is in fact communion with that God: "Christians believe that 'the one true God', who made himself known to Israel, has revealed himself supremely in the 'one whom he has sent', namely Jesus Christ (John 17:3); that, in Christ, God has reconciled the world to himself (2 Cor. 5:19); and that, by his Holy Spirit, God brings new and eternal life to all who through Christ put their trust in him" (*Confessing the One Faith*, para. 6).

The Second Vatican Council declared: "It pleased God, in his goodness and wisdom, to reveal himself and to make known the mystery of his will (cf. Eph. 1:9). His will was that men should have access to the Father, through Christ, the Word made flesh, in the Holy Spirit, and thus become sharers in the divine nature (cf. Eph. 2:18; 2 Pet. 1:4). By this revelation, then, the invisible God (cf. Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17), from the fullness of his love, addresses men as his friends (cf. Ex. 33:11; John 15:14-15), and moves among them (cf. Bar. 3:38), in order to invite and receive them into his own company" (*Dei Verbum* 2).

This grounding of the faith in the Trinitarian life and communion of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit (see **Trinity**), through the history of salvation colours the whole of Christian faith, its liturgy, theology and practice. Although Christians still differ about the actual interpretation of the Trinitarian communion, the ecumenical movement has based itself on the recognition of the glory of Father, Son and Holy Spirit and agrees on the Trinitarian structure of the his-

tory of salvation and its narrative functions (see **salvation history**).

### FAITH AND UNBELIEF

Serious challenges to such faith and hope arise in a world which seems to be caught up, at least in the northern hemisphere, in secularization\* processes: the rejection of theism and classical metaphysics, the loss of cultural impact from the Christian faith, the quest for human autonomy in a secularized state, in technological advance and scientific freedom, and in heavy criticism of the Christian heritage and the ecclesiastical institutions. Historical criticism and the hermeneutical gap between the faith of the church through the ages and the symbolic universe of people in modern society have made the search for “a common expression of the apostolic faith today” more than timely.

A worldwide reflection on continuity and change in the expressions of faith, resulting in countless new forms of liturgy and prayer, credal statements and confessions of faith, must go side by side with a serious quest to “hand on the faith once received” in the face of those who are inclined to reject it as a hindrance to their autonomy or as an illusory projection of a past state of human development.

### FAITH AND DIALOGUE WITH OTHER FAITHS

The Christian faith is rooted in the faith of Israel. But Christians are separated from Jews by a history of antisemitism,\* by deep and mutual misunderstandings with regard to the role of Jesus in God’s salvific work, and by an essentially different view on the relation between God’s covenant\* for all peoples and his covenant with Israel. The Jewish-Christian dialogue\* within the ecumenical movement has changed our understanding of faith through a serious re-reading of the Jewish scriptures, which belong to the Christian heritage as well, and through a new view on the origins of the church in the ministry of Jesus, as a son of Israel and as a prophet to his people.

Of quite another type is the dialogue with Islam, the faith of Muslims, who share with Christians the patriarchs and prophets of Israel as teachers of the faith. Muslim-Christian dialogue\* calls attention to the wider circles of God’s covenant, as the Vati-

can II Constitution on the Church has put it (*Lumen Gentium* 13-15), but not all Christian churches are ready to share this theological position. Some see such views as endangering the uniqueness of Jesus Christ,\* which they consider fundamental to Christian faith.

This tension is all the more evident in Buddhist-Christian\* and Hindu-Christian dialogue, though many Christians in Asia are coming nearer to their Asian religious and cultural heritage without giving up their faith in Jesus Christ. As the Light for the world, Jesus Christ may even be pictured in the New Testament and in Christian iconography as the “cosmic Christ”, present in all stages of creation and near to all the wisdom of old, as it has been delivered in the Asian context through the intermediary of the Asian religions.

The WCC’s *Guidelines on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies* declare: “It is Christian faith in the Triune God – Creator of all humankind, Redeemer in Jesus Christ, revealing and renewing Spirit – which calls us Christians to human relationship with our many neighbours. It is Christian faith which sets us free to be open to the faith of others, to risk, to trust and to be vulnerable. In dialogue, conviction and openness are held in balance.”

### FAITH AS A GIFT OF GOD AND AS HUMAN RESPONSE

In the aftermath of Protestant dialectical theology, it became a theological cliché to affirm against liberal theologies that it is impossible for humankind to construct a reasonable faith or to develop a natural theology. God communicates with us, before we could ever think about him. Believers know and confess that God loved us before we could love him. He is the God of revelation, inviting us to participate in divine life (*Dei Verbum* 1). Nevertheless, our answer of faith is based on conversion, on a personal decision to confess God as our Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, as himself Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We are ourselves involved in the act of faith. In ecumenical discussions of the relation of faith and baptism\* and faith and sacraments, this problem has played an important and controversial role. What the Lima text said about baptism – that it is “both God’s gift and our

human response to that gift" (B8) – could equally well have been said about faith. But the churches' responses to *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* disclose that this problem of the relation of divine and human initiative, of God's grace\* and human freedom, of faith as a divine gift and as a human spirituality, has not yet been solved to the satisfaction of all. Many fear an ungodly synergism. Others, however, stress the anthropomorphic character of the question itself. There is, from the side of God, no competition between God and humans. God does not need force or violence to impose obedience on humans; God rather persuades them, for there is no violence in God (*Epistle to Diognetus* 7.4). It is perhaps this model of a gentle, persuading, strengthening and justifying, reconciling and inviting God, which might renew the Christian faith and inform the ecumenical movement as a movement towards the mercy of God.

### TOWARDS A COMMON PROFESSION OF FAITH

In an intense and long-term study project ("Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today"), the F&O commission at its Bangalore meeting in 1978 embarked on a search for a faithful contemporary explanation of the content of the ancient creeds, for the recognition of the Nicene Creed of 381 by all churches as the ecumenical creed, and for a common expression of that same faith for today. Thus the commission tried to implement the proposals of the Nairobi assembly: "We ask the churches to undertake a common effort to receive, re-appropriate and confess together, as contemporary occasion requires, the Christian truth and faith, delivered through the apostles and handed down through the centuries. Such common action, arising from free and inclusive discussion under the commonly acknowledged authority of God's word, must aim both to clarify and to embody the unity and the diversity which are proper to the church's life and mission" (Nairobi, 2.19).

The search for such a common faith and witness inspires the whole ecumenical movement. In 1980 the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC published a document on "Common Witness", which together with the F&O study on the apostolic faith gives much hope

for a growing unity in faith within the one Body of Christ.

See also **Apostles' Creed; apostolic tradition; atheism; catechisms; common confession; common witness creeds; dialogue, bilateral; dialogue, multilateral; lex orandi, lex credendi.**

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### FAITH AND ORDER

THE FAITH and Order (F&O) movement serves the churches by leading them into theological dialogue as a means of overcoming obstacles to and opening up ways towards the manifestation of their unity\* given in Jesus Christ.

### HISTORY

Together with the movement for Life and Work\* and the International Missionary Council,\* the F&O movement shaped the first phase of the modern ecumenical movement between 1910 and 1948. Soon after the 1910 world missionary conference in Edinburgh, the 1910 convention of the (Anglican) Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA resolved "that a joint commission be appointed to bring about a conference for the consideration of questions touching Faith

and Order". Several other churches passed similar resolutions, but the responsibility for preparing the envisioned worldwide conference remained with the newly appointed commission until 1920. In that year a preparatory meeting for the planned world conference on F&O was held in Geneva. Under the leadership of Charles H. Brent, this was a first occasion for the nearly 80 churches represented to exchange their respective positions concerning Christian unity and to create an international and interconfessional continuation committee.

After further preparation the first world conference on F&O took place in 1927 in Lausanne. Over 400 participants, representing 127 Orthodox, Anglican, Reformation and Free churches, assembled under the leadership of Brent "to register the apparent level of fundamental agreements within the conference and the grave points of disagreement remaining". This comparative method was continued at the second world conference (1937) in Edinburgh. Again more than 400 participants, representing 122 churches, met and, under the presidency of William Temple, were able to clarify several concepts of church unity. They also agreed, despite some opposing voices, to unite F&O with the movement for Life and Work "to form a council of churches" – a decision which led to the formation of the WCC\* in 1948.

After 1948 the tasks of the F&O movement were carried on by the commission on F&O within the WCC. Under the leadership of Yngve Brilioth the new commission held the third world conference on Faith and Order (1952) in Lund, Sweden, and moved from the comparative method to a form of theological dialogue which approaches controversial issues from a common biblical and Christological basis. Oliver Tomkins chaired the fourth world conference in 1963 in Montreal, Canada. After a longer interval the fifth world conference was held in 1993 in Santiago de Compostela, Spain. The conference was chaired by Mary Tanner and outlined the future work of F&O under the programmatic theme "Towards Koinonia in Faith, Life and Witness".

### STRUCTURE, METHOD AND MEMBERSHIP

With its 120 members the commission on F&O, which meets every three or four

years, is the most representative theological forum in the world. Its aim is, according to its bylaws, "to proclaim the oneness of the church of Jesus Christ and to call the churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and in common life in Christ, in order that the world may believe". The bylaws provide for membership in the commission of representatives of churches which are not members of the WCC, thus underlining the movement character of F&O. The ongoing work of F&O is supervised by a board (30 members) and is carried out by the Geneva secretariat of F&O.

Since 1948 the work of F&O has found its most important expression in the meetings of the commission. There, study projects have been initiated which were carried out through international consultations and smaller study drafting groups. The results of these studies have been received by or formulated at commission meetings. Increasingly churches, ecumenical organizations and commissions and institutes as well as interested individuals have participated in F&O studies and thus have provided a much broader basis and involvement.

The composition of the commission has changed considerably since 1948. The rather small percentage of Orthodox members and representatives of the churches in Africa, Asia and Latin America has increased to over 20% and 40% respectively. Women, who were once virtually absent from the commission, represent now nearly 30% of its membership. Since 1968 the Roman Catholic Church has been officially represented with 12 members and participates actively in all F&O studies. Moderators of the commission were Brilioth (1947-57), Douglas Horton (1957-63), Paul Minear (1963-67), H.H. Harms (1967-71), John Meyendorff (1971-75), Nikos Nissiotis (1975-83), John Deschner (1983-91), Mary Tanner (1991-98) and David Yemba (1998-).

### THEMES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Since 1910 the F&O movement and the commission have dealt with a broad spectrum of theological issues: understanding and practice of baptism,\* eucharist\* and ordained ministry;\* the church\* and concepts of its unity; intercommunion;\* scripture and

Tradition;\* the role and significance of creeds\* and confessions; ordination of women;\* the influence of so-called non-theological factors on efforts for church unity. Alongside these controversial issues F&O has increasingly taken up themes which are of common concern for the churches or are fundamental for expressing their already-existing fellowship: worship and spirituality (e.g. the commission prepares jointly with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity\* the material for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity\*), Christian hope\* for today, inter-relation between bilateral and multilateral dialogues\* (since 1978 the commission has organized eight meetings of the forum on bilateral conversations). Three of the present study projects of F&O also belong to this category of themes: "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today", "The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community" (continued after 1993 by a study on "Ecclesiology and Ethics") and "Ecumenical Hermeneutics". The commission continues to serve united/uniting churches\* by organizing regular consultations for them, and it publishes a bi-annual "Survey of Church Union Negotiations". Since 1982 the work of F&O has become more widely known than ever before through the unprecedentedly broad and intensive discussion and reception process in connection with its 1982 *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry\** (BEM) document. This process continues, and F&O will deal with some major critical points raised in the almost 200 official responses of the churches to the so-called Lima text within the framework of a comprehensive ecclesiological study on "The Church as Koinonia" – a study which formed the integrating centre of F&O work beginning in 1994.

Within the wider ecumenical movement, and as part of the structure of the WCC, the commission on F&O sees its task in a concentrated theological effort to assist the churches in overcoming their dividing doctrinal differences, in sharing their diverse theological insights and forms of life as a source of mutual renewal, and in re-appropriating and expressing their common apostolic Tradition.\* All these efforts have as their goal the manifestation of the visible

unity of the church of Jesus Christ. On the way to this goal the churches are called to become a credible sign and instrument of God's plan for the salvation\* and transformation of humanity and all creation. With such a commitment F&O has rendered a significant contribution to the radically changed relationships between the churches and the many steps they have taken to express their full (or at least their growing) unity.

GÜNTHER GASSMANN

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## FAITH AND SCIENCE

THE ECUMENICAL movement was slow to catch up with science and technology,\* although the latter were rapidly changing the world. In a major address to the WCC's third assembly (New Delhi 1961), Joseph Sittler, drawing on Col. 1, appealed for a unity that applied the doctrine of redemption\* to the larger orbit of the whole creation.\* But the ecumenical movement did not heed this appeal, which Sittler repeated to a US ecumenical gathering in 1970 in a lecture on "Ecological Commitment as Theological Responsibility", apparently fearing that concern about the environment, science and technology would detract it from its major concern with human justice.

The change of heart seems to have come at the WCC's fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968), which became a turning point for ec-

umenical concern about science, technology and the environment. The presence of Margaret Mead was probably critical in the assembly recommendation that “the WCC give particular attention to science and the problems of worldwide technological change in its study programme”. With staff responsibility carried by Church and Society, the WCC moved vigorously and effectively in this new direction in a study programme on “The Future of Man in a World of Science-based Technology”, beginning with an exploratory conference on “Technology and the Future of Man and Society” in Geneva in 1970, which provided the agenda for years to follow.

The programme indicated both that the churches were out of touch with changes in science and technology and their impact on society and that many scientists were concerned to change this situation. An important aspect of the work for the next two decades was the strong involvement of scientists and sociologists in the study programme. Scientists who had dropped out of the church because they saw it as irrelevant came into this programme with enthusiasm. What was achieved came largely as a result of consultations on specific issues such as limits to growth; nuclear energy and alternative energy technologies; genetics and the quality of life; humanity, nature and God; theology, science and human purpose; science, ideology and theology; genetic engineering; and science education. The method of work included regional consultations in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

A world conference in Bucharest in 1974 on “Science and Technology for Human Development” became famous for introducing into ecumenical circles the concept of the ecologically sustainable society. From its ecumenical birth, this phrase and the concept it embodies spread around the world. It was incorporated into the WCC’s emphasis on the Just, Participatory and Sustainable Society,\* launched at the fifth assembly (Nairobi 1975) – only the second assembly to have a plenary presentation on science and faith. As a result, programmes on the ecologically sustainable society were initiated in many countries, linking up with the eco-justice movement in the USA and with serious sociological studies in the Netherlands and elsewhere.

A second world conference was held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1979. Its preparatory volume, *Faith, Science and the Future*, and its proceedings, *Faith and Science in an Unjust World*, became important ecumenical resources for many churches and theological institutions. *Anticipation*, the Church and Society journal, also published reactions to the MIT conference. Evident at the conference was the division between the developed world and the developing world as to whether science is good or bad and whether nuclear technology is good or bad. In both cases it was clear that science and technology are not value-free; rather, they reflect the values of the society from which they come.

The sixth assembly of the WCC (Vancouver 1983) saw a new emphasis in the call for a conciliar process on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation.\* The issues now were the tension between war and peace, injustice and justice, and industrialization and the integrity of creation. One issue introduced by the discussion of the integrity of creation was the intrinsic value of non-human creatures and animal rights. This was first taken up at a consultation in 1988, and reported in the book *Liberating Life* (1990). Just as there was concern in the 1960s that issues of science and technology were a distraction for churches and in the 1970s that environmental issues were a distraction, so too the issue of animal rights is regarded in some ecumenical circles as a distraction from what should be the main concern for the poor.\*

Unresolved issues in the ecumenical debate on science and faith include a theology of nature\* and a non-anthropocentric or biocentric ethic. One important contribution to this debate was that of Larry Rasmussen in his book, *Earth Community, Earth Ethics*. Rasmussen explores a version of the Gaia principle, which is expressed by Vaclav Havel as follows: “We belong to a larger whole... and our destiny is dependent not so much on what we do for ourselves but on what we do for earth as a whole.” He concludes his exploration by re-stating a moral guideline suggested by James Gustavson in *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective*: “The ‘good’ all things are is more than their good for us, and our own interests are relative to

larger wholes than those of immediate human welfare... Human beings thereby share with other participants in the community of life the need to make those sacrifices required for the sustainability of this community as a whole..."

These issues and concerns go to the heart of what science is, what theology is and what are the relations between the two. There is a much greater openness on the sides of both science and theology to learn from each other than in 1970, when some theologians argued they should march to different tunes. Instead of simply trying to understand each other better, movement on the frontiers of science and theology is now concerned with ways in which each may become transformed as a result of their encounter.

CHARLES BIRCH

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## FAMILY

THE SOCIAL GROUP called family is found in every culture from ancient to modern times. The term has described a diversity of social realities from the extended net of relatives of pre-modern cultures to the contemporary nuclear family.

Definitions of family are forged culturally, and perhaps have always been multi-layered and multi-dimensional. What we call family today probably denotes something very different from what it did to our ancestors. Today, it denotes different relationships in different contexts. However,

whatever the use and understanding of the term, one might safely say that what is today called the nuclear family has always been an important, if not central, element in any definition of the family. In parts of the world where a sense of individualism has shaped societies, the nuclear family has become normative. In other parts where other forms of relationships such as kinship continue to be important in the shaping of societies, the term denotes a broader relatedness beyond the still very essential nucleus of father, mother and children. It is important to add that in the languages of many traditional societies, a term is used that embraces both understandings interchangeably and reflects the inter-relatedness of the many nuclei of the family structure. Thus it is impossible to establish a universal normative definition of the family or its nature, functions and purpose.

What has distinguished a family from other social groups has been its functions: nurture, education and formation, spiritual and emotional support, social and economic support and security, procreation and the socialization of new generations. Some of these functions are now being augmented and drastically modified by modern life, especially in the West, through social and state institutions like child care centres, schools, health care, nursing homes, social security and life insurance.

Traditionally, the above-mentioned functions described the role of the tribe, clan or extended family. Historically, it seems that the human race has not lived in nuclear families but in broader social units. Tribes and clans were functional domestic households, genealogically established, where shared interests and divided responsibilities were fairly clear. With the increase in the complexity of human existence, tribes and clans gradually yielded some of their roles to the *extended family* and a number of secondary social institutions. The *nuclear family* as such is a later adaptation, emerging along with the processes of modernization and the increasing individualism of Western societies. To be sure, the nucleus of husband, wife and children existed before the industrial era, but this has not always counted as "family" apart from the larger net of interwoven familial relations.

In the Old Testament, says J.H. Westerhoff, “family” refers to “‘a tribal family’ which included a husband, his wives and their children, his concubines and their children, sons and daughters-in-law and their offspring, slaves of both sexes and their children, dependents such as the parentless, the widows and illegitimate children, aliens such as the sojourner passing through and all the marginal folk who chose to live among them” (257). In the New Testament, too, passages dealing with family life (e.g. Mark 1:29-31; Acts 10; Eph. 5:21-6:9) include relatives and servants within the domestic circle.

In short, “family” today could be regarded as the network of relationships established by marriage, birth and adoption. But the ways in which those relationships are established and the rights and duties attached to these various roles differ greatly according to culture, class, religion and region.

### STUDIES OF THE FAMILY

Popular books about the family, both secular and religious, often become best-sellers. From the second half of the 20th century there has been a tremendous expansion of study and research on the family. Several journals are devoted entirely to this field.

Families have been analyzed from different perspectives and disciplines. Studies by cultural anthropologists, sociologists, social scientists and psychologists have all made significant contributions towards a better understanding of the family in different contexts. The declaration of 1994 as International Year of the Family by the United Nations bore testimony to this and to the fact that states have been recognizing the family as one of the main caretakers of life, health and culture.

Many theologians and pastoral counselors are trying to reformulate their understanding of family in the light of new knowledge. They are realizing, for instance, that the notions of family in the teaching and the practice of the church have, with a certain inevitability, been conflated with the understanding of person, couple and household. With a better understanding and recognition of person and personality, the increasing differentiation of couple from family, the affir-

mation of women in their personhood as distinct from men, and the increasing ability to control procreation, there is an unavoidable and irreversible process towards clearly distinguishing the concepts of persons, couples, families and households. This could be conducive to better family pastoral care (see **marriage**). Sometimes, however, these developments have also led to an unhealthy dichotomy that negates the essential inter-relatedness of these categories, further increasing human individualism.

### THE FAMILY TODAY

To be a family today seems more difficult in almost every culture than ever before. More and more families around the globe concentrate most of their energy on trying to survive in situations of poverty and exploitation. Families – in the recent past, the main transmitters of culture and values – now have to compete fiercely with state agencies, the mass media and economic systems, which impose alien values and behaviours.

However, the family continues to endure as a nucleus of affection, socialization and nurturing. Furthermore, it has proved to be a very resourceful entity: it designs creative strategies for survival in social strata where income is inadequate to meet the reproduction of life and labour; in most “developing” countries, where developmental programmes, primary health care attention and universal education have failed, the family keeps providing – at different levels of proficiency – care, attention, socialization. Social scientists, educators and medical doctors are taking a fresh look at the family in order to learn about traditional medicine, popular education and subsistence economics. In the developed world, families have the potential to become emotionally closer in personal ways. Intimacy may rise while authoritarian relations diminish. Equality among sexes may provide solid ground for families to give a better sense of identity and support to new generations.

### THE CHURCH AND THE FAMILY

It is probably true that, in the course of history, Christian communities have accepted and even “baptized” certain culturally defined presuppositions regarding the

family as normative. This is perhaps because most pre-modern cultures shared many suppositions in common as far as the place and role of the family in human society. This has led to the churches being accused of defending very conservative positions or trying to impose so-called Christian values on non-Christian communities, an accusation that has not always been unjustified.

The Christian family cannot be identified with any one social pattern. Its value extends far beyond the social. Westerhoff states: "A Christian family has nothing to do with structures and roles; it has to do with the quality of life together, a quality of life that can assume many shapes and in which persons can play various roles" (254).

In many Christian traditions, this *quality of life* has been defined in the light of a certain understanding of the human person seen as an image of the Triune God. According to this understanding, humanity is created in the image and likeness of God in order to share in the life of the Trinity. The creation of humanity as male and female, the command or rather gift of procreation and the whole story of the first family in Genesis (especially ch. 4) are presented as an indication that the family unit is an integral element in how humanity is called or given to share in the life of God. It shows that the human being is not created as a self-contained individual, but rather (as within the Trinity) as *person in relation* whose very life and being depends on his/her relationship with the other and with God. In that sense, the family belongs to the realm of creation, yet it does so as an essential part of God's economy of sharing God's life with humanity and with creation.

In the realm of salvation, it is the church, according to Christian tradition, that has been called to reflect this life that God freely shares, through Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit, with God's creation. The church is that body which is called to fulfill God's eternal purpose of reconciling all of humanity to itself, to the rest of creation and to God. In other words, the church is that body in which the human being is in an eternal process of being restored to true *personhood* as defined above.

From earliest times, the church has seen the family, at least implicitly, as an essential

part of the process of restoration. Families and households seemed to play an important role in the life of the early church; St Paul's letters to the Ephesians (5:21-6:9), and to Timothy (ch. 3 and 5:1-8) among others, indicate a close connection in the apostolic equating of the church and the family or household. In certain traditions, this has led to the view of the Christian family or household as a microcosm of the church, or at least that microcosmic community in which the life of the church is first lived and manifested.

Like the extended family, the church, wherever it has been, has always been both a community within a community and a community of communities, reflecting always both the particular and the universal, in a certain kind of essential inter-relatedness. What the church, in its proper function, is to the wider human community, the family, in its proper function, is to the church: the primary, if not essential, unit of the "household of God" (1 Tim. 3:15).

As churches continue to explore new pastoral approaches to the havoc created by war, poverty, uprooting and isolation, they could do well to restore and deepen their understanding of the place and role of the Christian family. As Kenyan bishop David Gitari told the 1988 Lambeth conference: "With so many fractured and lonely families in the cities and so many people living alone, the church should see itself as an extended family where every believer finds a home, not just figuratively but literally. The church must work to build strong homes, exploring extended family models, so that each home truly is a church and the church truly a family."

Among churches all over the world, there is an increasing awareness of the importance of contextual theological reflection and relevant pastoral care for the family today. To work pastorally requires serious knowledge not only of a particular context and history\* but also of the major trends of history and the resources that cultures have to cope with in a changing environment. Today, ecumenism has helped to make available insights from different confessional and cultural traditions. These should contribute to better understanding and mutual enrichment. Besides that, a renewed dialogue with

other faiths is necessary in order to understand better the universality of the family. All these elements should lead to the deeper spiritual and theological insights urgently required to determine not only the limits but also the links between persons, couples, families, households, communities and the whole oikoumene.

JORGE E. MALDONADO and KWAME A. LABI

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## FASCISM

FASCISM is a form of totalitarian government (see **totalitarianism**) and organization of society developed by Benito Mussolini in Italy in the early 1920s. Although its ideology\* was not too clear, it included some romantic anti-rational elements together with an extreme nationalism. It claimed Georges Sorel and Vilfredo Pareto as ideological influences, built on certain interpretations of Nietzsche's idea of power and continued the nationalist movement of the poet D'Annunzio. The nation\* is identified with the state,\* conceived fundamentally as a centre of power\* that concentrates the totality of the forces and resources of the people and leads it to its goal, the aggrandizement of the nation. The leadership is elitist and concentrated in a charismatic leader (*duce* = leader, conductor) who is always right. Rejecting liberal democracy and proletarian communism, it created a corporate form of government, organizing labour and capital in cor-

porations (professionals, industry, etc.) under the leadership of the government, placing all public servants directly under the direction of the (fascist) party. It led Italy into wars of conquest in Ethiopia and Albania and finally into the alliance with Germany in the second world war.

A number of analogous regimes came to power in several European countries at different times after the first world war (Austria, Hungary, Romania, Spain). Since each of them had its own characteristics as a result of historical, sociological and cultural particularities, the word "fascism" became a sort of imprecise catch-all term – which is even more apparent when it is extended to third-world countries (e.g. Brazil under Vargas, Argentina under Peron), whose geopolitical situation defines some fundamental differences. Sometimes the expressions "neofascism" or "dependent fascism" have been used for these cases. Even more, it has become common to use "fascist" to designate a certain type of reactionary, right-wing or totalitarian attitude of mind which can be found in almost any society.

Although originally anti-clerical, Mussolini's pragmatism led him to seek a recognition by the Roman Catholic Church and a solution to the "Roman question", which culminated in the Lateran treaty of 1929. However, the totalitarian character of fascism eventually led into conflict with the church, as on the question of the fascist attempt to control the life and education of youth. Pius XII's letter *Non Abbiamo Bisogno* (1931) marked the break between the government and the church.

For the ecumenical movement and Protestant churches, the conflict with fascism was more closely related to German National Socialism (see **Confessing Church, war guilt**). The Oxford Life and Work conference (1937) faced the questions raised by this ideology, and its whole study on church, community and state involved a rejection of fascism. In this and subsequent WCC meetings (Amsterdam, Evanston), fascism was rejected, implicitly or explicitly, under the label of "totalitarianism" on the basis of its total claim on human life and its tendency to assume an unlimited power.

More recently, the churches are facing this threat in the doctrine of national secu-

riety.\* The ways in which the WCC has portrayed a desirable human society (see **responsible society; just, participatory and sustainable society; justice, peace and the integrity of creation**) espouse forms of democratic organization, people's participation and human rights and responsibilities that radically exclude all forms of fascism.

JOSÉ MÍGUEZ BONINO

## FEDERALISM

THE WORD derives from the Latin *foedus*, meaning covenant, alliance (French *alliance*), bond (German *Bund*). In modern ecumenical usage, "federal" relationships have been established within a single country among denominations which, while maintaining their separate identities, desire to collaborate in certain limited areas or for certain limited objectives, especially e.g. in social action or for a combined approach to civil governments. Thus there was the Free Church Federal Council in Britain (1940, after fore-runners) and the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America (1908, predecessor of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA). Internationally, a federal relationship could link nationally constituted churches of the same confession for consultative or cooperative purposes, though legislative power rested with the individual constituent bodies (thus the World Alliance of Reformed Churches,\* 1875; the Baptist World Alliance,\* 1905; the Lutheran World Federation,\* 1947). The World Student Christian Federation\* (1895) grouped the national Student Christian Movements that were themselves functionally ecumenical but did not raise any ecclesiological pretensions. The comic potential of federalism is suggested by the secular example of the humorist Garrison Keillor, who claimed that his US radio programme was sponsored by the fictitious "American Federation of Associations".

While federalism has a certain provisional utility, most ecumenists have judged it inadequate as a final model of church unity. John Kent wrote that "Christ is more than the president of a federal republic of Christian associations; he is the Head of the Body which is his church" (*The Age of Disunity*, 1966). The inadequacy of the federal pattern of church unity – what he called denomina-

tions "glued together at the edges" – was already perceived by the Episcopalian priest W.R. Huntington (1838-1909), who inspired the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral.\* With papal authoritarianism, it constituted the two extremes between which, according to Huntington, an "organic" alternative should and could be located. Federalism's ecclesiological weaknesses reside in its falling short of a genuinely conciliar capacity for decision making on matters of doctrine and discipline, and in the shallowness of its vision of what is possible and required in a life of *koinonia*\* in the gospel.

It is significant that the Lutheran World Federation in 1990 moved towards a Lutheran "communion" in word and sacrament, a self-understanding as "pulpit and altar fellowship". And in recent "covenantal" plans of church unity between denominations in a single country, the proposed degree of community in doctrine, sacraments, ministry, mission and decision making exceeds the (etymologically equivalent) older idea of a "federation". This was true of the abortive English proposals for a covenant (1982), which saw themselves as only an interim step "towards visible unity". It was true also of the Consultation on Church Union\* plan for "Churches in Covenant Communion" (1988), which nevertheless deliberately renounced "consolidation of organizational structures" among the participant churches.

See also **communion; conciliarity; covenanting; denominationalism; union, organic; unity, models of; unity, ways to.**

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## FELLOWSHIP OF ST ALBAN AND ST SERGIUS

AN INDEPENDENT society whose aim is to increase understanding and cooperation between Christians of Orthodox and Western traditions, the fellowship was founded in St Albans, England, in 1928, by participants in two Anglo-Russian theological conferences

organized jointly by the Russian and British Student Christian Movements. It takes its name from St Alban, the first martyr of Britain, and St Sergius of Radonezh, patron saint of the Russian theological academy in Paris, with which many of the Orthodox founder members were connected.

In the early years the fellowship worked mainly with theologians and theological students, through conferences and lectures in Anglican and Free church theological colleges. A key figure in this educational work was Nicolas Zernov, one of the fellowship's founders and its secretary 1934-47 who, with his wife Militza, made its development a life's work. Through his talks and writings, he made a great contribution to the knowledge of Orthodoxy\* among English-speaking Christians. Early participants in the conferences were predominantly Russians from Paris and members of the Church of England, but gradually they were joined by Orthodox from Romania, Serbia and Greece, Episcopalians from the USA and Swedish Lutherans. These contacts later led to the formation of branches outside Britain.

An important contribution of the fellowship in the 1930s and 1940s was providing accurate information on the situation of the church in Russia at a time when little of this was generally available in the West. The 1930s saw a high pitch of ecumenical enthusiasm in the fellowship, with hopes that a restoration of communion between Anglican and Orthodox churches could be in sight, but the discussions on practical advances in this direction were not continued.

In 1943 the fellowship acquired a permanent base, a house in London dedicated to St Basil the Great. This served as a centre for meetings, hospitality and prayer, until the fellowship office moved to Oxford in 1993; its chapel, unique in having both an Orthodox sanctuary and an Anglican altar, was dedicated by Archbishop Germanos of Thyateira in 1949. Fr Lev Gillet, known to many for his retreats, meditations and writings under the name of "a monk of the Eastern church", served as chaplain there until his death in 1980.

After the Second Vatican Council\* Roman Catholic participation in the fellowship, never totally absent, showed a marked increase. Nevertheless, relations between

Orthodox and Anglicans have continued to be central to the fellowship in the English-speaking world. The inauguration in 1973 of the official Anglican-Orthodox dialogue,\* involving many prominent fellowship members, could thus be seen as official approbation of the work already being carried on unofficially by the fellowship.

Today, fellowship members number over 2000, about half of them in Britain. Membership is strongest in English-speaking countries, but there are also local meetings in Greece and Scandinavia. The majority of members are Anglican, with a number of Lutherans and Roman Catholics and some Free church members; a large part of the Orthodox members are converts to Orthodoxy.

The main event in the life of the fellowship is still the annual conference, which brings together clergy and laity, theologians and non-theologians of all ages and from several countries. Another annual event is a pilgrimage to St Albans, where the Orthodox liturgy is celebrated in honour of the saint. Local branches also organize meetings and services, and the fellowship sometimes arranges programmes specifically for theological students.

The fellowship has been responsible for the publication of a number of books on Orthodox and Anglican spiritual life and points of convergence between the two traditions. Along with the fellowship journal *Sobornost*, founded in 1928, these have done much to make Orthodoxy more widely known.

Since the first conference, when Orthodox and Anglican eucharists were celebrated at the same altar on alternate days – a revolutionary idea in the 1920s – eucharistic worship has been at the heart of the fellowship's ecumenical work. In fact, a condition of membership is readiness to attend each other's eucharist.\* The founders of the fellowship and their successors believed that this shows both the element of real unity in worship of the same Lord and the pain of disunity. Experience of worship is also seen as a vital element in getting to know another Christian tradition; the fellowship has more than once presented to the wider ecumenical movement a plea for common worship according to various traditions rather than mixed services.

Despite great advances in the ecumenical movement since the fellowship's foundation, it still provides a forum unique outside the official bilateral dialogues\* for Orthodox and Western Christians to meet on equal terms and address theological issues together, each in the way that arises naturally from their own tradition.

ELIZABETH THEOKRITOFF

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## FEMINISM

THE WORD "feminism" has become a key word of the second women's movement, which began in the late 1960s. While the earlier women's movement was chiefly concerned with improving the position of women in society, emancipation, economic independence and work, the issues for the feminist movement of today are replacement of the established patriarchal order, raising awareness of the disastrous effects of the division woman/nature and man/intellect, and the adoption of female rather than male guiding principles. The question of woman's economic, political and social independence from man has thus been joined by that of her psychological independence from him in a male-dominated culture.\* This has led to far more radical solutions and utopias.

Feminist groups hold varying standpoints, but common to all is the view that women need their own organizations in order to assert their interests – not as man-hating caucuses, but as self-help groups for women in an overwhelmingly male culture. The conflict experienced by women is today expressed in the word "sexism",\* by analogy with "racism" and "classism", and connoting the oppression of one sex by the other which takes various forms – exploitation, expropriation, rejection, persecution and ill-treatment of women.

The church and theology have been a target of feminist criticism from the start. In Paul's commandment that women should keep silent (1 Cor. 14:34), in Bible passages stating that Eve sinned first and must redeem herself through bearing children (1 Tim.

2:11-15), in the works of the church fathers and the reformers, and in dialectical theology (Karl Barth), there is a wide variety of sexist statements declaring women to be weak, inferior, receptive and passive. In some churches such statements are used as an argument to justify the fact that women have been given a place in the church hierarchy only belatedly or not at all. The predominantly masculine imagery of God and masculine language about God have also served as a religious justification of the oppression of women in society.

On the other hand, there are many examples of Christian groups whose expectation of the kingdom of God\* and of the Spirit has encouraged equality between women and men (Cathars, Waldensians, Quakers). In the New Testament there is evidence that men and women were equal in the early Christian communities, though this fact has been glossed over in the course of the patriarchal account of history. Women apostles (Mary Magdalene, Junia), community leaders (Martha, Lydia), and Jesus' vision of a community of women and men not ruled by a father (see Mark 10:29) point to a non-sexist early Christian culture and church which are gradually being re-discovered through the efforts of feminist research and theology. There are many indications that the dichotomy of spirit and nature (body) was unknown in the acts of healing performed by the "Jesus movement" and that women played a prominent role.

The ecumenical movement was ahead of most churches in giving serious attention to the question of the status of women. As early as the 1927 world conference on Faith and Order,\* seven women presented a statement demanding that the issue be central at the meeting. Before the WCC's first assembly (Amsterdam 1948) a questionnaire was sent out to obtain information about the life and work of women in the churches, but the hesitant verbal resolutions made in Amsterdam did not lead to a change in practice. In Evanston (1954) the will clearly existed "to help women find the right balance between their family responsibilities and their professional life" as responsible members of society, but the masculine structure of that society, the "exclusively masculine environment", was taken for granted.

Not until 1974 at the women's consultation in Berlin on "Sexism in the 1970s", in preparation for the WCC's Nairobi assembly, were these structures fundamentally challenged. Sexism, it was said, exists where on the ground of sex individuals or groups are assigned on principle to a subordinate position through attitudes, behaviour or institutional structures. During the consultation, however, women from the third world shifted the problem of sexual oppression to the plane of imperialistic oppression and exploitation, also experienced by men, who, in resignation at their inability to alter their situation, react by adopting sexist behaviour patterns.

Sexism, then, is seen not so much as a struggle between the sexes as a common struggle within the wider struggle for liberation of the oppressed classes. Sexism in the white, middle-class sense of the term was resisted. To the disappointment of some North American women, a demand for the rights of lesbian women was not included in the recommendations made by the consultation.

The first consultation of European Christian women in Brussels in 1978 was able to work out a clearer Christian understanding of feminism: "We realized that it does not mean the same to everyone, but that agreement exists on the following...: feminism for us is a strategy, a principle for living which determines our thinking and action. For women in the Western countries of Europe the first important thing is to discover themselves as women. After centuries of being told by society and the church who they should be, what they should and should not do, it is time now to find out who they themselves think they are, what they can do, what they want to do. This process will be linked with a critical examination of the structures of their churches and the society in which they live... The church and theology must be made inclusive, they must be made to see all human beings, including the oppressed... We expressly emphasize that this strategy, this living principle, is not directed against men, but should be an encouragement to them to discover in themselves the attributes they have of the other sex. We want to live together in friendship, as allies and partners on the way to liberation."

The problem of sexism within the church was dealt with in greater depth in the following years through the plan, already presented in 1974 at the meeting of the F&O commission in Accra, Ghana, for a study on the "Community of Women and Men in the Church".\* A study booklet was presented to the F&O commission in 1978 in Bangalore for comment and approval before being sent to WCC member churches.

The unique aspect of this study was that its starting point was not what Christian men and women *ought to think* but their own experience and thoughts. Its aim was to discover the reality of partnership between women and men in different cultures and churches and to invite them to a dialogue. Above all, it sought to let women speak. Parallel to regional meetings in Asia, Latin America and Europe, specialist consultations were held on the ordination of women, a theology of human wholeness and the authority of scripture in the light of women's experiences. Some people felt the study was organized in such a way as to give prominence to the subject area "church, unity, fellowship", thus blurring the issue of sexism in the church. To women from the Western world in particular, the programme seemed to lack bite, "jumping too quickly to community without taking seriously the deep rifts and the breakdown of communication between women and men in our culture". Others, however, were relieved that the community study did not have sexism as its theme. From socialist countries came voices saying they did not want a women's study because partnership was already a reality in their countries. Asia and Africa let it be known that their problems were different. In fact only 20% of the Christian women and men who took part in the study came from outside Europe and North America. Yet the results showed that even in these societies and churches covert but widespread sexism exists. The aim of the study was not, however, to ignore the problems but to challenge as many people as possible to think afresh about creative ways of working together to build the church and make it into a community of women and men.

A final international consultation in Sheffield in 1981 heard the web of oppression – racism, classism, sexism – articulated

more clearly than ever, as women from African, Asian and Latin American countries insisted that “wholeness and community within the church” be considered in the context of “a larger struggle for the realization of human wholeness, for liberation from widespread oppression that is classist and racist”. They declared that their sense of priorities constrained them to speak from within and to this larger struggle.

Through the 1980s, study of issues of women and work, women in poverty, violence against women and sex tourism continued in the WCC’s Sub-unit on Women in Church and Society. But the most challenging implications of the community study were dismissed. At Sheffield, WCC general secretary Philip Potter had declared: “For me, this study is a veritable test of our faith and of the ecumenical movement, which is concerned about the unity of the whole people of God, as a sign and sacrament of the unity of all the peoples of the world.” As in Berlin, at Sheffield the inseparability of theological and so-called “non-theological factors”, of unity and renewal, of church and world, was strongly articulated. Pauline Webb has said that it was at Berlin that “for the first time many women came to realize that the question of women’s participation was not simply a matter of social justice, but of theological integrity”. After Sheffield, however, it was clear that World Council ways of thinking theologically and acting institutionally would not be changed in light of the community study.

The Council declared the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women\* from 1988 to 1998. Inaugurated during the Easter season, the opening refrain was, “Who will roll the stone away?” The Decade was, in some measure, a response to the significant role issues of women and religion played at the end-of-the-Decade for Women conference sponsored by the United Nations in Nairobi in 1985.

However, leaders of the Ecumenical Decade were clear that this was not a women’s decade but the churches’ decade. It was envisioned as an opportunity for men and women of faith – for the church – to be in solidarity with all women in church and society, to overcome the years of oppression experienced by women worldwide, to be full

partners on the journey towards a world human community from which no one is excluded because of gender, race, ethnic origin or religion. In short, it called the churches to conversion – to a re-interpretation and re-ordering of their faith, life and witness. But the 1997 report of the team visits, *Living Letters*, revealed that many member churches were not fully committed to or participating in the Decade. As earlier, the churches’ decade was becoming a women’s decade. The closing festival, held prior to the WCC’s eighth assembly in Harare in 1998, challenged the churches “to ensure that the solidarity we seek is sustained”.

A major post-Decade initiative, “On Being Church: Women’s Voices and Visions”, seeks to sustain the solidarity, noting that mid-Decade teams heard not only stories of violence and exclusion but also “stories of women standing in solidarity with each other, of their commitment to their churches and their efforts to develop their own ways of being church together”. The study invites women and men to (1) describe women’s participation in the life of their church; (2) express their visions, theological insights and hope for the church as community and for justice and solidarity; (3) express their faith and struggle in secular groups. The study hopes thereby both to affirm women’s voices and to bring these voices to the churches as contributions to the renewal and unity of the church.

Numerous questions related to the subordination of women in church and society remain unanswered within the ecumenical movement – inclusive language, new images of God, new ways of worshipping, women’s ordination, sexuality. These will not be easily addressed or answered. But as feminist theological voices become more articulate and fully developed throughout the churches and world they may set forth new visions for the ongoing conversation.

See also **ordination of women; theology, feminist.**

ELISABETH MOLTMANN-WENDEL  
and MELANIE A. MAY

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## FILIOQUE

THE FILIOQUE clause in the version of the Nicene Creed\* generally used in the Western churches affirms that the Holy Spirit\* proceeds "from the Father *and the Son*" (Latin *filioque*) and seeks thus to articulate the personal relation between the second and third persons of the Trinity.

The original text of the creed, as approved by the council of Constantinople\* (381; the text is *not* that of the council of Nicea in 325) and ratified by later ecumenical councils,\* stated only that the Holy Spirit "proceeds from the Father". The addition of the filioque came to be accepted in the West, not least under the influence of Augustine (e.g. *On the Trinity* 15.27.29), but not in the Eastern Orthodox churches. It has remained for more than a thousand years a point of contention between Eastern and Western Christendom, albeit one that has been more eagerly attacked by the East than defended by the West. Not indeed that the West has generally been much inclined to surrender the filioque: the general attitude has been that the filioque is self-evidently correct and that it was not worth troubling to attend much to Eastern objections. In recent decades, however, there have been signs of a change in climate.

The filioque seems first to have been solemnly affirmed as an article of faith\* by the synod of Toledo in 589. The occasion was the conversion of King Reccared from Arianism to Nicene Orthodoxy. The filioque served to underline the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father, and the synod had little or no sense of stating anything new or controversial. In the following centuries the filioque became a standard axiom of Western theology. Conflict with the East was provoked in the early 9th century when Charlemagne attempted to impose the filioque on the whole church; he was successfully opposed by Pope Leo III on the ground that the text ratified by an ecumenical council could not be arbitrarily modified. Two generations later Patriarch Photius in Constantinople went on the attack with the deliberately opposed formula "from the Father *alone*", but this too remained a private initiative.

Around 1014 the singing of the Nicene Creed was introduced with papal approval into the liturgy of the mass in Rome, and the form of the creed adapted included the filioque. This contributed to the schism\* between East and West and subsequently to notable theological defences of the filioque, e.g. by Anselm and Aquinas. The attempt to reconcile the two sides at the council of Florence (1439), on the principle that the filioque could be interpreted as equivalent to the formula, acceptable to the East, "from the Father *through* the Son", foundered on Byzantine resistance. The Reformation brought no change on the matter in the West; the main Protestant churches retained both the filioque theology and the corresponding wording of the Nicene Creed.

Increased contact between East and West began in the 19th century to encourage rethinking on both sides, but only after more Eastern Orthodox churches joined the WCC in the 1960s did the topic become important on the ecumenical agenda and did several Western churches begin to think aloud about deleting the filioque. Especially significant were two ecumenical meetings at Klingenthal, Alsace, in 1979 and 1980; the report *Spirit of God – Spirit of Christ* states what are still today the chief problems and offers some perspectives on ways forward.

The problems are of considerable complexity. Not only are they not all of the same

sort; they tend to appear different from different standpoints in the dialogue. In the eyes of Eastern Orthodoxy, for example, the changing of the wording of the Nicene Creed by any other authority than an ecumenical council is both canonically illegitimate and an offence against Christian community. The very different Roman Catholic view of the locus of authority in the church might concede the second point, but not the first. The attitudes of other churches to these issues naturally vary according to the degree of their commitment to restoring Christian unity, to their sense of the authority of the early church and the ecumenical councils and to the role the Nicene Creed plays in their worship.

More substantial – and even more difficult – is the question whether what the filioque affirms is theologically *true* in the context of Trinitarian doctrine (see **Trinity**). This question cannot be settled simply by appeal to biblical texts or to historical tradition conceived as finally authoritative; it is an issue in dogmatic theology, specifically a question of Trinitarian hermeneutics. A major difficulty here is that the tendency and direction of Trinitarian thinking in East and West have been subtly but significantly different since (at the latest) the 5th century; the filioque fits relatively well into the Western scheme, but not into the Eastern.

A further range of issues has to do with possible implications of filioque theology for other fundamental issues. So, for example, the charge has been made that the filioque has led in Western theology to an effectual subordination of the Holy Spirit\* not only to Jesus Christ\* but also to the church or to the human spirit; the counter-charge in defence of the filioque, advanced in particular by Karl Barth, is that it is an essential bulwark against all kinds of natural theology.

Finally there is the question: If the filioque is abandoned, how can such valid concerns as it sought to defend be upheld? The more distant and more recent past have brought a range of suggestions for alternative formulations, such as “from the Father through the Son” or “who proceeds from the Father and shines forth in the Son”. It remains to be seen whether or how far such proposals can deliver the degree of ecumenical theological agreement that is necessary if

the filioque controversy is to be relegated to the past.

ALASDAIR HERON

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## FIRST AND RADICAL REFORMATION CHURCHES

THESE TERMS have emerged in ecumenical discourse since 1950. The term *first Reformation* was coined by scholars associated with the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren to characterize reforming movements within medieval Catholicism from the 12th through the 15th centuries. The leading religious bodies formed from these movements are the Waldensian Church, the Unity of Brethren (Unitas Fratrum), the Renewed Moravian Church (which considered itself to be the direct continuation of the Unity of Brethren), and several Hussite-based churches. These churches were marked by emphasis on the synoptic gospels (especially the sermon on the mount) as a rule of life. The impetus behind the formulation “first Reformation” seems to have been the felt need to consider the reforming energies of these bodies as significant in their own right, over against the customary perception that they were a prelude or prologue to the mainstream Protestant Reformation.

The term *radical Reformation* was popularized through the seminal work of this title by George H. Williams (1962). He applied the concept to a wide range of dissenters, who had in common the rejection of Catholicism as well as Lutheranism and the

Reformed. Williams used the term “magisterial Reformation” to characterize these latter two communions – along with Anglicanism – to highlight their linkage with the state as well as their arrogation of the teaching authority\* of the official church. Religious groups emerging from the radical Reformation have also been called “Believers churches” or “Free churches” because of their championing of separation of church and state\* and of religious liberty.\*

Although discussion continues on how inclusive the term “radical Reformation” should be, there is agreement that it can always apply to the various manifestations of Anabaptism around the world; most of these churches currently use some form of the name “Mennonite”,\* although *Taufgesinnten* and the Dutch form *Doopsgezinden* are also found. Also stemming from 16th-century Anabaptism are the communally based Hutterian Brethren, now found in the north-western states and provinces of the USA and Canada. In some association with the Hutterian Brethren is the Society of Brothers or *Bruderhof*, formed in Germany after the first world war.

Other religious movements inspired by Anabaptism but not organically related to it are several Brethren\* bodies of 18th-century Pietist origin, of which the largest is the Church of the Brethren. Many Baptist historians have found the historical antecedents of their numerous denominations within Anabaptism, although other scholars firmly maintain that their original matrix within left-wing English Puritanism of the 17th century provides sufficient derivation. Also connected with Radical Puritanism was the Religious Society of Friends,\* nicknamed Quakers, who have often felt kinship with Mennonite and Brethren groups, in particular because of their shared peace\* testimony (see **Friends/Quakers, historic peace churches**).

Representatives of all the denominations mentioned above took part in a series of meetings, often called the “Prague Conferences” after the site of the first three (1986, 1987, 1989), hosted by the Comenius Theological Faculty. These meetings sought respectively to define concepts, to study eschatology\* and social transformation, and to search for economic implications. A fourth conference was held in Geneva in 1994, with

the participation of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches,\* the Lutheran World Federation\* and the Mennonite World Conference.\* This meeting gave particular attention to the import and impact of the sermon on the mount for personal and social ethics.

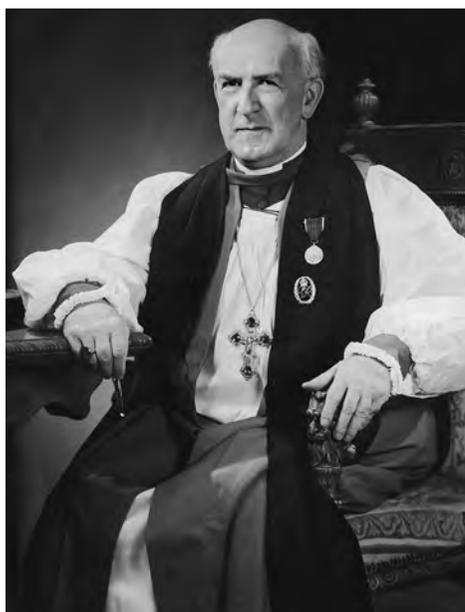
The fifth conference in the Prague series was again held in Geneva in 1998. Marked by the expansion of dialogue participants to include church leaders from Asia and Africa, it took as its focus the classic theological doctrines of justification and sanctification. This had been suggested by the current discussions on these themes between Lutherans and Reformed, on the one hand, and Lutherans and Roman Catholics, on the other. The same focus was continued in the sixth conference, held in Strasbourg, France, in 2000, with the intent to take up neglected aspects, in particular how dissenting bodies approach justification and sanctification. This perspective was signalled by the title of the consultation, “New Life in Christ”. Although some voices were there raised asking whether the consultation series had run its course, those attending “Prague VI” agreed that further conferences should be held, with Prague again as the site.

DONALD F. DURNBAUGH

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## FISHER, GEOFFREY FRANCIS

B. 5 May 1887, Higham, UK; d. 15 Sept. 1972, Sherborne. Fisher became archbishop of Canterbury in 1945, and the next year he preached an influential Cambridge sermon on reunion. Chairman of the WCC at its inaugu-



ration at Amsterdam 1948, he was a president from 1948 to 1954. In later years he proposed that the Council should be transformed into an organization for interchurch aid, which then would present no difficulty for the Roman Catholic Church to join. He met Pope John XXIII in 1960, the first archbishop of Canterbury to go to the Vatican since 1397. In the same year he also met with the Orthodox patriarch of Jerusalem and the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople. He presided over the Lambeth conferences of 1948 and 1958, which owed their representative character to his careful preparation, especially in America, and to the establishment of new provinces among the newly independent nations. From 1946 onwards he devoted considerable time to the revision of the canon law,\* though new canons were not authorized until 1969. He was headmaster of Rep-ton School, 1914-32.

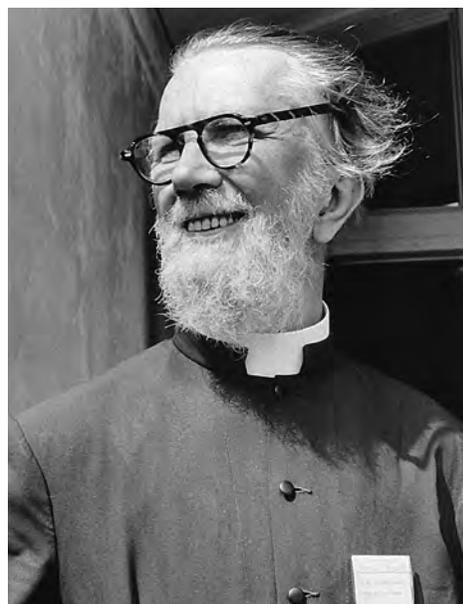
ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## FLOROVSKY, GEORGES VASILIEVICH

B. 28 Aug. 1893, Odessa, Ukraine; d. 11 Sept. 1979, Princeton, NJ, USA. Florovsky

was a universally recognized Orthodox spokesman in the ecumenical movement and the forger of the theological basis for Orthodox participation in that movement. He attended the Faith and Order\* conference at Edinburgh in 1937, was a member of the WCC central and executive committees, 1948-61, and in 1950 had a decisive influence on the Toronto statement\* "The Church, the Churches and the World Council of Churches". He taught at several institutions in Europe and the US; as professor of



philosophy of law at Prague, 1922-26; professor of patristics and later of systematic theology at the St Sergius Orthodox Institute in Paris, 1926-48; professor, and later dean, at St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in New York, 1948-50; professor of theology of religions at Columbia University, New York, 1951-55; professor of history and dogma of the Orthodox Church at Holy Cross Greek Theological School in Brookline, MA, 1955-56; and from 1956 onwards professor of the history of Eastern Orthodoxy at Harvard Divinity School. He was vice-president of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, 1954-57. Numerous monographs and articles are in the eight volumes so far published of his *Collected Works* (Belmont MA, Nordland, 1972-).

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## FOCOLARE MOVEMENT

THE WORLDWIDE Roman Catholic association known as Focolare (Italian for "hearth" or "furnace") began in Trent, Italy, in 1943. During the most destructive phase of the second world war, Chiara Lubich (b. 1920) and a few other young Italian women were convinced that whether they would die or survive, they should daily act out Jesus' command to "love one another, just as I have loved you" (John 13:34) and his will "that they may all be one" (John 17:21) – the Magna Carta of the movement. After the war, the loose association gradually spread among youth, adult men and women (married and unmarried), clergy and religious (who remain members of their orders or institutes). Many lay members are celibates with private vows.

In the early 1960s, the members, called Focolarini(e), eagerly accepted the new RCC stance towards the ecumenical movement. "Through our love for Jesus, we are able to appreciate the treasures of various other Christians and their churches, grasp their individual qualities and, while remaining totally faithful to our own church, feel that we are brothers and sisters of all Christians through our common baptism and mutual love" (Lubich). The movement then spread among Lutherans, Anglicans, Reformed and other Christians. Non-Christians, such as Jews, Muslims and Buddhists, are also friend-associates.

The Focolare's "New Humanity" movement works at the local and international level for peace and solidarity in society, and is recognized as an NGO at the United Nations. Chiara Lubich is an honorary president of the World Conference on Religion and Peace.\*

Over the years 19 little towns or citadels have been founded, together called a "permanent Mariapolis (City of Mary)": 8 in Europe, 4 in South America, 2 in North America, 3 in Africa, 1 in Asia and 1 in Australia. They offer an experience of living the Foco-

lare gospel-centred spirituality in everyday life. People stay there for short or longer periods of time learning to build a society based on the law of mutual love. At present in 198 countries the Focolare "core" members are around 110,000.

TOM STRANSKY

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## FOOD CRISIS/HUNGER

THROUGHOUT history, churches and Christians have been concerned about hunger in seeking to respond to the words of Jesus: "For I was hungry and you gave me food" (Matt. 25:35). Early church leaders were outspoken on the issue; St Basil the Great said that a person who can prevent somebody from starving and does not do so can reasonably be condemned as a murderer. Over the years, churches and related organizations have channelled foodstuffs worth millions of dollars to places of famine. In addition, they have also engaged in analyses of the root causes of hunger and malnutrition. For example, the East Asia Christian Conference, meeting in Kuala Lumpur in 1959, saw the solution to the food crisis in connection with changing the pattern of land ownership. The issue of land reform can be found in almost any church statement related to food and hunger (see **land**).

Another recurring theme in such church statements is the concern about population growth. The WCC central committee meeting in 1967 said: "We recognize that even the most promising combination of measures for increased food production will only postpone catastrophe unless there is a vast increase in responsible family life and planning."

Although carefully phrased, the issue of responsible family life was picked up again during a meeting in Beirut in 1968 of the committee on Society, Development and Peace (SODEPAX\*), which spoke of the need to develop "appropriate policies to slow down accelerated population increases". Influenced by the optimism prevailing then about

the problem-solving potential of science and technology,\* the Beirut meeting spoke about more fertilizers as a most promising key to higher farm yields, modern techniques and materials, soil and plant research, new strains of wheat, rice and other food crops, the benefits of modernization and the need for foreign financing and technology.

Fifteen years later, the sixth WCC assembly (Vancouver 1983) adopted a much more critical attitude regarding these factors, noting that the development of technologies of food production which require the use of chemical inputs has in certain instances hampered food production. Transnational corporations and large landowners, which control much of the productive land, were criticized because they prevent farmers, peasants and landless rural workers from participation in decision making.

Some uneasiness about new, sophisticated and capital-intensive technology was expressed at the WCC conference on "Science and Technology for Human Development", held in Bucharest in 1974. Referring to the negative balance of protein exchange between the satisfied and the hungry world, the conference spoke about a "protein empire" that has been built on prevailing trade patterns: "There is something radically wrong about economic systems that result in protein being exported from where it is most needed." The Bucharest meeting sharply criticized the stockpiling of bombs and missiles when not even a start was made to address the urgent need of stockpiling food. The conference concluded that nothing short of a world emergency food programme was urgently needed, thereby echoing similar recommendations made by the WCC conference on Church and Society in Geneva in 1966 and a SODEPAX meeting in Montreal in 1969.

In a message at the time of the 1974 synod of bishops, Pope Paul VI called on governments to change their attitude towards the victims of hunger, to respond to the imperatives of justice and reconciliation and speedily to find the means of feeding those who are without food. In his address to the world food conference in 1974, the pope placed the food crisis in the context of a general crisis of civilization and of solidarity. He argued that the reduction of food supplies was at least partially due to certain

commercial decisions, and stressed that the world food crisis would not be solved without the participation of the agricultural workers, which in turn required a radical revision of the present underestimation of the importance of agriculture.

The world food summit in Rome in November 1996 adopted a declaration and plan of action aimed at "reducing the number of undernourished people to half the present level no later than 2015". The final statement of the summit committed the international community to strive for "food security" through "a fair and market-oriented world trade system". A WCC statement welcomed the reference to a "fair" market-oriented system and agreed that deregulation of markets could lead to higher food production. However, the WCC also pointed out the paradox "that hunger continues while more food than ever before in history is available". The WCC statement said that "because markets allocate on the basis of effective demand, the demand of the poor is not registered" and warned that "food security cannot be left to the market mechanism alone". In his address to the world food summit, Pope John Paul II called on world leaders to take radical measures to tackle world hunger - including cancelling the international debt of developing countries. Economic and food policies based not only on profit but also on sharing in solidarity should be implemented. Pointing to the fact that "the starving and the wealthy, the very poor and the very rich, those who lack the necessary means and others who lavishly waste them" are living side by side, the pope called for a change of attitude and habits with regard to life-styles.

Over the years, churches have come to realize that hunger and malnutrition are the result of a complex set of inter-related factors. The complexity of the issue increased with the Green Revolution which took place during the 1970s and 1980s. Recent developments in the field of gene technology and genetically modified food have sparked new debates in the churches (and beyond) about the ethical, social, economic and health implications of genetic engineering for food production.

■ Address of Pope Paul VI to the participants of the world food conference, 9 Nov. 1974 ■ Address of Pope John Paul II to the World Food Summit, 13 Nov. 1996 ■ D. de Gaspar et al., *World Hunger: A Christian Reappraisal*, WCC, 1982 ■ *The Root Causes of Hunger and Food Insufficiency in Africa*, CDAA, 1985 ■ "Statement on the International Food Disorder", in *Gathered for Life*, D. Gill ed., WCC, 1983 ■ Statement of the WCC to the World Food Summit, Nov. 1996.

## FREIRE, PAULO REGLUS NEVES

B. 19 Sept. 1921, Recife, Brazil; d. 2 May 1997, Sao Paulo. Freire was a Brazilian educator widely known for his use of the term "conscientization" in education, a process by which "both teacher and pupils simultaneously become knowing subjects, brought together by the object they are knowing". He was special consultant to the WCC Subunit on Education and professor at the faculty of education of the university of



Geneva, 1970-80. Exiled by the Brazilian government for his so-called communist-inspired theory, 1964-80, he was first consultant to the ministry of education in Chile and to the Institute of Investigation into Agrarian Reform in conjunction with UNESCO. He then became (1969-70) visiting professor at Harvard University and the Center for Studies in Development and Social Change. On his return to Brazil, he became professor at

the Pontifical Catholic University in São Paulo, director of VEREDA (the Centre of Studies in Education), and secretary of education of the municipality of São Paulo. He wrote numerous books which have been translated into many languages.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ P. Freire, *Cultural Action for Freedom*, Cambridge MA, Center for the Study of Development and Social Change, 1970 ■ *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New York, Herder, 1970 ■ P. Freire & A. Faundez, *Learning to Question: A Pedagogy of Liberation*, WCC, 1989 ■ D. Collins, *Paulo Freire: His Life, Works and Thought*, New York, Paulist, 1977 ■ J. Elias, *Conscientization and Deschooling: Freire's and Illich's Proposals for Reshaping Society*, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1976 ■ A.M.A. Freire & D. Macedo eds, *The Paulo Freire Reader*, New York, Continuum, 1998.

## FRIENDS/QUAKERS

THIS PROPHEMIC-mystical movement developed in England around George Fox (1624-91) and his teaching and preaching. His followers first called themselves "children of the light" or simply "friends" – based on Jesus' words to his disciples, "You are my friends if you do what I command you" (John 15:14) – and later corporately took the name of the "Religious Society of Friends". "Quakers" was an early derisive nickname, associated with the tremblings of the Friends at their meetings. No longer considered derisive, this title is now also used by Friends of themselves.

Fox was convinced that the church\* had become apostate, and even reformation "in root and branch" could not re-capture the authentic Christian community of the 1st century. So beginning again on early apostolic beliefs, Fox erected a church. It would depend directly on the risen Lord, and its members would function equally without mediation or rite and clergy but with the biblical gifts of the Spirit and the "inward light of Christ" – men and women equally under the direct headship of Christ. Friends' meetings for worship or for business held the holy expectancy that Christ would be in the midst wherever "two or three are gathered" in his name (Matt. 18:20), inspiring them to speak, enabling life to be transformed and empowering ministries to the world with the

same self-giving love that he bore on the cross.

In 1676, Robert Barclay published (in Latin) *Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, which has never been displaced as the standard systematic treatment of Quaker theology.

The Quakers' early resistance in England to civil laws of religion that included oaths and marks of civil deference and to military service made the Friends targets of legal and popular oppression and imprisonment; more than 400 died from the lack of sanitation. Many fled to the American colonies. The majority sought refuge in Pennsylvania under William Penn (1644-1718), himself a Quaker. Elsewhere several Friends were persecuted; four were hung for religious dissension in Boston, 1659-61.

Social action is characteristic of the Friends. They "have been more concerned with the here and now than with the hereafter. They have sought in many different ways to improve the societies in which they live – locally, nationally, and internationally." They look to the time when God's kingdom will come and his will be done; meanwhile, they are summoned "to exhibit to the world a kingdom mind-set, kingdom values and a kingdom life-style". They are to be "the authentic counter-culture of a better way, the only way that holds true hope and the promise of life for humankind". And they feel "the terrible pull of the unlimited liability for one another which the New Testament ethic lays upon them" (Douglas Steere).

Few Friends have dramatic stories of unusual witness. Most live humbly, barely noticed. Among outstanding role models are some who worked against slavery: John Woolman (1720-72), Anthony Benezet (1713-84), and in the later abolitionist phase Lucretia Mott (1793-1880). Mott was also active in women's suffrage, along with Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906). In prison reform Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845) still excels; and in the humane treatment of the mentally ill William Tuke (1732-1822), his wife and grandson initiated a number of reforms. In the 20th century Alice Paul was the author of the Equal Rights (for women) Amendment to the US constitution, which failed ratification by only one state.

Friends have worked consistently towards the elimination of war and its root causes in militarism, injustice and economic imperialism. Two Friends have received the Nobel peace prize: Emily Greene Balch, leader of the international women's movement for peace, in 1946, and Philip J. Noel-Baker, for his 53 years of participation in every international disarmament conference, in 1959; in addition, the Nobel peace prize in 1947 recognized the humanitarian and reconstruction efforts of the (British) Friends Service Council and the American Friends Service Committee.

For authenticity in all these areas, Friends test "leadings" or "concerns" in a process of group "discernment". One may be way ahead of his or her meeting; the reverse may be true; or there may be a number of correct solutions. Real transformation of society does not come from a programme or an ideology, but from exemplary discipleship. The light, grace, truth or spirit of Christ are the real inspiration and the agent of transformation, moulding groups and individuals. Quakers follow spiritual disciplines, especially in prayer; a number of their writings have become spiritual classics for Christians.

From the beginning women have had an equal role in all aspects of the Quaker movement. Fox used a whole panoply of biblical texts to support the thesis that "souls have no sex", and that men and women are meant to be "help-meets" (Gen. 2:18, King James) rather than antagonists. And Gal. 3:27-28 became the charter not only for equal treatment of women but for the open acceptance of other races and peoples.

Quakers of two varieties (there are four in all, now cooperating closely) were founding members of the WCC. They had accredited observers at Vatican II\* (1962-65) and two delegates to the Faith and Order world conferences in 1963 and 1993. Quakers participate in the F&O commission of the National Council of the Churches of Christ, USA. Evangelical Friends are active in the World's Evangelical Alliance\* and other evangelical groupings. Most other Quakers participate in local ministerial associations, or in state and national councils.

By May 1999 Quakers in 43 countries totalled 281,860: 92,672 in Kenya, 92,263 in the USA, 31,000 Aymara Indians in Bo-

livia, 17,189 in Britain, 4000 in Taiwan, 2500 Eskimos in Alaska, 46,500 in the rest of Latin America; there are very small numbers of Germans, Japanese, Koreans, Scandinavians, Dutch, Middle Easterners, Indians and French-speaking people.

By and large their impulse to serve still comes from first-hand contact with the resurrected Christ, who is with us "always, to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20). The basic thrust of all Quaker structure and activities hinges on George Fox's central dictum, which states (without ruling out Christ's final coming in judgment) that "Christ has come" *again* – as he did again and again to the early church – "to teach his people himself".

See also **historic peace churches**.

DEAN FREIDAY

■ H.H. Brinton, *Friends for 300 Years*, New York, Harper, 1952 ■ E. Potts Brown & S. Mosher Stuard eds, *Witnesses for Change: Quaker Women over Three Centuries*, New Brunswick NJ, Rutgers UP, 1989 ■ D. Freiday, "The Early Quakers and the Doctrine of Authority", *Quaker Religious Thought*, 15, 1, 1973 ■ D. Freiday, "Quakers, Ecumenism and the WCC", *ER*, 46, 4, 1994 ■ M. Garman et al. *Hidden in Plain Sight: Quaker Women's Writings, 1650-1700*, Wallingford PA, Pendle Hill, 1996 ■ D.V. Steere ed., *Quaker Spirituality: Selected Writings*, New York, Paulist, 1984.

## FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE FOR CONSULTATION

THE FWCC was formed by the world conference of Friends in 1927 with an American and a European section, joined in 1971 by an African section. In 1974 the section of the Americas included constituencies in North, Central and South America and in the Caribbean area. The autonomous Friends yearly meetings freely associate themselves with the FWCC. It fosters spiritual life through inter-visitation, study, conferences and a wide sharing of spiritual experiences, across all cultures, countries and languages. The FWCC also brings Quaker pacifist and philanthropic concerns to the world's attention. The United Nations recognizes the FWCC as a non-governmental organization with consultative status.

TOM STRANSKY

## FRONTIER INTERNSHIP IN MISSION

FIM, FOUNDED in 1960, is an active partnership between regional councils and conferences of churches, the WCC and the World Student Christian Federation.\* It has placed nearly 400 interns (aged 25 to 35) in projects involving justice and liberation-oriented ministry. Interns come from within the Christian community, although projects are often based within communities of other faiths. FIM's current areas of focus include systemic causes of economic injustice, the resurgence of religion and its relationship to global political conflicts and the encounter of cultures (interfaith, interethnic, interracial) in the struggle for peace with justice.

FIM has four principal aims: (1) to serve as a programme of ecumenical leadership formation; (2) to provide experiences in new forms of mission in focus areas, including theological, political, economic and socio-cultural issues; (3) to be a tool for community-initiated organizations to extend, augment and supplement their work through the presence of an intern from a similar group in another country; and (4) to be a catalyst for organizational networking, for the creation of new international alliances, and for engagement of interfaith partners in mission through the use of sending and receiving groups for interns. The intern works with a receiving group for two years and returns to his or her sending organization for a minimum one year re-entry period. This ensures a re-integration with the ecumenical movement in the intern's home country.

New styles of decision making, new forms of community organizing, and new methods of political and social analysis form the basis of theological reflection done by every intern. From its office in Geneva, FIM circulates these reflections.

JOHN BOONSTRA

■ K. Todd, *Crossing Boundaries: Stories from the WCC FIM Programme*, WCC, 1985.

## FRY, FRANKLIN CLARK

B. 30 Aug. 1900, Bethlehem, PA, USA; d. 6 June 1968, Connecticut. Fry was vice-chairman of the WCC central and executive committees, 1948-54, and chairman of both, 1954-68. His services to the Lutheran World



Federation\* were no less considerable: one of the founders of the Federation at Lund in 1947, he was treasurer, 1948-52, first vice-president, 1952-57, and president, 1957-63. Educated at Philadelphia Lutheran Seminary and ordained in 1925, he was secretary of the Commission on Evangelism of the United Lutheran Church, 1930-38, and a member of the Board of American Missions, 1934-42, being elected to the executive board in 1942. He went on to become president of the United Lutheran Church, 1944-62, and in 1962 head of the Lutheran Church in America. A leader in the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA since its foundation in 1950, he chaired its Policy and Strategy Commission in 1954, and directed Church World Service, 1946-50. In 1947 he was president of Lutheran World Relief, and first vice-chairman of American Relief for Korea, 1950-54.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ R. H. Fischer ed., "Franklin Clark Fry: A Palette for a Portrait", *The Lutheran Quarterly*, 1972, supplementary number.

## FUNDAMENTALISTS

FOR A LONG time after the term came into general usage in the 1920s, most other Christians tended to regard those who call themselves

fundamentalists – and their beliefs and practices – with indifference. This attitude has been changing in recent decades due to two phenomena: (1) the increasing number, especially of young adults, who have left mainline Protestant churches and the Catholic church to join fundamentalist churches and parachurch organizations; (2) the growing political clout of fundamentalists as they move from personal piety to social critique and political activism with voting power.

Most popular descriptions of Christian fundamentalists retain an accusatory edge – “sectarian”, “authoritarian”, “simplistic”, “closed-minded”, “gullible”. Offsetting these caricatures is a growing number of interdisciplinary descriptions and interpretations, including studies by fundamentalists themselves.

In portraying a complex Christian movement which appears in varied social-cultural settings, these studies seek (1) not to blur fundamentalism with all of the conservative movements within Christianity today, whether Pentecostal, evangelical Protestant, Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox; (2) not to reduce fundamentalism to a system of theological statements, which can then be juxtaposed to other Christian theologies for comparisons; (3) not to label all fundamentalists as persons of the same psychological type and cognitive mindset (a closed personality who lusts for certitude, ideological purity, and moral rigorism); and (4) not to treat fundamentalism as a religious, social and political movement that is organizationally self-contained.

In general, fundamentalism is only one expression among Christians to meet the needs for fundamental confidences in the face of modernity: the struggle to find a firm foundation in life; the longing to break through the bewildering variety of claims: religious, non-religious and anti-religious, moral, immoral and amoral; and to search for a buttress against social instabilities, marginalizations and dislocations. To this perceived disarray of modernity, fundamentalists believe God has provided the authoritative answer. With certitude in the use of chosen biblical words and doctrines, their leaders identify the actions of a strict God who is saving a religious elite from an evil world and from corrupt forms of Christian faith.

## TACTICS AND MESSAGE

Fundamentalists seem to reduce the complexity of the world's experiences to a bipolar, even apocalyptic model: good/bad, true/false, kingdom of Light/kingdom of Darkness, God-and-we/Satan-and-others, Christ/antichrist, Christian/"secular humanist". In a world of such contrasts, they believe God calls them to be disciplined crusaders on a battlefield, who are carrying out God's clear purposes and undisputed will.

First, they focus on what is evil to characterize all of "modern times", which they compare with a reconstructed earlier Golden Age, emphasizing one or other of its traits which they regard as incarnating doctrinal and practical fundamentals for the present. They seek to re-capture and restore the designated glorious ages of their church or of their founders: the first generation of disciples of Jesus, or the 16th-century Reformation, or 19th-century Protestantism or pre-Vatican II Catholicism, or pre-communist regimes. They call for a return to "the old-time religion".

Second, fundamentalists claim authority over a sacred biblical and/or church tradition which they perceive all other Christians to be corroding. As "soldiers of truth" they equip themselves with an armoury of absolute proof-texts, arranged in a way that is most effective to sustain their courage in themselves and to defeat opponents.

Third, fundamentalists fight against general or specific enemies, within or outside churches: "modernists", "secular humanists", "Bible critics". They see all these agents – movements and forces, organizations and individuals – as conspiring both to destroy the community of faithful disciples of Christ and to bless that very social order which by divine imperative true Christians are called radically to change.

Fourth, fundamentalists thus keep at a distance Christians who even waver on certain fundamentals, in particular those who plead for at least an "agreement to disagree". Above all, they warn against those who falsely believe that the Holy Spirit is active in the ecumenical movement. Affiliation with, say, the World Council of Churches, is a biblically prohibited alliance with apostates and unbelievers.

## HISTORY

Major Christian traditions and teachers (e.g. Melancthon, Calvin, Wesley) have held that certain articles of faith are fundamentals, while others are non-essential, i.e. open to free debate. In the late 1800s and early 1900s the churches in the West encountered re-interpretations of the Christian faith in terms of contemporary historical, scientific, psychological and philosophical positions, associated with Kant (knowledge of moral norms as independent of religious beliefs), Darwin (biological evolution in creation and the human), Marx (capitalism as evil and religion as an "opium") and Freud (the human animal as basically sexually driven). This range of views came to be regarded under the general pejorative term of "modernism". Pope Pius X judged it to be "the synthesis of all heresies" (*Pascendi*, 1907).

In order to rectify theological deviations and preserve true Christians from the acids of modernism, North American and British evangelical Protestants widely circulated a series of 12 booklets called *The Fundamentals: A Testimony of Truth* (1910-15). The series identified five pivotal "fundamentals of faith and of evangelical Christianity" and pressed the question, "Do you believe these or not?" More than 3 million copies were freely distributed; and the yes's and no's led to divisions and schism among Protestant churches.

The series became a symbolic reference point and label for sub-groups among Evangelicals.\* Gradually "fundamentalists" (the term was coined in 1920) created narrower definitions of what the five fundamentals mean, and these detailed explanations then became the test of who is a "Bible-believing" Christian. To deny a strict interpretation of all or any of these fundamentals was to betray God. This eventually caused a rift between the less militant, more open "conservative evangelicals" and the fundamentalists, who in turn became even more belligerent and separatist than their predecessors.

## THE FUNDAMENTALS

1. *The inerrancy of scripture.* The originally recorded words of the Bible are "verbally inspired" or "God-breathed". Whatever scripture says on any subject, including historical and scientific affirmations and –

especially – prophetic discourse, even by way of passing comment, is the clear will and mind of God. The Bible reveals an ever-consistent theology. The flawless texts in no way can be relativized in terms of the understanding of those who wrote or who hear them in varying cultural and historical contexts. A loving God does not and indeed cannot disclose the divine mind and will in order to confuse. Any human being acting in good faith and with common sense can immediately grasp the biblical word. Thus anyone who reads the same text as the fundamentalist and arrives at a different understanding must be operating in bad faith, or with no faith; and that characterizes accommodation to modernity.

2. *The deity of Jesus.* Jesus was not just a perfectly God-conscious, God-guided teacher and example, but the Son of the Triune God, born as a man of a virgin, who worked miracles in the name of the Father and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

3. *Jesus Christ the Saviour.* By his death Jesus took on all the sins of all men and women of all times. Christ's blood shed on Calvary is always sufficient to cleanse every sin from every person. Each remains in a state of sin and damnation until he or she personally commits oneself to Jesus Christ as the Lord and the Saviour, and to moral discipleship.

4. *The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.* The same body born in Bethlehem, suffered, died and was raised from the dead in Jerusalem. And because Christ rose in his body, one day we too will be raised from the dead in our earthly bodies.

5. *The second coming of Jesus Christ.* The only hope for God's human family and for God's wounded creation is that Jesus is coming again, to set up his kingdom, reward the faithful, and condemn his enemies to hell (some lists have hell as a sixth fundamental).

The "canon within the canon" of scriptures is prophecy, understood as revealed predictions of future historical events. The Bible is a divine jigsaw puzzle which portrays the entire sweep of history. The fundamentalist interpreter fits the biblical pieces of prophecy together in a way that makes clear the movements of history, by discerning in some detail where to map present events on the divine calendar of the whole. An extraor-

inary complex of events is foreseen as terminating an era and inaugurating a new one.

A host of fundamentalist evangelists have presented a world-historical vision of apocalyptic premillennialism (see **millennialism**). Since not all the prophecies in the Old and New Testaments have been fulfilled either in the first coming of Christ or in the history of the church, there must be a future millennium ("the thousand years"), a final epoch on earth, during which God's faithfulness requires that the remaining prophecies find their fulfilment. The end is imminent, and the Christ and the antichrist\* are the key actors. The primary working images are those of battles and wars, with heavy eternal stakes in the outcome. It is a complicated scenario and fundamentalist interpreters offer many different and controverted sub-plots.

Above all Christian fundamentalist premillennialists locate "divine signs" in the rise of political Zionism and the founding of the state of Israel. Israel is "God's time clock which begins the countdown". Israel awaits the forces of the antichrist in his final rebellion, then the Armageddon of bloody destruction, before Israel achieves political, social and religious fulfilment in a restored and perfected Jewish nation, peacefully ruled by Jesus Christ, who will have returned to occupy the Davidic throne in Jerusalem – the priest and the king of believing Jews and Gentiles. Thus, today's Middle East is seen through apocalyptic scenarios. Israel represents holy fighting against Satan. Palestinians and other Arabs are mere pawns in the drama. In the 1990s, the identity of the invading enemy of God or "the Gog of Magog" (Ezek. 38) has shifted from the north, the former communist Soviet Union, to the south – the Middle East of Islam (in fact, restoring the 19th-century conviction that the "Muslim menace" in the Ottoman empire and in Africa was the antichrist).

To differing degrees, Protestant fundamentalist streams have been severe in their judgments on Roman Catholicism. *The Fundamentals* set out to prove that "the papal church" is "a satanic delusion" whose clergy preach and practise "another gospel" (Gal. 1:9). Catholics are objects of mission. The "Babylon" of Rev. 18 ("Come out of her, my people", v.4) is identified with the Roman Catholic Church. Yet today some fundamen-

talist groups will acknowledge in Catholics some biblical truth and authentic Christian commitment. They may even support Catholic leaders, including Pope John Paul II, whom they see as a courageous defender of biblical faith on such issues as right to life against abortion, the indissolubility of Christian marriage and the condemnation of premarital sex and active homosexuality. On such issues many fundamentalists are prepared to enter into public coalitions with like-minded Roman Catholics (and Protestants), and to allow them affiliation with their organizations.

### ROMAN CATHOLIC FUNDAMENTALISTS

Fundamentalist strains can be detected among some conservative groups in the post-Second Vatican Council Roman Catholic Church. Just as Protestant fundamentalists are sub-groups within conservative evangelical Protestantism, so Catholic fundamentalists are sub-groups within conservative Catholicism. For them, Vatican II\* broke down Catholic identity by causing the sudden death of an unambiguous historical continuity and the clear symbols which expressed and sustained it. Thus Catholic fundamentalists react through policies and strategies of restoration.

The principle of literal interpretation which Protestant fundamentalists apply to a set of biblical texts is used by Catholic fundamentalists to interpret Catholic traditions, seen as pure and intact until Vatican II; for example, selected citations from all general councils and popes, except Vatican II and Popes John XXIII, Paul VI and John Paul II. These Catholic fundamentalists look with particular suspicion and dismay at the shifts in official Catholic teachings on religious freedom, on relations with other Christians and churches, and with Jews, Muslims and adherents of other world faiths.

These Catholics are convinced that, though small in numbers, they alone are saving both the One True Church and the world in fidelity to the Spirit-protected tradition, as they interpret it. Thus it is their right and indeed duty to denounce the infidelity of other laity or clergy, the general hierarchy and recent popes.

The most visible and widely known expression of Catholic fundamentalism is the Society of St Pius X, founded by the late Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre in Switzerland

(1970). In Lefebvre's judgment Vatican II was "the greatest disaster not only of the 20th century but of any century since the foundation of the church", and the church of Vatican II is declared heretical because it has corrupted the unchangeable tradition firmly set by the definitions and canons of the councils of Trent\* and Vatican I,\* and by the statements of anti-modernist popes such as Pius IX (1846-78) and Pius X (1903-14).

### EASTERN ORTHODOX

Orthodox fundamentalists, especially in Eastern Europe, combine an extreme neo-nationalism and a cultural suspicion of all things "Western" to fuel the longing to restore pre-communist church life, the Golden Age stripped of its terrors.

Absent in that period was the 20th-century ecumenical movement and its institutions, now perceived to be a seductive Western creation. By citing ancient canons or statements of the 18th and 19th centuries and bypassing more recent ones, Orthodox fundamentalists only judge the ecumenical movement to be a modern "ecclesiastical heresy", and its Orthodox proponents, especially hierarchs, to be betrayers and deceivers of the true faith and the true church.

Similar to Archbishop Lefebvre's Roman Catholic traditionalists are the (non-canonical) Old Calendarists, who regard only themselves as the "true" Orthodox. When "civilization is waning, and the spirit of antichrist is a looming threat", ecumenism is that "seeking for the Truth outside the Truth"; it is "the domain of the wicked, the playground of demons" (Archbishop Chrysostomos of Etna, 1999).

TOM STRANSKY

- K. Armstrong, *The Battle for God*, New York, Knopf, 2000
- *Christian Fundamentalism Today*, 1993 consultation sponsored by the LWF, the PCPCU and the WARC, Geneva, WARC, 1994
- N. Cohen ed., *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1990
- M.E. Marty & R.S. Appleby eds, *Accounting for Fundamentalism: The Dynamic Character of Movements*, Chicago, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1994
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- T. Meyer, *Fundamentalismus. Aufstand gegen die Moderne*, Hamburg, Rowohlt, 1991.

# G

## **GARRETT, JOHN**

B. 15 July 1920, Sydney, Australia. From four years as general secretary of the Australian Council of Churches, Garrett moved to Geneva to become director of communication (then information) at the WCC, 1954-60. As a Congregational minister ordained in 1946, he was a delegate of the Congregational Union of Australia and New Zealand to Amsterdam 1948. Following his period in Geneva, he was a church history teacher and college principal in Sydney, 1960-66. He was a member of the joint commission on church union which prepared the union of Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian churches as the Uniting Church in Australia. From 1968 to 1974 he was on the faculty of the Pacific Theological College, Suva, Fiji.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ J. Garrett, *To Live among the Stars: Christian Origins in Oceania*, Suva, Institute of Pacific Studies, 1982 ■ *Where Nets Were Cast: Christianity in Oceania since World War II*, Suva, Institute of Pacific Studies, 1998.

## **GATU, JOHN**

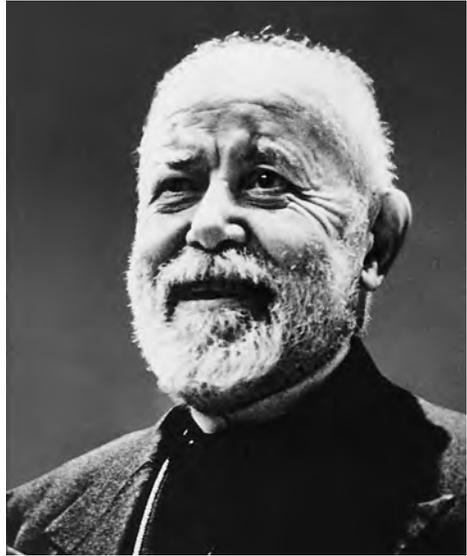
B. 3 March 1925, Kiambu, Kenya. A member of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Gatu was a sergeant in the colonial army before he was ordained and later served as the general secretary and moderator of his church. He also served as chairperson of the National Council of Churches in Kenya, and in various capacities with the All Africa Conference of Churches. Gatu is most remembered for his call in 1971 for a moratorium\* at a Mission Festival in Milwaukee, USA. Moratorium\* was a plea for

complete halt in the sending of missionaries and funds from European and North American churches to the churches of Africa, in order to enable the latter to develop their own identity and to define their mission for their time and place. Moratorium, as expounded by Gatu, was a challenge to the assumption that without the large-scale presence of Western missionaries, Christianity could not survive in Africa. Gatu also claimed the influence of Daniel Berrigan, who thought along the same lines in respect to Latin America. Gatu served as a member of the WCC's Faith and Order commission (1961-75) and on its executive and central committees. He attended the Montreal Faith and Order meeting (1963), the world mission conference in Bangkok (1973), and the WCC's fifth assembly in Nairobi (1975). He was educated at St Paul's United Theological College, Limuru (1951-55), New College, Edinburgh (1958), Pittsburgh Theological College (1963) and Princeton Theological Seminary (1970-71).

JOHN S. POBEE

## GERMANOS (Strenopoulos)

B. 15 Sept. 1872, Silivria, Greece; d. 24 Jan. 1951, London, England. Germanos was a president of the WCC, 1948-51. He met John R. Mott and Nathan Söderblom at a conference of the World Student Christian Federation\* in Constantinople in 1911 and thereafter became actively engaged in the ecumenical movement. He was influential in the publication of the "Encyclical unto all the Churches of Christ", issued by the patriarchate of Constantinople in 1920. Vice-president of the first world conference on Faith and Order\* (Lausanne 1927), he stressed that, from the point of view of Orthodox theology, "unity in faith constitutes a primary condition of reunion of the churches". He was also vice-president of the second world conference on F&O (Edinburgh 1937) and a member of the provisional committee of the WCC and much involved in its final creation. Educated in Constantinople, Halle, Leipzig, Strasbourg and Lausanne, Germanos was professor of dogmatics and symbolism at Halki, 1908, then dean of the same theological school. In 1922



he was appointed archbishop of Thyateira, with seat in London, and exarch for West and Central Europe in 1922. He contributed to *The Reunion of Christendom* (London, Cassell, 1929).

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ Germanos, *Kyrillos Loukaris, 1572-1638: A Struggle for Preponderance between Catholic and Protestant Powers in the Orthodox East*, London, SPCK, 1951.

## GLOBALIZATION, ECONOMIC

THE POLITICAL, economic, technological and social forces that seem to bind the world's nations into an increasingly interdependent whole are referred to as "globalization". Although these processes had been emerging for years, it was during the decade of the 1990s that globalization became the dominant feature of world order as the demise of communism, together with rapid innovations in telecommunications and electronically stored information, facilitated the global expansion of capitalism\* as the definitive world economic system.

Names such as "global village" and "spaceship earth" have been used to describe these processes, but others like "information society", "global shopping mall" and "global factory" more accurately typify the meaning of globalization. The principal forces driving globalization are: innovations

in telecommunications, electronically stored information, and transportation; transnational finance, commerce and investment; and component production centres transcending national boundaries. These forces are so closely identified with transnational corporations\* (TNC) that globalization often appears to be the name for the activities of these companies.

The expansiveness of these driving forces is made possible by international agreements establishing “free” or laissez-faire trade. This concept understands tariffs and other regulations, including those for protecting health or the environment and for ensuring social justice, or subsidies to protect national industries, as barriers to trade. Proponents assert that economic conditions will be improved in both wealthy and poor nations if international commerce is not regulated because this creates favourable conditions for foreign investment, trade and worldwide economic growth.

This global free trade system is governed by the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva. Composed of over 140 member nations, the WTO has legal jurisdiction to enforce trading agreements and to impose sanctions on nations that violate them. In cases of violation, the WTO orders the offending country to remove or weaken the barrier. The WTO deliberates in secret and the reasons for its decisions are not made public. Non-governmental and non-commercial organizations are specifically excluded, and only member nations directly involved can appeal a WTO decision.

These internal processes assure that only the official viewpoint of governments – and the transnational economic interests they often represent – are considered. Rarely are WTO decisions favourable to poor countries when their policies conflict with TNCs and first-world economic interests. Likewise, environmental and health regulations, as well as linking social justice to trade policy, consistently have been ruled as undue interference with free trade, thus mandating their removal or reduction to the lowest common denominator.

Globalization has generated significant increases in the volume of world trade and has rapidly accelerated capital accumulation, yet it has also deeply widened the gap between the rich and poor nations and the

gap between rich and poor within nations. One practical result has been the creation of a global division of labour in which poor economies: provide cheap labour for TNCs while offering their territory as tax-free production sites and as exotic tourist destinations; sell raw materials and nationally owned industries at bargain prices; and provide markets for technology and licenses for its use as well as consumer products and fast food options. Net economic benefits accrue to the wealthy, “owner” economies. This, in turn, has tended to create a three level social order: those integrated into the global economy as well-paid executives, consultants and highly skilled workers; minimally remunerated employees of globalized factories and commercial firms; and chronically unemployed or under-employed workers (see **unemployment**).

Internal, structural adjustments are often required of poor nations for their integration into the global economy, or to qualify for debt relief and financial assistance as well as to create internal conditions favourable to foreign investment. Nations refusing to make such adjustments risk isolation from the world economic community. These structural adjustments have privatized government industries and services; increased taxation; weakened the negotiating power of labour unions; cut wages; increased prices of basic goods; left sectors of the public behind, bypassed by the new economy; forced unemployment; and caused retrenchments in health, education and welfare services. Such measures have contributed to capital accumulation among the wealthy and established select countries as “credit-worthy” but have adversely affected the standard of living of other social sectors, especially the middle classes.

Women particularly have been affected, not only because the structural adjustments often adversely impact traditional women’s concerns such as the home and family health but also because of the global system itself. For example, the “global factory” – especially those that assemble products such as computer parts, toys or clothing – incorporates large numbers of young women as low-wage, unorganized labour. Among other social consequences, young women are attracted from their rural homes to the cities. However, many hopeful women are forced

into menial employment or exploitative jobs in “unofficial” industries, e.g. prostitution.

Another consequence of globalization is urban growth. Jobs attracting rural migrants to cities are but one reason for this. The global factory and shopping mall benefit from large concentrations of consumers, many suppliers, providers of services, financial institutions, port and transportation facilities, and quick access to specialized information and telecommunications technology, among other needs.

Advocates of globalization argue that economic growth is stimulated mainly through exports. This theory de-emphasizes the national market and urges countries to orient economic production towards exports. In turn, countries are encouraged to rely on imports, even for basic foods.

This export-import dynamic is believed to improve economic efficiency, drive down prices, and provide basic needs. However, only a few national industries can survive in the worldwide market. Transnational corporations buy many and others go out of business, thus undermining the internal, self-replicating foundation of the national economy. The provision of basic needs becomes dependent on external economies. Finally, success in the global economy depends on a country’s ability to occupy sophisticated, high-value industrial niches. However, this presupposes an educational and technological infrastructure as well as financial and natural resources that most poor nations do not have, and strategic geographic locations that permit ready access to major markets.

Globalization is an uneven process with some countries benefiting far more than others. The poorest nations are simply left out, the middle poor become suppliers and buyers, while the wealthy nations capture the greater part of the profits and control the process.

The idea fostered in the West that everyone has access to the fruits of globalization is scarcely reality. These benefits are limited to relatively small sectors of the world’s population. Even the image of the global factory as de-territorialized is deceiving; there is nothing de-territorialized about their first-world corporate headquarters and profit repatriation.

Because of the changes that are occurring, the eighth assembly of the WCC in Harare (1998) called globalization a “pastoral, ethical, theological and spiritual challenge to the churches”. Indeed, globalization has generated much ethical debate.

Those affirming globalization emphasize the ethical importance of a world bound together by trade and communication. In their view, this promotes dialogue and world peace. These voices also argue that the TNCs and the free market are forces for technological innovation and for the rapid and expansive production of needed goods and services. Some argue that globalizing forces can be understood as instruments of “co-creation” as God uses them to re-shape world order. Thus, through the opportunities afforded them by free trade, the TNCs are viewed as establishing “covenant relationships” with “stakeholders” across the globe. Although recognizing that TNCs can abuse the free market and their economic power, this viewpoint sees globalization as a positive development.

Many others, including the WCC, take strongly critical positions. Since its inception in 1948, the WCC has criticized *laissez-faire* capitalism and the economic and social injustices of the international order. The critique of globalization is not of international trade itself, but rather the terms and conditions of world trade, its administration by the WTO, and its effects on people, especially the weakest social sectors, and the environment. This viewpoint indicates especially the enormous power of the TNCs, the brutal competitiveness of the world economy, and the quest for economic growth without concern for equity or the welfare of the environment. As one ecumenical study concludes, “economic globalization is about the increasing concentration of economic power, coupled with increasing dependency of the poor on the decisions of the powerful” (Dickinson, p.5).

The Harare assembly referred to these aspects of globalization as a “new form of domination”, whose driving forces are economic powers “as insidious as political colonizers”, having “caused and fuelled fragmentation of the social fabric of societies”. It pointed especially to the unequal distribu-

tion of power and wealth, and to “poverty and exclusion” and the worsening situation of the poor – manifested in massive immigration to the economically stronger North – as evidence that globalization hardly signifies a unified, world community. In addition, it criticized global telecommunications for fostering a “consumerist monoculture”. Finally, the assembly noted that the “global economic system is blind to its destructive social and ecological consequences”. According to the assembly, these factors oppose the “vision of oikoumene, the unity of humankind and the whole inhabited earth” that “motivates and energizes the ecumenical movement”.

Finally, ecumenical thought on globalization is mindful that “the churches and the ecumenical movement uphold the affirmations of God’s grace to all human beings and all creation as imperative to life-centred ethics” (Mshana, pp.3-4).

Throughout the world, many groups, both secular and religious, have organized campaigns against globalization and orchestrated protests at gatherings of international leaders.

See also **development, economics.**

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- H.E. Daly & J.B. Cobb, *For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future*, 2nd ed., Boston, Beacon, 1994 ■ R. Dickinson, *Economic Globalization: Deepening Challenge for Christians*, WCC, 1998 ■ D.R. Finn, *Just Trading: On the Ethics of International Trade*, Nashville TN, Abingdon, 1996 ■ O. Ianni, *Teorías de globalización*, Mexico, Siglo Veintiuno, 1996 ■ Diane Kessler ed., *Together on the Way*, WCC, 1999 ■ J.H. Mittleman ed., *Globalization: Critical Reflections*, Boulder CO, Lynne Rienner, 1996 ■ R. Mshana, *Lead Us Not Into Temptation: Churches’ Response to the Policies of International Financial Institutions*, A Background Document, WCC, 2001 ■ J. de Santa Ana ed., *Sustainability and Globalization*, WCC, 1998 ■ S. Sassen, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, New York, New Press, 1998 ■ M.L. Stackhouse, D.P. Dennis P. McCann, S.J. Roels & P.N. Williams eds, *On Moral Business: Classical and Contemporary Resources for Ethics in Economic Life*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1995 ■ L. Wallach & M. Sforza, *The WTO: Five Years of Reasons to Resist Corporate Globalization*, New York, Seven Stories, 1999.

## GOD

“WHATEVER your heart clings to and trusts in, that is really your god,” said Luther in his exposition of the first commandment in the large catechism. Unfortunately, the human heart and mind is, as Calvin recognized, a “perpetual factory of idols” (*Institutes* 1.11.8). Phenomenologically speaking, there are therefore “many gods and many lords” (1 Cor. 8:5). But for Christians, the apostle Paul continues, “there is one God, the Father... and one Lord, Jesus Christ” (v.6). To come to the Christian faith is to turn “from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead – Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming” (1 Thess. 1:9-10). Or in Johannine terms: “And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (John 17:3).

The Christian doctrine of God is Trinitarian (see **Trinity**). “When I say God”, declared Gregory Nazianzus (d.389), “I mean Father, Son and Holy Spirit” (*Oration* 38.8; 45.4). Jesus Christ,\* the Son, is “God from God,... eternally begotten of the Father”, while the Holy Spirit\* “proceeds from the Father” and “with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified” (see **Nicene Creed**). This Trinitarian pattern is profoundly stamped on all Eastern Orthodox liturgy and theology. The classic Western churches are also Trinitarian in creed; but in their theological reflection they have tended, at least from Augustine (d.430) onwards, to start with the “one simple substance of God” in such a way as to make distinctions among the three persons difficult. From Aquinas (d.1274) onwards, it was for centuries customary for Western dogmatians to treat “the one God” (*de Deo uno*) before treating “the Triune God” (*de Deo trino*). Modern Protestantism has stood under the aegis of Friedrich Schleiermacher, who devoted only the last ten pages of his “doctrine of the faith” (*Der christliche Glaube*, 2nd ed., 1830), and then with “unitarian” sympathies, to the doctrine of the Trinity.

The Western situation changed in the 20th century with Karl Barth’s *Church Dogmatics* (1932-67), which begins its doctrine of revelation\* in a Trinitarian way that is

then maintained throughout the work. And on the Roman Catholic side, Karl Rahner's lengthy article on the Trinity in the encyclopedic *Mysterium Salutis* (Johannes Feiner and Magnus Löhrer eds, 1965-76) has been very influential, especially in its celebrated axiom that "the 'economic' Trinity is the 'immanent' Trinity and vice versa" (vol. 2, 1967, 317-401, in particular 328): God *is* in very being ("immanent Trinity") as God is *self-revealed* ("economic Trinity"), namely, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The ecumenical movement played a vital role in this "rediscovery" of the Trinity. In particular, the Orthodox churches contributed strongly: liturgically, they insisted on the invocation of the Holy Spirit to energize and complete the sacramental action (epiclesis); dogmatically, they brought to the fore the long controversial question of the procession of the Holy Spirit within the Godhead (see *filioque*); and in both cases, the pneumatology was part of a full-orbed Trinitarianism. Ecclesiological and missiologically, the Trinitarianly conceived and structured writings of Lesslie Newbigin proved seminal, namely *The Household of God* (1953) and *Trinitarian Faith and Today's Mission* (1964). Highly significant was the insertion into the membership basis of the WCC, in 1961, of the phrase "to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (see WCC, basis of). The work in Faith and Order that led to the Lima text of 1982 emphasized the Trinitarian pattern of baptism and the Lord's supper (see *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*); and the "apostolic faith study" followed the Trinitarian outline of the Nicene Creed.

In recent years there has been a flurry of books on the doctrine of the Trinity, with varied approaches and different emphases, from across the entire ecumenical board, including Jürgen Moltmann (Reformed), *Trinität und Reich Gottes* (1980, ET *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 1981); Robert Jenson (Lutheran), *The Triune Identity* (1982); Walter Kasper (Roman Catholic), *Der Gott Jesu Christi* (1982); John Zizioulas (Orthodox), *Being as Communion* (1985); Boris Bobrinskoy (Orthodox), *Le mystère de la Trinité* (1986, ET *The Mystery of the Trinity*, 1999); Bruno Forte (Roman Catholic), *Trinità come storia* (1985, ET *The Trinity as History* 1989);

Catherine LaCugna (Roman Catholic), *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (1991); and Thomas Torrance (Reformed), *The Christian Doctrine of God, One Being, Three Persons* (1996). The dominant insight has been that God is in very nature the loving communion of three persons. Such Trinitarianism, in its "positive" or "kataphatic" statements, does not impugn but rather recognizes the insights of "negative" or "apophatic" theology concerning the inexhaustibility of God, which must always transcend the knowledge even of redeemed, sanctified and perfected creatures.

The Christian doctrine of God has to be situated in reference to three developments or ranges of thinking in particular: the revelation embodied in Jesus Christ and the reflection of faith\* upon that; philosophical theism and atheism;\* and other religions, particularly those which profess faith in "one God".

## REVELATION AND REFLECTION

In the course of its history, Israel came to recognize the absolute uniqueness of the one who bore the revealed name of  $\text{YHWH}$ , the Lord, the Redeemer of the people and the Creator of all that is: "There is no other god besides me, a righteous God and a Saviour; there is no one besides me. Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other" (Isa. 45:21-22).

Jesus affirmed the "Shema Israel" (Deut. 6:4-5) as the first and great commandment and the way to eternal life: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might" (cf. Matt. 22:37; Mark 12:29-30; Luke 10:27). Jesus also regularly addressed this God by the intimate term of "Abba, Father" and himself appears correspondingly as "the Son" (Mark 1:11 and par.; Matt. 11:25-27; John 1:18, 3:16, 14:9; Rom. 8:32; Col. 1:13). The Father and the Son are "one" (John 10:30, 17:11); while remaining distinct, they dwell "in" each other (John 17:21). Jesus Christ is given the name of Lord (Phil. 2:9-10, echoing Isa. 45:23), though only and always "to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:11), who "gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist" (Rom. 4:17; cf. vv.24-25).

The New Testament also links the Spirit – “who comes from the Father” (John 15:26) – with the Son. The Spirit “remains” on the Son (John 1:32-34); and at the prayer of the exalted Christ (John 14:16,26, 15:26; Acts 2:33), the Father sends the Holy Spirit into the world, “the other Paraclete” (John 14:16), the Spirit who “gives life” (John 6:63; Rom. 8:11; 2 Cor. 3:6) and guides into all the truth (John 16:13). The triad of Father, Son and Holy Spirit figures together, sometimes explicitly as a threefold name, in many layers of the NT writings, with Matt. 28:19, 1 Cor. 12:4-6, 2 Cor. 13:14, and Eph. 2:18-22 and 4:4-6 among the more notable passages not already cited.

It took at least four centuries for the church,\* particularly in the intellectual and religious context of the Graeco-Roman world, to work out the implications of the Christ-event for belief in “the one God”. Against Marcion and the Gnostics it needed to be shown that the Creator and the Redeemer were the same God. Against temptations to a polytheism that would have jeopardized human salvation\* by reducing Christ to a demi-god, it needed to be shown that the agent of revelation and redemption was not a “second god” (*deuteros theos*) or a “god by courtesy” (*katachrēstikōs*) but himself “consubstantial with the Father” (*homoousios tō patri*). Against accusations of tritheism, it needed to be shown that there are “not three gods” (the title of Gregory of Nyssa’s refutation of the charge). The decisive dogmatic decisions were taken by the ecumenical councils\* of Nicea\* 325 and Constantinople\* 381.

Among the questions that have remained open for recurrent theological discussion within the church are the implications for God’s life and being of the liturgical confession that “one of the Trinity suffered” (recent examples are J.A. Baker’s *The Foolishness of God*, 1970, and Jürgen Moltmann’s *Der gekreuzigte Gott*, 1972, ET *The Crucified God*, 1974), and the precise ways in which the Trinitarian “relations” (*scheseis*) of Father, Son and Holy Spirit are to be described (for a recent discussion see T.F. Torrance’s *The Trinitarian Faith*, 1988). Yet since the 4th century councils it has been the almost unanimous practice among those claiming to be Christians to profess belief in

the one God and to confess the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Such Trinitarian faith is required of churches for membership in the WCC (see WCC, basis of).

### PHILOSOPHICAL THEISM AND ATHEISM

Since its beginnings in ancient Greece, Western philosophy has included a strand of thinking that arrives at “God” (the word is often used as a proper noun) by two main routes: from the contingency of the world (it need not be or have been) is drawn the conclusion of a necessary being, a first cause beyond the internal series of causes; and for the multiplicity of things, a single coherent ground is sought in the One. Despite counter-arguments that are often claimed or considered to be conclusive, “theism” keeps recurring in variant forms throughout the history of Western thought. It hovers around the contemporary search for “meaning” and “purpose”. Though preferring to speak of “panentheism”, Whiteheadian process theology is a close cousin to “classical theism”, as John Macquarrie’s preferred term of “dialectical theism” also indicates.

While great difficulties attend the notion of a “proof” of “God”, some modern Christian theologians (e.g. Walter Kasper, Macquarrie, Wolfhart Pannenberg) judge the metaphysical quest worth pursuing, even though none would claim that unaided reason could reach the personal knowledge of God granted by the self-revelation of God in Christ. Most would claim that at best the theistic arguments may serve, after the event, to show that belief in the self-revealed God is not irrational, or that the self-revealed God has in fact “answered” the “questions” which serious efforts to reach truth address.

Some Christian theologians, however, are suspicious of the whole theistic route, whether taken *a priori* or *a posteriori*. Thus Eberhard Jüngel argues that theism always makes God “necessary”, to ground the world or human self-consciousness (Descartes is a chief culprit). Atheism can then appear as the proper rejection of a “God” in which Christians do not really believe either. Jüngel finds in the God of Christian faith an utterly gracious one who is “more than necessary”. Christian faith begins, and must never deviate, from the cross of Christ and the concomitant confession

that “God is love” (1 John 4:8). Moltmann dislikes the term “monotheism” on the grounds that, in the history of Christian thought and society, belief in *Eis Theos* (in the eponymous title of Erik Peterson’s book of 1926) has too easily gone hand in hand with political oppression and totalitarianism (“monarchism”), whereas a truly Trinitarian doctrine (some would find Moltmann himself to verge on tritheism) is more favourable to a complex and differentiated pattern of human community. None of this, of course, touches the problem of unbelief, whether militant or indifferentist, in face of a Christian message adequately presented.

### OTHER RELIGIONS

Throughout Christian history there has been a marked tension in attitudes towards the religions of the world. On the one hand, all worship outside of the church may be considered idolatry, directed towards “false gods”. On the other hand, elements of truth may be detected in other religions that make them a “preparation for the gospel” (*preparatio evangelica*).

More along the latter line, monotheism has often been seen as a common factor, especially shared with Jews and Muslims, in so far as they, like Christians, claim a descent from Abraham and intend to worship “the God of Abraham”. However, the matter is complex and disputed. For their part, sympathetic Jews have regarded Christians as monotheists, minimizing the significance of the Christian worship of the “mere man” Jesus, which is more strictly idolatry; only rarely have Muslims exempted Christians from the charge of polytheism on account of their belief in “the Father and the Son”. (The Qur’an, 112:1-4, is seen as excluding the Trinity and incarnation; cf. 4:171, 5:72-73.) From the Christian angle again, what constitutes the “children of Abraham” is a matter of contention (see Matt. 3:9; Luke 3:8; John 8:33-59; Acts 7:1-60, 13:26-52; Rom. 4:1-25, 9:6-13; 2 Cor. 11:22; Gal. 3:6-18, 4:21-31); in the Christian era it must seem that Jews and Muslims have either refused or altered the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

Interfaith dialogues are exploring these issues (see **dialogue, interfaith**). It is unlikely that Jews or Muslims can accept the kind of “ranking”, however well intentioned, im-

plied in the model of concentric circles found in the Second Vatican Council’s Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra Aetate*) and in Pope Paul VI’s encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam*: the outer edge is no less than the limits of a universal humanity; then come all persons of good will; closer in, we find all who believe in “the one God”, people of “the great African and Asian religions”, but more particularly Muslims and more particularly yet Jews; finally come Christians and, at the very centre, the Catholic church.

The most liberal modern Christian theologians, whether Catholic or Protestant, have moved towards regarding religions as “equivalent” or simply (in a benign agnosticism) “incommensurable”; but this position is hard to square with scriptural and traditional faith in the unique and universal significance of Christ and hence in the God revealed by him and the events surrounding him (see **uniqueness of Christ, universalism**).

A more characteristically Christian approach to dialogue, let alone evangelism, can find resources in a Trinitarian doctrine of God. This is hinted at in the WCC *Guidelines for Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies* (1979): “It is Christian faith in the Triune God – Creator of all humankind, Redeemer in Jesus Christ, revealing and renewing Spirit – which calls us Christians to human relationship with our many neighbours. It is Christian faith which sets us free to be open to the faith of others, to risk, to trust and to be vulnerable. In dialogue, conviction and openness are held in balance.” In more academic terms, Karl Rahner’s vision provided a valuable Trinitarian framework for many: God is the mystery at the ultimate horizon of human self-transcendence and is constantly pressing upon the human creature in self-communication by word and grace. A more forthrightly biblical account is provided by Lesslie Newbigin in his thoroughly Trinitarian books *The Open Secret* (1978) and *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (1989).

If, in conclusion, it were to be asked what picture of God emerges in current ecumenical reflection by those committed to the Christian faith, the WCC Faith and Order\* study “Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today” suggests that the

following traits at least would be noticeable. The picture will be thoroughly Trinitarian (though with perhaps a blurring at the edges, among those who, under feminist criticism, are attempting the difficult, if not impossible, task of finding alternatives to the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit). "The Father" and "the Almighty" will be seen as mutually qualifying, with a recognition of the tender qualities of God which may even be designated motherly or feminine. "The Father" will never be without "the Son", or "the Son" without "the Father". It will be stressed, in a recovery of Athanasianism, that the work of Christ in revelation and redemption depends on the Son's being "consubstantial with the Father". Soteriological motifs will be strongly present, with a stress on God's favour towards the poor\* and the oppressed. In face of all the difficulties concerning "interventionism" raised by a scientific world-view, God will still be confessed as "acting" in the world. There will be discussion of the work of the Holy Spirit beyond the bounds of the church, throughout humankind and creation.\* The Holy Spirit will be seen in the church not only as a bond of unity\* but also as a principle of diversity. Communion and *perichoresis* will be major categories for expressing the inner-Trinitarian relations. The continuing work of God towards the eschatological consummation will figure prominently.

See also *grace*.

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■ D.B. Burrell, *Knowing the Unknowable God: Ibn-Sina, Maimonides, Aquinas*, Notre Dame IN, Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1986 ■ *Confessing the One Faith*, WCC, 1999 ■ R.P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy 318-381*, Edinburgh, Clark, 1988 ■ W. Jeanrond & C. Theobald eds, *God: Experience and Mystery*, London, SCM Press, 2001 ■ E. Jüngel, *Gott als Geheimnis der Welt* (ET *God as the Mystery of the World*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1983) ■ W. Kasper, *Der Gott Jesu Christi* (ET *The God of Jesus Christ*, New York, Crossroad, 1984) ■ V. Lossky, *La théologie mystique de l'Eglise d'Orient* (ET *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, London, James Clarke, 1957) ■ J. Macquarrie, *In Search of Deity*, London, SCM Press, 1984 ■ A. Manaranche, *Le monothéisme chrétien*, Paris, Cerf, 1985 ■ W. Pannenberg, *Metaphysik und Gottesgedanke*

(ET *Metaphysics and the Idea of God*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1990) ■ K. Rahner, "Theos im Neuen Testament" (ET in his *Theological Investigations*, 1, London, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1961) ■ D. Turner, *The Darkness of God*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1995.

## GOODALL, NORMAN

B. 30 Aug. 1896, Birmingham, UK; d. 1 Jan. 1985, Oxford. Goodall had great gifts for bringing about reconciliation\* between churches. He played a leading part both in the re-organization of the London Mission-



ary Society into the Council for World Mission, and in the eventual merger in 1972 of the Congregational and Presbyterian churches to become the United Reformed Church. He was foreign secretary of the London Missionary Society, 1936-44; secretary of the Joint Committee of the International Missionary Council and the WCC, 1955-61, prior to the union of the two in New Delhi, 1961; assistant general secretary of the WCC, 1961-63; chairman of a WCC structure committee; and secretary of the International Congregational Council, 1962-68. After studies in Mansfield College, Oxford, he was pastor of a Congregational church in London in 1922 and also lecturer,

broadcaster and author of several publications on ecumenism and mission.

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■ N. Goodall, *The Ecumenical Movement*, New York, Oxford UP, 1964 ■ *Ecumenical Progress: A Decade of Change in the Ecumenical Movement, 1961-71*, London, Oxford UP, 1972 ■ *Second Fiddle*, London, SPCK, 1979 ■ ed., *Uppsala Report*, WCC, 1968.

## GOSPEL AND CULTURE

AS A FOCUSED way of addressing the issues with which it deals, "gospel and culture" is a relatively recent theme in WCC conversations. Although mandated by the sixth assembly (Vancouver 1983), intensive study of the issue was especially precipitated by the address given at the seventh assembly (Canberra 1991) by Korean theologian Chung Hyun-Kyung and the controversies it stirred. Soon after the assembly, the theme "Called to One Hope: The Gospel in Diverse Cultures" was set for the Salvador, Brazil, conference on world mission and evangelism in 1996. A three-year preparatory study included a series of consultations, gathered the reflections of local study groups from all around the world, produced 18 monographs on the interaction of gospel and culture in particular contexts, and gave shape to a document which guided work at the conference on four sub-themes: authentic witness within each culture;\* gospel and identity in community; local congregations in pluralist societies; and one gospel – diverse expressions.

While this focus in the 1990s was new in the WCC, the issues were not. Wesley Ariarajah has suggested that although no "evolution" of the discussion in ecumenical history can be traced, the subject has arisen in a number of ways in major WCC conferences and assemblies. He identifies five central areas of discussion in which the issues have been present: gospel and religions; church, kingdom, world; universality and particularity; theologies in context; and the church and the churches.

Several factors have led to the increase of concern about the dynamic interaction between the gospel and cultures. First, there has been a shift in the Western world's ap-

preciation for the inherent value and dignity of all human cultures, displacing the dominant 19th-century attitude that linked Christianizing with civilizing. Second, the dismantling of the colonial holdings of the Western nations following the second world war spurred on movements towards independence on the part of the so-called "younger churches" over against the missionary structures. Third, the churches of the non-Western world increasingly recognized that their indigenous character includes selfhood not only in the areas of governance, support and mission, but also theologizing. By the time of the Bangkok conference on world mission and evangelism in 1973, the sentiment would be expressed that "culture shapes the human voice that answers the voice of Christ" and the need to engage that affirmation more directly and fully has continued to build ever since. The patterns of domination in new global economic forces, the hungers for communal identity and the tragedies of re-tribalization, and the challenges of holding and commending a particular faith amidst a pluralist world have sharpened the urgency to address the issues.

In wider ecumenical circles the issues have been addressed explicitly for a much longer period than in the WCC, particularly in connection with the crossing of cultural frontiers in mission. The Roman Catholic Church, for example, has had a long history of engagement with issues of adaptation and acculturation that can be traced from Roberto de Nobili and Matteo Ricci in the early 17th century to the present. Following the Second Vatican Council\* and the shift to what many Roman Catholic observers call the epoch of the world church, the term "inculturation" has come into use to indicate an approach that envisions a more whole and fruitful interchange between the gospel and the cultures of its recipients.

Conservative evangelical missiologists have carried on a fruitful and extensive dialogue as well. In journals such as *Practical Anthropology* and its successor, *Missiology: An International Review*, they gave early leadership among Protestants in the field. Their particular interest in the cross-cultural dynamics of missionary presence and communication was jointly expressed in the Wil-

lowbank report, developed at a consultation held by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization\* in 1978.

In the ecumenical reflections brought into focus at Salvador, several features of an emerging perspective are evident. First, the gospel, it is understood, is and always must be expressed in the terms of some human culture's way of understanding and stating it. Language and culture are such that a "culture-free gospel" is a contradiction in terms and inconsistent with an appreciation for the incarnation. Second, the gospel encounters the cultures of the churches where the missionary enterprise originates as much as it does the cultures with which it has contact. The churches of the West are having to re-learn that it is of the missionary essence of every church that the gospel is encountering the culture in which it participates, its own framework for understanding the world and living in it. Third, there is in the gospel-culture dynamic both an encounter calling for conversion and an affirmation of the culture's dignity. That is, as was said at Salvador, the gospel illumines and transforms a culture, and cultures illumine and incarnate the gospel. As Lamin Sanneh has pointed out, this means that every human culture is de-stigmatized and revitalized by the gospel, and every human culture is at the same time de-absolutized and relativized by it. All cultures are the true destiny of the gospel's expression, and no culture can claim to be its sole final expression.

GEORGE R. HUNSBERGER

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## GRACE

BOTH IN its biblical origins and subsequently, the concept of "grace" has been used in the legal realm and in the area of human relationships in general. Applied in a special way to God's relation to human beings, the concept has aroused great passions throughout the history of Christian theology and dogma, making it one of the central concepts of Christian theology, even considered at times to be the quintessence of Christianity as a whole. Theologically and in church politics the theme of "grace" has been affirmed, re-interpreted, circumscribed and nuanced, and has figured in disputes and schisms over its own definition and operation, especially in the Western church. In Judaism, despite a similarly high estimate of the relevant biblical content, the concept of "grace" has never played this kind of central role.

## OLD TESTAMENT

The word "grace" or close synonyms are used to translate a variety of related Hebrew words. The range of meanings includes the formula "to find *favour* in the sight of the Lord" (Gen. 6:8; Ex. 33:12-13,16-17, 34:9); the statement of God's absolute freedom in his gracious election, "I will be *gracious* to whom I will be gracious, and will *show mercy* on whom I will show mercy" (Ex. 33:19); and something like a general theological formula describing God as *merciful* and *gracious* and as a God of *steadfast love* and *faithfulness* (Ex. 34:6; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; Pss 86:15, 103:8, 111:4, 116:5, 145:8; Neh. 9:17,31; 2 Chron. 30:9).

It should be observed, all in all, that God bestows his grace freely with no preconditions; he grants it to Israel as a whole. This is a dependable promise, and the individual who in prayer asks to have it can rely on it. Grace is always given precedence over the commandment.

## NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament the equivalent for the term "grace" is *charis*. Paul's theology is central to the whole NT understanding of grace. The epistle to the Romans is of special importance here. In particular Paul emphasizes God's gracious action in the death of Jesus Christ\* on the cross (esp. in Rom. 3-6) and the presence of God's grace in believers

(thus Rom. 5:1-11, 6:14; 2 Cor. 6:1; Gal. 1:6, 5:4; Phil. 1:7); the fullness of the various *charismata*\* as gifts of God corresponds to the *charis* bestowed by God and makes that *charis* a reality in the Christian community (thus Rom. 12:3-21; 1 Cor. 1:4-9). In Rom. 3:24f. Paul says that God, through the divine eschatological act in the expiatory death of Jesus, justifies *dorean* (“as a gift”) those sinners who respond in faith.\* The *dorean* explicitly links grace with the corresponding position that “no human being will be justified... by works of the law” (3:20). Rom. 5:1-11 equates this eschatological divine act of grace in justification\* with the love of God revealed in Jesus’ death for sinners. In Rom. 5:12-21 the theme of grace is given expanded treatment. God’s grace flows so abundantly that as the righteousness (of believers) it annihilates the power of sin\* and will reign victoriously over the power of death in the eternal life of those who are made perfect. Rom. 6 explains how the baptized and justified have died with Christ to sin and are no longer under the law but under grace (v.14) and so have the prospect of eternal life as a gift (*charisma*) of the freely given grace of God (v.23).

Among the synoptic writers, only Luke uses *charis* (e.g. Luke 1:30, 2:40,52, 4:22; Acts 4:33, 7:46, 11:23, 14:3,26, 15:40, 20:24,32). Here Luke speaks of the benefit of grace, “the gospel of the grace of God”, the grace that was “upon him (Jesus)”, the grace which rested upon the (primitive) Christian community, and of mission,\* which is represented as a realization of the gracious eschatological act of God. In the Johannine writings *charis* is found only twice (John 1:14-18; 2 John 3); the conjunction of the two terms “grace and truth” in John 1:14-18 has its own importance, presupposing the incarnation of the Logos, in which the grace of God exceeds that which was to be found in the law of Moses.

### THE EARLY CHURCH AND THE MIDDLE AGES

It is not possible to describe the Western doctrine of grace since Augustine without reference to the soteriological and ethical context in which the theme of grace was treated in East and West in the first four centuries, with synergism as a characteristic feature: salvation\* is achieved through a con-

junction of divine and human action. God’s action establishes the comprehensive and definitive starting point of the human road to salvation and also provides for the goal, but between start and finish lie human ethics and morals made possible by grace as a life in grace, as the appropriation and demonstration of grace in moral behaviour, and as indispensable for salvation.

The interpretation of the doctrine of grace in terms of salvation history\* made it possible for Irenaeus (late 2nd century) to understand the whole existence of human beings as life based on grace: in creation\* itself human beings receive an existence based on grace, and as the image of God they are called to a fellowship with God that they cannot attain on their own after the fall. That is why the linking of divine grace with human beings in Jesus Christ is both possible and needed. Christ makes the Holy Spirit\* available to human beings (in baptism), and thus human nature is healed through grace – all of which happens in the church.\* From the time of Irenaeus onwards it is therefore possible to speak of the original state of grace and saving grace, of nature and grace, and of the church as the place where grace is to be found.

For Athanasius Christ is the mediator in creation and redemption; he is the true image of God and thus the original unity of nature and grace which human beings lost in Adam. Achieving fellowship with God requires the new imparting of grace that takes place in the incarnation\* and the subsequent bestowal of the Spirit, which inwardly renews human beings. The connection of grace and Spirit remained significant, especially in Eastern theology (e.g. for Basil the Great). Gregory of Nyssa describes the connection between divine grace and the moral behaviour of human beings in relation to salvation as *synergeia* (synergy), and John Chrysostom puts the main emphasis on grace. These 4th-century reflections on grace remained standard for Eastern theology, particularly in the way it related to pneumatology and was thematically developed.

The situation was completely different for Western theology. The course was set by Augustine, drawing on the tradition already available to him, accepting the 4th-century Christological and pneumatological dogmas,

and with particular dependence on Paul. Augustine's own development played an important part in this. In anthropology and ethics he switched under Pauline influence from a Platonic theory of knowledge to an interest in how right action is made possible. By around 396 his doctrine of grace was fully developed (*On Various Questions, to Simplician; Confessions*). In the controversy with Pelagius it was merely defended and more closely defined (esp. in *The Spirit and the Letter*, 412). Augustine's new understanding of sin, acquired under Paul's influence, is crucial: human beings are intrinsically characterized by sin (*peccatum originale*), which finds expression in covetousness and greed and in a radical love of self. Only God can open up the self-centredness and self-concern of human beings. This is the work of grace, which first enables human beings even simply to will what is good. This idea that not only doing good but even willing to do good is a work of grace is something wholly new, corresponding to Augustine's doctrine that everything is effected by God, so that everything good in God's creatures comes from the Deity. As in Paul, grace is freely bestowed by God without any prior works by human beings.

The controversy with Pelagius brought Augustine's doctrine of grace into conflict with what was taught not only by Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom but also by Jerome. Pelagius rejected a *peccatum originale* as essential to the character of a theological anthropology. The Creator himself had bestowed reason, conscience, freedom of will and the power to will what is good on human nature, which is good. Human weakness results from the seductive power of Adam's sin, which, beyond the merely limited effect of God's grace in the law, is removed through the representation of the grace of God in the incarnation of Jesus Christ and through the moral example he set. This is made transparent in baptism and makes good and just action possible. Against this less radical conception of Pelagius, Augustine (in *The Spirit and the Letter*) stresses the total incapacity of human beings to turn to God on their own initiative and emphasizes what Paul says in 1 Cor. 4:7: "What do you have that you did not receive?" Only grace awakens faith, is the basis of freedom

of the will, and turns us towards the good. Even the free assent to salvation is a work of grace; it is granted to those God foreknows will give that assent. The resort to predestination is intended to safeguard the complete gratuitousness of the grace of God, which the Deity is not under any obligation to bestow. It is because of God's grace that a life in accordance with the divine will is possible at all: Rom. 5:5 speaks of the love of God poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Spirit and grace are thus interconnected: both are God's gift of love; the Spirit is the Spirit of grace, and grace is the Spirit working as love. It is granted gratuitously. Christology and the doctrine of grace are mediated pneumatologically. Contrary to Pelagius, grace is neither nature nor law, but the Spirit who makes us alive; and Christ is thus not merely a person who works powerfully in history but is present and effective "in the Spirit". The Spirit – purely and simply the gift of God – operates through holy scripture, preaching, the sacraments and the ministry, creating love and fellowship, so that the individual partakes in grace in the *communio sanctorum*, in the *ecclesia catholica*. Augustine is not thinking in terms of the church itself as actively mediating grace.

The church adopted Augustine's teaching on grace in a cruder form and condemned Pelagius at the council of Carthage (418). The difficulties arising here are clearly shown by John Cassian and by Vincent of Lérins. While not supporters of Pelagius, they represented traditional synergism and were convinced, contrary to Augustine, that despite the fall the freedom to decide in favour of conversion\* is crucial; grace is not the source of the will to do good but merely re-inforces it. Augustine's doctrine was defended by Prosper of Aquitaine and Fulgentius of Ruspe, and Caesarius of Arles was finally able to obtain the condemnation of synergism at the provincial council of Orange (529). But its persistence is evident in Gregory I, for whom grace starts at the conversion of sinful human beings through faith and the will to do good, accompanies them after baptism and, together with the free will, is the cause of good works. Human co-operation is indispensable for conversion and for good works, but it also remains clear that there can be no Christian existence

without grace. Christian existence is nevertheless bound up with the life of the church. In Gregory I this contributes to an extension of the institutional church's claim to a mediating role in salvation far beyond Augustine's sacramentalism.

Early, high and late scholasticism remained beholden to the Augustinian scheme. Across the spectrum of theological schools, the doctrine of grace in the middle ages was characterized by systematization and what were plainly hair-splitting definitions, falling back on distinctions which already had a very long history. Early scholasticism interprets grace in the context of ethics and articulates it as the constant principle in virtue. Alongside this it recognizes three other contexts where grace has to be discussed: the doctrine of the sacraments, Christology, and the doctrine of creation and the original state of human beings. Faith ("initial grace", linked to justification) and love are the effect of grace. No good work is possible without grace.

For Thomas Aquinas grace is the creative coming "of the eternal love of God into the centre of the human ego" (O.H. Pesch), with which God rescues us from our natural limitations for a fellowship of love with him and endows us in such a way that we find this possible. Faith, hope and love follow from grace. Although Thomas champions the doctrine of the freedom of the will, human beings make no contribution to justification because freedom in Thomas's sense remains tied to God as its source and is therefore a "freedom that is bestowed". Thomas's concept of merit is not easy to understand; for him the doctrine of merit is an extension of the doctrine of grace. The *meritum de condigno* speaks of the efficacy of the grace of God; only the *meritum de congruo* belongs on the human side because it designates friendship and not a legal right: it is appropriate that God fulfills the request of a friend, but one who is a friend only through the grace of God.

Thomas's whole structure of ideas was bound to give rise to questions, which is what happened when the crisis in metaphysical thinking made it impossible for the characteristic bracketing of Christian tradition with Aristotelian metaphysics to continue saying what it was trying to say. Alongside a

new understanding of freedom, humanism generally developed new and different paradigms of language and thought. Old linguistic models were bound to suffer a crisis which then led, less inevitably, to the split in the Western church. By the 16th century, the doctrine of grace, in both its classical and late scholastic forms, had come to the end of the road – not least in view of the practical situation in proclamation and the cure of souls – and needed to be re-thought.

## THE REFORMATION

Martin Luther's new reflections on grace were prompted by the nominalist position that pure love of God was possible for the natural man. Although he was unacquainted with the high scholastic positions, these were by now caught up in the vortex of nominalistic thinking, so that Luther rejected them completely as human self-justification. In a situation of degeneration of theology and church life as a whole, Luther fell back on Paul and took up ideas which were central to Augustine to develop his doctrine of justification, within which grace is an essential constituent. The gospel of Jesus the Christ is grace; it proclaims the gracious God who in Christ has mercy on sinners. In faith human beings "cling" to the Christ who ascends to the Father. God accepts believers who look in faith on Christ and justifies them by grace alone without any merits on their part, vesting them with the righteousness that is God's, since Christ has "drowned" human sins in his death. Justification of sinners is God's act in Christ. It is actively proclaimed, and they partake of it in faith. All this happens in the Spirit.

In Reformation theology of the Lutheran type, this content is summed up in four principles which interpret each other: *sola gratia, solo Christo, solo verbo, sola fide*. Sinners are justified through these. Grace is seen to consist in the forgiveness of sins. Along with its effects on the whole of life, it grants fellowship with God. In no way is this saying less than what is found in the variations of the scholastic doctrine of grace. Luther's doctrine of grace is a paean to the fact that God is not ours to command and that God alone is efficacious in what he does. In God's sight human beings are always sinners on whom he has mercy in Christ and whom he

vests with his righteousness. The Christian is therefore *simul justus et peccator*, righteous and a sinner at the same time. In relation to salvation human beings have – from a strictly theological point of view – no “free will”, by means of which they could find the way to salvation apart from and prior to any grace, as this way has already been made smooth for human beings in Christ by God’s free will. Even human acceptance of salvation is a work of God’s grace, as the believer confesses in prayer.

For Calvin the divine sovereignty in God’s gracious acts is decisive. In his *Institutes* it is grace that links the saving work of Christ – which imparts God’s grace and salvation – with its consequences in the Christian’s life, seen as the “appropriation of the grace of Christ” and as the work of the Holy Spirit. Calvin’s doctrine of grace is marked by its Christological focus and pneumatological explication and acknowledges its permanent indebtedness to the Reformation principle of *sola gratia*.

The council of Trent\* was not able to take up the challenges of the Reformation creatively. It carefully avoided taking sides with any of the factions involved in disputes related to the scholastic schools; it sought to counter the situation created by the Reformation pastorally and at the same time to fight the Reformation theologically. The *doctrine* of grace and justification was described in detail in ways which can in fact be harmonized with Reformation teaching: justification was given a Christological basis, and grace was described as the means of obtaining justification. Like the Reformation, Trent subsumes grace in the doctrine of justification.

Despite vigorous controversies in which the medieval and Tridentine positions on grace were again most violently debated and fanatically defended, the three centuries after Trent were characterized in the Roman Catholic Church by a linguistic deficit and the absence of anything more to say, as the systems had lost any real relation to life, society and faith. Thus despite the Reformation, Trent had not settled the medieval disputes; and the effect of the biblical and Augustinian position adopted by Trent in the positive doctrinal texts (not in the condemnatory canons) was lost.

## THE 20TH CENTURY

The major theological systems or schemes arising after the destructive violence of the first world war caused the collapse of the 19th century’s optimistic belief in progress took a radical, fresh look at theological thinking, while recognizing their debt to the spirit of the biblical sources and seeking to hold on to what is best in each confessional tradition in the light of these, and being aware of their indebtedness to a diversity of philosophical “systems” (even if – like Karl Barth – they deny such connections). Protestant theology in German-speaking countries – Karl Holl (and the subsequent Luther renaissance), Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Rudolf Bultmann, Paul Tillich, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and others – tried in different ways to testify to the grace of God in Jesus Christ in faith and in the implementation of faith, thus placing enough “material” in the hands of the subsequent generation (Gerhard Ebeling, Eberhard Jüngel, Wolfhart Pannenberg and many others) for the independent work they are doing. At the same time, Protestant theology stirred Roman Catholic theology from its lethargy. While the only Roman Catholic theologies genuinely comparable with the Protestant systems are those of Karl Rahner and Edward Schillebeeckx, the serious attention paid to grace in Latin American liberation theology is worthy of note (Leonardo Boff).

When “The Doctrine of Grace” was treated by Faith and Order in the 1930s, W.A. Brown recognized in his synthesis that, despite differences on justification, predestination, the church as locus of grace and the sacraments as means of grace, all bodies of Christians hold to “the conviction that man’s welfare and happiness depend in the last analysis upon God and the conviction that God is moved to his gracious activity towards man by no merit on man’s part but solely by a characteristic of his own nature which impels him to impart himself in free outgoing love”. The 1984 bilateral dialogue between the Lutheran World Federation and the World Methodist Council entitled its final report “The Church: A Community of Grace” and was able, despite differences of emphasis, to come to what it considered sufficient agreement on “salvation by grace through faith”.

Christians who look back attentively at the high scholastic debate, the polemics of the 16th century and the bizarre controversies within the Roman Catholic Church in the 16th, 17th and early 18th centuries will be embarrassed at Christian history and want to pose Paul's question to these contentious fathers in the faith: "What do you have that you did not receive?" (1 Cor. 4:7). The high scholastic, late scholastic, Tridentine and post-Tridentine teaching on grace came to the end of the road because it no longer had any relation to reality and because its central concepts such as "preparation", *dispositio*, *qualitas*, "freedom", "merit", "cooperation", etc. even in their best form (e.g., that of Thomas Aquinas) meant in the linguistic usage of the time the exact opposite of what they normally convey in modern usage. To put the point more sharply, "freedom" in Thomas is the same as what Luther meant by the "bondage" of the will; "merit" in Thomas is not merit at all because it is an effect of grace and therefore no longer can be called merit; "cooperation" is a product of grace and therefore also is not cooperation, and so on.

A "re-reading" of Christian traditions in the light of the statements of holy scripture brings all Christians together before God, who has made himself freely available to us once for all in Jesus Christ. This gift is laid hold of in faith through the Spirit, as we hope for the divine consummation which will be effected at the eschaton and is attested here and now in love – as the work of the grace of God.

See also **redemption**.

JOHANNES BROSEDER

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## GRAHAM, WILLIAM FRANKLIN (Billy)

B. 7 Nov. 1918, Charlotte, NC, USA. "The most attractive public person that evangelical Protestantism has offered in the 20th century", according to historian Mark Noll, Billy Graham stands out in the American religious tradition that reaches back to Jonathan Edwards (d. 1758) whose revival meetings were "the surprising works of God".

After his born-again conversion during a rural revival (1934) and his graduation from Wheaton College (1943), the Southern Baptist minister became the full-time travelling evangelist for Youth for Christ. Following the success of his 1949 two-month campaign in Los Angeles, in 1950 he formed the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) to oversee the expanding work, which also used radio and print. Starting in Britain in 1954, by 1960 he had given urban "crusades for Christ" in six continents.

Graham insists on working through and with local ministers, and on not entering their area unless invited. After the first nationally televised crusade in New York City, 1957, leading fundamentalists\* began to oppose him for enlisting the working cooperation of mainline Protestants who dilute the gospel. In the 1960s he expanded "cooperative evangelism" by including willing Roman Catholic and Orthodox.

As a committed evangelist he attended the WCC founding assembly (Amsterdam 1948). But in the early 1960s he identified with those Evangelicals\* who disassociate themselves from the WCC because, in the name of dialogue, it underplays or spurns "the unfinished task of reaching the unreached peoples". His biblical preaching moved away from solely personal to social sins also, e.g., racism, poverty and other communal human indignities, but he never wavers in placing personal conversions as the condition for any societal transformations.

Among Evangelicals, his friendly piety, personal integrity and careful stewardship of BGEA funds empowered him to sponsor the Berlin World Congress on Evangelism in 1966 ("One Race, One Gospel, One Task"). BGEA-sponsored regional congresses followed in Singapore, Bogota and Amsterdam,

in order to raise up indigenous "itinerant evangelists". He also convened, and subsidized, the 1974 World Congress on World Evangelization; its 2500 participants from about 150 nations agreed to the Lausanne Covenant.\* His last intensive round of crusades, 1988-90, covered three continents, and by the time aging illness kept him at home, the BGEA claimed that Billy Graham had preached to nearly 100 million individuals in person.

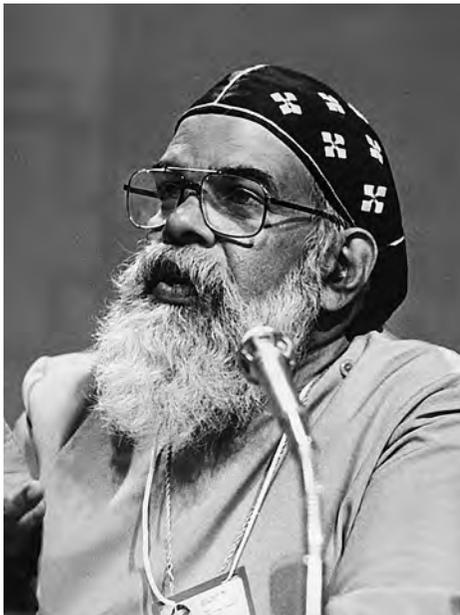
See also **Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization.**

TOM STRANSKY

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### GREGORIOS, PAULOS MAR (PAUL VERGHESE)

B. 9 Aug. 1922, Tripunithura, Kerala, India; d. 24 Nov. 1996, Kottayam. Orthodox Syrian Church of the East's metropolitan of Delhi, Gregorios's association with the WCC was long and wide-ranging; he was a president, 1983-91; director of the Division



of Ecumenical Action and associate general secretary, 1962-67; observer at the Second Vatican Council, 1962-65; member of the Joint Working Group\* between the RCC and the WCC, 1963-75, and of the Faith and Order\* commission, 1968-75; moderator of the Working Committee on Church and Society, 1975-83; and chairman of the world conference on "Faith, Science and the Future", MIT, Cambridge, USA, 1979. His studies took him to Union and Princeton theological seminaries and Yale university in the US, Oxford university in the UK, the Gregory of Nyssa Institute, Münster, and Serampore university where he received a ThD in 1975. In India he was general secretary of the Orthodox Student Movement, 1955-57. He was personal adviser to Emperor Haile Selassie and executive secretary of the Government Committee for Relief Aid, Ethiopia, 1956-59. He led WCC delegations to UNESCO, 1966; to heads of African states, 1968; and to UN general assembly special sessions on disarmament, 1983 and 1988. Secretary for interchurch relations of the Orthodox Episcopal Synod, Gregorios was also principal of the Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam, and director of the Delhi Orthodox Centre. He was active in bilateral dialogues in his country: joint organizer of the Oriental Orthodox-Eastern Orthodox conversations, as well as joint chairman of the Indian Orthodox-Roman Catholic Joint Commission, the Orthodox-Mar Thoma conversations and the Orthodox-Lutheran conversations. He was chief editor of the *Star of the East* and *Purobithan*.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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### GROUPE DES DOMBES

THE ECUMENICAL Groupe des Dombes (the Dombes group) sprang from the initiative of Abbé Paul Couturier (d.1953), a priest in the diocese of Lyons, France, and a Roman Catholic pioneer of Christian unity. In 1937

he had the idea of meeting for a few days at the Cistercian abbey of Les Dombes, 40 km northeast of Lyon, with a group of Roman Catholic and Protestant friends, mainly pastors and priests, from France and Switzerland. The purpose of meeting was to get to know one another better, by praying together and listening to one another in an atmosphere of love and friendship. The group today comprises some 40 members, who meet every year at the beginning of September for three full days. After a long period of alternating between a Roman Catholic meeting place (Les Dombes) and a Protestant one (Présinge, Grandchamp, Taizé), the group decided from 1971 on to meet every year at Les Dombes. The theological working sessions are interspersed and energized by three daily periods of prayer, including a morning eucharist service, shared with the monks, one of whom participates in the group's theological work.

Until 1955 the members of the group concentrated on getting to know one another and did not address the outside world. In the doctrinal field, they focused on comparative theological study (esp. justification\* and redemption\*), the sacraments\* and the church,\* trying to understand each other's positions better and rid themselves of common caricatures within their respective churches.

The years from 1956 to 1970 marked a second stage. The members of the group felt able to publish the results of their conversations in the form of a short series of theses. Thus they shifted from theological confrontation to collaboration. Leaving behind comparative theology, they started working out elements of a common theology. The subjects chosen were original sin,\* the mediation of Christ and the church's ministry, the church as the Body of Christ, pastoral authority, apostolicity,\* the priesthood,\* the doctrine of the Holy Spirit,\* intercommunion,\* the apostolic succession and the communion of saints.\*

The third stage began in 1971 as the group's work gathered momentum. With the official entrance of the Roman Catholic Church into ecumenical discussions, and in view of the urgent questions being asked by young people, the members decided to move away from the literary genre of theses for a

limited audience to producing documents of a wider scope presenting a doctrinal topic on which there was a precise, strong ecumenical agreement. Five such documents were produced: *Vers une même foi eucharistique?* (Towards one eucharistic faith?, 1971), *Pour une réconciliation des ministères* (For a reconciliation of ministries, 1972), *Le ministère épiscopal* (The episcopal ministry, 1976), *L'Esprit-Saint, l'Église et les sacrements* (The Holy Spirit, the church and the sacraments, 1979), *Le ministère de communion dans l'Église universelle* (The ministry of communion in the universal church, 1985). To mark the group's 50th anniversary in 1987, all its theses and documents were collected in a single volume, *Pour la communion des Églises: L'apport du Groupe des Dombes (1937-87)* (Towards communion among the churches: The contribution of the Dombes group).

Since 1987 the group has published two new documents. The first, *Pour la conversion des Églises* (For the conversion of the churches, 1991), shows that "far from being mutually exclusive, [confessional] identity and [ecumenical] conversion are complementary". The point is not to abolish confessional identities but to convert them, as is shown by an analysis of different forms of such conversion ancient and modern. The second text is a document on *Marie dans le dessein de Dieu et la communion des saints* (Mary in God's design and the communion of saints, 1997). It proposes an ecumenical reading of doctrinal and confessional history concerning Mary and then a survey of biblical texts about her, arranged according to the three articles of the creed. Subsequently the text tackles the continuing items of controversy (Mary's "cooperation" with God; the brothers and sisters of Jesus; the Roman Catholic dogmas of Mary's immaculate conception and assumption; the invocation of Mary in prayer).

As can be seen, the theological method used by the Groupe des Dombes is based on the spiritual conviction that reconciliation\* between the churches can come about only as the fruit of a process of conversion\* on the part of the different confessions – converting one another and together being converted to God and his Christ. On this basis, the method used applies the principles of Christological focus (seeking the substance

of the gospel in the light of the person of Christ), dogmatic focus (distinguishing the area of necessary unanimity in the faith from that of legitimate plurality in systematic theology), and lastly, overcoming conflict by refining and combining ("to see together how to do justice to *all* the fundamental and essential demands, in a common truth that is not behind us, but ahead of us, in a Christianity that is spiritually purer and intellectually more demanding, but also more balanced"; J. de Baciocchi).

The Groupe des Dombes is an independent group: it has no mandate from anyone, and the documents it produces have no authority apart from what they are able to command by their own worth. This private status enables it, however, to serve the churches as a force for new ideas, able to risk moving forward on doctrinal issues before official commissions are in a position to do so. Through translations of several of its texts, its reputation has spread beyond the French-speaking world. Many of its statements have been picked up in the documents of special commissions, particularly those concerning the eucharist\* and ministries. Its texts are also used in ecumenical catechetical classes in parishes and Christian communities. In this way it fulfills its calling to serve ecumenical dialogue creatively in the field of doctrine.

BERNARD SESBOÛÉ

■ C.J. Dumont, "Eucharistie et ministères, à propos des accords des Dombes", *Istina*, 18, 2, 1973 ■ "Le Groupe des Dombes", *Unité des chrétiens*, 14, 1974 ■ Groupe des Dombes, *Pour la communion des Eglises, l'apport du Groupe des Dombes 1937-87*, Paris, Centurion, 1988 ■ Groupe des Dombes, *Pour la conversion des Eglises (ET For the Conversion of the Churches, WCC, 1993)* ■ Groupe des Dombes, *Marie: dans le dessin de Dieu et la communion des saints: Dans l'histoire et l'écriture. Controverse et conversion*, Paris, Bayard/Centurion, 1999 ■ G. Hammann, "Hermeneutische Aspekte in der ökumenischen Arbeit der Groupe des Dombes/Aspects herméneutiques du travail œcuménique du Groupe des Dombes", conference of the institutes of religious hermeneutics of Zurich, Tübingen and Neuchâtel, May 1998 ■ H. Roux, *Interchurch Dialogue about Office: Interdenominational Dialogue in France*, New York, Seabury, 1972.

## GROWTH, LIMITS TO

SINCE THE beginning of the 20th century there have been warnings that the pattern of modern economic and industrial development, together with continuing population growth, was endangering the environment – the air, water, soil and living space on which human life depends – and that the wasteful use of natural resources would sooner or later bring "unacceptable consequences". These early warnings did not, however, weaken general confidence in the need for economic and industrial growth.

In the years between the two world wars the main social concerns in the industrially developed countries were justice in the distribution of the increasing wealth and income which economic growth made possible, and the threats to economic prosperity resulting from the periodic downturns in the business cycle, as in the great depression of the 1930s. After the second world war these issues were effectively addressed by the governments of the developed countries, ushering in a long period of prosperity with increasing social security and welfare, sustained by almost continuous economic growth and technological advance. At the same time, it was recognized that the poorer or developing countries needed to grow economically and industrially. The pressures on the environment and raw materials from this worldwide industrial expansion and economic growth led, however, to a new questioning of the assumptions of unlimited growth in a world of finite resources.

Moral theologians and social scientists in the rich countries noted that the emphasis on economic growth arose not only from the desire to meet basic human needs; in their view modern capitalism\* was creating an acquisitive consumer society based on ever-increasing technological power over nature. The Anglican V.A. Demant maintained, in *Religion and the Decline of Capitalism* (1952), that the capitalist system was leading to an unhealthy emphasis on the autonomy of economic life, glorifying the dynamics of individual economic achievement and stifling "the organic growth of human society". While Christian economists like R.H. Tawney and D.L. Munby challenged Demant's understanding of the market economy and the profit system, they agreed that

the spirit of dynamic growth tended to become an end in itself: "Dynamism may be a blessing, but it may equally be a curse; outside a proper theological framework, the curse is likely to dominate" (Munby).

In *The Costs of Economic Growth* (1967), the English economist E.J. Mishan criticized the modern "growth-mania", unchecked by serious regard for the increasing social costs or diseconomies arising from the single-minded emphasis on economic "progress". As a result, life in rural and urban areas was being robbed of its charm and pleasure. "With a hubris unmatched since the heyday of Victorian capitalism and with a blindness peculiar to our own time, we have abandoned ourselves to ransacking the most precious and irreplaceable good the earth provides, without thought to the desolation of the future and the deprivation of prosperity."

Later, other economists, notably E.F. Schumacher, author of *Small Is Beautiful*, also challenged the moral and philosophical assumptions of the liberal capitalist society. "In the excitement over the unfolding of his scientific and technical powers, modern man has built a system of production that ravishes nature and a type of society that mutilates man. If only there were more and more wealth, everything else, it is thought, would fall into place... This is the philosophy of materialism... which is now being challenged by events."

In the early 1970s the "limits to growth" debate entered a new phase when an international group of scientists, economists, engineers and business and political leaders formed the so-called Club of Rome to focus attention on "the Predicament of Mankind", as a global problem resulting from accelerating industrialization, rapid population growth, widespread malnutrition, depletion of non-renewable resources and a deteriorating environment. Drawing on the technical facilities and talent of research centres like MIT, they sponsored studies on *World Dynamics* (1971) and *Limits to Growth* (1972), using the new techniques of computer modelling to estimate the future consequences of present technological and economic trends. Their studies were criticized for making invalid predictions. In fact, *Limits to Growth* did not predict but extrapolated

from present trends, and the extrapolations turned out to be much closer to what has happened than the critics suggested. The book was also criticized for treating the world as one unit. That was rectified in the subsequent book *Mankind at the Turning Point* (1974). These studies did encourage much new thinking about the exponential consequences of economic-growth policies, the urgency of addressing the problems of world pollution, limits to resources, overpopulation, and the need to challenge a widespread overconfidence in technological solutions to them.

The WCC and its member churches joined in the discussion of these issues in a study programme on "The Future of Humanity and Society in a World of Science-based Technology", begun in 1969. Over the ensuing two decades this resulted in a series of ecumenical studies and findings in which theologians, technologists and scientists offered their views on the moral and spiritual issues posed by (1) the scientific-technological advances in biotechnology and the resulting "manipulation of life", (2) nuclear energy and the over-riding problem of energy for the future, (3) population growth and its impact on the human and physical environment in rich and poor countries, (4) the pollution of the environment and the threat to human life, (5) the social and political implications of limiting growth worldwide and the need to work for the "sustainable society", and (6) the philosophical assumptions of modern science and technology and the critique of these from various theological and ethical perspectives. Ecumenical reflection on these themes was summed up in two international ecumenical conferences: Bucharest (1974) and MIT (Cambridge, USA, 1979).

The findings of these meetings presented the churches with new perspectives on the future of society, leading to new agreement and new controversy. From the beginning many Christians from the third world saw the questioning of modern science and technology and the concern for nature and the environment as deliberate distractions from what they perceived as the central issue: the problem of social justice. There has also been disagreement also about the relation of these new concerns to the political and ideo-

logical systems which many held to be responsible for the misuse of technology and the natural environment. As one of the early consultations reported on its discussion of the relation of political systems and the use of natural resources (Nemi 1971): "Some say the fault in the current gross inequality is the profit system, which encourages the production of unnecessary items by catering to consumers' whims, and which must be replaced before lasting corrections can be accomplished. Some believe socialist countries are also wasteful as well as being poor contributors to the development of the third world. Some argue that the market mechanism can meet the needs of the developing countries... And some see little hope for substantial progress until international agencies control the allocation of resources."

Disagreement on such issues was in part responsible for the inability of the WCC world convocation on "Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation" (Seoul 1990) to arrive at a common understanding either of the "realities we face" or of the "theological and ethical affirmations" which would enable the churches to unite in common Christian witness and action. One of the most difficult continuing ecumenical challenges is finding a way to continue reflection and action on these highly complex and contentious issues, which continue to divide both church and world.

See also **development; economics; globalization, economic.**

PAUL ABRECHT

- P. Abrecht & R.L. Shinn eds, *Faith and Science in an Unjust World*, report of MIT 1979, 2 vols, WCC, 1980
- D.L. Munby, *Christianity and Economic Problems*, London, Macmillan, 1965
- "Science and Technology for Human Development", report of Bucharest 1974, *Anticipation*, 19, 1974
- "Three Reports from Church and Society", report of Nemi 1971, *Study Encounter*, 7, 3, 1971.

## GRUBB, KENNETH

B. 9 Sept. 1900, Oxton, England; d. 3 June 1980. An Anglo-Irishman, Grubb took great interest in getting to know the unknown lands of Amazonia and the Andes, as well as other areas of Latin America, and wrote several books which were indispensable for



missionary policy and work. During the second world war, he was controller of overseas publicity of the British Ministry of Information. From 1946 to 1968 he was chairman of the WCC's Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA).

Grubb was a member or officer of numerous bodies in church, mission, business and world affairs, including the Church Missionary Society, Unevangelized Fields Mission, the British Council of Churches, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the United Society for Christian Literature, the Institute of Rural Life at Home and Overseas, the London-based institutes for international affairs, race relations and strategic studies. In the post-war period through the CCIA he represented the concern of the churches to governments and to the United Nations. On issues of human rights\* in Latin America and Europe, he was the chief spokesperson of the churches to governments. He also tackled the issues of the arms race and disarmament on behalf of the churches and helped pioneer the *World Christian Handbook*.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

- K. Grubb, *Crypts of Power*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1971.

**GUTIÉRREZ, GUSTAVO**

B. 8 June 1928, Lima, Peru. Roman Catholic priest and theologian, Gutiérrez is widely honoured as “the father of liberation theology”\* – a term he coined in 1968 for the reflection on ministry in solidarity with the poor\* which he and other Latin American priests and pastoral workers began in the 1960s. His own seminal work, *A Theology of Liberation*, was published in Spanish in 1971; its 1973 English translation sold more than 100,000 copies. Though he has been criticized by political and theological conservatives, especially for the Marxist elements in his thought, Gutiérrez, unlike some other controversial contemporary Catholic theologians, has avoided the language and spirit of defiance, agreeing that theology is produced in and for the church\* and that there is thus a legitimate function for church authority\* in the process. Responding to the critical “Instructions” on liberation theology (1984

and 1986) from the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Gutiérrez said that they contained “relevant observations” and stimulated him both to make some corrections and to find phraseology less susceptible to misunderstanding.

Since publishing *A Theology of Liberation*, Gutiérrez’s interest in social, economic and political analysis has lessened, and his interest in biblical and theological questions increased – as the title of his 1983 book *We Drink from Our Own Wells* (English, 1984) indicates. His primary concern is not politics or elaboration of a theory, secular or religious: “I am above all a pastor.” He serves a poor parish in the historic Rimac section of Lima; he has limited his teaching (at Lima’s Catholic university) to students not taking degrees in theology.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ G. Gutiérrez, *Essential Writings*, J.B. Nickoloff ed., Maryknoll NY, Orbis, 1996.

# H

## HARTFORD APPEAL

THE HARTFORD appeal (“An Appeal for Theological Affirmation”) emerged from a three-day unofficial ecumenical consultation of theologians at the Hartford Seminary Foundation (Connecticut) in January 1975. Sociologist Peter L. Berger and Richard John Neuhaus initiated the meeting and prepared a preliminary draft for discussion. In its final and thoroughly revised form, the appeal called for theological response to 13 current themes in religious thought that were deemed to be “pervasive, false, and debilitating to the church’s life and work”. The key problem, said Hartford, is the “loss of transcendence” in religious thought. The rejected themes included the following: “Religious language refers to human experience and nothing

else, God being humanity’s noblest creation” (no. 3); “Since what is human is good, evil can adequately be understood as failure to realize potential” (no. 7); “The world must set the agenda for the church. Social, political and economic programmes to improve the quality of life are ultimately normative for the church’s mission in the world” (no. 10); and “The question of hope beyond death is irrelevant or at best marginal to the Christian understanding of human fulfilment” (no. 13). Among the signers of the appeal were Elizabeth Bettenhausen, William Sloane Coffin, Avery Dulles, George W. Forell, Stanley Hauerwas, Thomas Hopko, George A. Lindbeck, Richard J. Mouw, Carl J. Peter, Alexander Schmemmann, George H. Tavard, Bruce Vawter and Robert Wilken.

The appeal received intense popular and scholarly attention, especially in the US and Europe. The general press opined that Hartford might portend "a new reformation", while scholars such as Wolfhart Pannenberg of Munich hailed it as a necessary critique of both fundamentalist obscurantism and liberal secularization. Hartford also provoked a number of counter-statements, notably the "Boston Affirmation", which claimed that Hartford had short-changed Christian social responsibility.

The Hartford signers met again in the fall of 1975 and issued a book of commentaries on the appeal, *Against the World for the World*. In addition to the text of the appeal, the book contains essays by Berger, Lindbeck, Dulles, Forell, Peter, Mouw, Schmemmann and Neuhaus. The text of the appeal is available also in *A Documentary History of Religion in America*.

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS

■ *Against the World for the World*, New York, Seabury, 1976 ■ E.S. Gaustad ed., *A Documentary History of Religion in America*, 2, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1983.

## HEALING, HEALTH, HEALTH CARE

MANY OF THE laws of the ancient Hebrews dealt with health matters. Healing was a major activity of Jesus' earthly ministry. He sent his disciples out to teach, preach and heal (cf. Matt. 10:1). Christians since the days of Peter and Paul have been involved in various ways in health ministry, which figured prominently in the missionary enterprise of the last two centuries.

Concern about health care within the ecumenical movement has two main origins: the diakonia\* and social service programmes of the churches and parishes, and the church-related health care activities that grew out of medical mission programmes. The former have old roots in the command to heal, and comprise everything from individual action to large hospitals and institutions for the aged and infirm. Many churches have ministries of deacons and deaconesses (see **diaconate**) as well as lay activities for ordinary parishioners. The underlying concepts of the churches' involvement in health have varied considerably, and the

forms it has taken have been influenced by the prevailing health and social policies in the country of action or, in cases where such activities have been initiated by missionaries, in their country of origin.

A natural emphasis on health care as an essential part of the life and witness of every local Christian congregation has been often overshadowed by a preoccupation with larger institutions, which tend to become removed from the day-to-day life of the church and ordinary Christians. Such institutions have nevertheless been an important witness and sign of the kingdom of God in many societies and countries.

The churches' experience in the care of tuberculosis and leprosy patients and, more recently, persons affected by HIV/AIDS, for instance, has influenced not only church-related health care but also more globally important developments in this area. Many church-related programmes for mothers and children in rural areas of developing countries have become models for other agencies and governments. The churches' work in literacy and education has proved the positive effect of education on the health status of people. Care of the suffering and dying has provided examples of a humane approach to situations otherwise all too often neglected or insensitively handled. Many hospices for the terminally ill are church-related or largely staffed by Christians. Many individual Christians, on the other hand, are "voluntary workers" in hospitals and other care centres for the poor as a part of their service to Christ in the person of the weakest.

In 1964 and 1968 ecumenical consultations in Tübingen, Germany, organized by the WCC and the Lutheran World Federation, focused on medical missions in the third world and the role of the church in healing. The WCC created the Christian Medical Commission (CMC) in 1968 to assist the member churches to deal with questions being raised about these subjects and to encourage church-related health programmes to develop ecumenical cooperation.

In its early years CMC emphasized the promotion of primary health care as a means of redressing the imbalance between sophisticated and expensive institutional medical care for a few and hardly any for the rest. Primary health care became a global move-

ment adopted by all World Health Organization members at a conference which CMC helped organize in 1978 at Alma Ata, in the former Soviet Union. At the same time, however, there was growing dissatisfaction with the so-called garage-mechanic approach in modern medicine. This was leading Christian groups in many countries to search for a health care which addressed more fully the needs of the whole person; and in 1978 CMC also embarked on a programme to study "Health, Healing and Wholeness" at the grassroots. In the years that followed, regional consultations in Trinidad, Honduras, Botswana, India, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Ecuador, USA, Hungary and Japan brought together over 800 pastors, theologians and health workers to discuss the Christian perspective of health.

In July 1989 in Moscow, the final report was presented to the WCC's central committee. The study affirmed clearly that health is not primarily medical. Although the modern "health industry" is using increasingly sophisticated and expensive technology, most of the world's health problems cannot be best addressed in this way. The causes of disease in the world are social, economic, political and spiritual, as well as bio-medical. Poverty is the number one cause of disease in many parts of the world. War and the resulting migrations of refugees is another major impediment to health. In affluent countries life-style choices increasingly ravage human bodies and the environment. These issues are not best addressed by medical technology, but require a focus on changing the underlying causes of illness, often related to values. The study report called on the churches to see this as part of their Christian mandate.

Also identified as important to health was the spiritual dimension. Unresolved guilt, anger and hopelessness are now being found by medical science to be potent factors in suppressing the body's powerful, health-controlling immune system, while loving relationships in community augment its effectiveness. Those in loving harmony with God and neighbour not only stay healthier but survive tragedy or suffering best and grow stronger in the process.

The increasing influence of technology in medicine has led to the depersonalization of

medical care and an emphasis on curing rather than caring. The impressive achievements of science have led many of the churches to abdicate the Lord's mandate to be in healing ministry. Since wholeness of life is a central issue of the Christian gospel, the report called on the churches to play an important role in leading a movement towards the development of comprehensive health care systems in which all aspects of health have an appropriate place – with focus not only on saving lives but also on wholeness of life.

Today the churches' healing ministry ranges from large hospital systems to the laying on of hands in healing services. In some countries as much as half the medical services are provided by church-run facilities. The ecumenical movement has facilitated the formation of networks of ecumenical Christian health associations and helps coordinate their work, especially in Africa.

The ecumenical movement has also highlighted the HIV/AIDS\* issue since the 1980s. In June 1986 a WCC study group recommended three main areas where the churches could respond: pastoral care, social ministry and education-prevention. Educational material was produced and disseminated, aimed at equipping health workers, pastors and teachers to assist communities in facing the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Further efforts have focused on theological and ethical reflection on aspects of the church's responsibility in responding adequately to the crisis.

In 1994, the WCC study on AIDS was commissioned by the central committee and in 1996 the statement "The Impact of HIV/AIDS and the Churches' Response" was adopted. The study document *Facing AIDS: The Challenge, the Churches' Response* (1997), was a clear call for a forthright and faithful response to HIV/AIDS from Christians and churches. Based on these documents, educational materials aimed at attitudinal change were developed and published in 1998. In 2000 and 2001 an HIV/AIDS curriculum for theological colleges and Bible schools with a special focus on Africa was also developed and the faculties of these institutes have been trained.

Apart from this educational process, the health activities of ecumenical networks have been devoted to helping communities

understand the churches' policies in relation to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and encouraging positive action by church leaders; strengthening regional HIV/AIDS networks and initiatives; and advocating action of churches in the area of AIDS, internationally and regionally. The formation of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (see **World Council of Churches**) and its focus on AIDS is an expression of this work.

Persistent age-old diseases like malaria and newer ones such as AIDS present major challenges to Christian organizations with limited resources. Constant political, social and economic changes continue to require new approaches to health and health care. Churches are pioneering health programmes that empower communities to change the conditions that are causing illness, and health care professionals, clergy and laity are discovering together new ways to create healing community in a broken world.

DAVID HILTON and MANOJ KURIAN

■ "Health, Faith and Healing" (= *IRM*, 356-57, 2001) ■ *Ethical Challenges of Health and Healing Today*, WCC, 1994.

## HERESY

IN ITS ORIGINAL sense, the Greek *hairesis* meant choice or preference, hence, opinion, party. In the New Testament, the book of Acts uses it to mean "sect" – that of the Pharisees (15:5), that of the Sadducees (5:17), etc. Paul argues that the Christian church is not a sect but a "Way" (Acts 24:14). When divisions begin to emerge in the church (1 Cor. 11:19), he protests, considering heresies as the fruits of sin (Gal. 5:20; cf. Titus 3:10f.). In 2 Pet. 2:1 the term is used in the sense which came to be its general meaning in the history of the church: an error which leads to perversion of the faith\* and corruption of the Christian life (cf. Matt. 7:15; Jude).

The church was made particularly aware of the idea of heresy by the serious crisis caused by the Arian heresy in the 4th century. Arius, a priest at Alexandria, denied the divinity of Christ and hence also the divine dimension of the church\* and the reality of salvation.\* He was condemned by the first ecumenical council (Nicea 325\*),

which recognized the Son of God as consubstantial with the Father, but the Arian heresy initiated a period of controversies and disturbances in the church and in the empire, with sequels which lingered until after the second ecumenical council (Constantinople 381\*). As the church experienced several major heresies in the East (Nestorianism, monophysitism, monothelitism, etc.) and others in the West, Christian doctrine came to distinguish heresy on the one hand from schism,\* which also involved separation from the community of the church, but over problems of discipline, ritual or obedience to hierarchical authority (canon 1 of Basil the Great) rather than doctrinal disagreement; and on the other hand from apostasy,\* in that apostates leave the church community, abandoning the name of Christian and all their beliefs. Heretics, however, by remaining or calling themselves Christian yet rejecting certain truths of the faith, injure the unity\* of the church by damaging the unity of doctrine which is one of its essential marks.

The church has thus traditionally dealt severely with heresy. The second canon of the second ecumenical council declares that heresy is to be punished by excommunication.\* Ancient canon law\* does not recognize baptism\* and ordination\* administered by heretics. Marriage with heretics is, in principle, forbidden. A bishop cannot be a heretic; in case of heresy, his people are called upon to withhold their obedience.

The traditional conception of heresy poses a number of problems in the quest for Christian unity and ecumenical dialogue. Are the causes of the division that took place between the churches of East and West in 1054, or that in the 16th century with the Protestant Reformation, to be called heresy or schism? Does the quest for Christian unity mean the restoration of dogmatic unity, or simply reconciliation among the churches? What is to be done in cases where the condemnation of doctrines also involved the condemnation of individuals who have subsequently been canonized by their own communities? This is the problem between the Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Orthodox. Over time, theological reflection has reduced many of the Christological divergences between them, but the council of

Chalcedon pronounced anathema\* against Dioscorus of Alexandria and Severus of Antioch, who are venerated as saints\* by the non-Chalcedonians, whereas the latter anathematized Pope Leo the Great, whom both Orthodox and Catholics regard as a great saint and father of the church.

The same problem arises over the question of how heretics are to be received into the traditional churches. In general the baptism received is recognized when administered by a community which recognizes this sacrament, the dogma of the Holy Trinity\* and the divinity of Jesus Christ\* (the sacrament of chrismation\* is, however, then conferred on those who have not received it). The same recognition applies to the sacrament of orders received in communities which have this sacrament and also apostolic succession. But the Pidalion, the official canonical book of the Greek church, and the practice of Mount Athos demand re-baptism for those coming to Orthodoxy from other Christian confessions, which amounts to denying the church status of these communities and poses the problem of the oneness of Christian baptism.

In modern times, heresy can also be applied to attitudes which contradict the gospel teaching in life, e.g., apartheid in South Africa (see *status confessionis*).

ALEXIS KNIAZEFF

## HERMENEUTICS

THE QUESTION of the interpretation of scripture\* has been at the heart of the ecumenical dialogue (see *dialogue, intrafaith*) from the beginning of the modern search for Christian unity.\* Ecumenical discussions of issues related to the interpretation of the Bible hold their own with recent developments in philosophical hermeneutics (Hans-Georg Gadamer, Paul Ricoeur et al.), which have in turn shaped the way in which Christian dialogue *with* and *about* scripture has come to be understood (e.g. the introduction of the terminology of "fusion of horizons"). These reciprocal effects of hermeneutical research and ecumenical dialogue can be seen not only in ongoing discussions of Faith and Order\* but also in the internal discussions within Roman Catholicism and Protes-

tantism as well as in the Anabaptist and Orthodox traditions.

## DISCUSSIONS IN FAITH AND ORDER

In the years after the second world war, many ecumenists were optimistic that the Bible itself could provide the much-desired thematic unity needed for the recovery of unity among the churches. At a F&O conference held in Wadham College, Oxford, in 1949, the influence of "biblical theology" was clearly in evidence. The thematic unity of the Old and New Testaments was presupposed, and combined with a confessing theology to underwrite a renewed emphasis on ecumenism.

Within a decade, however, it was evident that the problem was more complex than Wadham had acknowledged. The theoretical consensus proved vulnerable at the point of practical application. Soon scholars again had to contend with the important ways in which ecclesial traditions (see *Tradition and traditions*) served to define biblical interpretation. Subsequent discussions of F&O began to focus on different understandings of the relation of scripture and Tradition, leading up to the report of the fourth world conference on F&O (Montreal 1963) on "Scripture, Tradition and traditions". The differentiation between the great Tradition (with a capital *T*) and particular ecclesial, confessional or denominational traditions (with a lower-case *t*) helped make way for the discussion of the diverse expressions of the one gospel. This development in turn made it possible to conceive of a more dynamic view of the relationship of Tradition and scripture. "Tradition" and "scripture" are not two independent entities. Rather, scripture can be understood to be the internal norm of Tradition, and Tradition itself must be seen to be the proper context for reading scripture: "Thus we can say that we exist as Christians by the Tradition of the gospel (the *paradosis* of the *kerygma*) testified in scripture, transmitted in and by the church through the power of the Holy Spirit. Tradition taken in this sense is actualized in the preaching of the word, in the administration of sacraments and worship, in Christian teaching and theology, and in mission and witness to Christ by the lives of the members of the church."

After Montreal, fresh attempts were made in F&O to explore the hermeneutical significance of these new proposals. About the same time, debates about the diversity of the Bible, particularly the diversity of ecclesiologies in the NT (expressed in the clash between Ernst Käsemann and Raymond Brown at Montreal), led to a deeper sense that the “biblical theology” consensus of Wadham was rather uncritical in its attribution of thematic unity to the biblical witness. Moreover, the interpretative rules of biblical exegesis\* which Wadham had confidently announced no longer appeared adequate. The F&O Bristol report on “The Significance of the Hermeneutical Problem for the Ecumenical Movement” (1967) sought to eschew theological presuppositions, emphasizing the literary and *human* character of the Bible as a collection of writings. One of the results of this report was a clear shift in the way inspiration\* of scripture is understood; no longer a matter of dogmatic presupposition, the inspiration of scripture comes to be understood as a conclusion of faith\* which arises out of the church’s experience.

By the 1971 F&O Louvain report on “The Authority of the Bible”, the emphasis on diversity resulted in the proposal of “relational” understanding of biblical authority\* in place of the earlier claims of a “material centre” (*Sachmitte*). In keeping with the claims of Montreal, the Louvain report refuses to specify a specific centre of scripture as the hermeneutical key for the interpretation of the whole but instead suggests the idea of a number of “relational centres” (*Beziehungsmitten*). These proposals led to speculation about the “prolongation” in the church of the “interpretative process” which can be found in scripture itself: as canonical scripture (see **canon**) itself is the product of fresh interpretations of earlier traditions, so the scriptures invite and require continuing interpretation in the church. By re-opening the issue of the nature of biblical authority, this proposal was also implicitly raising ecclesiological issues: e.g., who is given the authority to interpret scripture?

Discussions of the 1970s and 1980s focused on four specific issues: (1) “the significance of the Old Testament in relation to

the New” (Loccum 1971); (2) the use of scripture in the liturgy\* of the churches as well as in the devotional life of Christians (thereby counteracting a one-sidedly intellectualist approach to the Bible); (3) the growing awareness of the experience of Christians in Africa and Latin America, which emphasizes the contemporaneity of scripture interpretation in third-world contexts; and (4) the growing recognition of the greater variety of interpretative strategies, including structuralist literary criticism and the emerging discussion of political hermeneutics, as these in turn raise questions for biblical interpretation.

### HERMENEUTICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN REPRESENTATIVE TRADITIONS

It will be helpful to outline separately the recent hermeneutical directions of various Christian traditions.

*Orthodoxy*.\* The contribution of the Eastern Orthodox communions to the discussion of hermeneutical issues can be seen since 1945. Perhaps nowhere is this more visible than in the discussions of Tradition and the traditions (Montreal 1963). Not so well known is the important contribution to hermeneutics which a new generation of Orthodox biblical scholars, theologians and literary critics is making in “the Orthodox diaspora”.

For example, Benedict Englezakis has called attention to the complex relationship between Tradition and prophecy\* (as mediated by the Holy Spirit) in the biblical witness. Rejecting a positivist application of historical criticism to the Bible, Englezakis argues that “the ‘riddle of the New Testament’ can never be solved except in the Holy Spirit. It is a historical fact that these documents claim to be incomprehensible outside the light of the Spirit, and this is the predicament of the New Testament historian” (*New and Old in God’s Revelation*, 1972) (see **Holy Spirit**).

John Breck’s *The Power of the Word in the Worshipping Church* (1986) and Thomas Hopko’s earlier influential essay “The Bible in the Orthodox Church” (in his *All the Fullness of God*, 1982) both exhibit the importance of the liturgical context for the investigation of hermeneutical issues. As Hopko has noted, it is one of the paradoxes

of Orthodox hermeneutics that the Revelation of St John is not included in the cycle of readings for public worship, yet it is indispensable for explicating the liturgical setting of Orthodox worship.

One of the most promising contributions to emerge out of the Orthodox diaspora is that of Anthony Ugolnik. His essay on "An Orthodox Hermeneutic in the West" (*St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 27, 1983) offers a striking account of the literary and theological divergence between Eastern and Western Christian use of the Bible. Contrary to the Western "textualist" tradition of hermeneutics, Ugolnik points to the communal or *sobornost*\* dimension of Orthodox hermeneutics. In his *The Illuminating Icon*, Ugolnik has extended this line of argument, drawing on the works of Romanian theologian Dumitru Staniloae as well as the literary theories of Mikhail Bakhtin. Ugolnik's explication of the ways in which Tradition "lives" in the present as "dialogue" goes beyond the arguments of the previous generation of Orthodox theologians, even as it also draws on the writings of Vladimir Lossky, Alexander Schmemmann and Staniloae.

A further strength of Ugolnik's study is that he is attentive to the ways in which political ideology (East vs West polarities, etc.) frequently distorts discussions of hermeneutics as well as ecumenism. By calling attention to the problem in this way, Ugolnik moves the discussion of hermeneutics out of the common polarities of tradition vs scripture and Tradition vs the traditions, and relocates it in the "politics" of the ecclesial Tradition itself. Certainly, Ugolnik's explication of the communal character of Orthodox hermeneutics has great potential for defusing several tired debates in Western hermeneutics.

*Roman Catholicism.* Since 1970, theological ferment has characterized Roman Catholic discussion of hermeneutics. On the one hand, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger has urged that "we must learn to read the documents which have been handed down to us according to the hermeneutics of unity". On the other hand, Latin American liberation theologians (Leonardo Boff, Gustavo Gutiérrez) have called for renewed emphasis on the ways in which scripture nurtures political responses to oppression. While fuller

explication of both these approaches is needed, it is especially noteworthy that Catholic discussions of hermeneutics have also moved beyond the so-called two sources impasse (scripture vs Tradition). More dynamic categories of analysis also suggest opportunities for renewed hermeneutical investigation within both scripture and Tradition.

Among the most intriguing proposals is Nicholas Lash's "performative" hermeneutic, explicated in several essays in his *Theology on the Way to Emmaus*. Lash argues against the stark historical separation of "what the text meant" and "what the text means", preferring a more interactive understanding of exegesis and interpretation. He contends that the "fundamental form of the Christian interpretation of scripture is the life, activity and organization of the believing community... Christian practice as interpretative action consists in the performance of texts which are construed as 'rendering', bearing witness to, one whose words and deeds, discourse and suffering 'rendered' the truth of God in human history." Lash claims further that Christian living, "construed as the interpretative performance of scripture", is a *collaborative* enterprise. He asserts: "The poles of interpretation are not, in the last analysis, written texts... but patterns of human action: we talk of 'holy' scripture, and for good reason. And yet it is not, in fact, the *script* that is 'holy' but the people: the company that performs the script." Following up this reference with an analogy to *King Lear*, Lash concludes: "There are some texts the fundamental form of which is a full-time affair because it consists in their enactment as the social existence of an entire community. The scriptures, I suggest, are such texts... The performance of scripture is the life of the church" ("The Performance of Scripture", 42-44).

Catholic discussion of hermeneutical issues has also been enriched by the growing movement of church base communities\* in Latin America, where the use of the Bible among the poor has coincided with the renewal of the church's witness. Ernesto Cardenal's four volumes of *The Gospel in Solentiname* recount the ongoing engagement with the Bible of the *campesinos* in a village in Nicaragua. While some of the most intriguing discussions of scripture in these vol-

umes arise out of the villagers' puzzlement when they disagree about how to interpret scripture, they also demonstrate that scripture has become a source of unity in the struggle for freedom in Latin America, where Protestant and Catholic alike find themselves victims of oppression. More academically formulated has been the "materialist" reading of scripture associated with José Porfirio Miranda, or (less ideologically phrased) the "socio-economic" interpretation.

Post-Vatican II Roman Catholicism has also been encouraged by a remark of Pope John XXIII: "The substance of the ancient doctrine of the deposit of faith is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another." In light of this distinction, Roman Catholics have increasingly been willing to extend the range of the hermeneutical question to include post-biblical pronouncements by the councils of the church and other instances of its magisterium (see **teaching authority**). Such re-assessment has in turn evoked new responses from Protestant ecumenists. For example, as a result of his experiences in Roman Catholic-Lutheran dialogue, George Lindbeck was stimulated to propose his ecumenically provocative "rule theory" of doctrine, according to which official dogmas\* are to be principally taken as regulating Christian discourse rather than being regarded primarily in terms of their substantive content (*The Nature of Doctrine*, 1984).

*Protestantism.* The contribution of Rudolf Bultmann ("Is Exegesis without Presuppositions Possible?") preoccupied Protestant hermeneutical discussions for much of the second half of the 20th century. The so-called new hermeneutic of Erich Fuchs, Gerhard Ebeling and James M. Robinson led to increased concern about the relationship of the language of the Bible to the historical character of Christian existence. Bultmann's programme of "demythologization" was also attacked by theologians and biblical scholars influenced by Karl Barth for its lack of "biblical realism" (Hendrik Kraemer) as well as for the existentialist hermeneutic upon which it was built.

More recently, Peter Stuhlmacher has argued that historical criticism itself requires a kind of "hermeneutics of consent" in order to avoid the errors of positivism to which

many 19th-century historical critics of the Bible fell prey. Taking Adolf Schlatter as a model and drawing on the insights of Ebeling and Gadamer among others, Stuhlmacher insists upon a "critical dialogue" with the biblical tradition. Such a dialogue will take into account not only the "history of the effects" (Gadamer's *Wirkungsgeschichte*) of the Bible as a text but also the sense in which "the biblical tradition supports, empowers and limits our life at one and the same time". This line of argument has been continued in Stuhlmacher's book *Vom Verstehen des Neuen Testaments: Eine Hermeneutik* (1986). Meanwhile the French Protestant Paul Ricoeur has recalled attention to the multivalence of symbols, which provokes thought ("le symbole donne à penser") and enjoins the "conflict of interpretations".

Along with the renewed sense of the critical task as arising from within the biblical tradition itself, there is in fact a growing awareness among Protestants of the inadequacy of the "modernist" attempt to identify the singular meaning of biblical pericopes. Not only is a case put forward for "The Superiority of Pre-Critical Exegesis" (David Steinmetz, 1980; reprinted in his *Memory and Mission*, 1988), but there is also more interest among Protestants in overcoming the dichotomous separation of scripture from Tradition, and the gospel from the life of the church. In fact, recent developments point to a renewed awareness of the dialectical relationship of scripture and Tradition among Protestants, suggesting the kind of convergence noted by Cardinal Ratzinger's proposal for a "hermeneutics of unity".

Among several positive proposals worthy of note is Geoffrey Wainwright's discussion of "liturgy as a hermeneutical continuum" (*Doxology*, 1980), within which scripture is rightly interpreted for the life of the church. Wainwright's proposal is noteworthy because he applies the ancient principle of *lex orandi, lex credendi* in two directions at once: the primacy of scripture remains, but the ecumenical liturgical tradition serves to lend diachronic continuity to the synchronic experience of the church as it gathers to hear the word.

*Anabaptism.* The contribution of Anabaptist hermeneutics to the ecumenical

movement only began to be noticed in the 1980s, but since the 1960s the scholarship of the US Mennonite theological ethicist John Howard Yoder and the Canadian historian and NT scholar William Klassen has prepared the way for this recognition. Building on the historical investigations of 16th-century Anabaptists, such as Klassen's study of Pilgram Marpeck, and on his own studies of Balthasar Hubmaier's writings, Yoder has demonstrated how the "rule of Christ" (Matt. 18:15-20) and the "rule of Paul" (1 Cor. 14:29) functioned hermeneutically among 16th-century Anabaptist communities. In so doing, he has also helped to dispel misunderstandings of the Anabaptist tradition while engaging in ecumenical dialogue regarding the use of scripture in ethics.

Yoder's careful explication of the Anabaptist "hermeneutics of community", arising out of such community-specific practices as the process of "binding and loosing", has also been provocative for theologians outside that tradition, even though his emphasis on the synchronic gathering of the ecclesia sometimes seems to call into question the viability of the diachronic dimension of the greater ecumenical tradition. Indeed, Yoder strongly dissents from the cultural model of "Tradition and traditions" which emerged from the discussions of the F&O commission at Montreal (1963). But at the same time, it must also be said that Yoder has called attention to the biblical mandate for visible unity of the church as a political community before the world. Particularly provocative are his proposals for the embodiment of such unity in "sacramental" (not to be confused with what he calls "sacramentalist") practices such as the eucharist, baptism and the "fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13), which exemplifies the gathered ecclesia in ministry.

## SUMMARY

As the foregoing summary of developments indicates, given the polyphony of voices which the ecumenical movement comprises, the various ecclesial traditions are nevertheless converging in their awareness of the importance of dialogic unity in hermeneutical investigations. As Ellen Flessemann-van Leer notes: "The ecclesiological counterpart of this renewed emphasis

on biblical unity is the insistence that the unity of the churches must find visible expression." This assessment also highlights the source of convergence as well as divergence with respect to the question of hermeneutics.

In the face of continuing disagreements, there are increasing indications of agreement. Among the several noteworthy hermeneutical convergences is the common appreciation in the proposals of Lash, Ugolnik, Wainwright and Yoder for the "ecclesial locus" of hermeneutics. Significantly, each has gone *beyond* the preoccupation with the "text" of scripture in an effort to understand the interactive dimensions of scripture and liturgy, ethics and ecclesiology, politics and interpretation.

In addition, one can detect a growing sense of convergence among the representative traditions on the relationship of *ecclesial unity* to hermeneutics. Apart from the real differences in orientation in the different traditions in the ecumenical movement, the recent proposals for a hermeneutics of "unity" (Ratzinger), of "consent" (Stuhlmacher), of "peoplehood" (Yoder) and the Orthodox conception of "sobornost" community (Ugolnik) all presuppose, with varying degrees of emphasis, that the context of the church as a hermeneutical community is crucial. While none of these proposals suggests that all current hermeneutical issues have been resolved, these convergences are serving to re-orient the hermeneutical debate itself towards a dialogue that is *interdisciplinary* as well as interdenominational.

This circumstance also helps to put into perspective the previous shifts in the ecumenical discussion of hermeneutics. The initial discussions of the F&O movement at Wadham College (1949) were primarily nurtured by the contributions of historical-critical scholarship of the Bible. As is widely recognized, the increasing participation of representatives of the Orthodox tradition (Montreal 1963) has led to a more balanced appreciation for Tradition in relation to scripture, but this rediscovery of the ecclesial locus of hermeneutics in the 1980s has gone beyond the contributions of the Orthodox and Anabaptist traditions. In the process, scholars both within and outside the ecumenical movement have also discovered

links between previously disparate disciplines of biblical studies, historical theology, political theory and literary hermeneutics. Through such interdisciplinary studies a renewed awareness of the “unsearchable riches” of the gospel as the source and end of visible unity for the church is emerging.

As a result of this interdisciplinary ferment, as well as newly articulated missional concerns, recent F&O discussions have focused on the question of “ecumenical hermeneutic”. This initiative has been enabled by new interventions such as that of Anton Houtepen, who distinguishes between two needs: “a hermeneutics of tradition”, an agreed-upon set of criteria for determining “the faith delivered to the saints”, and “a hermeneutics of communion”, a common recognition of the essential elements of Christian communion, the “sharing in the gifts of God” manifested in prayer, solidarity and the bonds of love within and beyond the local congregation, including relationships with other local communities of the universal church. By carefully distinguishing and relating the synchronic and diachronic modes of hermeneutical enquiry, Houtepen’s proposal may point the way towards how to re-frame vexing issues in transconfessional dialogue.

At the fifth world conference on F&O (Santiago de Compostela 1993), a variety of confessional and mission voices from Africa, Asia, the Pacific and Latin America called for an “ecumenical hermeneutic”. This concern has arisen less out of questions about classical confessional controversies than it has been evoked by specific missional concerns about how the gospel may be presented – and received – in newly evangelized areas in ways that respect local cultures while also seeking their transformation.

The call for an ecumenical hermeneutic has brought about renewed conversation in F&O about intercultural dynamics as well as ecclesiological issues. A short-term study resulted in a report intended to stimulate more detailed work at all levels and in all contexts of the church as an hermeneutical community: *A Treasure in Earthen Vessels: An Instrument for an Ecumenical Reflection on Hermeneutics* (1998). On the interconfessional front, a case study can be found in Wainwright’s essay “Towards an Ecumenical Hermeneutic”

(1995), which compares the hermeneutic principles set forth in the new *Catechism* of the Roman Catholic Church with the principles of interpretation found in the works of John Wesley. Wainwright shows surprising areas of convergence on key issues of interpretation. Such transconfessional comparisons, which highlight commonalities while also taking seriously ecclesiological differences, may provide a way forward in the quest for an ecumenical hermeneutic. In the meantime, as a variety of ecumenists have pointed out, the development of a common lectionary (see **liturgical texts, common**), which provides a *practical* means for common study, constitutes an achievement whose significance should not be overlooked in calling the churches to grasp what it might yet mean for Christians to read scripture in communion.

See also **Bible, its role in the ecumenical movement; church; New Testament and Christian unity; Old Testament and Christian unity.**

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## HIERARCHY OF TRUTHS

THIS EXPRESSION first appeared in the Second Vatican Council’s Decree on Ecumenism\* (1964): “In ecumenical dialogue, when Catholic theologians join with separated brethren in common study of the divine mysteries, they should, while standing fast by the teaching of the church, pursue the work with love for the truth, with charity and with humility. When comparing doctrines, they should remember that there exists an order or ‘*hierarchy of truths*’ in Catholic doctrine, since they vary in their relation to the foundation of the Christian faith. Thus the way will be open whereby this kind of ‘fraternal emulation’ will incite all to a deeper awareness and a clearer expression of the unfathomable riches of Christ (cf. Eph. 3:8)” (11). Oscar Cullmann regarded the passage as “the most revolutionary” to be found in the 16 Vatican II documents.

The concept aroused hopes for a more refined methodology in the ecumenical dialogue, for the respectful evaluation of Christian traditions other than one’s own, for the enhanced renewal of one’s own church’s thought and action and for common witness\* by churches in real but imperfect communion\* with one another. But more detailed clarification of the expression and its implications was urged by W.A. Visser ’t Hooft and favoured by John Paul II during the pope’s visit to the WCC in June 1984. Thus the sixth report of the WCC/RCC Joint Working Group\* (1990) included an appendix on “The Notion of ‘Hierarchy of Truths’ – An Ecumenical Interpretation”.

Because faith\* is organic, revealed truths are not placed side by side in a static listing of propositions, but are organized around and point to a centre or foundation – the person and mystery of Jesus Christ,\* our salvation.\* Though equally true, beliefs have greater or less consequence to the extent they relate to this foundation. Grace\* has more importance than sin,\* sanctifying grace more than actual grace, the resurrection\* of Christ more than his childhood, the

mystical aspect of the church\* more than its juridical; the church’s liturgy\* more than private devotions.

Furthermore, the mystery of Christ is not only that which Christians believe but primarily the life which they share and experience. Differences about the ordering of revealed truths around this central mystery and about their expression in the actual life of a church are among the reasons for Christian divisions, either because of a failure to acknowledge legitimate diversity of expression, theological reflection and devotional practice or because of basic differences concerning what is and is not revealed (see *revelation*).

By better understanding how other Christians hold, express and live the faith, each confessional tradition can be led to a better understanding also of itself and begin to see its own formulations of doctrine in a broader perspective. The churches together can clarify the foundational content of what, in common witness, should be proclaimed in word and life in a way that speaks to the religious needs of the human spirit.

In the current ecumenical dialogue on divisive ethical issues, some have proposed a methodology of the “hierarchy of ethical truths and values”.

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## HINDU-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

ACCORDING to an old and honoured tradition, contacts between Hinduism and Christianity go back to the beginnings of Christianity, when the apostle Thomas preached the gospel in India and suffered martyrdom.\* In later centuries the Thomas Christians were given certain privileges in the Hindu kingdoms of the south and formed one of the self-contained communities within Indian society.

The Western "discovery" of India brought about a major missionary effort by Roman Catholic and later by various Protestant churches, leading to the formation of new Indian Christian communities along Western denominational lines. The newly converted Indian Christians were taught to break all links with their Hindu past and to consider the religion of their ancestors as inferior, if not as an outright invention of the devil. Similarly, many Hindus had a contempt for all non-Hindus, believing that contact with them would be polluting. Courageous individuals, such as Ram Mohan Roy and Brahmbandhab Upadhyaya in the 19th century, who suggested a mutual rapprochement, were largely ignored or even opposed by their fellow Hindus and fellow Christians.

In the early 1930s philosopher-statesman Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1889-1985) persuasively pleaded for a "dialogue of religions". He was perhaps influenced by his teacher and mentor, A.G. Hogg of the Madras Christian College, although Radhakrishnan frequently complained about the negative criticism which Hinduism had received at the hands of other missionary teachers. Only in the early 1960s was the dialogue taken up seriously by Christians. Two Christian scholars deserve special credit: Paul Devanandan, the founder-director of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society in Bangalore, and Jacques-Albert Cottat, Swiss ambassador to India from 1960 to 1964. Devanandan lectured and wrote about inter-religious dialogue long before the term became fashionable and helped to institutionalize it at the centre and in its bulletin, *Religion and Society*. Cottat undertook a major lobbying effort among the Indian Roman Catholic bishops to persuade the Vatican to establish what became known as the Secretariat for Non-Christians (established by Pope Paul VI in 1964), re-named under Pope John Paul II the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue. He also assembled what came to be known as the Cottat group, a gathering of about 20 Christians from different denominations who shared an interest in Hindu-Christian dialogue. The Jyotiniketan ashram, established by Murray Rogers near Bareilly, emerged as a kind of central point

for dialogue conferences between 1960 and 1970, especially in North India.

Under the leadership of Stanley Samartha of the Church of South India, the WCC Sub-unit on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies, established in 1971, became a major promoter of Hindu-Christian dialogue. Like the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians, the WCC Dialogue sub-unit had to contend with a certain amount of opposition from more conservative, traditionally mission-oriented circles within the churches and a certain misunderstanding on the part of Hindus, but the very existence of both signalled a new chapter in Hindu-Christian relations. The Christian side in Hindu-Christian dialogue meetings usually included representatives of a variety of denominations; similarly, the numerous dialogue centres which sprang up in India, though often run by particular Christian denominations, were nevertheless ecumenical in their approach to Hindu-Christian dialogue.

From the early 1970s onwards a new dimension of Hindu-Christian dialogue developed with the growth and spread of Hindu missions in the West. Whereas the Ramakrishna mission addressed mainly intellectuals and propagated a kind of universal religion, Hare Krishna and similar movements brought a new kind of sectarian Hinduism to the West, attracting young people to a life-style rooted in a particular Hindu tradition. Although the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) encountered some hostility in conservative Christian quarters, several of its leading members have actively sought dialogue with Christianity. Saunaka Rishi Das, editor of *ISKCON Communications Journal*, organized successful Vaisnava-Christian dialogue meetings in the UK and the USA in 1996. Subhananda Das, one of the most active promoters of dialogue, especially on a scholarly level, arranged a memorable three-day seminar in New Vrindaban in 1985 and also founded a review to promote academic dialogue between the Hare Krishna movement and Christianity.

The Christian ashram movement, including Jyotiniketan, now led by Franciscan friars, the Krist-Seva ashram in Pune, and Saccidanandashram, in Thanirpalli, founded by

Fr Mochanin and Swami Abhishiktananda (Fr Henri Lesaux, OSB), later under the guidance of Bede Griffiths, is essentially dedicated to Hindu-Christian dialogue in an attempt to integrate Hindu *sannyasa* into Christianity. After the death of two great pioneers of Hindu-Christian dialogue in India – Swami Abhishiktananda in 1973 and Fr Bede Griffiths in 1994 – friends and admirers have formed associations to keep their memories alive and to continue their work. The Abhishiktananda Society's bulletin *Setu* includes useful information on Hindu-Christian dialogue activities and reviews of publications. Notable individual efforts to engage in a theological Hindu-Christian dialogue were made by Bishop A.J. Appasamy (*Christianity as Bhaktimarga*) and Raymond Panikkar (*The Unknown Christ of Hinduism*). Conferences sponsored by Oratio Dominica in Freiburg, several symposia organized by the De Nobili research library, associated with the Indology department of the University of Vienna, and an international conference sponsored by the Religions-theologisches Institut St Gabriel, Mödling, have brought Hindu and Christian scholars together to reflect on basic concerns of their traditions in a spirit of dialogue and enquiry. Although global in scope, the 1993 Chicago Parliament of Religions was also a memorable event in Hindu-Christian dialogue due to the presence of representatives from both traditions.

A 1987 Hindu-Christian dialogue organized by the Calgary Institute for the Humanities led to the foundation of the *Hindu-Christian Studies Bulletin*, which serves as a vehicle for an ecumenical Hindu-Christian dialogue. Another source of information is the thrice-yearly *Bulletin of Monastic Inter-religious Dialogue*, published by the North American board for East-West dialogue. And the forthcoming multi-volume *Encyclopedia on Hinduism*, whose general editor Seshagiri Rao is himself an active promoter of Hindu-Christian dialogue, not only carries contributions relating to Hindu-Christian dialogue, but also includes several Christians among its editors.

Both Hinduism and Christianity are fragmented into numerous denominations and sects. Hindu-Christian dialogue not only leads to an encounter between Hindus

and Christians but also acts as a strong incentive to Hindu and Christian ecumenism. By meeting the other, each side is reminded of its own roots and original beliefs, over against which later events and developments leading to fissions and divisions may appear relatively unimportant. Such dialogue perhaps will lead to a more essential and more relevant Christianity and Hinduism.

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## HISTORIC PEACE CHURCHES

HISTORIC Peace Churches (HPC) is a term popularized in 1935 to refer to the Church of the Brethren,\* the Religious Society of Friends\* (Quakers), and the Mennonite\* churches which share a common witness against war. The three traditions date from different times, the Mennonites from the radical Reformation in the 16th century, the Friends from radical puritanism in the 17th century, and the Brethren from radical pietism in the 18th century. Yet all have held an official witness that peace is an essential aspect of the gospel and all have rejected the use of force and violence. Their common position on peace has brought the three traditions into many cooperative relationships, not only during times of war but also in worldwide service and relief projects.

In 1935 the conference of historic peace churches in North America, was held at North Newton, Kansas, USA, one in a series of meetings of pacifist denominations. The term "historic peace churches" was coined in part to distinguish biblical-based peaceful non-resistance from political pacifism,

which was becoming a popular movement during the time between the two world wars. At the Newton meeting, which included both theological and political concerns, participants felt that cooperation was urgent because of the growing international crisis, and that they had an obligation to share their message with other Christian bodies and with the United States government. Delegations were formed to visit different denominations and President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and a continuation committee was set up to promote peace concerns cooperatively. With the advent of military conscription in the USA in 1940, peace-church leaders worked to set up an alternative to military service for their members who were conscientious objectors: civilian public service. The work of the continuation committee was extended to Europe after the second world war, most notably through the series of conferences on “The Lordship of Christ over Church and State”, often referred to as the Puidoux conferences after the site of the first meeting in Switzerland.

When the World Council of Churches (WCC) was formed in Amsterdam in 1948, several of the HPC were founding members – the Church of the Brethren, Five Years Meeting (now Friends United Meeting), Friends General Conference (all from the USA), Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit (Dutch Mennonites) and the Vereinigung der Deutschen Mennonitengemeinden (German Mennonites). The first WCC assembly stated that “war is contrary to the will of God”, described three varying positions held by Christians, and urged theological reflections on the issues involved. The continuation committee took seriously this call, especially when a request came specifically from the WCC general secretary, W. A. Visser ‘t Hooft. In the booklet *War Is Contrary to the Will of God* (1951) each tradition submitted its statement, adding a fourth from the International Fellowship of Reconciliation.\* Ecumenical leaders expressed appreciation for the statements but challenged the peace church leaders again. If the HPC could not formulate a common position, they could hardly expect a body as diverse as the WCC to come to agreement. The continuation

committee went back to work and in 1953 presented a joint statement, “Peace Is the Will of God”. This was replaced in 1991 by the HPC in the USA, joined by the Fellowship of Reconciliation, in “A Declaration on Peace: In God’s People the World’s Renewal Has Begun”.

Service agencies of the HPC were instrumental in organizing EIRENE to provide openings for alternative service for European conscientious objectors, especially in developing countries. Volunteers from the HPC have served in many peace and service-oriented organizations in both Western and Eastern Europe. Members of these churches continue to be active in ecumenical activities, in particular through the WCC Programme to Overcome Violence and the Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV). In 2001, an HPC consultation was held in Bienenberg, Switzerland, on “Theology and Culture: Peace-making in a Globalized World” as a theological contribution to the DOV and an important marker in continuing ecumenical dialogue among the three HPC traditions and with the wider Christian fellowship.

See also **first and radical Reformation churches**.

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## HISTORY

THE GREAT Abrahamic religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – are religions of history (*Geschichtsreligionen*) with a definite direction towards the future, whereas the basic aim of the great religions in the East is to establish an inner and outer equilibrium within nature, society or the human person. Abraham was called by God to leave his home and country and to find a new land, to become a great nation and to be a blessing to many (Gen. 12:1-3). In this primordial and

archetypal story are found the basic categories which have created and sustained the Judaeo-Christian faith\* and are fundamental for its understanding of history: promise and covenant,\* expectation and experience, memory and hope.\*

### BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES

From its earliest to its latest parts, the Hebrew Bible reflects a widening understanding of history, which corresponds to a widening understanding of God's work. The ancient memories of Yahweh's guiding the destinies of the patriarchs came alive in the experience of Israel's liberation from Egypt. The ancient covenants with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are realized again in Yahweh's covenant with Israel in the revelation of the *torah*. From the book of Joshua to the book of Nehemiah, the story of Israel and its rulers is told. Israel's prophets are Yahweh's witnesses, interpreting, judging and guiding this history. As one follows that witness from Nathan to Daniel, Yahweh is understood not only as the Lord of Israel's history but as the Lord of all peoples. Not least, the creation\* accounts and related texts see Yahweh as the maker of heaven and earth, thereby placing the history of the universe under God's rule. Finally, the apocalyptic literature, which appears with Daniel and continues in the intertestamental period, envisages Yahweh as the Creator of a new creation and, therefore, of time beyond this earthly time.

This widening awareness of history is intimately related to Israel's experiencing God as continuously creating, calling, guiding, judging, caring. As a consequence of this experience of God, time is discovered as flowing, moving, unique in its possibilities, not closed in eternally recurrent circles; in short, it is eschatological. Yahweh discloses himself as the sense and meaning of time: I AM WHO I AM or I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE (Ex. 3:14). This name shows history as the *modus praesentiae Dei*.

History is therefore not simply regarded in terms of a mechanical sequence from past through present to the future but is considered an open, inspired process in which the future holds in store the unfulfilled promises of the past. The present is guided by *experiences* of past events and *expectations* of

things to come. Faith moves between memory and hope. Life is shaped by judgment and redemption. Time in its eschatological openness calls forth the categories of the possible and the not-yet, of change and renewal.

Israel's understanding of history as the realm of the living God is not simply linear. In its eschatological character, it also contains elements of a cyclical understanding of time. The *sabbath* is a recurrent time of rest (Ex. 20:10), the *sabbaticals* are years of restoration (Lev. 25:1-7) and the great *year of jubilee* is seen as a time of re-creating the original conditions of life for humanity and nature alike (Lev. 25:11). Since history is seen not as an independent entity (this explains why there is no term for it in the Bible) but as a perspective of God's presence, it is conceived not simply as a fatalistic movement forward but as God's time to create, destroy and regenerate. The land and the people are meant to live in God's own rhythm of working and resting.

Nowhere is Christianity more obviously rooted in the Jewish faith than in its understanding of history. What the New Testament says about God incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth (see **incarnation**) is based on Israel's faith in God's time-creating presence and power. The specific *Christian* contribution to this concept of history is found in the cross and resurrection\* of Jesus Christ.\* The Christian faith in the resurrected Christ implies an understanding of history as participation in the process of resurrection. Since in Christ the fullness of God is revealed, all creation shares in the promise of a resurrected life, or life eternal.

So history is placed in the dimension of radicalized eschatology: "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). Christ is not the end of history but the final and decisive revelation of what Israel had learned to believe: God as history's ultimate meaning, God disclosed as love, sacrificial love as warranted by the life and death of Jesus, and love transcending death, as manifested on Easter morning.

The Christ-event is not only a hermeneutical clue in order to find a solution to the age-old question of the meaning of time and of existence. It is at the same time an invitation to participate in it as trustworthy stew-

ards (cf. 1 Cor. 4:1) in the unfolding of God's kingdom.\* As history is the realm of God's presence, it is also the realm of discipleship for the believers.

### MODERN WESTERN CIVILIZATION

In the early and medieval church, history was largely understood in terms of God's pedagogy of humanity. The four-kingdoms concept of the prophet Daniel served as a way of ordering history in a typological sense. The chiliastic concepts of history (as taught e.g. by Joachim de Fiore) follow a similar typological interpretation of past events. Their aim is to proclaim a message for the present; history thus becomes a tool for specific interests, whether political, apologetic or soteriological.

As a discipline in its own right, history takes shape only within the modern civilization, the *Neuzeit*. The origins of this epoch are certainly varied. But it can be safely said that with the Renaissance period a great historical process began which first spread through Europe, and from there to the Americas, before reaching out to all parts of the globe in the 19th and especially in the 20th century. Therefore, it is here called the modern Western civilization. It is a process of unprecedented discoveries, conquests and expansions which led to the formation of great colonial empires and super-powers and, even more significantly, revolutionized the sciences that were known and created new ones. Their results, coupled with new technologies, economic methods and communication skills, have drastically shaped the world of today.

It is within this process – which may justly be called the human project of “dominion over the earth” – that the idea of history has developed and turned into a scientific discipline of its own. And inasmuch as the international connectedness of peoples and cultures became more and more apparent, so history took on a universal scope as *Universalgeschichte*. An impressive example of this is A.J. Toynbee's *A Study of History*, which endeavours to describe the societies and cultures of the earth.

In the modern Western civilization, the human being (in the form of elites, or peoples, or classes) is the subject of history. The world of nature and also the human body

are considered mere “resources”, objectified and instrumentalized matter to be dealt with at will by the human mind.

Philosophers like Karl Löwith have interpreted this project of *dominium terrae* as the secularized adaptation of the biblical view of history (see **secularization**). Humanity itself is put in the place of God; it no longer sees itself as part of creation but as creator. It is a decidedly *anthropocentric Weltanschauung*. The biblical notion of promise has been replaced by the belief in unlimited progress, eschatological openness by evolutionary necessity.

By the end of the 20th century, however, it had become apparent that this great project of dominion over the earth, which began 500 years ago, has run into a deep crisis. The economic relationships and structures of the world are marked by deep injustices causing hunger, impoverishment and marginalization in large parts of the earth. The development of nuclear bombs has led to massive overkill capacities which threaten all life with annihilation. The misuse of the natural resources and the contamination of air, water and soil have produced irrevocable ecological damage. Humankind is facing global catastrophes. While attempting to be the maker of its own future, humanity ends up being the possible maker of its death. No wonder, then, that for many people the belief in progress has turned into despair, cynicism or hedonism.

### HISTORY IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

The modern ecumenical movement began in the second half of the 19th century, and young women and men in Western (mostly Protestant) churches took the lead. So this movement is part of what we have called the great project of discovery and expansion. In this case it is the discovery of the oikoumene, the whole inhabited earth, as one great realm of operation. It is the discovery of the church\* of Jesus Christ as a global phenomenon, the *una sancta ecclesia*, transcending all denominational lines and limitations. It is the discovery of a universal calling to bring Christ to all the peoples who have not yet heard of him.

The ecumenical movement can thus be seen as presenting a new level of consciousness gaining ground in the churches. A new

perspective appeared, in which the histories of the churches led towards the one history of the one church of Christ on earth. This vision was first grasped by young people who formed international organizations such as the YMCA, the YWCA and the World Student Christian Federation. They provided the generation of leaders who formed the ecumenical movement.

John R. Mott (1865-1955) can be singled out as the most significant of them. Mott was keenly aware of the process by which the Western powers of trade, industry, science and technology were opening up the world. But he interpreted this process in biblical terms. Therefore he considered it as God's way to create the providential *kairos* for the world to hear the good news of Christ. His famous programme of "the evangelization of the world in this generation" reflected his awareness of this unique historical opportunity as an irrevocable moment in God's plan for history. Now was the time to win the world for Christ, lest other faiths, religious or secular, use that *kairos*. Mott saw clearly that the other great religions were soon to become active in missionary work. Above all, he considered rising communism as the most dangerous competitor of Christianity for shaping the course of world history.

While the founding generation of the ecumenical movement shared that great optimism about progress, they understood it in a theological perspective. It was God\* leading the histories of the peoples towards one great world history. The discovery of the *oikoumene* was the discovery of God's purpose and providence.\* To work for it was a supreme and timely act of obedience and discipleship. The fervent conviction *Dieu le veut*, "God wills it", transformed itself into three main ecumenical imperatives: the imperative for *mission*\* (represented in the International Missionary Council\*), for *church unity* (represented by the Faith and Order\* movement), and for *peace*\* (represented in the Life and Work\* movement and the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches\*).

From its inception the ecumenical movement has tried to be firmly rooted in the Bible and to follow the Christocentric orientation which appeared as early as the YMCA

basis adopted in Paris in 1855: "To confess Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures." This Christocentricity has had a critical influence both in the understanding of the churches' role and in the perception of the world. From the start the ecumenical movement understood itself as a fellowship of believers calling their churches to repentance and obedience and approaching the affairs of the worldly powers with prophetic criticism. History was conceived not only as the realm of human activity but equally importantly as the realm in which God was working out his purpose. Hence different concepts of salvation history\* played an important part in understanding this relationship.

The first assembly of the WCC (Amsterdam 1948) chose a theme which illuminates this basic orientation: "Man's Disorder and God's Design". This formulation reflects the faith in God's work in history as well as critical awareness of the world's disorders. The Paris basis appears again in the constitution of the WCC (see WCC, basis of), and with it the Christocentric orientation was firmly established. Its concept of history was universal. This Christocentric universality can easily be detected in all of the Council's varied activities.

This frame of thought also governs most of the world confessional groupings, such as the Lutheran World Federation\* or the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.\* But it surfaced most explicitly in the Second Vatican Council (see Vatican Councils I and II). Its Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*, spells out a linear concept of salvation history. This process of salvation\* finds its visible historical expression in the (Catholic) church as the human community of salvation (*Lumen Gentium*). The other religions of humankind are seen as preparatory approximations to this process of salvation (*Nostra Aetate*). Finally, Vatican II sets this approach in the context of human history in general: *Gaudium et Spes* speaks of one great organic process leading all history towards its one common goal in God.

Within the theological work of the WCC, two Faith and Order projects have made a significant attempt to clarify the relationship between the mission of the ecumenical movement and contemporary historical awareness.

The first, "God in Nature and History" (1967), connects belief in God's providential guidance of history with the modern concept of evolution and tries to integrate the finality of Christ with the universal nature-history process (see **nature**). Clearly influenced by visionary thinkers like Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, who considered the coming of Christ the one great telos of the history of the planet earth, the F&O paper emphasizes the convergent processes in the world and places the ecumenical movement firmly in it. The ambivalence of historical progress, e.g. in the area of medicine, is acknowledged, but that this same ambivalence also pertains to the development of philosophies and theologies of history is not realized.

The second study project was conducted during the 1970s under the title "Unity of the Church and Unity of Humankind". In some ways it was the continuation of "God in Nature and History", but now the attempt was made to look more carefully at the role of the churches in the historic process of increasing global interdependence. The Uppsala assembly in 1968 had boldly spoken of the church "as the sign of the coming unity of mankind", but soon thereafter interdependence began to unfold its unjust, exploitative and marginalizing character. At the same time the diversity between the churches received more attention, pushing the idea of organic unity into the background. The belief in a positive convergence of all evolutionary processes began to vanish. By the time of the Nairobi assembly (1975), the key points of the F&O study had changed considerably. The unity of the church, of humankind and of creation were now derived from the faith in the Trinitarian unity of God (see **Trinity**), thus replacing the earlier, more uncritical relation between evolution and salvation.

Under the impact of the growing anguish of large sectors of the world's population (the third world), Uppsala had also sharpened ethical awareness by underlining the option for the poor\* and the oppressed (obviously in relation to the liberation theology\* emerging during those years in Latin America). During the 1980s the threefold threat to life on earth led to a further widening of the theological and ethical scope. The call of the Vancouver assembly (1983) for

the churches to covenant together for justice, peace and the integrity of creation marks the end of a merely anthropocentric and social concept of ecumenical ethics. The Christocentric orientation does not imply an anthropocentric concept of salvation. In fact, if Christ is understood in cosmic terms – a dimension present at the New Delhi assembly in 1961 but largely overlooked since then – his saving work extends to all of creation.

In summary, the ecumenical movement at the beginning of the 21st century must realize that the anthropocentric paradigm of modern civilization has come to an end. In view of the threat of an end of history brought about by human beings, it will have to re-think its understanding of history. To deny human responsibility and to resort to a fundamentalist apocalyptic view, as certain churches and evangelical groupings suggest, will not do justice to humanity's unique calling within the whole of creation. Once creation is understood as a community of equal dignity and rights for all living things, human beings will see themselves no longer as the centre of history but as trustees of a history which belongs to the earth.

The tension remains that humanity has entered the stage in which it must assume the responsibility for the future of history, even though the destructive forces set in motion appear to be beyond control. But precisely on that account, the notion of human beings as stewards and trustees of the community of life may help to balance this dilemma, for it reduces them to their proper place in the commonwealth of creation and keeps them accountable to God, who remains the ultimate source of history and its goal.

See also **eschatology, prophecy**.

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## HOLINESS

THE CHURCH\* of the risen Christ, victorious over sin and death, can only be holy. In the Nicene Creed,\* holiness is one of the four specific “notes” of the church – “one, *holy*, catholic, apostolic”.

The church’s holiness is participation in the holiness of God, who is the source of all holiness. The church is “a holy nation, God’s own people” (1 Pet. 2:9). The Father so loved the world that he gave his only Son to save it (John 3:16) and made it possible for the church, the “Body of Christ”, to share in the communion of the Triune God (see **Trinity**). The church is holy through Christ’s righteousness. Jesus, “the holy One of God” (Mark 1:24; John 6:69), full of the Holy Spirit\* (Luke 1:35, 3:22, 4:34; Acts 10:38), is one body with his church (Eph. 5:23). He “loved the church and gave himself up for her, in order to make her holy... that she might be holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:25-27). The risen Christ is “a life-giving spirit” (1 Cor. 15:45; cf. 2 Cor. 3:17): through his Spirit the Christians are “a holy temple in the Lord” (Eph. 2:21; cf. 1 Cor. 3:17). Individual Christians are holy through their relationship to God as members of the church; and they are to live a life worthy of their calling (Eph. 4:1-3; Col. 3:12-15). “Holiness” thus defines the church as the redeeming presence of God’s holiness in our sinful world (see **sin**), as the call of God to all humankind to that participation in the divine life and love “which is the very mystery of the church” (Cardinal Basil Hume).

The creed relates the holiness of the church to the mission of the Holy Spirit, “Lord and Giver of life”. In communion with the Father and Son, the Spirit is the principle of all holiness of, in and through the church. The succeeding articles – communion of saints\* (Apostles’ Creed), forgiveness of sins, resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come – make explicit the Spirit’s role in salvation.\*

The holiness of the church confessed by Trinitarian Christian faith transcends the concept of the sacred or wholly other, described in such terms as “out of human reach”, “awesome” and “fascinating”. In the church, God manifests his absolute closeness, shares his “wholly other” life with sinful humans. God is met as love dispelling fear and removing guilt, as Father communicating himself through his Son and his Spirit in our flesh and history.\* God’s love overcomes sin in his very “enemies”: “God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us... While we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son” (Rom. 5:8-10).

The church is the place where mortals find holiness and salvation. It is holy in order “that they may have life” (John 10:10). It is the place for proclaiming the gospel, for baptism,\* for praying, worshipping, celebrating together, for the forgiveness of sins. It is sign or sacrament\* of the healing and reconciling action of Christ and the Holy Spirit through such “means of sanctity” (Vatican II) as scripture, the ministry of the word, sacraments, church structures and discipline. God’s sanctifying economy\* constitutes the “objective” holiness of the church. Faithful and self-involving response to the gospel makes the church into a communion of “saints”, a fellowship of life, love and truth, expecting the resurrection\* of the body and the life of the world to come. Many faithful persons whose lives reflected the holiness of the church have been canonized (declared saints) in the course of history. The Second Vatican Council emphasized that “the holiness of the church expresses itself... in a special way” through the monastic life. The saint bears witness to the presence in the world of God’s saving power. The “holy” church is recognized in the first place through sanctity in its members.

The church in its pilgrim state is at once holy and, at least in a sense, sinful (see **people of God**). A “subjective” sinfulness of the church can be attributed to its members: “The church herself is sinful, in that her own members are sinners” (Karl Rahner). But also “the church will never lack holiness in her members” (Karel Truhlar). Montanism and Novatianism in the early church refused to reconcile Christians guilty of apostasy,\*

murder or adultery or to grant penance\* more than once in a life-time. Later currents – such as the Albigensians, Waldensians, Hussites, the radical Reformation and the Jansenists – also disputed that sinful Christians remain members of the church. But Christianity on the whole never evolved into a fellowship of the perfect. It also followed Augustine's rejection of Donatist doctrine that sinful ministers do not dispense valid sacraments: sin cannot impair the efficacy of the church's ministry in so far as it is Christ's own saving action. Although Roman Catholics claim that the fullness of "objective" sanctity is found only in their church, Vatican II\* affirmed the existence of "great holiness" outside it.

The correlation of holiness and sinfulness is constitutive of the very conception of the holiness of the church. "It is precisely through its paradoxical structure of holiness and unholiness that the church is the form of grace in this world" (Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger). Luther saw that such a structure points to Christ's holiness as being our sole holiness and of course the church's holiness. Or in the words of modern Protestants quoted by Yves Congar: "To affirm the holiness of the church is not to exclude sin in it but to proclaim the indissolubility of the union of Christ and the church." As Body of Christ, the church is patterned upon the paradox that Christ has been made sin: "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor. 5:21). The mystery of the holiness of the church is derived from the primary fact that a man deeply involved in (others') sin is given as the very holiness of God bestowed upon sinners so that they may be freed from sin.

The churches of the Reformation\* rejected the Roman theses on the objective holiness of the church. Protestant theology holds that the church as a fellowship of sinners has no power over the process of sanctification.\* There is no proper "sanctifying" capacity of the clergy or even of the sacramental rites as such. Thus a fundamental difference continues to exist between Roman Catholics, who maintain the constitutive role of the church and its ministry, as Body of Christ, in God's sanctifying work, and those Protestants who deny the church, as

"creature of the word", any "authorship" in salvation.

Theological discussions about the holiness of the church have consistently demonstrated that to interpret human reality in terms of holiness is fruitful only within the polarity of God's holiness and human sinfulness. Neglecting this specific structure of the topic may lead, for example, to expecting from the church an unreal, "stainless" purity, a notion of holiness alien to our sinful human condition, in which we constantly face the destructiveness of sin and also perceive it as lying as heavy as the momentous victory of the Crucified One over it. The holiness of the church is rooted in this victory of God's holiness over sin, in Christ "made sin for us", in us, with us sinners. It is as the One who agreed to be "all the sinners" that Christ has become the event of divine holiness, redemptive in the faith of "a holy church of sinners", *ecclesia simul sancta et peccatrix*. Like his "holy" church, Christ has been known and condemned on earth as sinner: but in the Spirit the believer is given an insight into the life of the church "hidden with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3).

In contemporary Christianity the notion of the holiness of the church has become further controversial in connection with the concern for Christian commitment to justice.\* "There is no holiness without justice" (Paul Tillich). Catholicism has come to admit injustice committed in the past by the Roman church and to acknowledge the need for continual reformation of the church, in the spirit of the Reformation theme of the *ecclesia semper reformanda*. Church bodies come under heavy criticism and are deemed "unholy" wherever they fail to attend to social needs, to appear convincingly committed to active struggle against sin "in the world". The holiness of the church is measured according to the parable of the Good Samaritan and the account of the last judgment in Matthew 25. The conception of the church as "congregation of saints" (Augsburg confession) is criticized as omitting the church's function in world history. "The salvation it proclaims is not merely salvation of the soul but also the realization of the eschatological hope of justice" (Jürgen Moltmann).

Churches today have thus sought to work together for such "worldly" concerns

as justice, peace,\* the integrity of creation, freedom and life (see **life and death**). This commitment to engage “secular” problems is not always very successful, and not totally without the risk of compromising with sin, as some have argued in the case of WCC support for liberation\* movements involved in armed violence,\* one of the factors leading the Salvation Army\* to suspend its membership in the WCC. But coming to grips with institutionalized sin through commitment to peace and human rights, through coping with the problems of the people most in need, living as a servant community in the spirit of Jesus – all this has brought to Christianity a fresh understanding of the gospel in the context of a radically changed world. In the face of the experience of holiness given in attending to Christ’s most suffering members, many traditional views about holiness collapse. The church realizes and confesses its guilt in much of the injustice in the world, for failing to do anything worthwhile to redeem many awful situations, for being indifferent to them. But the epiphany of “Christ made sin” in the socially or politically “crucified” of our times reveals God’s forgiveness granted to his people in the Son, whom the Father gave up for the sins of the world. The risen Christ, who has buried sin in his death, is the only righteousness of his “body”, its life-giving spirit for a new creation. In him is recalled that at human level nothing “just” is spared sinfulness. In his church’s struggle, it is Christ who continues to fight “against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness suppress the truth” (Rom. 1:18) – also within the church.

This new gospel awareness owes much to the “discovery” of the Holy Spirit through the ecumenical dialogue with the Orthodox. In Orthodoxy the Holy Spirit has always been known as the ever-active agent of the holiness of the church. Pentecost\* inaugurated an economy of holiness in which sin is not yet totally suppressed but no longer reigns. Through the eucharistic invocation to the Spirit, the church calls upon itself the power that makes it “the icon of the kingdom to come” (John Zizioulas). The Spirit is the one who bears witness in the church to the risen Christ as the eschatological Lord over sin.

Today’s deeper understanding of the holiness of the church is prompted by the interaction of the best insights in Western and Eastern Christianity. “The Holy Spirit leads us to understand more clearly that holiness today cannot be attained without commitment to justice, without human solidarity, that include the poor and the oppressed” (Roman Synod on the Laity, 1987). Conversely, the theology of the Crucified makes clear that charisms\* are not powers that would allow the church to be, so to say, holy “on its own”. Holiness is the church’s respiration dependent on the holy breath of Christ, in constant prayer,\* the very struggle of life.

The criterion of a “holy” church is this life in the Spirit, not an abstract sinlessness. As long as the process of sanctification is going on in the church, sin remains and calls for forgiveness; but it is also overcome by this “holiness” which consists in the struggle of Christ’s Spirit against evil. To manifest the church’s holiness today is to foster Christian fellowship through interchurch thinking and acting on vital issues, in response to the one undivided gospel of God in Christ. The church’s entire reality rests on the holy gospel, whereby God’s merciful action is made known and redemptive for our times.

See also **redemption**.

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## HOLINESS MOVEMENT

THE HOLINESS movement is a group of individuals and church bodies in the US whose principal purpose is the propagation of what they believe to be the biblical doctrine and experience of Christian perfection. Most accept John Wesley’s teaching on “entire sanc-

tification” as normative but not absolutely definitive.

The Holiness movement understands Christian perfection to begin in an act of divine grace\* in which the already-regenerate recipient, totally submissive to the will of God, is cleansed of original sin,\* endowed with perfect love for God and neighbour and empowered to witness to the saving grace of God in Christ through service. It is received instantaneously by faith.\* It is provided for in the atoning work of Jesus Christ\* and is wrought by the Holy Spirit.\* The Holiness movement distinguishes purity from maturity and insists that while Christian perfection is wholly accomplished at its inception, the sanctified believer will seek to grow in grace and Christlikeness.

Holiness people consider themselves strictly orthodox Christians and, with the exception of restorationist elements, accept as their own the creeds,\* doctrinal understandings and ethical principles of the ecumenical and undivided church, as well as the history of the church catholic. They are Protestant, holding stoutly (as basic and essential doctrine) to *sola gratia, sola scriptura* and the priesthood of all believers. They are Augustinian in their understanding of the human condition apart from saving grace and Arminian in their understanding of universal atonement, free grace and free will, though popular thought has sometimes run to Pelagianism. Currently, some awareness is dawning of affinities with the Eastern Orthodox tradition in the areas of creation and soteriology.

Methodism’s Twenty-five Articles of Religion provide the basis for most of the movement’s confessional statements. Such statements usually both affirm catholicity\* and declare distinguishing tenets.

Beyond the fundamental agreements noted, the Holiness movement bodies vary greatly, as the following differences in sacramental theology illustrate. Most Holiness groups celebrate both baptism\* and eucharist,\* but the Salvation Army\* and some Friends\* congregations celebrate neither. The Church of God (Anderson) advocates the term “ordinances” and celebrates three: baptism, the Lord’s supper and foot-washing. The Church of the Nazarene, Wesleyan Church and Free Methodist Church practise

infant baptism; the Church of God (Anderson), Church of God (Holiness) and Missionary Church practise believer’s baptism only.

Holiness people have insisted that these and other differences do not divide their witness to the propagation of Christian perfection. The Christian Holiness Association (CHA – originally the National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness, later the National Holiness Association) serves as a coordinating and galvanizing agency for that purpose. A similar function is carried out for a constituency of perhaps 100,000 in some 30 smaller groups who fear that the mainstream of the movement is spiritually lukewarm, by the Interdenominational Holiness Convention (IHC, 1947). Some persons and groups belong to both CHA and IHC. The Church of God (Anderson) identifies and works with the movement, but as a restorationist body refuses to join either CHA or IHC. Only racial prejudice has prevented the Holiness movement from recognizing that African American Methodism (African Methodist Episcopal, AME Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal) has historically differed from it not one whit in faith and piety.

The Holiness movement has two major historical roots. By far the larger and more significant is the largely successful mid-19th century Methodist attempt to revive a flagging commitment to Wesleyan perfectionism, led before the civil war by Phoebe Palmer, George and Jesse Peck and Nathan Bangs, joined immediately after the war by Randolph Foster, John A. Wood and John Inskip. The second major root is in the perfectionist revivalism of Asa Mahan and Charles Finney, especially its emphases on biblical “proofs” for entire sanctification, “free moral agency”, the work of the Holy Spirit as the agent of the sanctifying experience and spiritual power. Such fundamentalism in method and content as there is in the movement has generally arisen from this latter source, but its Wesleyan roots have kept the movement free of the debates over biblical inerrancy and millennialism which have been divisive in other US groups.

The Holiness movement bears deep commitments to the transformationist social ethic characteristic of its roots in the aboli-

tionism of the Wesleyans and Free Methodists and its primary expression in the Salvation Army. After nearly a half-century of dormancy induced by *embourgeoisement*, this tradition re-appeared in strength in the 1970s.

The movement has had two periods of denomination-building: roughly 1880-1920 and 1960-80. In the former period, Holiness people formed congregations and associations on the basis of three convictions: that the major denominations did not want them, that those denominations were neglecting the inner cities, and that they needed to nurture those converted and sanctified in their revivalistic ventures. The original congregations and associations quickly entered a period of merger which ended only as the new denominations gained a generation of "tradition" and identity. From 1960 to 1980, a number of groups broke away from older Holiness denominations, usually protesting worldliness and abuse of ecclesiastical power. The 1968 merger of the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church to form the Wesleyan Church and increasing interdenominational cooperation in such matters as hymnody and materials for Christian education may herald a new period of merger.

Several of the Holiness bodies and a number of individuals belong to the National Association of Evangelicals, in spite of deep concerns on the part of some with the rationalistic style of much of evangelical theology, the supposed emotionalism of the Pentecostals, and the traditional programmatic social conservatism of the NAE. Through the Wesleyan Theological Society, the scholarly commission of CHA, the movement is represented on the Faith and Order commission of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA.

See also **sanctification**.

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## HOLY SPIRIT

THE THEOLOGY of the Holy Spirit, or pneumatology, is not so much one specific chapter of Christian theology as an essential dimension of every theological view of the church and of its spirituality and liturgical and sacramental life. The Holy Spirit is first and foremost the Spirit we invoke, the Spirit who presides over the upbuilding and renewal of the church,\* the Spirit who infuses everyone that comes into the world with the light of Christ.

## BIBLICAL TEACHING

In the figures of the Old Testament, the link between *dabbar* (word) and *ruah* (wind, breath, spirit) is one of the things which most forcefully heralds Trinitarian theology (see **Trinity**). The Word of God is alive and sanctifies. It is suffused by Spirit and transmitted by the divine breath. This anthropological image suggests the intimate and essential link between the divine persons of the Son and the Spirit.

Gradually the Word achieved greater definition, disclosing its identity and, in some passages from the Psalms, being treated as a person.\* The same process of development held good for the Spirit or wisdom. In the post-exilic writings a theology of the Spirit and a theology of wisdom were worked out.

In Gen. 1 the pneumatological prologue is followed by acts of God sustained and signalled by a living Word. But in the work of creation the Word of God is not merely preceded but also accompanied by the Spirit, who ensures that it "carries" and reaches its audience. Thus Word and Spirit go together in the order of creation. Of this the Bible gives evidence in fullest measure (e.g. Pss. 33:6, 147:18).

The entire sacred history of Israel displays God's teaching work as he speaks to this people "whose hearts are hardened", but whom he has chosen for himself and loved. God's hand can be traced in the web of historical events itself, in the summons of the prophets who communicate the word of God. The Spirit of God is always there and

suffuses the prophets and fills the poetical writers and the psalmists. The Spirit guides the people and, as it were, ensures the slow rising of sap so that they may become mature and await ever more anxiously and impatiently the Saviour and the pouring out of the Spirit in the last days.

The dual presence and action of the Word and the Spirit is pre-eminently embodied and displayed in biblical messianism. Frequently the pneumatological dimension of this messianism has been neglected. If the Messiah can keep the word of the law given by God to Moses and bring about justice on this earth, it is because the Spirit of God rests upon him (Isa. 61:1). If the "Suffering Servant" can "bring salvation to the nations", it is for the same reason. And if the people as a whole will be able one day to accept the Word in their inmost selves, this is because the heart of each person will be renewed by the Spirit.

The two constants of the Spirit and the Word, of the Spirit and those who are the elect, of the Spirit and the Servant, merge in the anointing of Jesus by the Spirit at his baptism. Here the Elect One of God not only states the Word of God as something outside himself but incarnates and manifests it.

In the period of the incarnation the Holy Spirit is the *Spirit of the incarnation*, in and by whom the Word – the logos – of God breaks into history, the Spirit who prepares a human body for that Word as the temple of its godhead.

The baptism of Jesus by the forerunner in the Jordan is a major stage of the revelation of the Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and rests on the Son, thus accompanying and confirming the witness of the Father. This is a revelation of the eternal movement of the Spirit of the Father, who remains in the Son from all eternity. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus, permeating him, revealing him and disclosing him to the world.

Jesus' first words in his public ministry express his awareness of being Christ, that is, of being anointed and permeated by the Spirit (Luke 4:18,21; Matt. 12:17-18) and even led by him (Matt. 4:1; Mark 1:12). From then on, consecrated by the anointing of the Spirit, who remains in him and sends him, Jesus proclaims the good news to the poor. And in the Spirit he works miracles,

heals the sick, raises the dead and expels demons.

All of Jesus' prayers are – or rather the *entire prayer* of Jesus is – in the Spirit (Luke 10:21; John 4:23, 11:33,41). His praying is something continuous in which the whole being of the Saviour is defined in a constant existential relationship to the Father in the Spirit. Thus the Holy Spirit is the centre, where the indescribable occurs in the exchange of the eternal Trinitarian words "You are my Son" and "Abba, Father". From the incarnation\* to the ascension the entire earthly life of Jesus is a life filled by the Spirit, moving through the passion, the cross, the supreme impoverishment in which Jesus achieves the ideal of the Beatitudes, of which he is the great and only true example, so that we can paraphrase: "Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3 and 1 Pet. 4:14).

It is indeed in the Spirit that Jesus consecrates himself to the Father (John 17:19) and offers himself to the Father as a sacrifice without blemish (Heb. 9:14) and, according to the passion stories in Luke (23:46) and John (19:30), commits his spirit into the Father's hands and breathes his last. In answer to this definitive gift of the Spirit, the Father raises his Son from the dead by that same Spirit (Acts 2:32-33). Thus henceforward the Spirit is the irresistible force which breaks the seal of the empty tomb, the overflowing joy which fills the disciples and the women who bring spices, the blinding light of the resurrection,\* the presence which remained in Jesus himself in death and which hell cannot swallow up.

The Spirit as a person also remains to some extent unmentioned by name and is concealed behind symbols (the finger of God, power, light, cloud, kingdom) and so is inseparable from the living experience of the fruits of the kingdom (peace, joy, gentleness, mercy, wisdom, courage, etc.). This anonymity of the Spirit is confirmed by Paul's words that "in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily" (Col. 2:9; cf. John 1:14). In these Pauline and Johannine expressions we have the feeling that the Spirit is hidden and somehow confounded with the gifts of the Spirit, with the energies of the Spirit which radiate eternally from the divine

Trinity. These deeply scriptural intuitions were developed in Byzantine and Palamite theology.

The certainty of the coming of the Spirit is affirmed in the preaching of Jesus. We remember the exposition by Jesus himself (cf. Luke 11:13) of the petition in the Lord's prayer, "give us each day our daily bread". All the needs of men and women are signs of the Spirit and an opportunity for proclamation: bread, fire, water, light, etc. (cf. Luke 12:49).

The imminence of the Saviour's passion gives him the opportunity for some final teaching of the most exalted kind on the Holy Spirit on the occasion of the great "words of consolation" found in the farewell discourse (John 13:31-16:33) and the high priestly prayer (John 17), which are indivisibly part of these words. The promise of the Holy Spirit is given there more solemnly than ever in the setting of Jesus' "departure" (see John 16:7), which acquires its whole meaning as a necessary condition for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Thus because Jesus "is spirit" (John 4:24; 2 Cor. 3:17-18) from all eternity, and "in the days of his flesh" was wholly filled with the Spirit and united with the Spirit to the ineffable core of his being as God-man, he communicates the Spirit to human beings in the unceasing Pentecost\* of the church, which is his body and the temple of his Spirit.

The gift of Pentecost is the necessary completion of the mystery of Easter. Christ, being filled with the Spirit, becomes the giver of the Spirit in the morning of Pentecost in the upper room. This is when the church, baptized and re-born through the blood of Christ, is confirmed and strengthened once for all in the new life which is the life of the Spirit, or life in the Spirit of God.

In the actual life of the early church, the Spirit genuinely is an everyday reality which Christians know from their experience: "do not quench the Spirit" (1 Thess. 5:19), "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18), "be ardent in the Spirit" (Rom. 12:11). Paul describes very fully the experience of the church *in the Spirit*: "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us" (Rom. 5:5). Rom. 8 sets out the new life of the Christian

in the Spirit. At the heart of our renewed personality, our spirit, it is the Holy Spirit himself who acts, speaks, groans and prays (v.26).

Like the New Testament, the patristic writings equally reflect the church's fundamental confession of faith in Jesus Christ dead and risen, in the certainty of the experience of the Spirit who makes alive. Rather than reflecting *on* the Spirit, the fathers pass on to us an expression of the experience *of* the Spirit in the church.

### THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CHURCH

Christian worship is worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24), both through the strength of the Spirit, who works in the church, and through the purpose of this worship, which is to make us bearers of the Spirit (*pneumatophoroi*), transformed by and in the Spirit into new people till we attain "the full stature of Christ" (Eph. 4:13), who both humbled himself in taking human form and was exalted by God (Phil. 2:6-11).

While Christian worship involves us in the great movement of prayer – in the intercession both on earth and in heaven of Jesus the High Priest – it must also be said that the Holy Spirit is the object and the entire content of that invocation, or epiclesis,\* by Christ. The whole of Christian worship thus constitutes an unceasing epiclesis which culminates in the continual Pentecost of the Spirit in the church, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Between the liturgical expression of the eucharist – the continuing Pentecost of the Spirit – and the experience of the saints there is a profound connection: in both it is the Holy Spirit who creates the dynamic of the call, the encounter and the transformation of human beings into a temple of God. This sense of the prayer of the Spirit in the human heart is experienced very strongly in the tradition of the Jesus prayer, in which Jesus' name is unceasingly invoked: "When the Spirit comes to dwell in human beings, they can no longer cease from praying, for the Spirit never ceases praying in them" (Isaac of Nineveh).

All the structures of the church are determined by the dual, simultaneous and reciprocal mediation of the Son in the Spirit and the Spirit in the Son, by that dual, real

presence of the Lord Jesus and the Comforter, and in and through them by the encounter with the Father who is the source and end (i.e. alpha and omega) of the divine fellowship or communion. Thus there is in the church a fundamental balance between, on the one hand, the principles of tradition, obedience, order, sacramental, liturgical and canonical forms, and, on the other, the principles of freedom, creativity, personal responsibility, the irreducible integrity of the human person, the local community, the divine grace which gives spiritual content to the forms and structures and ensures a unique and necessary vertical relation between the individual person and God, between the local congregation and the Master. This balance is never achieved once for all but must always be renewed. With this in mind, the inspiration\* of the Spirit must always be renewed and cannot be codified but becomes incarnated: truth is always alive and is never wholly the same as the dogmatic formulas expressing and enshrining it.

The Word – the Logos – is the guarantor that it really is the Spirit that is acting. The Word identifies the Spirit in the gift of distinguishing between spirits. But this does not mean that the Word is subordinating the Spirit to the hierarchy or the institutions. Today the Spirit still creates prophetic gifts or charisms which can come into conflict with the hierarchy, which, though it is established, is not infallible. These charisms may call on the hierarchy to repent or may proclaim God's judgment to it. Prophecy\* is just as intrinsic to the nature of the church as is the royal priesthood, or rather it represents one of the essential, inalienable aspects of the priestly anointing of the church by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Prophecy is a characteristic mark of the genuineness of the Spirit and of the Spirit's continuing, sovereign presence. The Spirit is a Spirit of order, but the divine order does not always correspond in every respect to that of the established hierarchy.

See also **charism(ata), holiness, sanctification.**

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■ For bibliography, see *Holy Spirit in ecumenical thought*.

## HOLY SPIRIT IN ECUMENICAL THOUGHT

REFERENCES to the Holy Spirit in the reports of major ecumenical conferences prior to the formation of the WCC followed the lines of traditional Protestant thinking and piety in those years. The Holy Spirit was understood mainly as divine power working in the church\* and in the life of the individual Christian. While the Trinitarian confession of the faith was acknowledged formally, the affirmation of the Spirit as person\* in communion\* with the Father and the Son remained largely undeveloped (see **Trinity**).

A new emphasis began to be evident in 1952 at both the world mission (Willingen) and Faith and Order (Lund) conferences. The understanding of the missionary task as participation in the *missio Dei*\* is based on a Trinitarian conception of the divine economy, the sequence of God's saving acts in the history of salvation.\* God has sent his Son to reconcile all things unto himself in order that all people might become one with God through the power of the Holy Spirit. As Jesus Christ\* has accomplished his work of salvation, God sent the Spirit – the Spirit of Jesus who assembles people into one body, leads into all truth and enables the church to continue the divine mission. Through the Holy Spirit, the church can both press forward as ambassador and witness to Christ and wait with confidence for his final victory (cf. Willingen's declaration on the "Missionary Obligation of the Church").

In its sections on "Christ and the Church" and "Continuity and Unity", Lund repeated many earlier affirmations about the Holy Spirit. Through the Spirit, Jesus Christ is the head of the church, which is his Body, and is present in his church. The continuity of the church in history\* is assured "by the constant action of the risen Lord through the Holy Spirit". It is through the "unifying power of his indwelling Spirit" that the organic unity of the Body of Christ is formed and sustained. However, in describing the inseparable relation between Christ and his church and in speaking of the nature of the church in terms of a double movement (called from the world, sent into the world), Lund recognized the distinct work of the Holy Spirit as the present manifestation of the reign of God. "Through the indwelling

of the Holy Spirit the new age of the future is already given to participate in the power of the resurrection." Indicative of the new orientation is the conclusion of the report on "Christ and His Church": "It is of decisive importance for the advance of ecumenical work that the doctrine of the church be treated in close relation both to the doctrine of Christ and to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit."

The WCC's third assembly (New Delhi 1961) made this new orientation clearly visible in several ways. One was the decision to set the Christocentric affirmation of the original WCC basis\* into an explicitly Trinitarian setting by adding the doxological formula "to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit". The preamble to New Delhi's statement on the church's unity, which has served as an ecumenical yardstick ever since, places the understanding of unity\* in a Trinitarian setting: "The love of the Father and the Son in the unity of the Holy Spirit is the source and goal of the unity which the Triune God wills for all men and creation. We believe that we share in this unity in the church of Jesus Christ... The reality of this unity was made manifest at Pentecost in the gift of the Holy Spirit, through whom we know in this present age the first-fruits of that perfect union of the Son with his Father, which will be known in its fullness only when all things are consummated by Christ in his glory." Later, the report explains the distinct work of the Holy Spirit in these terms: "The church exists in time and place by the power of the Holy Spirit, who effects in her life all the elements that belong to her unity, witness and service. He is the gift of the Father in the name of Jesus Christ to build up the church, to lead her into the freedom and fellowship which belong to her peace and joy. For any achievement of a fuller unity than that now manifest, we are wholly dependent upon the Spirit's presence and governance."

A much more fully developed exposition of this Trinitarian approach was found in the plenary presentation to the assembly by Nikos Nissiotis on "The Witness and the Service of Eastern Orthodoxy to the One Undivided Church". Nissiotis stated: "Unity among men in the church is the result, the reflection of the event of the Father's union

with Christ by his Spirit realized in the historical church on the day of Pentecost."

Nissiotis's presentation – the first by an Orthodox theologian at a WCC assembly – marks the official beginning of the full Orthodox impact on ecumenical thought, underscored at New Delhi through the entry of the Russian Orthodox Church in the membership of the WCC.

The period up to the fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968) was characterized by an increasingly clear recognition in ecumenical thought of the work of the Holy Spirit. The fourth world conference on Faith and Order (Montreal 1963) summed up the insights gained so far and provided the stimulus for more detailed analysis and study.

### MONTREAL 1963

Based on the prior study of "Christ and His Church" and the understanding of the church in the context of the history of salvation, the Montreal report on "The Church in the Purpose of God" stated: "The church is founded on the mighty acts of God in calling his chosen people Israel and supremely in his decisive act in the incarnation, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the sending of the Holy Spirit... The community of the church was founded to proclaim God's saving act to the world through all ages, and to be continually used by the Spirit to make Christ present again and again through the proclamation of the Word and the administration of the sacraments. Through these means Christ is always at work afresh through the Spirit, bestowing his salvation on man and calling him to obedient service."

*Tradition.*\* Based again on extensive preliminary study, Montreal affirmed: "We exist as Christians by the Tradition of the gospel testified in scripture, transmitted in and by the church through the power of the Holy Spirit... What is transmitted in the process of Tradition is the Christian faith, not only as a sum of tenets, but as a living reality transmitted through the operation of the Holy Spirit." A little later the report adds: "The scriptures as documents can be letter only. It is the Spirit who is the Lord and Giver of life. Accordingly we may say that the right interpretation... is that interpretation which is guided by the Holy Spirit."

*Ministry.* Stimulated by new interest in the ministry of the laity,\* the people of God,\* Montreal addressed the difficult issue of a common understanding of the ministry.\* All ministry in the church is rooted in the threefold ministry of Christ, which is made effective in the church through the action of the Holy Spirit. "The Holy Spirit dwells in the church. He comes to each member in his baptism for the quickening of faith. He also bestows differing gifts (*charismata*) on groups and individuals. All his activities are to enable men to serve and worship God. All members of the church are thus gifted for the common good." The Spirit equips God's people to live and work in the world; he builds up the Body of Christ in mutual love; and he calls some to the special ministry, which depends entirely on the Spirit's presence and action in the church.

*Worship.* Within a Trinitarian understanding of worship as "a service to God the Father by men redeemed by his Son, who are continually finding new life in the power of the Holy Spirit", the report addresses in particular the action of the Holy Spirit in the sacraments\* of baptism\* and the eucharist.\* Both sacraments have their central meaning in the participation in Christ through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the celebration of each should include an explicit invocation of the Holy Spirit (see *epiclesis*).

Montreal not only brought together the fruits of previous work but initiated a fresh approach. Studies commissioned by F&O at Aarhus (1964) reflected a desire to intensify the dialogue between the Western and Eastern traditions and to explore further the understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. Thus began a programme of patristic studies from an ecumenical viewpoint which for several years focused on a new reading of the important treatise by Basil the Great on the Holy Spirit. As a follow-up of the Montreal discussion on ministry, a study was initiated on "Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Ministry" which came to a first point of fruition at the commission meeting at Louvain 1971 and served as background for the Lima document on the ministry. Aarhus said the work of the Holy Spirit needed "more thorough and comprehensive treatment than it received in these Montreal paragraphs. In particular it may be noted that the work of

the Holy Spirit enabling human response to the word and action of God in Christ would require explicit treatment; but groups may wish to develop much more their understanding of the ministry of the Holy Spirit."

The renewed interest in the eucharist and its ecclesiological significance was pursued in the context of a study on "The Eucharist – a Sacrament of Unity". Among the questions to be given particular attention was the following point: "How is the activity of the Holy Spirit to be understood when the eucharist is celebrated?" The first report on this study, presented at Bristol (1967), devoted a long section to the "anamnetic and epikletic character of the eucharist", affirming that "it is the Spirit who, in our eucharist, makes Christ really present and given to us in the bread and wine, according to the words of the institution".

But the most significant impulse emerging from Montreal concerned a more conscious exploration of the relationship between ecclesiology and pneumatology. This was pursued through the study on "Spirit, Order and Organization" and through a process of reflection on "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church", leading up to section 1 at the Uppsala assembly. Both deserve brief comment.

The outline of the study on "Spirit, Order and Organization", prepared at Aarhus, took its departure explicitly from the New Delhi statement on the unity\* of the church, with its recognition of the action of the Holy Spirit. "This understanding of the action of the Holy Spirit in guiding Christians towards unity is important and needs to be fully explored in the light of the biblical and historical doctrine of the Spirit." The outline recognizes the Spirit both as the source of continuity in the life of the church and as judging and transforming power.

The reflection on "The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church" developed out of a fresh study of the "nature of unity" following Montreal. It was then re-focused as a contribution to the preparations for the Uppsala assembly. Uppsala's section 1 report was the first WCC assembly document to address explicitly the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and the fullest summary of ecumenical thinking on the Holy Spirit up to that moment is provided in para. 8.

The F&O meeting in Louvain (1971) brought together most of the results of the studies initiated after Montreal. Especially the reports on "The Authority of the Bible" and on "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry", as well as the concluding report on "Spirit, Order and Organization", help to substantiate more fully the insights gained during the previous period into the various dimensions of the work of the Holy Spirit.

An important new aspect was added through a statement on "Conciliarity and the Future of the Ecumenical Movement": "By conciliarity we mean the coming together of Christians – locally, regionally or globally – for common prayer, counsel and decision, in the belief that the Holy Spirit can use such meetings for his own purpose of reconciling, renewing and reforming the church by guiding it towards the fullness of truth and love... The central fact in true conciliarity is the active presence and work of the Holy Spirit. A council is a true council if the Holy Spirit directs and inspires it, even if it is not universal; and a universally representative body of Christians would not become a true council if the Spirit did not guide it." This statement served as the background for the attempt to describe the unity we seek in terms of "conciliar fellowship", which came to its fruition at the Nairobi assembly (1975); it regained significance in the context of the "conciliar process of mutual commitment for justice, peace and the integrity of creation" initiated by the Vancouver assembly (1983).

Some of the more recent emphases in ecumenical thinking about the Holy Spirit go significantly beyond earlier affirmations.

### THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CONFESSION OF THE FAITH

The Nairobi assembly devoted one of its sections to the theme "Confessing Christ Today". The report, speaking about the confessing community as a community in the Spirit, affirms that to confess Christ today means to be led by the Spirit into struggle, to revive the witness of the prophets, to speak and act with concern and solidarity for the whole of creation.

At its meeting in Bangalore (1978) F&O accepted a statement on "A Common Account of Hope" which includes an affirma-

tion of hope\* in God the Spirit: "The living God becomes accessible to us by the *Holy Spirit*, who confirms God's presence in our lives and makes us members of Christ's body, the church. By the Holy Spirit, we have hope that already our lives can show signs of the new creation... The Spirit sets us free from the powers of darkness, stirs up our spirits, rekindles our energies, gives us visions and dreams, presses us to work for real communion, overcoming the barriers which sin has erected." These last affirmations are taken up again in the statement's often-quoted description of Christian hope as "a resistance movement against fatalism": it is the Spirit who sustains people in the struggle against the threats to the integrity of creation, peace and just relationships in human community.

Two special initiatives regarding the Holy Spirit in the confession of the faith may also be mentioned: the study on the ecumenical significance of the filioque\* controversy, and a very tentative discussion of the "maternal office of the Holy Spirit" in the context of the 1981 Sheffield conference on "The Community of Women and Men in the Church".

The third part of the F&O study "Confessing the One Faith" enters into a full discussion of the affirmations about the Holy Spirit in the Nicene Creed,\* beginning with the following comprehensive statement: "The church confesses and worships the Holy Spirit, 'the Lord and the Giver of life'. And it is only in the power of the Holy Spirit that Christian faith and its confession are possible. Because the God whom we confess in the creed is revealed as Triune God, faith in the Holy Spirit is never to be isolated from faith in the Father and the Son. In the church, the Holy Spirit is never experienced, confessed or worshipped apart from the Father and the Son. As the Lord and the Giver of life, the Holy Spirit enables our communion with the Father and the Son and is, therefore, fundamental to Christian faith, life and hope."

### THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CHURCH

This has been the concern most thoroughly considered since the beginning of the ecumenical movement. Here a brief paragraph from the section report on "Confess-

ing Christ Today” of the Nairobi assembly may serve as starting point. “Those who take part in the life of Christ and confess him as Lord and Saviour, Liberator and Unifier, are gathered in a community of which the author and sustainer is the Holy Spirit. This communion of the Spirit finds its primary aim and ultimate purpose in the eucharistic celebration and the glorification of the Triune God. The doxology is the supreme confession which transcends all our divisions.”

One of the most important ecumenical contributions to understanding the relation between the Holy Spirit and the church is undoubtedly the Lima document on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*.<sup>\*</sup> The sections on baptism and the eucharist both include extensive reference to the Holy Spirit: e.g. baptism as a gift of the Spirit (B5), the eucharist as invocation of the Spirit (E14-18). The statement on ministry, in its introductory part on “The Calling of the Whole People of God”, develops a pneumatological understanding of the church: “The church lives through the liberating and renewing power of the Holy Spirit. That the Holy Spirit was upon Jesus is evidenced in his baptism, and after the resurrection that same Spirit was given to those who believed in the Risen Lord in order to re-create them as the Body of Christ. The Spirit calls people to faith, sanctifies them through many gifts, gives them strength to witness to the gospel, and empowers them to serve in hope and love. The Spirit keeps the church in the truth and guides it despite the frailty of its members” (M3).

The fifth world conference on Faith and Order in Santiago de Compostela (1993) explored the understanding of the church as *koinonia*. In his presentation on “The Church as Communion”, Metropolitan John of Pergamon clarified the relationship between Christ and the church. “The Spirit is a spirit of *koinonia*. If we cannot have Christology without pneumatology, this means that we must stop thinking of Christ in individualistic terms and understand him as a ‘corporate person’, an inclusive being. The ‘many’ are a constitutive element of the ‘one’. The ‘head’ without the ‘Body’ is inconceivable. The church is the Body of Christ, because Christ is a pneumatological

being, born and existing in the *koinonia* of the Spirit.”

Section I of Santiago applied this interpretation to the understanding of unity and diversity in the life of the church and of catholicity: “The interdependence of unity and diversity, which is the essence of the church’s *koinonia*, is rooted in the Triune God revealed in Jesus Christ. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit is the perfect expression of unity and diversity and the ultimate reality of relational life. In the Holy Spirit, he makes human beings partakers of this relational life which is his own... The relational dynamic of catholicity within each local church to the universal (the ‘one’ and the ‘many’) echoes the relationship of the Trinity. The Holy Trinity actualizes the one body of Christ by making each local church a full and ‘catholic’ church. For the fullness of catholicity to be safeguarded within the life of the local church, both equally strong pneumatological and Christological emphases are needed.”

### THE HOLY SPIRIT AND RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

Especially since it began a programme on interfaith dialogue<sup>\*</sup> in 1971, the WCC has faced the issue of a Christian theological understanding of religious pluralism. In this context a new, though tentative, emphasis in ecumenical thinking about the Holy Spirit has taken shape.

In a presentation to the central committee meeting at Addis Ababa (1971), Metropolitan Georges Khodr interpreted the situation of Christianity in a pluralistic world in light of the work of the Holy Spirit. He challenged the traditional understanding of the *oikonomia* of God, particularly in Western theology, in terms of the history of salvation. “Contemporary theology must therefore transcend the notion of ‘salvation history’ in order to recover the meaning of *oikonomia*. The economy of Christ cannot be reduced to its unfolding in history; the heart of it is the fact that it makes us participants in the very life of God. It must involve reference to eternity and to the work of the Holy Spirit. For inherent in the term ‘economy’ is the idea of mystery.”

Stanley Samartha, the first director of this programme, has commented: “What we seek here is not so much to extend the work

of the Holy Spirit outside the hedges of the church as a more inclusive doctrine of God himself. A more sensitive recognition of the wider work of the Holy Spirit may also help us to broaden our understanding of God's saving activity." The question of the Holy Spirit and people of other faiths, Samartha concludes, "must inevitably lead to the doctrine of God himself and of the Trinity in far more inclusive ways than Christian theology has done before. It must take into account the unknowability, the incomprehensibility and the mystery of God and the work of his Spirit among others no less than his revelation in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit" (*Courage for Dialogue*, 24, 76f.).

A statement on "religious plurality" from a consultation in 1990 in preparation for the WCC assembly at Canberra affirms unambiguously that "God, the Holy Spirit, has been at work in the life and traditions of people of living faiths. Further, we affirm that it is within the realm of the Spirit that we may be able to interpret the truth and goodness of other religions and distinguish the 'things that differ', so that our 'love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment' (Phil. 1:9-10). We also affirm that the Holy Spirit, the Interpreter of Christ and of our own scriptures (John 14:26), will lead us to understand afresh the deposit of the faith already given to us, and into fresh and unexpected discovery of new wisdom and insight, as we learn more from our neighbours of other faiths."

**THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CHARISMATIC RENEWAL**

Over the past three decades many member churches of the WCC have experienced manifestations of a charismatic renewal, characterized in particular by instances of baptism in the Spirit, the gift of tongues and of healing. The WCC gave attention to this phenomenon as part of its concern for a renewal of spirituality, and a preparatory paper for a 1980 consultation, "Towards a Church Renewed and United in the Holy Spirit", offered a tentative theological interpretation of the charismatic renewal, distinguishing an ecclesiological, a cosmological and a sacramental approach to the Holy Spirit. The ecclesiological approach starts from an experience of the church which can

be described as a social experience of God. "The Holy Spirit is God 'in between', or 'the go-between God'. His purpose is to establish relationships between us and to produce a common experience among us." The cosmological approach affirms the Holy Spirit as the one who renews creation and bestows fullness of life. "Within the context of this renewal of creation we expect healing of social relationships, healing in our relations with our own human self, healing of bodily sickness." The sacramental approach is based on the experience of conversion as a "once-for-all event which needs constant and repeated renewal and reinforcement by the power of the Holy Spirit". Reference is made particularly to baptism, confirmation\* and ordination.\*

Such a distinction of approaches to the reality of the Holy Spirit could prove helpful far beyond this particular consultation. The same could be said of the opening remarks by Kilian McDonnell in his presentation on "Church Reactions to the Charismatic Renewal". Commenting on the excessive fear among the churches of an exaggerated doctrine of the Holy Spirit, he said: "A mutuality exists between Christ and the Spirit. Christ sends the Spirit from the Father, but it is only through the Spirit that one can say Jesus is Lord. There is no Christological statement without its pneumatological counterpart. Also the renewal is saying that the Holy Spirit is constitutive of the church. In the West we build up the church in Christological categories and then when it is an already constructed Christological reality we then, in the second moment of her existence, add the Holy Spirit as a vivifier and animator. The second moment is already too late. The Holy Spirit belongs to the first constitutive moment of the church's existence."

The concern for a renewal of spirituality\* was also the focus of the reflections of section IV at the Canberra assembly, under the theme "Holy Spirit - Transform and Sanctify Us!" "An ecumenical spirituality for our times should be incarnational, here and now, life-giving, rooted in the scriptures and nourished by prayer; it should be communitarian and celebrating, centred on the eucharist, expressed in service and witness, trusting and confident. It will inevitably lead to suffering, is open to the wider oikoumene,

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joyful and hopeful. Its source and guide is the action of the Holy Spirit. It is lived and thought in community and for others. It is an ongoing process of formation and discipleship."

### A CONCLUDING NOTE

What has emerged from ecumenical thinking on the Holy Spirit is much less than a coherent "doctrine": there are more indications of important questions perceived than of common answers found. The remarks by McDonnell point to two fundamental challenges the ecumenical movement has only begun to face. Though formulated against the background of the charismatic renewal, they have been raised consistently by Orthodox theology. Since they go to the very core of the inherited "consensus" in the ecumenical movement, enshrined in the Christocentrism of the basis of the WCC and its implications for the understanding of church and world, it has been difficult to meet this challenge.

José Míguez Bonino has also challenged the traditional Christocentric theological framework in the ecumenical movement, calling for a Trinitarian enlargement which interprets "the second article in relation to the first and the third, both creationally and pneumatologically". The Canberra assembly, with its theme "Come, Holy Spirit – Renew the Whole Creation", opened up precisely this double perspective.

While the assembly did not go beyond the common insights generated so far, two brief passages from the report of section IV can serve as a summary. On the "Mystery of the Holy Spirit", the report says: "The Holy Spirit cannot be understood apart from the life of the Holy Trinity. Proceeding from the Father, the Holy Spirit points to Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, the Messiah, the Saviour of the world. The Spirit is the Power of God, energizing the people of God, corporately and individually, to fulfil their ministry. The Holy Spirit is 'holy' by virtue of the very nature of the Holy Trinity. It is distinct from other 'spirits', benign or demonic (1 John 4). The Holy Spirit is gloriously free and unbound (John 3), freeing and unbinding God's people from the structures and strictures of this world (Rom. 12)."

Regarding the "Holy Spirit in the world", the report states: "The Holy Spirit, the Giver of life, continues to breathe life into all creation. As all life emanates from God and ultimately will return to God (Ps. 104), the ethos of holiness requires holding an attitude towards all that exists as if it by nature belonged to God. We do not own ourselves, our bodies, our lives, the air and the soil. All is given by God... The Holy Spirit is at work among all peoples and faiths, and throughout the universe. With the sovereign freedom which belongs to God, the Wind blows wherever it wants." It concludes: "The Holy Spirit accompanies us on our ecumenical journey; keeps alive the vision that all things in heaven and on earth will be united in Christ; encourages, corrects, challenges and moves us forward until we come to our true unity and glory in God through Christ. Come, Holy Spirit, come!"

KONRAD RAISER

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## HOMOSEXUALITY

THE TERM “homosexuality” usually refers to a persistent desire for and/or repeated engagement in intimate sexual behaviour with persons of the same sex; a distinction is made between “orientation” and “practice”. The phenomenon is known in many, perhaps all cultures, and appears in many forms; but the term “homosexuality” was invented in the 19th century by European physicians who viewed this as a medical condition, a kind of “third sex”, and thus not a moral or cultural condition. Persons who were “of this condition” should, they said, not be treated as deviant or disordered males or females.

While earlier studies suggested that 7-10% of the population experience such orientations and/or engage in such practices on a sustained basis, more careful recent research set the figures at less than 3% for males and 1.5% for females. Comparative studies suggest that patterns vary cross-culturally and historically and that participation in same-sexed practices may increase or decrease as cultural values, social expectations and sexual opportunities change. Some say that sex is genetic but that sexual orientation, like gender, is a social construct.

The issue of homosexuality has prompted heated debates in North American and European Protestant churches, where family patterns are changing rapidly and matters of sexuality and gender were already under discussion. The main issues in the debate can be identified:

1. The advocates for change view contemporary societies as trapped in an archaic, imposed moralism, backed by forms of religiosity that crush freedom and deny the variety and particularity of personal needs and relationships. Often they claim that resistance is rooted in “homophobia”, an irrational fear of sexual ambiguity or difference, or “heterosexism”, an attempt to defend or enforce older standards by reasoned, if mistaken, conviction.

Those who hold to heterosexual norms acknowledge that some resistance to change

is homophobic, but deny that all of it is. They affirm that heterosexuality is normative, based on scripture, tradition, reason and the deepest experiences of true love humans have known.

2. Advocates point out that homosexuality is rarely mentioned in the Bible, and while all of the references are negative, some are only ambiguously so, or are based in now discarded teachings about ritual purity, property or the need to procreate for survival. Still others refer to behaviours that were condemned because they were exploitative, violent or otherwise unrelated to sustained, mutual, caring relationships between consenting adults in private.

Defenders of more classical views argue that homosexuality is rarely mentioned in the Bible because the moral presumptions throughout scripture are clear: God created humans male and female, made reproduction and companionship with an “other” possible and established a structure for sexual relations that is genuinely humane, and not altered by whatever distortions may be present in obsolete ritual behaviour, property law, procreative needs or subsequent interpretations and use of texts. They sometimes accuse advocates of manipulating texts to remove obvious ethical meanings.

3. Advocates claim that the church has long promulgated or accepted false doctrines about the right order of things – slavery, kingship and patriarchy – and allied itself with false understandings of the way the world works, as seen in its opposition to Galileo, Darwin and some modern social science. They claim that negative attitudes towards homosexuality are another instance of dogmatic closure to new insight, of holding that there is *one* right order.

Others disagree, arguing that prophetic voices in the church have historically opposed the exploitation of workers, political domination by arbitrary authority and the oppression of women, and that wherever the gospel has been carried it has borne the seeds of justice with it, promoted human rights for all and welcomed the insights of science. Contritely recognizing that Christians have not always been consistent in this, they claim that the truly prophetic stand today denies that there is no right order of things and doubts the scientific validity of

evidence used to back arguments for the moral approval of homosexuality.

4. Advocates often hold that the churches' view of "nature" needs challenge, for it has confused sexuality with oppressive gender roles and failed to recognize that God saw the creation as "good". Thus, it has denied both the goodness of sexuality and ignored the fact that some people experience themselves as homosexual by nature, and that orientation as good.

The proponents of a more classic view often draw a distinction between the goodness of creation as made by God and the experiences we have of what is "natural" in a fallen world, which may need transformation. Those who accent natural law\* theory in ethics, meanwhile, argue that nature as we encounter it may be disordered, even if pleasing, and may need to be converted, rightly re-ordered according to God's primal design and higher purpose.

5. Many advocates argue that it is immoral to deny the experience of love that some find in same-sex relationships, and that since genuine love is rare, precious and possibly an indicator of God's redemptive power, it is legalistic, even flatly unethical, to deny the reality of these experiences – especially since some cannot find love heterosexually. Others argue that to say that God is love does not mean that love is God, and that it is not legalism but ethical wisdom to identify the marks and forms of love as they bear on all areas of life, including sexuality. Some may find affection only in same-sex relationships, and this is not to be utterly condemned; but few hold that experience itself can generate ethical norms. Experience needs moral and spiritual discernment and guidance, by reason, Tradition\* and scripture.

After years of intense and often rancorous discussion of such matters, various church bodies are coming to decision on homosexuality, generally by modulating, while re-affirming classic norms. Debates remain, but a summary of the present, uneasy consensus can be stated: (1) Most churches affirm that genital activity is a moral issue, and should be confined to monogamous, enduring, heterosexual marriage. Celibacy is strongly commended for singles. (2) Most churches support the human rights of those who do not conform to these ideals, but

deny approval to extra-marital or homosexual behaviour, or to same-sex marriage. (3) Most churches deny ordination\* to those engaging in homosexual practice, and some withhold the privilege of pulpit from those who argue that same-sex unions are equal to heterosexual ones. (4) Most churches advocate pastoral care for adults who are single but sexually active, including those who see themselves as homosexuals, even if their behaviours are not approved. (5) An increasing number of churches have accepted feminist arguments about justice in regard to the equality of the sexes in church and society, but resist efforts to view all social issues in gender terms or to treat homosexuality as the same kind of issue.

While the general contours of this set of debates have remained constant for more than a decade, one new element has to do with whether or not clergy may approve, even if they do not perform or officially bless, "civil unions" – a kind of state-ratified social contract between same-sex partners that does not call the relationship marriage, but allows certain legal privileges (health or tax benefits, co-ownership of property, etc.) to be administered on the same basis as a marriage. Policies in this direction inside or outside the church are vigorously opposed by church leaders in Africa, Asia and Latin America against the "decadent sexual morality" advocated by "liberals" in the West, as well as by Catholic, Orthodox and Evangelical branches of the Christian family in the West. Nevertheless, the practice has been adopted in the Netherlands and in the state of Vermont in the USA and is being discussed elsewhere. The question raises the issue of the role of the church in giving moral instruction to state authority on matters where equity and freedom appear to contradict long traditions of biblical, sacramental and moral views of the better ways to order human love.

It is uncertain what impact such views will have on cultural and political debates over "family values" generally and over public policies governing homosexuality, privacy and marriage,\* nor is it yet clear how legal decisions in various contexts may influence the churches. Convictions on these issues are intense, and it is possible that minority advocates will form or join dissenting church bod-

ies. Protestant churches which sustain something like the described consensus, however, are likely to find themselves drawn closer to Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and evangelical communions, where comparable norms are well established.

See also **ethics, sexual**.

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## HOPE

THE CHARACTERISTIC emphasis in 20th-century ecumenical discussions of Christian hope has been the linking of hope for church unity,\* for the healing of human community and for the evangelization of the world. The joining together of movements representing these hopes at mid-century to create a new World Council of Churches posed a large theological question: What is our “one hope” of which the scriptures speak?

Much occurred in the succeeding years to test and darken these hopes. Faith and Order’s\* optimism about “church union” was encountering Amsterdam’s acknowledgment of “our deepest difference”. Life and Work’s\* confidence about social amelioration was facing “rapid social change” and a clamour of conflicting ideologies. And as for mission,\* it was shaken to its foundations by the realization that the sending and receiving institutions, and the agreements which had served the cause so well, needed not repair but fundamental re-design in a world where the majority of Christians now lived outside the North Atlantic region.

Such considerations contributed to the choice of “Christ – the Hope of the World” as the theme for the WCC’s Evanston assembly (1954), a choice whose vitality and timeliness were attested by the sharp contro-

versy which came with it. An advisory commission of 32 theologians spent three years drafting a 51-page text that offered a profound discussion of the ultimate Christian hope and its relation to the more provisional hopes of our time.

The commission’s report makes a sustained effort to view the various basic ecumenical concerns in the light of “Christ our hope”. Because his kingdom is to come, “the pilgrim people of God”\* have realistic hope for their unity and their mission. And the rich meaning in this Christian hope for our “earthly tasks” in history\* requires us to be in dialogue with other “hopes of our time”: democratic humanism, scientific humanism, Marxism, national and religious renaissance, the hope of the hopeless.

For whatever reasons, this direct excursion into eschatology\* did not bring consensus or even convergence in the early 1950s. The more impressive work on what we hope for as churches actually took place in the narrower church unity discussion during these years, especially in the straightforward attempt to define the nature of “the unity we seek” in the famous New Delhi statement of 1961 about “all in each place” seeking communion\* with “the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages”.

The 1960s brought new dimensions into the discussion of the unity we hope for. A new third-world majority in the Christian household of faith was urgently asking for an ecumenical vision of hope which was relevant to the rapid social changes in the human community as such. Everywhere there were growing demands that “the unity we seek” deal not simply with confessional divisions but with racism,\* sexism\* and classism as church-dividing issues. Moreover, weighty new ecumenical voices from Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches brought powerful new momentum and a demand for apostolic depth to this growing discussion about ecumenical hopes.

Indeed, a crucial contribution came from Vatican II’s\* emphasis upon the sacramentality of the church, and the new light which this ecclesiology brought to the Council’s vision of “the church in the modern world” (*Gaudium et Spes*). In Uppsala (1968) the WCC underwent a parallel development: a fresh perception of the catholicity of the

church opened the door to the importance of church unity for human community. "The church is bold in speaking of itself as the sign of the coming unity of mankind."

### THE F&O STUDY OF CHRISTIAN HOPE

Against this background, F&O undertook an ambitious study in the 1970s, not only of the relation of church unity to human community, but also of the Christian hope which both share. The study was called, after 1 Pet. 3:15, "Giving Account of the Hope That Is within Us", and began not with an international group of theologians but with scores of local study groups attempting to produce "accounts of hope" relevant to their own situations. At Accra (1974) the F&O commission was then charged with attempting, in the light of these particular hopes, to give "a common account". To its credit, this meeting refused to make a universal "a-political, non-ideological" statement. It honestly presented a statement faithful to the local statements and frankly faced the challenge of a conflicting plurality of hopes within the Christian community. "There is only one hope in Christ, but many relevant ways of expressing it."

After four years of further study the attempt to give "a common account" was renewed at Bangalore (1978), where, after 18 days of intense debate and re-drafting, "A Common Account of Hope" was unanimously adopted by the entire commission. The text openly faces the problem: "hopes encounter hopes", yet "we refuse to believe that the hopes of humankind are ultimately contradictory". A Trinitarian confession then spells out "our hope in God", and an ecclesiological section deals with the church\* as "a communion of hope" which "provides the possibility of encounter across human barriers". This section also includes honest confession about "how we in our churches actually look" in spite of our hopes "to establish a credible communion". The statement then turns to hope for the human community. Rather than trying to generalize on the vast situational diversity in local studies, the account attempts to identify common international threats to Christian hope which F&O itself faces as an international community: excessive concentrations of power, increasing capacity to shape the physical world, growth

of armaments, attacks upon human community, assaults on human dignity, the sense of meaninglessness and absurdity. "We believe that each rightful action counts because God blesses it... The Christian hope is a resistance movement against fatalism." And the text concludes with a much-quoted section on "hope as the invitation to risk".

### OUTWORKINGS

In subsequent F&O work, the study on hope was perhaps most directly related to the study on "The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community" (1984-92), in which the essential move was to view both humanity and the church in the light of the kingdom. The kingdom with its judgment and its promise is addressed to the whole of humanity. The church is that part of humanity which receives and affirms the mission of proclaiming the kingdom as its effective sign and instrument. In the perspective of the kingdom it is then possible to speak of the relation of church and world\* without one-sided distortion. They belong together eschatologically; the church is truly in the world, even if not of it; and their close inter-relation shapes the life and mission of the church both as the mystery of the presence of Christ's body among us and as the prophetic sign or instrument of God's grace for the world. On this basis the study then addresses the relationship between the search for unity among – and within – the churches, and the churches' calling to mission, witness and service. This link is explored in light of the churches' engagement in the specific areas of prophetic witness for justice and the community of women and men. Strikingly, the final chapter of *Church and World*, the culminating report from the study, ends with a strong affirmation of Christian eschatological hope – not as an escape from Christian engagement with issues of the day, but precisely as the foundation of and empowerment for that engagement. Thus the unity and renewal study was fully in accord with the "characteristic emphasis" in ecumenical discussions of hope.

The hope study also led directly to the major new study of the 1980s, "Towards a Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today". "Doctrine divides," said an earlier ecumenical dictum. But it was the experience

of the study on hope which encouraged F&O to begin the more difficult project, with its unavoidable questions of apostolicity\* and ecclesial teaching authority.\*

Finally, the hope study has strengthened the provisional ecumenical hopes invested in the “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry”\* study. The BEM text is completed: the urgent questions about it have to do with the reception among the churches of the apostolic faith to which it bears witness. BEM has thus become a concrete question of Christian hope for the church unity movement. And BEM’s claim to be a statement that is a “convergence”, not yet a “consensus”,\* confronts the ecumenical movement with a fresh theme. What, actually, is a “convergence”? If, as has been claimed, a convergence envisions a point of consensus out ahead of the churches which responsible theological judgment in each church considers attainable in faithfulness to its own confession of the apostolic faith, then a so-called convergence is nothing less than a concrete expression of Christian hope. Bangalore’s vision of the church as a communion of hope and of hope as the invitation to risk then becomes directly relevant to the quest for visible eucharistic fellowship among the churches.

The notion of hope received a renewed prominence as one aspect of the theme (“Turn to God – Rejoice in Hope!”) for the WCC’s eighth assembly (Harare 1998). Pre-assembly reflection on the theme emphasized the distinct qualities of Christian hope: it is radical and world-challenging, rooted in God’s act of salvation through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:4); it is inclusive, grounded in the vision of Christ as the incohering principle of all creation (Eph. 1:10); it is eschatological, sustained by the power of the Spirit which draws us and all creation towards that liberation and transformation which God wills as our final destiny.

The assembly’s opening plenary placed the notion of hope within the context of its partners *anamnesis* (that active “remembering” which makes present the past and anticipates the future) and *metanoia* (the “repentance” rooted in our awareness of the pain and suffering in the world, and committing us to newness of life). Hope crowns these, rooted as it is in the mystery “of a compassionate God who embraces the

world” so that “the more desperate the world becomes, the more intimate and determined becomes the life-sustaining embrace of God” (Koyama). Hope confounds our expectations and limitations, opening us for love and just service to all humanity.

It is clear that the dimension of hope is fundamental to the Christian life, to the life of the churches and to the churches’ continuing search for a common confession, witness and service before the world. Therefore the theme of hope must, in whatever form, remain on the ecumenical agenda.

See also **kingdom of God, salvation history**.

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## HOUSE CHURCH

IT COULD be said that a house church is the oldest form of Christian gathering. New Testament Christians met in prayer, worship and eucharist in private homes (Mark 14:15 and par.; Acts 1:13-14, 20:7-9). Before the building of basilicas and cathedrals began in the 4th century, archaeological evidence confirms that house churches were the usual site of Christian liturgical gatherings. Today, however, the term “house church” is associated specifically with certain kinds of Christian community in China and in Britain.

In China, the term “house churches” refers generally to groups outside the formal

structures of the China Christian Council. They range from small fellowship groups regularly worshipping in homes to huge congregations of hundreds of people organized into closely built networks spanning several provinces and running income-generating enterprises. Some have come into being because there are no public churches in the area to serve the aged believers; others are intentional communities seeking freedom of expression from religious and political authorities. During the years of the cultural revolution (1966-75), when all forms of organized religion were suppressed, house churches served as the only means of Christian fellowship and worship. Even then, the number was relatively small. With the modernization policy in the early 1980s, alongside the re-opening of thousands of public churches throughout China, house churches have blossomed in rural areas. By the end of 1988, the China Christian Council reported 20,602 "meeting points", the official name for house churches. House churches in China own no one theological tradition. Generally, it is easy to detect influences from the Jesus Family, the Little Flock, China Inland Mission and, most prominently, a form of Pentecostalism\* with emphasis on faith healing and exorcism, similar not so much to charismatic non-denominationalism as to Christian animism.

In the Church of England in the 1950s, priests such as E.W. Southcott in Leeds experimented with "house churches" as sub-units within the parish. In Britain and English-speaking countries (e.g., New Zealand), the term "house churches" is now used of networks of charismatic, non-denominational churches originating from conferences convened by David Lillie and Arthur Wallis in Britain in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Plymouth Brethren ecclesiology and Pentecostal pneumatology combine in house church theology for the "restoration" of the church. Early teachers were largely from these two denominations. In the early 1950s George North ministered "Wesleyan Holiness" in many small home groups, and Sidney Purse at Chard introduced, from the "Jesus Only" Pentecostal movement, deliverance and healing. These, together with a general spiritual hunger for new church life in the country, contributed, along with the

charismatic quest, to the movement's rise in the 1960s.

Today "house churches" is a misnomer because many meet in large premises, even church buildings. But the emphasis on local church, charismatic worship and gifts, relationships, a radical discipling (at one time called heavy shepherding, introduced by Ern Baxter from the USA in 1974) is still characteristic. The fivefold ministries of Eph. 4:11 are restored, and groups of churches are led by different leaders who, though divided, yet remain in fellowship and share a common vision for the church and the kingdom (which is primarily for this age). In the early phases evangelism, interchurch relations and social action were low on the agenda. This has now changed. The house churches have been acknowledged as a stimulus and catalyst by many mainline churches.

See also **church base communities**.

RAYMOND FUNG and ROGER T. FORSTER

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## HROMÁDKA, JOSEF LUKL

B. 8 June 1889, Hodslavice, Moravia, Czechoslovakia; d. 26 Dec. 1970, Prague. Theologian, ecumenist and pioneer of Christian-Marxist dialogue, he was founder of the Christian Peace Conference,\* vice-president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (1954-64) and long-time member of the WCC central and executive committees.

Hromádka began teaching systematic theology at the John Hus faculty in Prague in 1920. His outspoken opposition to Nazism put him at risk when the Germans invaded Czechoslovakia in 1938; he then went to the US, where he taught apologetics and ethics at Princeton Theological Seminary until 1947. Returning to Prague after the war, he became dean of the Comenius faculty of Protestant theology in 1950, a post he held until 1964. Influenced by the philosophy of T.G. Mazaryk and the theology of Ernst Troeltsch, Hromádka took great interest in the role of the church and religion in a secularized world. He studied Roman Catholicism and its re-evaluation in



the eyes of Czech Protestants; and in order to understand Orthodoxy, he learned Russian and read Russian literature and theology.

Hromádka's involvement in the ecumenical movement was long and varied. An architect of 1918 unification of Lutherans and Reformed in the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, he was also a founder of the Union of Evangelical Churches in Czechoslovakia (1926). Internationally, he attended conferences of the World Alliance for Promoting Friendship through the Churches (1928) and Faith and Order (1937), on whose commission he served until 1961. At the WCC's founding assembly in Amsterdam in 1948 (where he was elected to the first of his three terms on the central committee), Hromádka defended the socialist revolution in a famous exchange with US Presbyterian (later secretary of state) John Foster Dulles.

Convinced that "Western civilization" was a spent force in world history, Hromádka emphasized the socialist vision of a society "in which man will be free of all external greed, mammon and material tyranny, and in which a fellowship of real human beings in mutual sympathy, love and goodwill will be established". In 1950 he protested that the WCC's approval of the United Nations action in Korea represented a yielding "to the mood of one side of the present world".

During the late 1950s a number of European theologians began to speak out against the nuclear armament of West Germany. Their platform, under the leadership of Hromádka, led to the founding of the Christian Peace Conference (CPC), of which he was president until shortly before his death. Warning that rigid anti-communism would lead to catastrophe, he devoted much of his attention in the 1960s to Christian-Marxist dialogue, both in his country and abroad, and sought to maintain contacts between Western and Eastern churches by inviting Christians from abroad to travel "behind the iron curtain" (see *Marxist-Christian dialogue*).

When Warsaw pact troops invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968, crushing the "Prague spring" and its effort to build "socialism with a human face", Hromádka wrote to the ambassador of the USSR in Prague that "the Soviet government could not have committed a more tragic error... The moral weight of socialism and communism has been shattered for a long time to come. Only an immediate withdrawal of the occupation forces would, at least in part, moderate our common misfortune." In 1969 he resigned from the CPC.

Though respected for his courage and integrity, Hromádka's views aroused a good deal of criticism, also from his friends in the West. Barth – himself attacked for complaining about the anti-communism of some theologians – wrote to Hromádka in 1962 that he was disturbed "by the arbitrariness with which you not only champion one of the fronts personally but also expect the church and the world to do the same". A successor to Hromádka as ethics professor at Princeton, Charles West, suggested in *Communism and the Theologians* (1958) that Hromádka had a "naive unanalytical picture of social history" and criticized his "silence in the face of flagrant violations of other men's freedom and welfare..., lack of searching critique towards his own society... and acquiescence in government control of the church itself".

In a tribute at his funeral, WCC general secretary Eugene Carson Blake, calling Hromádka "a man of hope... despite his deep disappointments", noted that "many Americans during the cold war supposed he

must be a communist and therefore an enemy, while many communists distrusted his loyalty even while for 21 years he was the strongest force in Eastern Europe in persuading his fellow churchmen to support in faith and hope their revolutionary socialist governments and societies. During these same 21 years he was the outstanding moral interpreter to the West of the vision of justice and peace that has inspired the best in the socialist nations.”

ANS VAN DER BENT

■ J. Hromádka, *Doom and Resurrection*, London, SCM Press, 1945 ■ *Thoughts of a Czech Pastor*, London, SCM Press, 1970 ■ D. Neumärker, *Josef L. Hromádka*, Munich, Kaiser, 1974 ■ M. Opořenský ed., *From the Reformation to Tomorrow: In Memory and Appreciation of Josef L. Hromádka, 1889-1969*, Geneva, WARC, 1999 ■ J. Smolik ed., *Von Amsterdam nach Prag: Eine ökumenische Freundschaft an Josef L. Hromádka*, Hamburg, Herbert Reich, 1969.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

THE SCHOLARLY formulations contained in many of today's human rights instruments do scant justice to the driving force behind them: the determination of people demanding respect for their human dignity. The conviction that the human person has inherent worth and dignity is as old as the experience of oppression. The modern term “human rights” derives from the notion that on the grounds of these paramount values, limits and duties can be placed upon authorities and the community, nationally and internationally, and that these can be codified and guaranteed by law (see **international law**).

The Stoic idea that all human beings have a common nature and the Judaic teaching that all people are created in the image of God are two striking ancient examples of concern for human rights. The Magna Carta, granted more than seven centuries ago, is often seen as the point of departure for modern human rights.

In the wake of the Reformation and the European religious conflicts of the 16th and 17th centuries, safeguards for religious tolerance and civil liberties began to be enacted in law, most explicitly in England with the bill of rights of 1689. The rights guaranteed

in these documents, however, are tied to citizenship or social class. The American revolutionaries who framed the Virginia Declaration of Rights in 1776 went a step further by ascribing *innate* rights, independent of status within a society or state. This conception was incorporated into the 1789 US constitution by means of the amendments of 1790.

The 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, one of the initial documents of the French revolution, was infused with the anti-clerical spirit of the revolution itself. Whereas the American human rights conception was based on Christian enlightenment and natural law,\* the French version derived exclusively from rational philosophy. “Human” rights were juxtaposed to the “divine” rights of monarchs, the traditional recipients of the church's patronage. This was a major reason why Roman Catholic and Orthodox teaching as well as most Protestant theology on the European continent rejected the notion of human rights, preferring instead to emphasize human duties.

The profitability of colonialism\* and the industrial revolution were prominent factors in the rise to power of the merchant and manufacturing classes, who managed nevertheless to introduce certain human rights into practically all European constitutions during the 19th century. These were almost exclusively what has more recently been termed the first generation of rights, “bourgeois” freedoms guaranteeing the right to personal property\* and the free accumulation of wealth. They required of the state a *laissez-faire* attitude, non-interference in free trade and economic competition.

The granting of civil and political freedoms meant little to the emerging industrial working class, who found themselves in an unprecedented straitjacket of exploitation. Marx and Engels's Communist Manifesto of 1848 inspired a re-thinking of human rights, requiring of the state a positive intervention for the good of the majority. Although many measures for the implementation of these social and economic rights achieved legal expression through the activities of labour unions, it was only after the Russian revolution of 1917 that states began to guarantee such “second-generation” rights as employment and fair working conditions, education, health care and social security (see **labour**).

The 20th-century struggles against colonialism and for independence highlighted more the human rights of collectivities than those due to individuals. Emerging nations were demanding the right to self-determination and to development, freedom from want and aggression. To these “third-generation” rights were added newer concepts related to concerns about peace\* and the environment, sometimes referred to as the rights of future generations.

The idea of the universality of human rights, with a validity not only independent of the legal constraints of governments but also as an international responsibility, gained new respectability in the wake of the wanton disregard for human dignity during the second world war, symbolized by Auschwitz and Hiroshima. At the inception of the United Nations,\* the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (10 December 1948) linked world peace and the respect for human rights, stressing that “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world”.

To make the contents of the declaration binding obligations of international law, various conventions relating to human rights have been formulated and ratified, the most important of which are the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, adopted in 1966. Regional human rights instruments have also been created, notably the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 1950, the American Convention on Human Rights of 1969 and the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights of 1981.

**CONTENT**

This survey shows that the content of human rights is open-ended, related to the forms of inequality and oppression against which individuals, groups or nations demand their rights. As new expressions of injustice arise, human rights standards must be expanded or refined. Nevertheless, the foundation on which all human rights are constructed includes four basic elements: (1) Human rights affirm the *inviolability* of the

person.\* Life, physical and psychological integrity, and privacy of the family, home, correspondence and property are protected against violation, intrusion or dispossession. (2) Human rights uphold *freedom* over against illegal restriction, especially on the part of state power; this includes freedom of thought, conscience and religion, of opinion and expression, of movement, assembly and association. (3) Human rights proclaim the *equality* of all persons, precluding discrimination on the basis of distinctions of any kind. (4) Human rights postulate *participation* in decisions affecting the life of society, as well as in the production and consumption of society’s goods.

The heated ideological debate between proponents of first- and second-generation rights has merely served as a smokescreen for governments to delay the full implementation of both. If all four basic elements of inviolability, freedom, equality and participation are taken seriously, then the question of priorities in human rights becomes a pragmatic matter. Those immediately threatened with death will seek the implementation of the right to life as a priority. Those marginalized by decision-making processes will seek political freedoms.

More useful distinctions can be made regarding the nature of the obligation involved in the respective rights. Some rights are immediately enforceable, while others involve programmatic aspects that require time and perhaps even systemic social or economic changes for their implementation. Those rights requiring a negative obligation of the state, such as not intruding, interfering or discriminating, are presently demandable no matter what the political system or the level of economic development. When the obligation involved is positive, where the state has to do or to give something as a contribution to the fulfilment of some economic or social right such as work, education or health care, full implementation will depend on appropriate means and programmes. When these are lacking, the immediately enforceable right to participate in political decision making becomes a high priority.

**THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIONS**

In light of early official church opposition to human rights, that they viewed for

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much of their history as the product of humanistic philosophy, the claim of a "theological basis of human rights" might be considered somewhat presumptuous. It is only after the second world war that serious theological work related to human rights surfaced, and even then much of it concentrated solely on the right to religious liberty. In the Roman Catholic Church, human rights received official sanction through Pope John XXIII's encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (1963) and in the Second Vatican Council's pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1965). Ecumenically, the WCC coordinated an interconfessional study project on theology and human rights beginning in 1979, in which Anglican, Lutheran, Reformed, Baptist and Methodist world bodies as well as the preparatory committee of the pan-Orthodox council and the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace participated.

Institutional efforts which for the most part try to derive human rights systematically from traditional theological concepts such as natural law, covenant,\* grace,\* Christology or redemption\* have been criticized for functionalizing theology in order to re-gain the churches' credibility or to justify Christian engagement in human rights activities. Such an approach differs radically from that adopted by Christians and theologians who are themselves engaged at the forefront of human rights struggles, impelled by their Christian faith, but without an articulated prior justification. Theological literature emanating from Christian reflection on concrete life-and-death experiences grew rapidly in the 1970s, especially in regions where the violation of human rights was most severe. Much of this discussion evaded or resisted systematic classification according to traditional theological categories and was therefore open to controversy, as for example Latin American liberation theology,\* Korean minjung theology\* or the Kairós document\* by South African theologians. The free development of such unorthodox theological approaches itself became a human rights claim and raised the question as to whether the limits imposed by church hierarchies on theological or ecumenical dialogue are themselves an infringement of human rights.

## ECUMENICAL ACTIVITIES

The ecumenical movement has accompanied and at times led the human rights movement at local, national and international levels. O. Frederick Nolde, the first director of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA), served as a consultant on religious liberty\* and freedom of conscience to the drafters of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1946 to 1948. The WCC's inaugural assembly in Amsterdam (1948) issued a declaration on religious liberty and underlined the importance of the churches' work for human rights. For 40 years the WCC continued to sharpen its concern, highlighting particular violations, e.g. racism (1968), torture (1977), and extra-judicial executions (1982).

While statements were being made regularly over the years in international ecumenical circles, it was the local churches living in situations of oppression which pioneered the methods of effective church activities and underlined the need for international solidarity. At the international level, the churches underwent a learning process that took several decades before a consensus could be reached on the meaning of human rights, the nature of the churches' responsibilities and the strategies for effective action to combat violations.

Highlights in this history are the creation of the Programme to Combat Racism\* following the WCC's Uppsala assembly in 1968, the consensus on an ecumenical understanding of human rights arrived at during the Nairobi assembly in 1975, the creation of a WCC Human Rights Resources Office for Latin America following a number of coups in that continent in the mid-1970s, the creation of a Human Rights Advisory Group within the CCIA in 1978, and the creation of numerous regional ecumenical human rights programmes.

Along with increased awareness of the extent and sophistication of contemporary human rights violations, ecumenical engagement at all levels in monitoring, advocacy and public education for human rights increased markedly in the 1980s. Christians of all confessions have suffered imprisonment, torture, disappearance and martyrdom as a result of their human rights activities. The right to be engaged in the struggle for justice

and human dignity has itself become a component of religious liberty.

By the end of the 1980s, the realization that effective human rights work requires international ecumenical solidarity was put into practice through inter-regional exchange programmes among churches and human rights organizations. These experiences showed that the ecumenical community had to achieve far greater political sophistication in dealing with the root causes of human rights abuse, causes which are international in scope and cannot be dealt with by humanitarian approaches within offending countries alone.

During the 1990s, globalization and increasing interdependence of national economies had a negative impact on the social rights of workers, especially migrants. The rising importance of the economic and communal rights of peoples gained prominence at the 1993 UN conference on human rights in Vienna. Rights to a healthy environment, land access and land security were increasingly acknowledged as essential to the enjoyment of other recognized human rights. Fresh challenges from Asian and Islamic countries to Western interpretations of the universality of human rights encouraged critical dialogue in the international human rights community. The present conflict of views may intensify – or it may lead to genuine dialogue resulting in understanding of and consensus on the importance and dynamics of shared values and structures within regional societies, while discouraging exclusive cultural claims to exemption from human rights norms and practices.

Finally, the impunity from justice enjoyed by perpetrators of crimes against humanity, such as torture and the forced disappearance of persons in many regions of the world, has been sharply challenged by victims and their families, by advocates of international law and by the ecumenical community, particularly in Latin America. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission created after the fall of the apartheid\* regime provided a significant model of how to deal with the question of past crimes in a way that could contribute to the post-conflict healing of societies. The programme of the WCC on impunity, truth and reconciliation created in 1993 has fur-

thered legal, theological and pastoral thought and practice in this field.

See also **Amnesty International, economics, land, migration, nation.**

ERICH WEINGÄRTNER

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## HUMANUM STUDIES

THE HUMANUM Studies, undertaken in the WCC between 1969 and 1975, were launched by the Uppsala assembly (1968) and grew out of the concern of the Geneva 1966 conference about the meaning of "humanization". Within the context of theological trends in the 1960s they may be seen as (1) a consequence of re-defining the mission of the church in terms of the agenda of the world in the light of *missio Dei*;<sup>\*</sup> (2) an ecumenical response to the rapidity of changes and developments, particularly in Western societies, as a result of technological and social progress; (3) a first attempt to develop an interdisciplinary methodology of ecumenical study and social thought in the light of a new appreciation of disciplines like sociology, psychology and anthropology.

The Humanum Studies were closely linked with the name of David Jenkins, a British theologian (later Anglican bishop of Durham) who contributed most of the 25 articles found in the WCC library's portfolio on Humanum Studies. The study was carried out in close cooperation with other contemporary WCC studies, including "The Future of Man and Society in a World of Science-based Technology" (Church and Society), "The Unity of

the Church and the Unity of Mankind" (Faith and Order), "Humanization and Mission: The Role of Christians in Changing Institutions" – all reflecting the shift in interest to the social and human dimension of the gospel in the 1960s. The contributions – most of them published in *Study Encounter* and *Anticipation* – covered a wide range of issues from the theology of development and the understanding of human rights to problems of biotechnology and human criteria of health care. This reflected the twofold emphasis of the Humanum Studies – a "survey of the secular", trying to discern the contemporary frontiers where human dignity was at stake, and a search for a theological interpretation of the problem area involved which could provide a meaningful orientation and bridge the gap between Christian tradition and contemporary experience.

However, the final report of the study, presented to the WCC central committee in Berlin 1974 under the title "The Anguish of Man, the Praise of God and the Repentance of the Church", centred on fundamental issues of theological methodology, reflecting a remarkable shift in emphasis from the question "What is man?" to the question "How do we do theology?" Rather than producing a deductive and universally applicable Christian doctrine of the human, the studies thus led to a passionate plea for methodologically taking seriously the social context and contemporary struggles to be human "in all their anguish and richness". The question of what the human really is led to a fundamental critique of detached ways of doing theology which, according to the study, have not yet been overcome in the churches and can in themselves be dehumanizing. A realistic account of both human suffering and liberation was seen as vital for any genuine theological study. Christological insights formed the basis for this approach: "The true motivating forces for understanding and coming to grips with 'the Humanum' are, as we have called them, the anguish of man and the praise of God uniquely united and reconciled with one another in Jesus Christ." This inter-relation of a Christology of incarnation and a theological methodology of contextuality constituted the long-term importance of the Humanum Studies for ecumenical social ethics. The final report affirmed: "The

incarnation of Jesus Christ declares to us that the nearer we come to reality the nearer we come to God, and that the more accurately we achieve an analysis of reality the more closely we come to suffering and sharing with God in his redemptive and creative work."

The Humanum Studies thus provided the theological and methodological rationale for the immense widening of the horizon of ecumenical social thinking in the action-oriented period after Uppsala, with the WCC initiating programmes on development,\* racism,\* sexism,\* human rights.\* Without reducing theology to anthropology, they made it clear that the contemporary quest for the "human" is a crucial way of asking for God and is thus the theological question of modern times. They also paved the way for the development of contextual theologies in non-Western countries by clearly criticizing Western cultural particularism and enquiring into the sources of "indigenous cultural energies" in the "development of responsible indigenous theologies" for the non-Western world (see *Humanum Studies: A Collection of Documents*, pp.45f. and 97ff.). Finally, they produced new insights with regard to interdisciplinary and cooperative methodologies in applying social sciences to ecumenical social ethics.

The Humanum Studies remain relevant in this respect, even though they came only at the beginning of the process of re-formulating Christian anthropology and the meaning of humanization in an age of ecological awareness. Jenkins's far-reaching recommendations about the structure and inter-relation of the WCC's programmes (made in his final paper, "Implications of the Humanum Studies for the Future Programmes of the WCC") are still pertinent. A continuation of the theological concerns of the Humanum Studies is reflected in both the WCC study on "The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Humankind" and the Lutheran World Federation study on "The Identity of the Church and Its Service to the Whole Human Being".

DIETRICH WERNER

■ D.J. Coles, *The Search for Methods in Contemporary Ecumenical Social Ethics*, thesis, Univ. of Manchester, England, 1973 ■ Hu-

*manum Studies 1969-1975: A Collection of Documents*, WCC, 1975 ■ D. Jenkins, "Man's Inhumanity to Man: The Direction and Purpose of the Humanum Studies", *ER*, 25, 1, 1973 ■ K. Raiser, "Prozess für den Menschen: Das Humanum-Studienprojekt des ÖRK", in *Ev. Komm.*, 6, 1973 ■ P.A. Stauffer, *The Meaning of Humanization: An Emerging Understanding of Man in WCC Discussions 1965-1970*, Ann Arbor MI, University Microfilms, 1972.

## HYMNS

SINGING is fundamentally an ecumenical activity, both in the spatial sense (we know of no peoples in the world who do not sing as an integral part of their culture)\* and in the temporal sense (anthropologists say that in the process of human evolution singing came into being even before speech).

In individuals, singing is one of the most intimate and profound expressions of the human being, coming from the very heart. Sung sound, technically defined as "the musical expression, through the voice, of every emotion suggested by thought and imagination" (*Groves' Dictionary of Music and Musicians*), thus becomes an expansion of the singer's spirit and was recognized as such by the church fathers, who described tunes sung to the word "Hallelujah" as the climax of the believers' praise and prayer, poured out when they could not organize their ideas articulately to express their feelings. Augustine commented: *Qui cantat bene, bis orati* – Who sings well, twice prays.

## GROUP SINGING: UNISON

Singing is most expressive and impressive when done in community. The uniting of many voices – in a new expression different from each of them individually – in unison has a privileged place in most Eastern civilizations. It is a symbol of joining everyone's spirit in one as well as a basic focus for concentration and meditation, i.e. mystical activity with a strong emphasis on the emotions (see *selection 1*).

Unison is the sound preferred in the Gregorian chants, associated with the papacy of Gregory the Great (1073-85), and the Genevan Psalter, which came into being around John Calvin (1509-64) – but for reasons wholly different from those mentioned regarding Eastern music.

Even though the strong influence of the beauty of the Gregorian chant on Eastern music is well documented by musicologists, the strict control of its theory and practice implemented when it was codified in Rome gave it the character of "official church music", identified with the papacy's attitude of expanding dominance at that period. Unison thus "subjected to rules" came to express the profound cohesion of an ecclesiastical elite and an oikoumene seen as having its centre in Rome. Through Gregory's missionary activity the form of singing which bears his name was imposed throughout the known world and sometimes overwhelmed local cultural expressions such as the Ambrosian hymns, genuine community forms associated with Ambrose, bishop of Milan (d.397).

The Genevan psalms were sung in unison for a different reason, though it was stated with the same authoritarian emphasis. Calvin inherited from Augustine a fear that music would distract worshippers or create in them emotions whose strength would obscure the clear sense of the word; thus he strictly forbade the use of musical instruments as an accompaniment (associated as they were with secular music) and multi-part harmony.

## GROUP SINGING: POLYPHONY

As a variety of religious music, polyphony began in the northern hemisphere in the 12th century as a derivative of the Gregorian chant. It exists as a natural form in other parts of the world such as Africa, where it developed its own characteristics independent of European music, by which it was influenced through the missionary movement in the 18th century, as students of African cultures have shown. In the traditions which use polyphony, both in the North and the South, it is regarded as symbolizing the variety of expressions within an integrated, harmonious whole. In Africa, for example, this multiplicity of voices allows a high degree of freedom for individual improvisation alongside the group performance, thus adding a new dimension to the significance of the symbol.

In European Christianity polyphony is synonymous with freedom of expression, especially in terms of the artist's independence

I-to Loh, Taiwan

求 主 憐 憫 我 們 求 基 督  
 Ch'iu\_\_ Chu lien - min\_\_ wo - men. Ch'iu\_\_ Chi - tu  
 Lord\_\_, have mer - cy\_\_ on us. Christ \_\_\_\_, have

憐 憫 我 們 求 主 憐 憫 我 們  
 lien - min\_\_ wo - men. Ch'iu\_\_ Chu lien - min\_\_ wo - men.  
 mer - cy\_\_ on us. Lord \_\_\_\_, have mer - cy\_\_ on us.

Selection 1. Copyright © 1965 by I-to Loh. Used by permission. Reprinted from *Jesus Christ – the Life of the World: A Worship Book for the Sixth Assembly*, WCC, 1983, p.117.

from ecclesiastical direction. Not a few papal bulls and edicts tried to stem its luxuriant, disorderly and fascinating growth in the middle ages. Regulations specified in extravagant detail what was permitted and what was not, sometimes even deploying theological arguments. All of this merely served to stimulate the imagination and subtlety of the composers – at a period when polyphony had not yet attained the height of musical art which it would achieve in the northern hemisphere in the 18th century.

One of the most lowly and elementary forms of polyphonic music, called the “chorale” in Germany and “hymn” in England, became the most valuable tool of the churches from the time of the 16th-century Reformation, precisely because of its simple structure and straightforward, explicit nature. The idea of the priesthood of all believers is accompanied in Lutheranism by a clear encouragement of active participation in the worship by everyone. The challenge of making the semi-literate masses sing when they packed the cathedrals of 16th-century Germany surely has few parallels in the history of liturgy, music or education. Luther and his fellow workers met it by creating the chorale, adapting all kinds of musical expression to a simple form – Gregorian chants (as well as those of Ambrose, who was perhaps closer in spirit to Luther, a man of the people), folk tunes both religious and secular, contemporary popular songs and, of course, works they themselves produced.

The structure is simple. The same musical phrase is repeated several times, vocal-

ization is infrequent, the original tune is found in the highest part of the harmony (so that it can be easily heard and reproduced), and it is given a lower register which is suitable for all voices. The organ sustains the whole force of the singing with its powerful accompaniment, and the choir (which is not abolished but encouraged) supports the congregation and also contributes to the final result with its own more elaborate polyphony (see *selection 2*).

Such a musical setting is clearly both impressive and expressive. The ancient Greek philosophers already recognized the importance of hymns both for committing basic content to memory and for creating appropriate modes of behaviour. Paul no doubt had something similar in mind when he juxtaposes singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with teaching and exhortation (Col. 3:16). Of Luther, indeed, it is said that his enemies feared his songs more than his sermons.

It was in the 18th century that a second important step was taken in the development of the ecumenical character of liturgical singing. In 1737 John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, published the first modern “hymnal”, that is, a collection of hymns, psalms and chorales for worship, coming from a variety of traditions – in other words, “ecumenical” (so far as that was possible at that period). Musically, the Methodist hymns were quite different from those previously known. They did not have one note per syllable, and they used tunes with a great range of vocal and rhythmic development. This was largely due, no doubt, to the metrical va-

riety of the poems by Charles Wesley, the movement's most prolific author, and to the attitude of John Wesley himself, who encouraged, rather than folk melodies, the use of elements from the non-ecclesiastical "classical" music of his day, thus breaking down the isolation of the church from secular modes of expression (for which he was widely and harshly criticized).

the world, perhaps dazzled by the splendour of what was in their trust, seldom appreciated the musical values in the cultures they encountered, and thus did not incorporate them into the treasury of Christian hymnody. In most cases, they rather overwhelmed the indigenous cultures and divorced the peoples from their own roots.

Germany / Johann Walter 1541 / Harm. 1934

1. All Mor - gen ist ganz frisch und neu des  
1. Each mor - ning with its new - born light pro -

Her - ren Gnad und gro - ße Treu, sie hat kein End den  
- claims the Lord of life is great! His faith - ful - ness will

lan - gen Tag, drauf je - der sich ver - las - sen mag.  
have no end; to him our songs of praise as - cend.

Selection 2. Original German text by Johannes Zwick. English text by Fred Kaan. English words copyright 1974 by Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream IL 60188, USA, for the USA and Canada, and Stainer & Bell Ltd, London N3 1DZ, England, for all other territories.

Wesley's hymnal established the foundations for an ecumenical repertoire in the fields of music and liturgy.\* Despite their many divisions, the churches of the West have been united by a musical inheritance that to a substantial extent cuts across all barriers to produce the surprising discovery, when church members encounter a different tradition, that "they sing the same songs we do"!

The missionaries entrusted with the export of these musical riches to the rest of

**THIRD-WORLD HYMNODY**

Two more centuries were to pass before the churches of the third world achieved enough awareness and strength to offer the rest of the Christian world their own musical expressions of faith on an equal footing with those of others, which till then had been regarded as "universal". The independence movements in Africa and the claims of the indigenous peoples and the African diaspora in the Americas, Australia and elsewhere certainly helped to create this confidence.

Misa Popular Salvadoreña: El Salvador

Muy movido

San - to, San - to es nues - tro Dios, Se - ñor de to - da la  
 tie - rra, San - to, San - to es nues - tro Dios, San - to, San - to, San - to, San - to, San - to es nues - tro  
 Dios, Se - ñor de to - da la his - to - ria San - to San - to es nues - tro Dios. Que a - com - pa - ña a nues - tro pue - blo, que  
 vi - ve en nues - tras lu - chas, del u - ni - ver - so en - te - ro el ú - ni - co Se - ñor. Ben - di - tos los que en su  
 nom - bre el E - van - ge - lio a - nun - cian, la bue - na y gran no - ti - cia de la li - be - ra - ción.

**D.C. al Fine**

**Introducción y Final**

Music and Spanish © Guillermo J. Cuellar, Residencial El Cortijo senda B#2, Ave. Monte Urales, Colonia Montebello, San Salvador, El Salvador.

### Selection 3. Reprinted by permission of the composer, Guillermo Cuéllar, El Salvador.

While it is perhaps too early to evaluate the contribution by third-world Christians to hymnody, certain characteristics stand out clearly: the African musical idiom which fits so well the idea of participatory, spontaneous and expressive worship; the texts of Latin American songs for the strength and poetic imagination with which they state the claim for social justice as an unmistakable sign of the coming of the kingdom; the genuine expressions of folk culture in music from Christian base communities (e.g. the Salvadorean mass; see *selection 3*).

### ECUMENICAL HYMNODY

The panorama of contemporary Christian hymnody is completed by a mention of poets who have given their work a clearly ecumenical focus that goes beyond their national or church origins. Two key figures are Fred Kaan, a Dutch native living in England, and Dieter Trautwein of Germany; associated with them on the musical side have

been Erik Routley (England), Joseph Gelineau (France) and Doreen Potter (Jamaica). Their efforts culminated in the publication (melody ed. 1974, full music ed. 1980) of the hymnbook *Cantate Domino*. This work, begun in 1924 by the World Student Christian Federation, was certainly the most significant expression of ecumenical hymnody in the 20th century.

Mention should also be made of the unique contribution to ecumenical hymnody of the ecumenical community of Taizé\* (France), whose prior, Brother Roger, encouraged the creation of much liturgical and popular music within the framework of selective traditional European models. Brother Robert and the musician Jacques Berthier had the responsibility for this work.

### EXPERIMENTAL LITURGIES

In the widely heralded worship at the WCC assembly in Vancouver in 1983 two things converged: the call of the third-world

churches for their forms of cultural expression to be respected, and the innovations to the liturgy in the northern hemisphere. The result has been the growth of a new experimental ecumenical liturgy in which music and singing have a number of specific characteristics.

*New forms.* To the traditional hymn with several stanzas has been added the “short liturgical response”, sometimes consisting of merely a single sentence. These have been widely accepted among Christians of the most diverse traditions for several reasons: (1) the brevity of the response makes it easy to memorize, thus allowing more flexible participation by the congregation; (2) though short, the content generally uses key words (“hallelujah”, “kyrie”, etc.), a prayer or im-

clusive role in accompanying communal singing, especially with music for which other instruments (guitar, zither, mbira, percussion, piano, synthesizer, etc.) are clearly more suitable for interpreting the style.

*Broadening the idea of vocal technique.* Voice production as understood in the West (mainly derived from 17th-century Italian opera) has ceased to be the sole criterion. Congregations are now encouraged to get closer in their singing to ways in which the voice is used in other cultures as an important form of identification. Just as African Christians were once taught to sing German chorales, using a vocal style other than their own (which in its time was also classed as “sacred”), so too German Christians are now being taught to sing African songs in a vocal

Orthodox liturgy, USSR

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son,  
Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.

Selection 4. Reprinted from *Jesus Christ – the Life of the World*, p.117.

agery, which emphasizes the emotional rather than the intellectual dimension of what is being sung (e.g. Russian kyrie, see *selection 4*); (3) repetition, sometimes frequent, creates a degree of “unconsciousness” in which worshippers momentarily cease to focus on their own identity in order to become one with the larger body of the community. They can also stop singing at specific moments without affecting the overall results, because the congregation continues with the repetition. In other words, the community overshadows the individual’s participation and appears to be independent of it.

*Changed ideas on “sacred music”.* The identification of certain styles and forms of European music with Christianity has been replaced by acceptance of every kind of rhythm, timbre and structure of melody and harmony that represents a form of authentic human expression. The organ has lost its ex-

style quite different from that of the chorale.

*Use of the original languages.* Similarly, cultural barriers to identifying in worship with “the other” can be overcome by using the sounds of the original languages of the songs, with assistance to help those who do not know the words to pronounce them. Here, a pastoral approach is needed to overcome initial reactions of reluctance or displeasure.

### THEOLOGY AND DOXOLOGY

Ideally, a hymn is a balanced and indissoluble unity of words and music. The music is not a slave to the words, as has sometimes been said in Christian circles, but neither is the word shackled. Rather, both are liberated by the gospel to attain new levels of expression. The hymns which achieve genuine recognition ecumenically, i.e. those which overcome the profound and sometimes artificial barriers which keep human beings

apart, seem to be those which express people's deepest and most genuine aspirations. Or, to put it negatively: hymns whose texts primarily represent doctrinal statements of a decidedly academic nature and are resistant to the soaring of the melody generally do not succeed in getting beyond the limits of the community that shares these statements. Nor do hymns which use only parts of the gospel truth and reduce it to the repetition of sentimental adjectives mainly about the person of Jesus, with tunes which mirror the dearth of theological content. Examples of these can be found in Christian hymnody of every age and tradition.

In the ideal symbiosis of poetry and music, both undergo change. The music takes on meanings beyond "pure" sound; the poetry is expanded in an ambience in which it is the emotions rather than the intellect which makes the sound come across meaningfully. With such hymns it may be possible to stop singing and not be able to repeat the words but yet to experience a very intense and definite emotion. The admonition to "pay attention" to what is being sung (i.e. the text) stresses the intellectual aspect of the hymn in an effort to put in the forefront something which has already become secondary because it is united to the music.

The apostle Paul's advice to sing with the spirit and with the mind (1 Cor. 14:15) reflects a certain fear, still present in Christianity, of "unintelligible" forms of expression which may take Christians into regions where emotions cannot always be controlled or classified. But the most important contribution of hymns to the Christian world may

be that they provide a means of community worship which is easily accessible, and through which brothers and sisters may identify with each other on the basis not of agreements in doctrine but of deeply shared emotions.

Although in some respects the ecumenical spirit seems to be declining, the ecumenical future with regard to music and singing can be seen as already with us and in the course of fulfilment.

See also **church music, worship in the ecumenical movement.**

PABLO SOSA

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## I

**IBIAM, FRANCIS AKANU**

B. 29 Nov. 1906, Unwana, Nigeria; d. 1995. Ibiham was the first African student at the medical school, University of St Andrews, Scotland (1927-35), and thereafter became a missionary doctor. He was founder and director of Abiriba hospital (1936) and doctor at the Church of Scotland mission hospital in Itu (1953). The list of his official positions is long: he established SCM Nigeria in 1937, was president of the Christian Council of Nigeria 1955-58, served on the standing committee of the International Missionary Council 1957-61, was chairman of the provisional committee of the All Africa Conference of Churches and AACC representative at the inaugural conference of the East Asia Christian Conference in Kuala Lumpur



1959, was a speaker at New Delhi 1961, attended Uppsala 1968, and was present as a guest at Nairobi 1975. He also served as a president of the WCC, 1961-68.

Ibiam was a key figure in national political life also. Britain appointed him as the first indigenous governor of Eastern Nigeria, 1960, from which position he led the churches to host the WCC central committee in Enugu. In the Biafra war, he sided with his people of Eastern Nigeria and consequently had to go into exile near Zurich until he was received back honourably in Nigeria. Identifying with his people, and in protest against British government support of the central Nigerian government against Biafra, in 1967 he renounced knighthood and other honours that Great Britain had bestowed on him.

JOHN S. POBEE

■ D.C. Nwafo, *Born to Serve: The Biography of Dr Akanu Ibiam*, Lagos, Macmillan, 1988.

## ICON/IMAGE

THE WORD "icon" is an adaptation of the Greek *eikon*, "image". Strictly speaking, the word covers all forms of representation, but it gradually came to denote a specific form of sacred painting on wood in the Byzantine tradition. The basic theological principles are the same for all other forms of visual sacred art (frescoes, mosaics, etc.) as for icons.

From early times Christians have used images along with the verbal proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ. At first, they were mainly symbolic: Christ as the shepherd, the lamb, a fish (Greek *ichthys*, acronym for *Iesous Christos Theou Hyios Soter* = Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour), although according to some traditions, the figurative representation of the holy face of Christ goes back to Christ's own times (cf. the legend of Abgar, king of Edessa, and the "image not made by human hands", as well as the legend of the linen or shroud of St Veronica, a name that means "true image").

From the time Christianity became the official religion of the empire, Christian art played a role in all parts of the oik-

oumene, with images of Christ, the *theotokos*, martyrs, saints and scenes from the Old and New Testaments playing a part in worship and as objects of veneration for the faithful. Such veneration came under severe attack during the iconoclastic crisis in the 8th and 9th centuries. Iconoclasm (the breaking of images) began in Byzantium in the first quarter of the 8th century with Emperor Leo III the Isaurian and was finally overcome only in 843 under Empress Theodora. During that time, images were destroyed, and many who venerated images were persecuted.

Two aspects of this crisis deserve mention from the ecumenical point of view: the theological issue at stake, and the repercussions in the West. The first was in a sense a continuation of the Nestorian and the monophysite controversies. The adversaries of images began by asking which of Christ's natures is represented on the icon of Christ: the human or the divine? If it is the human, then it amounts to a form of Nestorianism in that it implies two separate persons in Christ; if it is the divine, it is either monophysitism, in that the human is absorbed in the divine, or it is plain blasphemy, since the divine nature or essence is ineffable, invisible, unknowable and therefore cannot be represented. To this was added the argument that the veneration of a material object amounts to idolatry.

The Orthodox, or upholders of the catholic faith (John Damascene, the fathers of the seventh ecumenical council, Nicea II 787, Theodore of Studios), replied to the first set of questions that an icon of Christ represented neither his human nor his divine nature but his divine incarnate Person, or his *hypostasis*. Since the Word became flesh, the uncircumscribed became circumscribed, all matter is assumed in the mysterious process, and the invisible Word who made himself visible can be visibly represented.

In the view of the church expressed in the second council of Nicea, such a theological view is a direct consequence of Christ's incarnation,\* and if the incarnation is to be taken seriously, it is by no means a secondary matter, for it concerns the participation of the flesh and the mate-

rial universe in salvation.\* On the charge of idolatry, the texts of Nicea II are very clear. They take up (after John Damascene) a formula used by Basil in the 4th century to the effect that the honour rendered to the image goes to the prototype, so that when an icon is venerated, the honour goes to Christ, his mother or the saint represented, not to the actual icon. Besides, the texts draw a very clear distinction between the "veneration" of the icon and "adoration", which is due only to God.

When in 843 iconoclasm was finally overcome and the feast known as the triumph of Orthodoxy was appointed to be celebrated on the first Sunday in Lent (it is still solemnized each year in the Orthodox church), the implications were deeply Christological. Liturgical texts show that the veneration of images is the outward expression of taking seriously the consequences of the incarnation.

The repercussions of the iconoclastic crisis in the West were complex. The papacy remained faithful throughout to the catholic faith and practice. Pope Hadrian I sent legates to the seventh ecumenical council, and the council was received in Rome. Meanwhile Charlemagne and his theologians, basing their case on a totally corrupt translation of the acts of Nicea II, attacked it violently and rejected its decisions concerning the veneration of icons in the early 790s. They accused the "Greeks" of enjoining the "adoration" of images (exactly the opposite of what the council had said) and altogether of being heretics. These accusations and rejections are expressed in the *Caroline Books* (*Libri Carolini*) and were repeated solemnly at the council of Frankfurt in 794.

Although Pope Hadrian I and his successor, Leo III, resisted Charlemagne's requests to reject the second council of Nicea and defended the Greeks' orthodoxy, Carolingian theologians continued to regard the Eastern practice as suspicious well into the 9th century. Vestiges of this suspicion have remained in the Christian West, where the tendency became widespread to accept images, icons, frescoes, mosaics and statues merely as decoration and visual aids for the illiterate. It is of interest ecumenically to recall that some

of the Reformation "iconoclasts" referred to the *Caroline Books* to denounce the "superstitions" of the medieval West in the realm of veneration and that in reply the council of Trent\* referred to Nicea II.

In spite of the undeniable diversity due to the peculiar genius of each place and each epoch, there is a striking unity of spirit in the visual sacred art of the Christian church throughout the period of the 3rd to the 12th centuries. Certain features characteristic of what today tends to be described as Byzantine art (stylized features, figures and landscapes, absence of naturalistic representation, inversed perspective, etc.) are to be found all over Christendom (in the West, until the Romanesque period on the European continent, the Norman period in England). After the separation between East and West, there appeared a tendency in the Christian West to depart from these features and go for more and more "realism" in the naturalistic sense and towards more and more freedom from the theological principles expressed by Nicea II. In the Christian East, the manner of representation of the divine continued unchanged until "decadence" set in roughly in the 17th century. The 20th century saw a resumption of "traditional" art.

In the ecumenical context, the 20th century witnessed another striking phenomenon whose consequences are yet to be measured: icons, which for obvious historical reasons have long been associated with Byzantium and the Orthodox church, began to become more and more common in Roman Catholic places of worship and many homes, as well as in some Anglican and even Protestant churches, to say nothing of ecumenical gatherings and centres. What is more, they are very often appreciated by non-Christians. Icon painting is being practised both within and outside the Orthodox world.

Whether this is only a passing fashion, no one can say. But from the ecumenical point of view, this trend obviously presents an opportunity to recall what visual sacred art (and sacred art in general) means within the Orthodox context, where it has never completely died (in spite of periods of decline).

Icons in the Orthodox perspective, which strives to be faithful to the seventh ecumenical council, are “theology in colour”. In other words, all the responsibility which rests with the theologians, whose service in the church is an endeavour to express for the contemporary world the truth of Jesus Christ “the same yesterday and today and for ever” (Heb. 13:8), rests also and in the same measure with the icon painter (and other artists). Iconography is a liturgical art. It is part of worship where the truth of the kingdom is not only preached but, in a mysterious way, experienced as a foretaste. All visual representation therefore refers to the *transfigured* reality of all things called to salvation. Hence the stylized, non-naturalistic manner of representation.

The decision of Nicea II says that iconography (and therefore sacred art in general) “is in accord with our preaching of the gospel”. Therefore there can be no contradiction between the gospel preached (which is true theology) and what the eyes contemplate (and the other senses perceive). More important still for the ecumenical situation is another statement of the council concerning iconography (and sacred art, i.e. liturgy in general): it is “useful to strengthen our faith in the truly real, non-fictitious incarnation of the Word of God”.

It is to be hoped that the present generalized use of icons in prayer by many Christians may serve precisely this purpose of a united confession of the true consequences of Christ’s incarnation for the whole of creation.

NICHOLAS LOSSKY

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## IDEOLOGY

ALTHOUGH the term “ideology” gained currency only during the 19th century, preoccupation with its central problem – the relation between representation and reality – has a long history. Xenophanes and Plato were critical of those who, like Homer and Hesiod, misrepresented the nature of gods, creating an illusory fiction.

The problem of misrepresentation has continued throughout Western history. It received a more systematic treatment with Machiavelli, who contrasted the use of open force in the exercise of power with the use of fraud. Fraud is efficacious to the extent that the gap between reality and appearance can be widened. Francis Bacon went further by recognizing that the human mind distorts even scientific observations, for it is beset by “idols” that prevent the acknowledgment of truth. Later the notion of prejudice (Etienne de Condillac, Paul-Henri Holbach, Claude Adrien Helvetius) inherited the basic features of Bacon’s theory of idols.

The term “ideology” was first used by Destutt de Tracy at the end of the 18th century. Within the context of the French Enlightenment, his *Eléments d’idéologie* (1801) offered a systematic proposal for a new science. Ideas were understood as natural phenomena expressing the relation of the human body with the environment.

Ideology is thus the science that recognizes and systematizes the accumulated knowledge of such relation. Auguste Comte extended the meaning of the term further to describe not only the study of the relationship between the human and the environment on the basis of sense perception, but also the ensemble of ideas of an era characterizing the evolving stages of the human mind (theological, metaphysical and scientific).

For these authors the term “ideology” is devoid of critical significance. Napoleon, in 1812, was the first to present “ideology” as a pejorative concept. He attacked the *idéologues* (de Tracy and his followers), his former allies, accusing them of causing the disgrace of France by building a “tenebrous metaphysics” instead of basing knowledge in “the human

heart and in the lessons of history". Although Napoleon's attack was political, since the ideologues were legitimate children of the anti-metaphysical convictions of the French Enlightenment, it would become the fundamental insight in the use of the term by Marx, for whom the ideologue was one who inverts and distorts the relation between ideas and reality.

**MARXISM AND IDEOLOGY**

With Marx the concept of ideology is coupled with critical thinking, restoring into it elements of the critique of representations throughout history. The fundamental thesis of *The German Ideology* (1846), which Marx wrote with Engels, asserts the priority of being over consciousness; in their words, "life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life". Since for Marx life is historical existence and history is conditioned by its mode of material production – with the division of labour and the resulting struggle of classes with interests for themselves – the dominant ideas of an epoch, its ideology, are the ideas of the dominant class.

Hence for Marx the function of ideology is to veil the contradictions inherent in a historical mode of production in defence of the dominant class, so that those who are dominated will not raise their consciousness to the need to transform reality. At the same time, only revolutionary practice will bring about the possibility of overcoming ideology. An ideology is maintained as long as an economic system produces fetishes which are reifications of real relations, e.g. labour turns into commodity or exchange into money. Ontologically, ideology distorts the real contradictions of a mode of production; epistemologically, it inverts the relationship between theory and practice.

For Marx the critique of ideology is a necessary but not sufficient condition for revolutionary practice. Ideological critique liberates consciousness from the dominant ideology in order to grant space for a new consciousness to emerge out of revolutionary practice. Yet Marx left this problem unsolved: if ideological critique is necessary, though in a negative sense, un-

der what conditions would such a critique be possible?

In the subsequent interpretation of the concept, we find two trends attempting to address this problem left by Marx. One tends towards positivism, the other towards historicism.

The former proposes to solve the problem by moving the discussion from the theory-practice frame of reference to the structure-superstructure relationship. Ideology was conceived as a super-structural *reflection* of the structural (economic) relations and forces of production in a society. If a dominant ideology would reflect the interests of the dominant class in order to maintain domination, a competing ideology would emerge as a reflection of the revolutionary interests of the dominated class, the proletariat. Such consciousness does not emerge spontaneously, but as a result of the political and pedagogical work of a group within this class which is conscious of its own historical role, i.e. the party. The party as the conscious vanguard of its class has an ideology radically different from the dominant ideology. Lenin, arguing this view, would recognize that without such an ideology a party would not fulfill its historical role.

Along these lines, a positive assessment of ideology results. Ideologies not only reflect but create the objective world. The resolution of historical conflicts passes through these new ideologies, which are in conflict among themselves. Later development in this interpretation emptied ideology of its Marxian meaning and approached it more generally as an instrument that defines the psychological, social and political project of a class. In Louis Althusser, science is distinguished from ideology in that the latter is only an unconscious expression of the relation of the human to the world, but essential for the ordering of any social formation. Elements of the historical interpretation of the problem that goes through Machiavelli, de Tracy and Comte are here maintained.

The second trend, which recovered Baconian tenets in the assessment of the problem, was developed by the historicist

tradition. It is represented by the sociologists of knowledge and is also present in the theoreticians of the Frankfurt school. According to this view, all understanding is socially, culturally and existentially rooted. Knowledge is permeated by social interests. Science itself is ideological, given that it is interest-laden. Karl Mannheim would go so far as to say that there are ideological elements in the process of knowledge which will remain, even after all efforts are made to recognize interest in any proposition. The reading of any socio-cultural fact has to be done from the standpoint of the interests of the actors. To do this systematically is to apply "ideological suspicion". The point of exercising ideological suspicion is not to remove the layers of ideological husk to get to the pure scientific kernel but to achieve a new level of knowledge surpassing subjectivism, without falling into an illusory objectivism. The goal is to relativize ideologies through an open community of intersubjective communication in which conflicting points of view will allow for a permanent recognition of ideologies and their underlying interests.

In Marx the term "ideology" was confined to its pejorative meaning. It was applied both to religious and theological discourse and to the philosophies and critiques of those who attack religious forms and systems (Bruno Bauer, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Ludwig Feuerbach, etc.) with "phrases" instead of doing it through revolutionary practice.

Only with Lenin does "ideology" receive a positive assessment. Being different from science, ideologies belong to the super-structure of a mode of production reflecting at the level of ideas the struggle of social classes. The ideological struggle is a function of class struggle. The triumph of the Russian revolution (1917) was then also the triumph of the communist ideology of the proletariat.

The positive assessment of ideology as a constitutive component in the struggle for the truth to be triumphant would lead to still another and this time fundamental shift in the understanding of the concept. If the ideological struggle is a function of truth-saying and not only of false con-

sciousness, then the question of truth cannot be dissociated from the question of power. Hence the question of ideology is newly situated, neither at the level of consciousness formation nor at the level of practical and technological application, but at the level of the institution of discourses (scientific or not) with their power of configuring normative knowledge and of excluding other forms of knowledge. This has been the contribution of Michel Foucault who shifted the axis of discussion from the science-ideology relation to the one between truth and power. Ironically it was Lenin's positive assessment of ideology, which lent support to the Russian revolution, that would ultimately evince the indissoluble relationship between truth and power, the very issue that helped to corrode the legitimacy of the Soviet Union.

#### IDEOLOGY IN ECUMENICAL THOUGHT

Religious and theological thinking turned itself against such a notion of ideology in the first half of the 20th century. In the ecumenical movement from the 1930s to the 1960s, "ideology" was used exclusively in a pejorative sense, referring primarily to communism as a system of thought competing with Christianity for the spiritual allegiance of humankind. The 1938 Tambaram conference of the International Missionary Council stated (although not using the term "ideology") that "Marxist communism in its orthodox philosophy stands clearly opposed to Christianity". On the Roman Catholic side, Pope Pius XI declared in *Divini Redemptoris* (1937) that "communism is intrinsically wrong".

In the first assembly of the WCC (Amsterdam 1948), the term "ideology" received an expanded meaning. Though still pejorative, it was no longer used exclusively to attack communism; Amsterdam called on the churches "to reject the ideologies of both communism and laissez-faire capitalism". The Evanston assembly (1954) maintained the Christian rejection of ideologies but recognized the effects which sterile anti-communist rhetoric and practice were producing in many Western societies under the impact of the cold war.

Not until the world conference on Church and Society (Geneva 1966) was the term "ideology" ecumenically assessed in a non-pejorative sense. It was defined as "the theoretical and analytical structure of thought which undergirds successful action to realize revolutionary change in society or to undergird and justify its status quo". It was also recognized that "Christians, like all other human beings, are affected by ideological perspectives". The challenge that came with the world conference was to work out the relationship between faith and ideologies. In 1971 the WCC central committee decided to insert "and Ideologies" in the title of the sub-unit dealing with "Dialogue with People of Living Faiths" (see *Marxist-Christian dialogue*).

An important ecumenical development was the political challenge that Latin American Christians brought to the theological agenda. As a result, the WCC Faith and Order\* commission, meeting at Accra in 1974, recognized that Marxism or communism is not the exclusive or even the main reference of ideology, but that all our ideas have material roots and that the conceptions people hold often have an ideological function. The concern shifted from the sheer rejection of ideologies to the need to recognize them and to understand how they function. This was well expressed in the title of the report "Churches among Ideologies" of the Geneva consultation on ideology and ideologies sponsored by the WCC in 1981.

**ROMAN CATHOLIC RESPONSES**

In the Roman Catholic Church the notion of ideology was also marked by prejudices until the Second Vatican Council. In the Council the concept is understood as the systematic expression of ideas debased by interests of nations or groups. *Gaudium et Spes* regards ideologies as instruments to impose the interests of profit, nationalism or militarism. The building of the Christian community, says *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, implies that priests can never put themselves at the service of any ideology. While the main concern of the Council when dealing with ideology is to reject "systematic atheism" (a concept that includes but

avoids an exclusive attack on communism), the final text has a view of ideology that is still negative but more balanced.

A further step on the Roman Catholic side was taken by the Latin American bishops conference in Puebla, Mexico, in 1979. The bishops defined ideology as a vision of several aspects of life elaborated from the point of view of a determined group in society. It is legitimate if the interests being defended are also legitimate and show respect for the fundamental insights of the other groups of a nation. In this non-pejorative sense ideology functions as mediation for action. Claiming that ideologies have a tendency to absolutize themselves and become idols, the conference defined the three main ideologies of Latin America as capitalist liberalism, Marxist collectivism and the ideology of national security.\*

The ecumenical movement, in its approach to the notion of ideology, has moved from sheer rejection of it (in order to affirm faith) to an attitude of tolerance which recognizes it as a psycho-social and cultural phenomenon. But the challenge of the F&O Accra meeting remains, demanding a further enquiry into the relationship between faith and ideology. It is by no means enough to examine the material rootedness of ideologies if the spiritual ground of faith is dualistically divorced from it. A critical approach to ideology requires also the examination of the necessity of the faith-ideology relationship. Such an approach will bring into the agenda of Christians in the oikoumene the discussion of the relationship between Christian practice and ecclesial teachings, between charisma and structure, or still better, between truth-claims and the power by which they are instituted.

VÍTOR WESTHELLE

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## IGNATIUS IV (Hazim)

B. 1920, Mhardah, Syria. Patriarch of Antioch and All the East since 1979, Ignatius was a president of the WCC 1983-91, a member of the central committee 1968-83, and president of the Middle East Council of Churches 1974-94. Ordained to the priesthood in 1953, he studied philosophy at the American University of Beirut and theology at the St Sergius Orthodox Institute in Paris. He was founder and director of the Annunciation School in Beirut 1953-62, and principal of Balamand Seminary and School 1962-70. Elected patriarchal vicar and ordained bishop in 1962, he became metropolitan of Latakia, Syria, in 1965. From 1970 to 1974 he was dean of St John of Damascus Theological Institute, Lebanon.

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## IMAGES OF THE CHURCH

SINCE BIBLICAL times, images have functioned more powerfully than concepts or definitions in shaping the ways in which the church\* and its unity\* are understood. The images, in so far as they are taken from ordinary human experience, are generally metaphorical; they are predicated only analogously of the church as a mystery of grace.\* In ecclesiology, the images serve as models for thinking about the church and its attributes.

In the New Testament the church is described through a number of metaphors taken from spheres of life that range from agriculture, fishing and business to family relations, domestic chores and religious practice. Temple worship, political memories and living organisms furnish material for ecclesiology. Paul Minear's classic study *Images of the Church in the New Testament* (1960) considers some 96 analogies. Among the "major images" he lists several taken from the covenant\* history of Israel (e.g., people of God, Israel, holy nation, temple), several based on the universal cosmic order (e.g., new creation, kingdom of God,\* communion\* in the Holy Spirit\*), several referring to the mu-

tual union of Christians in the faith (e.g., fellowship of saints,\* disciples, household of God) and several pointing up the organic relations between God and his people (e.g. Body of Christ, fullness of God).

Patristic and medieval theology, while exploiting these NT images of the church, at the same time tended to enrich them with allegorical interpretations of biblical texts that did not refer literally and immediately to the church. Thus Cyprian, in his treatise on *The Unity of the Church*, speaks of the seamless robe of Christ, of Noah's ark (outside of which no one can escape death) and of the immaculate spouse who cannot be unfaithful to her husband. The Greek fathers show a marked preference for the image of the church as Christ's mystical body, animated by the Holy Spirit, who sustains all the members with the same divine life. Augustine, incorporating material from the Greek fathers, develops the image of the "whole Christ", head and members. He speaks likewise of the church as bride of Christ and as mother of all the faithful. Mining some of the parables of the kingdom, Augustine argues against the Donatists that the church is a mixed society, containing good and evil members, some of whom are not predestined to eternal life.

In the monastic theology of the medieval Western church, the symbolic interpretation of scripture was in great favour. The church was depicted, e.g., as the heavenly Jerusalem, the new ark of the covenant, the new tabernacle, the new temple, the moon, the Samaritan woman, Martha and Mary, and the woman giving birth to a child. In canon law,\* ecclesiastical office was discussed in terms of the "power of the keys" conferred upon Peter (Matt. 16:19). The doctrine of the two swords, founded on Luke 22:38, was used to justify the spiritual and temporal powers of the papacy. The scholastic theologians of the middle ages, more sober in their use of metaphor, interpreted the supernatural life and wisdom of the church in Neo-platonic categories, mediated through Pseudo-Dionysius.

Luther and Calvin developed a critical ecclesiology, resistant to what they saw as

exaggerated Roman claims. Both of them, in certain texts, distinguished quite sharply between the visible and the invisible church, according greater dignity to the latter. Yet both of them sought to defend, against radical spiritualism, the importance of the visible church as the place where the gospel is preached and the sacraments\* are administered. Calvin described the church as the Body of Christ and as the mother in whose womb the faithful are conceived. Lutheranism, with its strong emphasis on proclamation, tended to emphasize the local congregation and to let the universal structures of unity recede into relative neglect. The dominant image of the church in Lutheranism, and in much of classical Protestantism, is that of a herald.

The Catholic theologians of the Counter-Reformation reacted vigorously against the reformers. They tended to prefer categories borrowed from Aristotelian philosophy and Roman law and to interpret the biblical data by means of these categories.

Robert Bellarmine, for instance, portrayed the church as a universal society under the government of the legitimate pastors, and especially under the pope as vicar of Christ. This type of ecclesiology was still dominant at the time of Vatican I\* (1869-70), which defined the powers of the pope as "shepherd and teacher of all Christians". The biblical metaphor of shepherd was still used but was interpreted in juridical and societal terms, with the accent on jurisdiction.

Many Catholic theologians of the 19th and early 20th centuries felt the need to complement the official juridical ecclesiology with a more organic ecclesiology, having a richer biblical and patristic basis. Influenced by the romantic idealism of his day, Johann Adam Möhler (1796-1838) placed the primary accent on the church as mystical communion, drawing abundantly from the Greek fathers. During the following century the theology of the mystical body underwent a notable development. It received official blessing from Pope Pius XII, who in his encyclical *Mystici Corporis* (1943) stated that the expression "the mystical Body of Christ"

was the noblest and most sublime description of the church. Warning against any dualistic spiritualism, the pope went on to insist that the church, as a body, was necessarily visible and that to be cut off from the visible communion of the society was to be placed outside the Body of Christ. In the concluding section of the encyclical, Pius XII called for prayers that straying Christians might receive the grace to "enter into Catholic unity... in the organic oneness of the Body of Jesus Christ".

With Vatican II (1962-65) official Catholic ecclesiology took a new turn. In its Constitution on the Church, the Council records four mutually complementary sets of biblical images: flock of Christ, vineyard of the Lord, temple of the Holy Spirit and spouse of the Lamb (*Lumen Gentium* 6). The following article (7) goes on to expound at some length the image of the church as Body of Christ. Finally, chapter 2 (arts 9-17) unfolds the mystery of the church as new people of God, the image that seems to be dominant in Vatican II. But this image cannot be played off against the teaching of Vatican I. Vatican II, rejecting populist models, taught explicitly that the people of God is a hierarchically structured society in which the pope and the bishops in union with him hold the plenitude of power.

In other passages Vatican II developed the idea of the church as sacrament, i.e. as sign and instrument of Christ's redeeming and reconciling activity. The Decree on Ecumenism\* recognized that the Catholic church, in its present condition, is in some ways deficient and that the sacramentality of the church called for progress towards unity among all Christians. In line with this sacramental ecclesiology, Vatican II muted the rhetoric of "return" and called for a movement forward on the part of all Christians, including Catholics, to the fullness of grace and truth that God wills for the church (*Unitatis Redintegratio* 12).

The highly complex history of Protestantism over the past four centuries precludes any simple generalizations about its ecclesiological imagery. Some Protestants, such as Paul Tillich, have tended to look on the visible church as a merely human organization having no necessary relation

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to eternal life. For them the essential is the invisible spiritual community that exists dialectically within the churches. The mainstream of Protestant thought, however, has depicted the church as the place where the saving word of God resounds and is accepted in faith.\* Conservative Protestants, adhering to the Reformation emphasis on correct doctrine, magnify the preaching office and the Bible as text. In some 20th-century authors (e.g. Karl Barth, Rudolf Bultmann, Gerhard Ebeling) the church is presented primarily as an event in which the living Lord makes himself present here and now through proclamation. This ecclesiology attaches little importance to the continuing life of the church from one generation to another or to the overarching structures of unity.

In the 20th-century ecumenical movement it is evident how different ecclesiological images are linked with different visions of unity. At one end of the ecumenical spectrum are those who maintain that the church of Christ (as divine institution, sacrament or Body of Christ) continues to exist in a single divinely established fellowship of truth and grace. Incorporation in Christ is obtained through sacramental participation in the life of one particular, historically continuous church. This position may be called the catholic concept of ecumenism. It is represented by many Roman Catholics, Orthodox and members of other sacramental churches. This model can be set forth in a way that acknowledges deficiencies in every church and admits that separated churches may be partial or incomplete realizations of the church of Christ. Indeed both of these points were asserted by Vatican II.

At the other end of the spectrum are Christians who hold that the church exists primarily in local congregations where the gospel is faithfully preached and that structures of unity are a matter of human negotiation. Synodical unions, federations and conciliar organizations are seen as beneficial but unessential. This view of unity is often connected with the image of the church as herald or a community of faith.

According to a third view – that of ecclesiological dualism – the unity of the

church is in some sense a given; it can be neither constructed nor dissolved by human effort. The church exists as a spiritual, invisible communion of grace within a multiplicity of bodies that are separated from one another on the empirical plane. This theory of unity rests on a vision of the church in which spiritual unity can exist without bodily or external unity. The task of the ecumenical movement, in this perspective, is not to create but to manifest the unity of the *una sancta*.

Still another ecclesiological model has emerged in secular theology. According to this view, the church has the task of pioneering the unity of the larger human society. It sees itself as a servant of the coming unity of the whole human race. In this perspective the internal unity of the church is not a primary consideration. The main focus is on the goals of universal peace,\* justice\* and solidarity, to which the service of the church is ordered. The unity of Christians may take the form of provisional coalitions for secular goals, such as civil rights.

The various models of union have been intensely discussed within the ecumenical movement in recent years. Distinctions are made between organic union,\* corporate union, fellowship through concordats, conciliar fellowship, unity in reconciled diversity and the like. Upon examination it becomes apparent that a preference for certain models over others is usually a consequence of an option for a particular image of the church. Thus ecumenism must concern itself with images and models in ecclesiology.

See also **Jesus Christ; people of God; unity, ways to**.

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**IMPERIALISM**

TRADITIONALLY understood as “a policy aiming at the formation and maintenance of empires”, imperialism has been re-defined, mainly in the terms of Hobson, Hilferding and Lenin, or in the terms of third-world nationalisms, as the policy of international capitalism or of powerful “central” states to achieve control through economic domination, political pressure and, if necessary, armed intervention. The term can also refer to the ideological legitimation of such policies.

While the ecumenical movement has seldom spoken of “imperialism”, probably to avoid the ideological connotations and emotional resonance characterizing such vocabulary, issues related to imperialism have been the object of ecumenical reflection, pronouncements and action under such rubrics as capitalism,\* colonialism,\* decolonization,\* dependence,\* economics,\* international order,\* liberation\* and third world.\*

See also **debt crisis; fascism; ideology; investment; justice; militarism; nation; national security; totalitarianism; world community.**

JOSÉ MÍGUEZ BONINO

**INCARNATION**

THE DOCTRINE of the incarnation has been accorded greater or lesser importance at different periods of Christian history. In the theology of the early centuries, both in East and West, it was of fundamental significance. More recent centuries have sometimes seen a tendency to set “incarnation theologies” over against “redemption theologies”, and to trace these different lines of thought back to the New Testament in different emphases in the Johannine and Pauline writings respectively.

While many theologians would now question how far these tendencies are really mutually exclusive, there can be no doubt that since the Reformation a certain style of incarnational theology has characterized those theologians who have sought in the theology of the early centuries, particularly in its Greek form,

to find a way through some of the impasses of Reformation and Counter-Reformation controversy. This strategy has been followed by a large number of Anglican writers from the 16th century onwards.

The origins of this line of thought in Anglican tradition are found in the work of Richard Hooker (1554-1600), the greatest English theologian since the Reformation. In the fifth book of the laws of ecclesiastical polity, Hooker writes: “Forasmuch as there is no union of God with man without that mean between both which is both, it seemeth requisite that we first consider how God is in Christ, then how Christ is in us, and how the sacraments do serve to make us partakers of Christ” (5.1.3). In this way he established a direct connection between the doctrine of the incarnation, the church\* and the sacraments.\*

This line of thought was developed further during the 17th century, and it came to new life in the teaching of the Oxford movement in the middle of the 19th century, particularly in Cardinal Newman and R.I. Wilberforce. A somewhat different elaboration of these ideas is to be found in F.D. Maurice (1805-74), who draws out the social and political implications of such a doctrine of the incarnation and sees in the sacraments models for a more human and participatory ordering of society.

An emphasis on the doctrine of the incarnation is also to be found in the Lutheran tradition, e.g. the great Danish churchman N.F.S. Grundtvig (1783-1872). In a different theological style, he also emphasizes how in Christ the original goodness of creation\* and humanity, which is masked but not destroyed by sin,\* is transfigured and fulfilled. Grundtvig’s theology is grounded in a way which is uncommon in the 19th century. His teaching had its effects not only in the world of education but also in that of agricultural production. It provides interesting suggestions for a theology able to respond to the ecological dilemmas of our time.

No Christian theology which is worthy of its name can evade the mystery of the

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cross, the mystery of Christ's triumph over death by death. But the doctrine of the incarnation, with its affirmation of the Word made flesh, is also vital to a full and balanced presentation of the Christian message. It is particularly important at the present, in that it provides both a way of looking at God's action in the material world and a way of understanding the action of the Word in different cultures and different traditions. In the fourth gospel, as in the epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians, the Word is seen at work in all things. No part of human experience is altogether alien to him. In the words of the great Greek theologian Maximus the Confessor: "The Word of God, who is God, wills at all times and in all places to work the mystery of his embodiment."

See also **Jesus Christ, resurrection, uniqueness of Christ.**

A.M. ALLCHIN

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## INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

LANGUAGE which is carefully chosen, ensuring that both vocabulary and content include all people, is known as inclusive language. Inclusive language is important for many people not only because it reflects a change in culture, in particular in the status of women, but also because it may actually effect that change. It encourages people to examine attitudes which may be exclusive and alter them.

By baptism\* all people become full members of the Body of Christ, yet the language of theology and liturgy often seems to deny that basic equality. Those who are not male, white, young and healthy find their existence and experi-

ence is rarely mentioned. Women have become increasingly aware of, and vocal about, their exclusion. They have observed that language reflects the culture\* which has formed it. A language in which a masculine noun or pronoun can be used to denote members of both sexes reflects a culture in which the male is normative. Language which includes only male metaphors for God reflects a culture for which the most sacred is male. Such language has begun to change. As women emerge from subordination, the language has begun to adapt to make them visible and encourage their inclusion.

Yet it has been easier to revise language about the worshipping people than language about the One they worship. The scriptures were fashioned in a patriarchal culture. Biblical images for God are predominantly masculine, and although the Christian God is stated to transcend gender and although devotion to a motherly God is well attested within the tradition, there have been strong negative reactions to feminine imagery. The creative use both of non-personal (love, rock, light) and non-gender-specific descriptions (healer, friend, lover, disturber) is inevitably found to be less troublesome, albeit with its own limitations.

In the Christian community, especially but not exclusively in the English-speaking world, concern focused initially on language referring to the worshipping community. Many liturgical revisers in Canada, the US, New Zealand and England agree that alternatives should be found for terms such as "men", "sons", "brothers" and "mankind", and for masculine personal pronouns, on the premise that although these words once had a broad meaning, they are now not believed to be inclusive. It is also accepted that the biblical distinction (in Hebrew, Greek and Latin) between "male human" and "human" should from now on be clearly observed in translation.

Recent liturgical writing and hymnody have gone beyond the use of inclusive vocabulary. Drawing on neglected scriptural and spiritual traditions and the reflections of contemporary women, worship can in-

creasingly benefit from the wealth of women's experience now offered in canticle and prayer, reading and blessing. The worship of the people of God\* can begin to include the experience of all the people of God.

Close attention to biblical texts has encouraged debate about translation. Some scholars argue that if texts are to be adequately understood, translation must include a considerable amount of interpretation. An inclusive-language translation might refer to Jesus as "child of God" rather than "son of God", as "human one" rather than "son of man", on the assumption that Jesus' humanity is of greater significance than his masculinity. Exclusively masculine descriptions for God might also be modified, "lord" being replaced by "sovereign", "father" by "father and mother". Suggestions such as these test the elasticity of the Christian faith.

While the 1981 central committee mandated the use of inclusive language in all WCC publications, the question of appropriate language for God was a point of growing ecumenical controversy during the 1980s. The 1988 central committee asked for a theological study of this issue. Some Orthodox argue that the scriptural and patristic source of the Trinitarian formula "Father, Son and Holy Spirit" in the WCC basis\* means any change in such language has theological implications affecting the foundation of ecumenical fellowship (see **Trinity**).

Interim guidelines for worship at the seventh assembly (Canberra 1991) affirmed adherence to biblical texts and early creeds while recognizing a need to encourage people creatively to express their faith in contemporary language. The spirit of these guidelines was also applied at the eighth assembly in Harare (1998). In *Liturgiam authenticam* (2001), the Roman Congregation for Divine Worship issued strict instructions limiting the adaptability of original Latin texts undergoing translation into modern vernaculars.

See also **sexism, women in church and society**.

VIVIENNE FAULL

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## INCULTURATION

ETYMOLOGICALLY, "inculturation" means the insertion of new values into one's heritage and world-view. This process applies to all human dimensions of life and development. Within contemporary Christianity, inculturation signifies the movement which takes local cultures and their values as the basic instrument and a powerful means for presenting, reformulating and living Christianity. Within this process effective dialogue between Christianity and local cultures is carried out. Inculturation, therefore, becomes the honest attempt to make Christ and his liberative message better understood by people of every culture,\* locality and time.

Inculturation can be traced back to biblical history, which produced an inculturated Bible. From the beginning, Christianity has passed through various stages of inculturation as it moved from the Jewish to Greek, Roman and Germanic cultures. Since the 16th century, however, missionary Christianity became less willing to be truly incarnated within the cultures and world-views of non-Europeans. In the second half of the 20th century, the inculturation movement reasserted itself, especially in Africa and Asia, following the achievement of political independence, the indigenization of the local churches and the movement for cultural independence.

Inculturation asserts the right of all peoples to enjoy and develop their own culture, the right to be different and to live as authentic Christians while remaining truly themselves at the same time. It makes Christianity feel truly at home in the culture of each people, thus reflecting its uni-

versality. It becomes a prophetic and liberative movement which rejects colonial Christianity and proclaims the liberty of all peoples to serve God within their own basic world-view, thus eliminating the constant danger of dualism or dichotomy in their lives. It is not the aim of the movement to create a faulty, separatist, easy, syncretistic or racist Christianity.

The scope of inculturation extends to the totality of Christian life and doctrine, the central ministry of Christ and all other ministries which derive from it, the manner of witnessing to Christ, proclaiming his message, worship, organization of church, study of the Bible and theology and pastoral methods. There is no area of Christianity that can be considered to be outside the scope of inculturation.

To inculturate Christianity authentically there is a need for a deep knowledge of both Christianity and culture and an intimate link between liberation and inculturation. The people must be fully involved in the entire process in a new way of doing theology. They need the necessary freedom to think, research and experiment, with the cooperation of church leaders at all levels and an adequate catechesis for active participation. Inculturation is best promoted through ecumenical endeavours when all Christian churches within a similar cultural milieu work towards a common goal.

See also **theology, contextual**.

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## INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

THE WORKING definition of indigenous peoples used by the United Nations Sub-commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities is that they are "the existent descendants of the peoples who inhabited the present territory of a country wholly or partially at the time when persons of a different culture or ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of the world, overcame them and, by conquest, settlement or other means, reduced them to a non-dominant or colonial situation".

Questions regarding the status, rights and conditions of indigenous peoples were raised during the meetings of the International Missionary Council, but the issue as such did not appear on the ecumenical agenda until the establishment of the WCC's Programme to Combat Racism\* in 1969. Global ecumenical awareness of the situation of indigenous peoples was subsequently stimulated by the visible participation of Native Canadians in the WCC's sixth assembly (Vancouver 1983) and the even more prominent role of Aboriginal Australians in the seventh assembly (Canberra 1991) – the latter coming just a year before worldwide commemorations of the 500th anniversary of the voyage of Christopher Columbus, which had devastating consequences for the indigenous peoples of the Americas.

One factor that distinguishes indigenous peoples from national minorities\* and other groups suffering racist oppression is the fact that they were the original inhabitants of the land before being displaced by an invading group. While indigenous peoples can be a national minority – and in fact constitute the largest minority in Mexico, Peru and El Salvador – elsewhere they make up the majority of the population, as in Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala and South Africa.

The 2001 edition of the *Yearbook* of the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs gives the following figures for indigenous peoples in the world: 290,000 Aborigines in Australia, 350,000 Maoris in New Zealand, 80,000 Sami (Lapps) in the Scandinavian countries, 150,000 Inu-

its (Eskimos) in circumpolar states, 29 million indigenous in Central and South America, and 1.5 million in North America. In Africa there are an estimated 14.5 million, in Asia 148 million, with some 1 million in Siberia and the Russian Far East, and 1.5 million in the Pacific. (Of course, population statistics are, at best, approximate: many people of indigenous ancestry are not acknowledged by government statistics or by some indigenous governing councils, for a variety of reasons. This would tend to make the estimates of indigenous populations low.) The overwhelming majority of these populations are landless, live in desperate poverty and have little or no access at all to health, water supply, shelter and education services.

A second, related characteristic of indigenous peoples, no matter where they live or what their political or social culture and beliefs may be, is that they all view land\* as the basis of their very survival. While other groups suffer from landlessness, they do not have the same affinity to the land as indigenous peoples, for whom it is basic not only for economic survival but also for cultural and religious survival.

Indigenous peoples have three major goals: politically, they seek self-determination or autonomy; economically, they seek control over the resources of their land in order to use them for their development; socially, they seek the right to practise their cultures and religions and struggle against assimilation and integration, which bring the risk of cultural genocide.

Within the Programme to Combat Racism, specific attention to indigenous peoples and the major issue of land rights came in two consultations of anthropologists and indigenous peoples themselves, convened by the WCC in Barbados (1971 and 1977). In 1981 a WCC team visited Australia to investigate the condition of the Aboriginal people, and this resulted in the Australian churches' returning property to them valued at \$250,000. The results of these investigations were incorporated in a 1982 WCC central committee statement on indigenous peoples and land rights: "The indigenous peoples' struggle

for land rights is challenging the church to be faithful to its gospel of reconciliation and the biblical affirmation of the creation of all human beings in the image of God. The racist denial of indigenous people's identity can only be combated when the oppressed are empowered spiritually, economically and politically."

The ecumenical movement held several consultations in Latin America between 1980 and 1996, with special attention to racism, the land issue, the pursuing of constitutional rights for indigenous peoples and the ways in which churches may develop a policy of solidarity and accompaniment.

The issue of indigenous peoples is also connected with the integrity of creation and problems of pollution and ecology. Current efforts of the WCC are likely to further the ecumenical concern and action with indigenous peoples; they include a land rights consultation (1989), a Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation\* convocation (1990), and the WCC assembly in Australia (1991).

In 1992 the churches were forced to face their past and present responsibility in the 500 years of genocide, land theft and cultural destruction that has resulted from the invasion of the Americas. In many cases indigenous peoples have brought the churches and governments to court over the issue of treatment in residential schools: physical and sexual abuse, and also cultural and spiritual loss. Since 1999, these areas of concern have been addressed in the courts of the land as well as through Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms (ADRs) and face-to-face dialogues.

The churches have actively worked with the indigenous peoples and the government in developing reconciliation and healing initiatives and alternative resolution strategies. Although indigenous peoples pursue the aim of having their own government recognized and their own legal systems acknowledged as valid, they know that only through national and international laws can justice be presently sought – that is, where governments respect and follow their own laws and international conventions.

Concern for the preservation of the earth and interest in indigenous peoples cannot be separated. Mission approaches profoundly affect relations with indigenous peoples, their culture, their spiritual heritage and their ways of life. Respect is the key to walking and working together as equals.

See also **environment/ecology, ethnicity, racism.**

JEAN SINDAB and ALF DUMONT

■ *Indigenous Peoples: Walking Together towards Tomorrow*, Geneva, WCC, 1998

## INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS

THE TERM "indigenous religions" covers a very wide range of religious traditions around the world. No completely satisfactory term has been found for the religions treated in this entry: other terms include traditional, primal, tribal or native religions, shamanism, and, inaccurately and often disrespectfully (generally by anthropologists, missionaries and some Western comparative religion scholars), primitive, ancestral, natural or spiritist.

Indigenous religions have no single founders but seem to have evolved gradually as people reflected on the mysteries of life such as birth and death (see **life and death**), joy and suffering,\* the forces of nature\* and the purpose of life itself. They are generally integrated into the whole of life, and their history is closely intertwined with the history of the people and region concerned.

## DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous religions are found today in Africa, South, Central and North America, Asia, Australia and the Pacific region. The total number of adherents is virtually impossible to specify with statistical precision. The accompanying table suggests that there are more adherents of indigenous religions than of many so-called major world religions, including the Jewish, Sikh, Confucian, Shinto and Baha'i faiths. In fact, the numbers are no doubt far greater than available statistics indicate. In many places followers of indigenous religions may be disregarded in official censuses or included among the adherents of the dominant national religion. Furthermore, the presence and impact of indigenous religions are much greater than the statistics might indicate, in terms of their long integration in the history, language, culture\* and world-view of the peoples where they have evolved.

Apart from those areas in eastern and north-eastern Asia and Siberia where shamanism has its stronghold, Christianity generally won converts from followers of indigenous religions. To a much lesser extent Islam has also won converts, by persuasion and the sword, among adherents of indigenous religions in Africa and regions of Southeast Asia. But converts to other religions do not necessarily abandon altogether their traditional world-views, which tend to surface in situations of stress and in key moments of life like birth, initiation, marriage, sickness and death. While statistics identify them only as adherents of their new religions, converts bring with

<i>Indigenous religion type</i>	1900	1970 (thousands)	2000
Tribal Religionists	106,340	166,525	255,950
Shamanists	11,341	15,930	9,947
Afro-American Spiritists	247	1,777	7,133
Other Spiritists	59	1,385	5,606
Total	117,987	185,617	278,636

Source: Adapted from *World Christian Encyclopedia*, Oxford, Oxford UP, 2001 and *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Jan. 99.

them into their new religions a variety of elements from their indigenous religions.

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The primary sources for the study of indigenous religions are oral, in the form of stories, myths, proverbs, prayers, ritual incantations, songs, names of people and places, and the secrets of religious personages. To these can be added art, language, ceremonies and rituals, religious objects and sacred places like shrines and altars, ceremonial symbols, and even the so-called magical objects and practices. Indigenous religions have no written scriptures,\* though ancient hieroglyphs such as those of Egypt and Latin America may carry religious texts. The unique traditional art of the Australian Aborigines tells much about the religious life of the people, going back to their "dream time".

Indigenous religions are tied to the cultures of the peoples concerned. Their adherents do not propagate them to win converts in the same way as Islam, Christianity and some modern religious movements do. But where sizeable numbers of the adherents move to new areas, they carry with them their religions and practise them in their new home, with modifications. A good example of this is the transfer and spread of indigenous African religion to the Western hemisphere through the slave trade. Millions of Africans brought their religion with them to the West Indies and the Americas, and it has never totally disappeared.

### COSMOLOGY

The various indigenous religions have much in common in their respective views of God, spirits, force, nature and humankind.

*God.* In many cases, such as among African peoples, cosmological ideas are built around the concept of God as Creator of all things. He is invisible, but his works are evidence of his existence. For some, God is thought to be little involved in the daily life of individuals; for others, he is personally involved in the welfare of society, and people speak of him as Father or Mother, Parent, Friend, Saviour, Protector, Giver of life (children, health, food), etc. God is good, just and loving to all

people. Prayers, sacrifices or offerings are directed to him, either regularly or in times of communal needs. The name of God is used in pronouncing blessings and in making solemn agreements such as covenants and oaths. In some areas priesthood systems have evolved, forming an active link between people and God. The priesthoods (in many cases, carried out by both men and women) are also transmitters of traditional wisdom, theology, history and other cultural values. In some areas temples exist, with priests and priestesses serving in various religious duties. They officiate at religious ceremonies, pray on behalf of their communities, give advice, and in some cases perform health functions.

In other societies there may be a number of divine figures or a plurality of gods, some having specific responsibilities in the universe. Nevertheless, one of these figures is generally regarded as ranking above the others, whether or not people have direct contact with this one. In others (e.g. among some Amerindians), there is no special concern with the origin of the cosmos as such, and this is taken for granted.

*Spirits.* Many indigenous religions believe strongly in invisible spiritual figures and beings which interact with the world of human beings. Some spirits are personifications of natural objects and phenomena, both heavenly (sun, moon and stars, thunder, lightning, wind and rain) and earthly (oceans, lakes, rivers, waterfalls, mountains, forests, earthquakes). Other spirits are human beings who have died.

In many traditional societies the links between the living and the spirits of the departed are so active that their religion is referred to as spiritism or spirit worship. Spirits are often involved in matters of health, such as diagnosing the cause and nature of sickness, treatment and healing procedures, measures to ward off disease and misfortune, spirit possession and exorcisms.

*Force.* Indigenous religions acknowledge the existence of a force or power in the universe, often referred to by the Melanesian word *mana*, although it is differently interpreted in different areas. This force is often feared and avoided, especially if it is used negatively as magic. Many

African societies see magic and witchcraft as an explanation of sickness, misfortune, accident and even death. In moments of communal crisis, those suspected of using this power in the form of magic and witchcraft may be beaten or stoned to death.

Within traditional societies, however, the normal use of this power has always been for the good. It is often used in the treatment of diseases, in divination, in exorcising spirits, in promoting success, in rain-making ceremonies, in protecting against misfortune. It may also be displayed in abnormal feats like walking on fire, lying down on sharp pieces of metal or pushing nails through the tongue, and even in entertainment (e.g. in conjuring tricks and hypnotizing the audience).

*Nature.* Nature in its various forms has an important place in indigenous religions. Even though some natural forces are destructive, the life of the people depends in countless ways on nature – the food, water, air, fields and hunting grounds, fishing waters, herbs and minerals, animals and many insects, and even its infinite beauty. Indigenous religions cultivate nature and generally make friends with it, protect and respect it to the point of even worshipping some natural forces and objects. Certain places and natural objects – mountains, caves, waterfalls, trees, rocks, animals – may be set apart as sacred and held in awe. Some are sanctuaries in which no human beings or animals may be killed and where no trees may be felled. People endeavour to live in harmony with nature, and rituals supporting and defending this mystical relationship are found in all indigenous religions. Rather than destructive masters over nature, people are one with it and must be wise stewards of it.

*Humankind.* Countless myths tell about the creation or origin of human beings. According to some, humans were created at the end of the primal creation. Some depict a creation from clay, others say that humankind (as husband and wife or as two pairs) was created in heaven (the sky) and lowered to the earth. Some say that the creation occurred in a vessel, in water or in the fruit of some tree.

These creation stories often tell further that the original state of the first people

was one of bliss; many say that there was neither sickness nor death. Others tell that the earth was directly linked to heaven (the sky), with God and the human(s) living close to each other. For various reasons the link between heaven and earth was severed, and the two separated. Death came about, and the original bliss also disappeared.

In indigenous religions the life of the individual is marked with a variety of rites, particularly at birth, initiation, marriage and death. Birth and name-giving ceremonies are occasions for rejoicing and expressing gratitude to God for the living gift of a child. Initiation ceremonies for the youth can be highly elaborate in many places; some may involve undergoing hardships and painful experiences like circumcision, while others may involve periods of seclusion for the initiates, during which they learn a wide variety of matters pertaining to adult life. Some initiations have secrets that are strictly safeguarded.

Marriage is generally a religious duty in indigenous religions. Many customs and ceremonies are connected with marriage, which is primarily a family-to-family arrangement and not simply a private affair between man and woman. The bearing of children is an integral part of family life, and no efforts are spared to make sure that there are children in each family. Kinship plays a crucial role in the life of society, with ties extending to embrace not only the family but in varying degrees the whole tribe or nation. Religious rituals are often performed within the family or community, some of which are intended to strengthen the kinship ties.

Burial and funeral rites – some coming months or even years after a person's death – are observed carefully. They serve to comfort the bereaved and to send off the departed in peace to the spirit world. Belief in the continuation of life after death is held in many places where indigenous religions have evolved. While indigenous views concerning the hereafter vary considerably, the next world is generally pictured as very much like the present life. Even if those who inhabit it are spirits and not humans, they retain their human characteristics. According to some indigenous religions there is neither reward for good

life on earth nor punishment for evil life, but others depict a form of reckoning in the hereafter. The departed may appear to their relatives through dreams, in the waking, or through divination. The living remember their departed through various acts, such as naming new children after them, taking care of their graves, pouring libation of various drinks and setting apart bits of food as an expression of sharing meals. In some societies prayers may invoke some departed members of the family, asking them to carry the message further until it reaches God. There is thus a kind of unity between the living, the departed and God (or other spiritual realities).

### ETHICS AND MORALS

The ethics and morals of indigenous religions are embedded in customs, traditional laws and taboos. God (or some high-ranking spirit) is ultimately the sanctioner and upholder of morality. Custom regulates what ought and ought not to be done in each society. Offences such as stealing, disrespect towards elderly people, sexual abuse, murder and the like are punished through beating, payment of fines, shame, ostracism or even death. Kindness, politeness, generosity, hospitality, hard work, caring for elderly parents, generosity towards others and friendliness are good virtues which earn social respect, praise and admiration.

Community life is a strong feature in indigenous religions, and many values and activities are directed towards promoting, preserving and safeguarding the community of the living, those who are yet to be born and in many cases those who have departed. The notion of the community extends also to nature as part of the community. In many indigenous religions, clan or tribal totems symbolize the ties between human community and nature.

Indigenous religions have had contact with other religions of the world, chiefly Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, and with other cultures, especially Western. In many cases their adherents often convert to these religions. The expansion of colonial Christianity beginning in the 16th century virtually conquered indigenous religions in the Americas, in the process de-

stroying tribal, national cultures and human. Since the 18th century Christianity began to spread in Asia (with comparatively little or no success, except in Korea), Africa, and the Pacific. Indigenous religions have been very accommodating to these other religions and to Western culture, with all its positive and negative contributions to modern life.

But conversion or accommodation does not mean abandoning the world of indigenous religions. To the contrary, many Christians in Africa, for example, derive spiritual enrichment from indigenous religions. Some Christian values become absorbed in indigenous religions, and in turn some indigenous religions values have been absorbed in Christianity and Islam.

Written studies of indigenous religions in the 19th century (and in some cases earlier) were all done by foreigners with a Western point of view – missionaries, anthropologists (see **anthropology, cultural**), colonial rulers and other self-styled experts. On the whole, indigenous religions were negatively presented, often falsely interpreted and blatantly ridiculed by attitudes of racism and a superiority complex. Since the middle of the 20th century, a more objective approach has been gaining ground, and the number of indigenous or native researchers and scholars has increased. Forms of inter-religious dialogues are also opening up, and some values of indigenous religions are seeping into circles of Christian discussion or even practice. The WCC's dialogue programme has included indigenous religions, especially in Africa and the Americas; apart from holding special meetings to promote dialogue, representatives of indigenous religions are also invited to multifaith dialogue meetings.

JOHN S. MBITI

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## INFALLIBILITY/INDEFECTIBILITY

IN THE ECUMENICAL discussions between the Roman Catholic Church and other Christian communities, the question of infallibility remains one of the areas in which complete agreement appears an impossible achievement. Nevertheless, the final report of the first Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) bore witness to a remarkable degree of consensus\* with regard to the main issues involved. Even so, the report had to recognize that Catholics and Anglicans differ in their perception of the manner in which infallibility is exercised through the solemn (i.e. *ex cathedra*) definitions pronounced by the bishop who is "charged by God to maintain the universal church in the unity of faith".

### THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH OF GOD

The Orthodox churches and the RCC have always affirmed that the people of God,\* by virtue of their being God's own people, remain free from error in keeping the faith\* (infallibility *in credendo*) through the indwelling presence of the Spirit of the risen Lord (Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium* 10,12). Infallibility is understood, therefore, as the gift of the Holy Spirit.\* This gift enables the church,\* through its creed\* and its living witness, to adhere with unflinching certainty (*asphalôs*, without a doubt, without faltering) to what God himself has revealed (see **revelation**); and this certainty remains unaffected by any particular reasons or motives which may be advanced as rational vindications of the faith. Handed down through a living Tradition,\* this faith is bound to the Spirit of truth and is present in all the local churches. It is confessed

and celebrated in their liturgy\* (*lex orandi, lex credendi\**), explained and defended by their bishops (either preaching individually from their *cathedra* or acting together in a conciliar decree), witnessed by the public and private life of the Christian community, and proclaimed abroad in mission.\*

It is worthy of note that in the US, Lutherans and Catholics in dialogue have found themselves to be in fundamental agreement over the church's perseverance in the truth received from Christ. This steadfastness has its origin in the assistance of the Spirit, who ensures the transmission and safekeeping of all that has been revealed.

### THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE EPISCOPAL BODY AND OF THE PRIMATE

When the apostolic community had passed away, the faithful transmission and preservation of the substance of revelation was assured by God in willing the church to possess, in its ordained ministry, an instrument of the Spirit of truth (see **apostolic Tradition**). The RCC speaks of an infallibility of teaching as manifested in certain pronouncements, whether of the episcopal college as such (i.e. united in a communion which the bishop of Rome "watches over") or of the bishop of Rome (in communion with the entire episcopal body). On these occasions a final judgment may be delivered.

It is not a question of introducing any new word by revelation or inspiration but rather of providing a definitive judgment on an essential point of the Christian datum. Where salvation\* is concerned, it is necessary to know what to believe and what to reject in the sphere of faith and morals; thus, the final judgment declares and defines what is true and what is false, and in so doing provides the rule of faith for the whole church. The content of revelation remains unaffected, nothing new has been introduced (*LG* 25). But the meaning of revelation, i.e. its underlying truth, is made explicit in the form of a judgment which brings to an end uncertainty and controversy. This judgment is infallible or, in other words, free from error. It eliminates all doubt concerning what it has ex-

pressly formulated qua judgment, but not necessarily concerning other related issues. Thus, the judgment of the bishops assembled at Chalcedon defined the authentic meaning of faith in Jesus Christ, true God and true man. It proclaimed the faith that has been revealed from the beginning and celebrated in the local churches, over which the bishops presided; in so doing, it bore witness to the presence of the Spirit of truth, by whom the churches were firmly united to Christ, the one who declared himself to be “the way, and the truth and the life” (John 14:6).

Although definitions of dogma\* may be closely linked to a particular historical or cultural environment, they nevertheless express the essential truths of faith and are devoid of error; they remain valid, even though it may become necessary at a later date to complete or perfect them by a change in their formulation. This situation occurred at Vatican II\* with regard to some definitions of Vatican I. A further requirement to be noted is that all dogma should be “received” by the local churches, although reception\* does not constitute truth. Infallibility in doctrinal judgment, according to the RCC, does not have its source in reception; on the other hand, it is through reception that judgments pass into the life of the ecclesial community in order to become what they are meant to be: living truth, not archival monuments.

The RCC is alone in affirming that, under certain special circumstances and within conditions that are strictly defined and limited by numerous safeguards, the bishop of Rome outside of a council may deliver an infallible judgment. In this he is assisted by the same Holy Spirit who ensures that the people of God dwell in the truth as it has been revealed; in the words of the decree of Vatican I, he is empowered to “exercise the infallibility with which Christ chose to endow the church” (*Pastor Aeternus*, DS 3074).

The bishop of Rome is given this infallibility only for certain very specific judgments. It does not apply to all the pronouncements, decrees, declarations and documents which he issues, nor to all the doctrinal precisions included in his encycli-

cals\* and bulls. Thus, it cannot be regarded as a guarantee which covers all his “magisterial” acts. The divine assistance which guarantees the infallibility of a judgment is given only when the bishop of Rome speaks *ex cathedra*, i.e. when he specifically invokes the function of the Roman see in its “supreme apostolic authority” over the communion of faith of the churches. This solemn judgment must be directed to the universal church with the intention to elucidate a truth, in the realm of faith and morals, which is essential to salvation. Vatican II (*LG 25*) specifies that it must be “in accord with revelation itself”. Of equal importance is the prerequisite that there must be painstaking inquiry into the contents of revelation “by recourse to all the appropriate resources”.

A judgment of this kind can be promulgated only when the bishop in so doing is aware of being in communion with the whole episcopal body and therefore with all the local churches; this explains why Pius IX and Pius XII consulted the local churches before defining the two Marian dogmas. The origins of both can be traced back to the important affirmation of Mary as *theotokos*, as defined by the ecumenical council of Ephesus, and both concerned truths which popular devotion had previously “received”. These judgments are irreformable in the sense that they are not subject – as was claimed by the Gallican Articles of 1682 – to adjudication by any higher instance. Moreover, these are judgments issuing from the episcopal college through the one who in his person holds it together in communion: that is, the bishop of Rome. While his definition of a particular truth may not be expressed in precisely the same language which an ecumenical council\* might have chosen, the difference is one of terminology and not of truth.

The final report of ARCIC I has clarified the Anglican position. Contrary to Roman Catholics, Anglicans do not accept that the bishop of Rome (keeping within the prescribed regulations) can make an infallible pronouncement; for them the infallibility of his judgment can be recognized only in retrospect. They are also worried by the fact that Pius IX and Pius XII exercised

this “privilege” to define two dogmas when the faith was not under threat. To Anglicans this prerogative is of such momentous import that it should be asserted only in cases of extreme urgency or necessity.

The Orthodox churches reprove the RCC because it developed and defined this view of papal infallibility after the separation between East and West; thus it precluded the possibility of discussion and decision by a strictly ecumenical council in which all the apostolic traditions were represented.

“Indefectibility” is the term generally used to describe the indestructible and permanent character of the church as one and holy in spite of the sinfulness of its members. This indestructible unity and holiness is based on the promise of Christ that “the gates of Hades will not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18). The conception of the church as “without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind” (Eph. 5:27) is shared by most Christian churches: the RCC, the Orthodox churches, many Anglicans, Lutherans and also some other Protestants, even if they vary on the use of the phrase *ecclesia peccatrix*. All seem to agree that the sinfulness of its members demands a constant purification of the concrete life of the church.

See also **primacy, teaching authority.**

J.-M.R. TILLARD

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## INSPIRATION

THROUGHOUT the history of the Christian church, theories of the inspiration of scripture\* have used a variety of adjectives:

dictatorial or mechanistic, personal vs verbal, natural or ecstatic vs organic, partial/dualistic/fundamental vs plenary, static vs dynamic, inspiration restricted to the historic event or the book itself vs inspiration including the effective receiving of the message (through the illumination by the same Spirit), dialectical/actual/existential inspiration, and many permutations. These theories have sought to address the same issues, but in terms of differing cultural and philosophical contexts: the relationship between human and divine; the Bible’s authority\* and uniqueness; the role of the Holy Spirit\* in interpretation; the role of the church\* and therefore Tradition in interpretation (see **Tradition and traditions**); the aim and purpose of scripture; its trustworthiness, including its historical and scientific reliability; and the final ground for believers’ assuredness.

Especially in post-Reformation orthodoxy, terminology and philosophical ideas were used which led to serious debates during and after the Enlightenment, and these have continued until today. During the 20th century Karl Barth and Karl Rahner made major contributions towards new and positive interpretations of inspiration in their respective traditions.

Although it is too early to speak of an ecumenical consensus,\* the last 40 years have seen a significant rapprochement between Catholics, (ecumenical) Protestants and the Eastern Orthodox, though many conservative Evangelicals\* still adhere to the essentials of the orthodox Protestant position and strongly debate its nature and implications (esp. the question of inerrancy). The ecumenical convergence is reflected in the Constitution on Divine Revelation (*Dei Verbum*) of Vatican II\* and some of the documents of Faith and Order.\*

At the world conference on F&O in Montreal (1963) a report on “Scripture, Tradition and traditions”, expressing the common views of Protestant and Orthodox participants, addressed several issues traditionally related to inspiration: the Reformation principle of *sola scriptura* was qualified by the reminder that the Bible is part of Tradition and embedded in tradi-

tion; it in fact becomes living Tradition only when correctly interpreted in ever-new situations; Tradition as source of revelation\* was qualified by the assertion that it is accessible only in traditions whose trustworthiness must be tested in the light of scripture. The role of confessional traditions in biblical interpretation, the necessity of constant re-interpretation in different cultural contexts, the diversity within the Bible itself and the accompanying difficulties in speaking of *the* biblical doctrine on any particular issue, as well as the theological consequences of critical scholarship, were discussed, with direct bearing on authority and inspiration (see **hermeneutics**).

At the F&O meeting in Louvain (1971) a study on "The Authority of the Bible" followed. The authority was seen not as a fixed quality belonging in some way to the Bible but as a "relational concept", present when experienced as the authority capable of leading people to faith,\* as the impact of the self-demonstrating biblical testimony, which is ultimately the authority of God himself. While recognizing the importance of the canon,\* the report insisted that the dividing line between canonical and non-canonical writings is not hard and fast. It dealt explicitly with inspiration, saying that it cannot be seen, as often in history, as an *a priori* dogmatic presupposition, on which the Bible's authority is based, but rather as a conclusion of faith, acknowledging the powerful activity of the Spirit behind the experienced authority of the biblical message. The report regarded critical distinctions within the biblical materials as necessary, held that different "relational centres" within the Bible were possible, and re-emphasized the ongoing process of interpretation and the role of the present-day situation.

This development shows convergence with *Dei Verbum*, which also affirmed divine inspiration, but in a "de-psychologized" way. Repeating the essential teaching of Vatican I, it depicted inspiration functionally, in terms of the canonical book which was to be the result (ch. 3, paras 11-13). Referring to 2 Tim. 3, it said: "Since, therefore, all that the inspired authors... affirm should be regarded as af-

firmed by the Holy Spirit, we must acknowledge that the books of scripture, firmly, faithfully and without error, teach that truth which God, for the sake of our salvation, wished to see confided to the sacred scriptures."

Drawing conclusions, *Dei Verbum* dealt with biblical interpretation in a way similar to F&O. Dulles (in McKim) mentions several related points of convergence: the treatment of "without error" (the fundamental idea of inerrancy but not the term, leaving scope for interpretation); the contents of the canon; the "canon within the canon"; the relationship between the two Testaments; scholarly methods of interpretation; and the material sufficiency of the Bible. "The documents... while they do not totally overcome all the historic disputes... go a long way towards reconciliation... It is no longer safe to assume that either Protestants or Catholics adhere to the classical orthodoxies of their own churches, as expressed in past centuries. Protestant and Catholic biblical reflection, since the mid-1960s, has embarked on a common history."

See also **Bible, its role in the ecumenical movement; exegesis, methods of.**

D.J. SMIT

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## INSTITUTE FOR ECUMENICAL AND CULTURAL RESEARCH

THIS RESIDENTIAL centre for study, research, writing and dialogue was founded in 1967 by Kilian McDonnell, OSB, and the Benedictine monks of St John's Abbey on the campus of St John's University, in Collegeville, Minnesota, USA. It is an independent corporation with its own ecumenical board of directors, most of whom are laypersons. The Benedictine tradition of worship and work, together with the stimulation of the academic community, creates the atmosphere for institute activities.

The institute's task – “to dispel religious ignorance and promote better understanding and harmony” – is conceived broadly as the encouragement of constructive thought in historical, literary, artistic, philosophical, sociological, theological and other kinds of research that bear upon the Christian tradition, including the relationship of Christianity to culture. The institute welcomes men and women scholars, together with their families, for one or two semesters of study and writing on their own projects.

During summer months the institute holds invitational conferences to deal with timely ecumenical issues. A feature of these consultations is the insistence that participants speak in the first person; no one comes as an official representative of an ecclesiastical institution. The institute has pioneered in crossing conventional ecumenical lines by including in dialogue persons from traditions that have historically been wary of the ecumenical movement, and by giving such persons an opportunity to name their agenda instead of assuming they will enter into the ecumenical agenda already set by decades of discussion.

The various projects of the institute seek to discern the meaning of Christian identity and unity in a religiously and culturally diverse nation and world, and to communicate that meaning for the mission of the church and the renewal of human community.

The institute publishes twice a year *Ecumenical People, Programs, Papers*.

PATRICK HENRY

## INSTITUTE FOR ECUMENICS

FOUNDED in 1957 in Paderborn, Germany, by Archbishop Lorenz Jaeger (1892-1975) and named after the Catholic ecumenical theologian Johann-Adam Möhler (d.1838), this RC institute pioneered the serious scientific study of Protestant churches and their theologies with objective, non-polemical methods. Originally called the institute “for *Kontroverstheologie*”, in 1966 the title changed to “for ecumenics”. The title recognizes that one must study not only the theology but also

the total life of other churches, i.e. their liturgies, pieties, disciplines, politics, and that the aim is not articulated differences and counter-statements but acknowledged commonalities, in the light of which one can better understand and evaluate the differences.

In addition to such studies, the institute promotes ecumenical dialogues in the search for visible church unity\* in truth and love; arranges lectures, conferences and study days, especially for those who are committed to pastoral ministry and who teach religion; trains specialists in ecumenism; builds up a research library in ecumenics (now over 150,000 volumes), open to scholars and students; and publishes studies through the quarterly *Catholica* and a special ecumenical series (over 80 books).

ALOYS KLEIN

## INTERCESSION

“INTERCESSION” literally means “going between” and has come to mean particularly praying for others, caring for them in the presence of God, sharing in the divine caring, pleading their cause and offering their need, in what has been called “the prayer of love”. There are many biblical examples of intercession. Abraham prays for the righteous remnant in the city of Sodom (Gen. 18:22-33); Aaron carries the names of the children of Israel with him into the holy place (Ex. 28:29); the psalmist prays for the king (Ps. 72); the king prays for the people (1 Kings 8:30-66). In the New Testament the church prays for Peter in prison (Acts 12:5); Paul prays for the church in Ephesus (Eph. 1:15-23); James instructs the elders of the church to pray for the sick (James 5:14). In the Apocrypha there is reference to prayers for the dead (2 Macc. 12:43-45).

The focus of all Christian intercession is the incarnate Christ himself, who, with the Spirit, makes intercession for the whole of humanity (Rom. 8:26,34). Jesus gave his followers a pattern of intercession in a prayer whose framework is the petition that God's will be done and that the rule of his kingdom prevail. Christ's own intercession for his disciples, for the

church and for the world is the great ecumenical prayer that "they may all be one... that the world may believe" (John 17:21).

While essential in the liturgy of all churches, intercession itself has sometimes been a cause of dissension between them. Already early in Christian history, controversy arose over the question of prayers for the dead, of which there are examples in the catacombs, and which have continued as a permissible custom in some churches in the form of requiem prayers and commemorations. In the medieval church, dissension arose over the invoking of angels, saints and the Blessed Virgin as aids to intercession, a custom strongly attacked by the reformers, who saw here a threat to their insistence on Christ as the one and only mediator, but defended by Catholics as a way of calling on the prayer offered continually within the communion of saints.\*

Though intercession in recent times has come to play an increasingly important role in all forms of Christian worship, there are many diverse ways of engaging in it. Through the ecumenical movement these have been shared across the whole life of the church. Litanies in the Orthodox tradition, bidding prayers from Catholic liturgies and extemporaneous prayers from Protestant usage find their place now in the growing number of ecumenical gatherings for prayer, both local and international.

Ecumenical intercession is prayer *in* unity as well as prayer *for* unity, shared by people of all traditions, expressing solidarity with all God's creation. In the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity,\* the material prepared for use in all the churches gives opportunities for intercession that is well informed about the whole ecumenical movement. The World Day of Prayer,\* prepared annually by women of different countries, highlights each year the particular needs of the country responsible for the theme. Current ecumenical prayer cycles\* enable the churches to pray not only for one another but also with all God's people.

The growing emphasis on intercession in the eucharistic observances of all the traditions is seen as an important part of

that growing together reflected in the *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* document (BEM, E21,27). Lukas Vischer has suggested that the divided churches anticipate unity "by practising mutual intercession" and that it should thus form an integral part of every celebration of the eucharist. Theologically speaking, "the entire work of Christ can be presented as intercession". Vischer likens intercession to the "act of blessing", believes that it "entails suffering" and refers to the "prophetic intercession of Jesus as the hallmark of the prayer in John 17". Thus, as the churches "accept the common bond of mutual intercession..., [they] will also strengthen one another in their freedom for the future and their openness for love".

See also **prayer in the ecumenical movement**.

PAULINE WEBB

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## INTERCHURCH AID

In 1938, WHEN W.A. Visser 't Hooft was invited to become the WCC's first general secretary, he accepted on condition that the Council would be active in the field of aid, because "there could be no healthy ecumenical fellowship without practical solidarity". Few, if any, have disagreed with him. Even the provisional committee of the WCC, which began meeting in 1942 against a background of massive destruction in Europe and mounting need for reconciliation, set up what soon became known as the Department of Refugee and Inter-Church Aid (1945); and since the first WCC assembly in 1948 a whole succession of departments within the Council have reflected Visser 't Hooft's conviction, most notably: the Department and then Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees (DICASR, 1949); the Division of Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and

World Service (DICARWS, 1960); the Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS, 1971); and Unit IV: Sharing and Service (1992) whose responsibilities were shared out between a number of teams within a newly-formed "cluster" on relations following the Harare assembly of 1998.

And these have not been the only actors. Within the structures of the WCC itself, CCPD (the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development), ECLC (Ecumenical Church Loan Fund), PCR (Programme to Combat Racism), CWME (Commission on World Mission and Evangelism), ACT International (Action by Churches Together, jointly managed with the Lutheran World Federation) and others have all played their part.

Outside the structures of the WCC, though within the same ecumenical family, the most important contributors to interchurch aid have of course been the churches themselves, both individually and together in their local, national and regional councils. Standing alongside them have been the increasingly professional and specialized aid and development organizations to which the churches gave birth and to which their offsprings have usually remained accountable even though they have tended to take on a life of their own. These organizations may relate to a single church or to several churches and so be ecumenical in their own right. In addition they have formed ecumenical alliances and networks of which the European APRODEV (Association of WCC-Related Development Organizations in Europe, 1990) and the much larger ACT International (1995) are examples. These organizations began to appear in Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand in the 1940s. They are often referred to as "agencies" since they carry out the churches' work, and as "donor agencies" since they have been major sources of funding. They are now found in most corners of the world. Some, like CASA (Church's Auxiliary for Social Action) in India, are very large indeed.

The understanding of "interchurch aid" has broadened over the years. This is partly the result of internal debates within

the ecumenical family often stimulated by the growing presence and influence of the churches of Africa, Asia and Latin America. But it is also due to external pressures. The persistence of poverty and inequality has been one, deepening the debate about the adequacy of the churches' response. The "wind of change" which swept across Africa and elsewhere was another, drawing the churches into the struggle for liberation and inspiring for example the Ecumenical Programme for Emergency Action in Africa (EPEAA) in 1965 and, later, the Programme to Combat Racism\* (1969). The end of the cold war opened up greater cooperation with the churches in Eastern Europe and also brought with it the demands of a growing number of conflicts elsewhere. Most recently interchurch aid, as part of the life of an intrinsically "international" community, has been challenged to re-express itself in response to the phenomenon of "globalization".

"Broadening" has therefore been both geographical and conceptual. At the start interchurch aid was thought of largely in terms of helping the churches in Europe to recover from the ravages of the second world war; but its geographical remit soon widened to include most other parts of the world. At the start interchurch aid was concerned with "emergencies" which it was hoped would soon be resolved, for example by enabling refugees from conflict or famine to survive and then to return home and re-build their lives. That concern has never been abandoned. Indeed it was re-invigorated in 1995 when the WCC's Unit IV marked the 50th anniversary of the Council's service to refugees by re-commitment to solidarity with uprooted peoples; and the response to emergencies is now on a scale undreamed of at the outset, through ACT International for example which not only improved efficiency but gave the churches and their agencies a single common identity. But many of the underlying causes of these so-called "emergencies" were soon recognized as being far from temporary. A more sustained approach was required and the concept of aid broadened out to include the concept of development.\* Again at the beginning, and the attitude still persists, aid was un-

derstood to be a matter of the materially rich helping the materially poor. Gradually it came to be understood that all peoples are both rich and poor in their different ways, spiritually as well as materially, and need each other's help. If ever interchurch aid was conceived rather narrowly as churches helping churches, it soon became clear that any such help had to enable churches to serve the needy, whether inside or outside their ranks, irrespective of ideology or religious creed. Finally, the understanding of interchurch aid has broadened to include advocacy which tries to meet human need in a different but complementary way by campaigning for changes in the policies and practices of governments and some of the world's largest and most influential institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF, the WTO and the UN. One result has been the formation of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance in 2001 preceded by the Jubilee 2000 campaign to cancel the debts of the poorest countries which was a thoroughly ecumenical movement of the churches and other faith communities.

Interchurch aid has been marked and stimulated by several long-running debates of which three are mentioned here. First comes the debate about holism. At the conceptual level it has kept on insisting that we are not just economic beings. If life is more than food, aid is more than emergency rations, and development is more than economic development. As human beings we have minds and spirits as well as bodies: we exist not just as individuals but in cultures and communities. Our needs and aspirations have to be dealt with in the round. Basically livelihoods may be the precondition of everything else but there is little point in gaining the whole economic world and losing our souls.

This holistic approach was a major theme running through the Larnaca consultation, organized by CICARWS in 1986, and the work of Unit IV in the early 1990s. At the practical level it led, for example in the Rwandan crisis of 1994, to attempts to deal with the psychological needs of people traumatized by conflict and to foster reconciliation between them as well as providing food and shelter.

More difficult was the attempt to honour both the Christian vocation to witness through evangelism, upheld by the missionary movement and incorporated within the WCC as the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, and to witness through service, upheld by the development movement and incorporated within the WCC as various commissions on aid, development and service. Not to combine these two seemed to fly in the face of an holistic approach, but to combine them could rapidly put the work of aid and development under suspicion of being a cover for proselytism.\*

Second is the debate about structural change. No one doubted that emergency aid was necessary but did little to deal with underlying causes. It provided a sticking plaster but not a cure. The force of the argument was not so readily accepted however when it came to the myriad development projects and programmes reported by ecumenical partners throughout the world. They too eased the pain but according to some did little to change the inequitable economic and social structures which created and perpetuated poverty. Structural change could only be brought about if the churches, along with others, engaged in political activities, and for many they needed to be of a radical, even revolutionary kind. Practical examples included efforts to protect victims of human-rights violations in Chile and other Latin American countries and standing alongside the racially oppressed in Southern Africa.

Several objections were raised however. The most familiar, and the most misguided, was that Christianity and politics do not mix. The more pragmatic was that it would bring the aid and development work of the churches under another cloud of suspicion especially from donors, both personal and corporate, who might well withdraw their financial support. More measured was the argument that political attempts to bring about structural change should not be allowed to eclipse projects and programmes which were a necessary support to poor people whilst they waited, perhaps for a life-time, for change to come about. In any case, if planned strategically,

these programmes could in fact be instruments of structural change, not merely a substitute for it.

The third debate has been about partnership. At first it was hardly mentioned. Interchurch aid was dangerously like hand-outs and hand-downs. Churches of the "South", however, insisted that interchurch aid was in many ways perpetuating the very dependency it sought to eradicate whereby powerful and well-off churches and nations dictated what should happen to the less powerful and the poor and kept the decision making, whether with good or bad intentions, firmly in their own hands. This was objectionable for several reasons. It denied poor people the right to take control over their lives. It assumed that others knew better than they did what was good for the poor. Worse still, it behaved as if so-called poor people had nothing to give and had no riches of their own to share. As a result relations between the churches were not mutual but one-sided and over-bearing.

Numerous attempts have been made to promote real partnerships. The priority projects list administered by the WCC for many years tried to ensure that priorities for funding were decided by the recipients and not the donors. In 1987 a consultation at El Escorial produced fresh "Guidelines for Sharing". The WCC created a desk dedicated to resource sharing understood as a respectful and mutual enterprise. Round tables were formed and reformed in countries and regions where all the parties involved, donors and recipients alike, met together and made joint decisions about programmes and strategies and were accountable to one another. Whilst unequal power structures in both church and world and the unequal distribution of resources, together with the widening gap between rich and poor, jeopardize all such attempts, they nevertheless underline the importance of fostering a community of sharing in which all are seen as vulnerable and as responsible for each other.

Interchurch aid will no doubt continue to be endorsed by the whole ecumenical family; and it will continue to be the focus of controversy. It is too close to the heart

of the churches' calling to serve and to bring good news to the poor, and it is too close to the harsh realities of life for millions of God's people to be otherwise. Nevertheless, for the time being we may perhaps define it as: churches helping each other to play their part according to the gospel in opening up for everyone, especially the most deprived, an equal chance to live their lives to the full.

See also **globalization, economic**.

MICHAEL H. TAYLOR

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## INTERCOMMUNION

FOR MOST of the 20th century, intercommunion was the slogan around which the ecumenical debate concerning the point at which churches might properly enter into eucharistic fellowship with one another took place.

The Orthodox rejected altogether the term and concept of *intercommunion* – which the Bulgarian and Romanian responses to *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* suspect "Eucharist" (E33) of still favouring – on the ground that there is either "communion"\* in the one church or no communion at all. A similar substantive position was held by the Roman Catholic Church (RCC), some Anglicans, some Lutherans and some Baptists, although they differed on what was required for the unity\* of which eucharistic communion was or would be the sacramental expression. On the other hand, those churches which accepted a federal model of unity (see **federalism**) used the word "intercommunion" without any pejorative intent or sense of provisionality, to describe their sacramental sharing across persisting denominational boundaries.

Between these two positions were to be found those ecumenists who had most stake in the notion of intercommunion: they held that at some point along the road to an ever fuller unity it became possible and desirable for churches to practise intercommunion as both a sign of the unity they already enjoyed and a means towards more perfect unity. Sometimes adopting an eschatological perspective (for the Lord's supper prefigures the banquet of the final kingdom, where a divided fellowship is unthinkable), they argued that the goal of unity could become prophetically effective through the active anticipation of it in the sacrament. At the Faith and Order\* meeting in Lund (1952) T.F. Torrance spoke of the eucharist as "the divinely given sacrament of unity, the *medicine for our divisions*".

On the recommendation of the Montreal world conference on Faith and Order (1963), the WCC central committee that year formalized a procedure that ecumenical conferences, in order to bear witness to the tensions inherent in the theory and practice of communion in the painful and scandalous situation of a divided Christianity, should include both a celebration "according to the liturgy of a church which cannot conscientiously offer an invitation to members of all other churches to partake of the elements" and one "in which a church or a group of churches can invite members of other churches to participate and partake". In the long-standing custom of an occasional "open" communion at ecumenical events, it was most often the Anglicans who had acted as hosts, since this usually ensured a maximum number of communicants (if only because Anglicans themselves, whatever their churchmanship, were ready to receive at the hands of an Anglican celebrant, whereas they were not sure to do so in the case of a Methodist, Presbyterian or Baptist presiding).

During his tenure as WCC general secretary, Emilio Castro pressed for greater eucharistic sharing and pleaded at Canberra in 1991 that "this should be the last assembly with a divided eucharist". Faith and Order studied the matter again in 1995-96 but concluded that "it is still not

possible to move beyond the guidelines" established in 1963. Thus the 1998 assembly of the WCC in Harare did not include any eucharistic service as part of official assembly worship, given the current impossibility of a fully common celebration. The programme included a service of penitence in recognition of continuing divisions; and various local congregations representing the Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox (see **Oriental Orthodox churches**), Reformation and Roman Catholic streams of Christianity hosted WCC delegates at their respective celebrations of a Sunday eucharist,\* in the understanding that existing protocol be observed.

It was probably the official entry of the RCC into the ecumenical movement which did most to shift the terms of the problematic to those of "eucharistic hospitality" (in fact a better description than intercommunion – which implies mutuality – for what took place in many "open" communion services). Vatican II\* recognized that other Christians, by virtue of baptism\* and faith\* in Christ, still or already enjoy "a certain, though imperfect, communion with the Catholic church" (*Unitatis Redintegratio* 3). On this ground, pastoral provision could be made for rightly disposed non-Catholics whose sacramental faith is consonant with the Catholic faith to receive, upon request, the Catholic eucharist in the emergency circumstances of mortal danger, persecution, imprisonment, or serious spiritual need (*Ecumenical Directory*, 1967, 55; cf. *Ecumenical Directory*, 1993, 129-31). According to the *Directory* of 1993 (159-60), Catholic bishops may allow the admission of the non-Catholic partner to Catholic communion at the celebration of a mixed marriage, provided all the other conditions are met; but such "eucharistic sharing can only be exceptional".

The RCC would have liked the Orthodox churches – and thereby Rome made a considerable recognition of their ecclesiality – to offer reciprocal hospitality in the sacraments of penance, eucharist and the anointing of the sick to Roman Catholics in exceptional circumstances (Vatican II, *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* 26-29; *Ecumenical Directory*, 1967, 39-45; cf. *Direc-*

tory, 1993, 122-28); but with the temporary exception of the Moscow patriarchate for some years after 1969, this has not occurred. In 1984, however, Pope John Paul II and Oriental Orthodox Syrian Patriarch Ignatius Zakka I entered into such a mutual pastoral agreement for the sake of their faithful who had no access to their respective priests. In the case of Protestants, it was clearer that the Roman emergency hospitality would be offered to them as individual Christians, the limited ecclesiality of their own communities being indicated by the fact that Catholics were still expected *not* to communicate in Protestant churches (*Ecumenical Directory*, 1967, 55; cf. *Directory*, 1993, 132), whose Lord's supper was marred by a "defect" at the level of ordination (*UR* 22).

The largely individual character of eucharistic hospitality is evident in those churches which practise "open communion" or "general admission". Perhaps the Methodists were the first; but at Princeton in 1954 the World Alliance of Reformed Churches\* recommended the admission to the Lord's table of "any baptized person who loves and confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour". In 1975 the German Lutheran churches (VELKD) adopted the position that "access to the Lord's table is in principle open to every baptized Christian who comes trusting in Christ's word of promise as spoken in his words of institution"; and the (Lutheran) Church of Norway, in its response to BEM, declared that while it did not "feel that what is stated in the BEM document yet provides an adequate basis for full eucharistic communion between the churches involved", yet it had "long practised the principle of open communion" on the grounds that fellowship around the Lord's table was "a natural expression" of baptismal unity. The common theological thread in the argument appears to be that, in case of ecclesial conflict, the sacraments belong to the Lord *rather than* to the church(es); but this itself is of course only one possible answer to the question of the instrumentality of the church\* in the mediation of salvation.\*

Beyond and amid the various current disciplines of the respective churches, there are groups of Christians who, on the basis

of local advances in ecumenism or in the context of collaboration in significant projects of witness and service, do in fact practise a certain intercommunion. Although an element of self-indulgence cannot always be discounted, these *communions sauvages* are an understandable expression of impatience at the failure of church authorities to enact the degree of unity that is already possible, and they may benevolently be interpreted as prophetic acts.

While the official admission of individuals in pastoral emergencies is charitable, while the ultimate sovereignty of the Lord over his sacraments\* must be maintained, and while the flouting of institutional discipline may bring local and temporary relief, yet the question of *ecclesial* relations cannot be evaded. That is why we are driven back to the possibility of, and need for, *communion agreements* between the churches. These have recently come in various kinds: thus the US Lutheran-Episcopal interim agreement of 1982 required that a minister from each church preside at a joint celebration, though this has now been transcended in the relationship of "full communion" inaugurated in 2001 (see **Anglican-Lutheran dialogue**). The 1973 Leuenberg concordat between European Lutherans and Reformed, in its full mutual recognition of members and ministries, allows for the interchangeability of sacramental presidency, as does the "pulpit and altar fellowship" declared in Germany in 1987 and 1990 between the Methodists and the Lutheran, Reformed and United churches. Churches have to decide when their relations with particular partners are ripe for a certain kind of agreement and what is the future road they still have to travel together.

Since 1975 the express constitutional goal of the WCC has been to help the churches to advance to "visible unity in one faith and in one eucharistic fellowship". This is an urgent task. In a passionate paragraph, BEM declares: "The eucharist involves the believer in the central event of the world's history. As participants in the eucharist, therefore, we prove inconsistent if we are not actively participating in this ongoing restoration of the world's situation and the human condi-

tion. The eucharist shows us that our behaviour is inconsistent in face of the reconciling presence of God in human history: we are placed under continual judgment by the persistence of unjust relationships of all kinds in our society, the manifold divisions on account of human pride, material interest and power politics and, above all, the obstinacy of unjustifiable confessional oppositions within the body of Christ" (E20). An earlier draft said, even more sharply, that such divisions "make a mockery" of the eucharist.

See also **church discipline**.

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT

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## INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MISSION STUDIES

THE FORMAL organization of the International Association for Mission Studies (IAMS) in 1972 in the Netherlands realized a proposal made more than 20 years earlier by Norwegian missiologist Olav Myklebust, to which some personnel of the International Missionary Council\* had objected on the ground that it would duplicate the activities of the IMC research department. The aim of IAMS is "to promote the scholarly study of theological, historical, social and practical questions relating to mission, to promote fellowship, cooperation and

mutual assistance in the study, and to relate studies in mission to studies in theological and other fields". IAMS achieves this through research, publications, triennial congresses and the journal *Mission Studies*.

Research activities have centred on biblical studies and mission, healing, and mission documentation, archives and bibliography. Congress venues are chosen to expose participants to the varied contexts of mission in the oikoumene.

In its origins a Western European and Protestant organization, IAMS is now a broadly ecumenical body, including Roman Catholics, Orthodox, conciliar and evangelical Protestants, and members of the Pentecostal, charismatic and Independent churches from all six continents among its more than 500 individual and corporate members. In 1988 it elected its first non-Northern president; and it seeks to increase its number of women members.

JOHN S. POBEE

## INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

THE INTERNATIONAL Association for Religious Freedom was founded by Unitarians in 1900 in Boston (USA) as the International Council of Unitarian and Other Liberal Religious Thinkers and Workers, and held its first congress in 1901 in London. It is the oldest international inter-religious organization in the world. Originally designed to unite Unitarian and related groups and individuals, IARF membership gradually grew to include representatives of a wide variety of faith groups, including Buddhist, Shinto, Hindu, African tribal religion, as well as liberal Christian. Encompassing 86 member groups in 27 countries, IARF holds a triennial congress as well as many other meetings for inter-religious cooperation and dialogue. A social service network provides direct aid and relief, principally in India.

WILLIAM F. SCHULZ

## INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN YOUTH EXCHANGE

AS A MEANS of post-second world war reconciliation, the Church of the Brethren (USA) in 1949, in cooperation with the US state department, began to bring German

youth to the USA for a year of living with a family, going to school and sharing in church life. In 1957 the Brethren and four other US denominations formed the ICYE as an independent church-sponsored agency for one-year ecumenical exchanges of young people of 16-18 years. In cooperation with ecumenical youth movements and the WCC youth department, the ICYE initiated exchanges with other countries in Europe, later in Asia, Latin America and Africa. In 1965 student exchanges began among European countries and among regions. By the late 1960s 450 youth in 27 countries participated annually.

In the 1950s there was a strong emphasis on the church, Christian commitment and ecumenical education. In the 1960s religious commitment did not weaken but was interpreted in different ways. The decade was marked by turmoil, protest by youth and students, the demand for international economic justice, and the experience of liberation from traditional ideas and patterns of behaviour. Vigorous discussions in the ICYE took place on how to understand its aims and purposes, and the meaning of "Christian" in its name.

In 1967 the ICYE, the World Student Christian Federation's European section for Christian school movements and the WCC youth department co-sponsored a youth conference: "Revolution: The Struggle for True Humanity". Out of the 183 participants, 115 were ICYE students who had spent a year overseas. They were critical of educational systems which ignored the dimensions of social change in a world of economic and political injustice.

A statement of the international committee (Berlin 1969) reflected the debate about the ICYE's Christian character and purpose: "ICYE sponsors the exchange of young people among nations as a means of international and ecumenical education to further Christian commitment to and responsibility for reconciliation, justice and peace in the world. ICYE seeks to enable all participants to discover the common bonds they share with the whole of humanity. ICYE therefore seeks encounter with persons of all convictions and invites participation of those who share its aims and who wish to take part in its programmes."

Separating itself from the US programme, the ICYE international council was formed in 1969. The US separation caused a precarious financial situation. The nature of international exchange and of Christian commitment was called into question; internal tensions increased. In 1977 the council dissolved itself, and in a new federation the national ICYE committees were free to interpret and develop programmes according to their own convictions.

The ICYE retains ecumenical links. It develops new patterns alongside the traditional one-year school and family programme, including opportunities for voluntary service and community action, independent or group living, and special exchanges for youth with disabilities. Over 500 youth from more than 30 countries in all continents participate annually. Since the ICYE's beginning, over 14,000 young people from over 40 countries have joined in this exchange programme, and 25,000 other persons of all ages have been involved as hosts or co-workers.

See also *youth*.

WILLIAM A. PERKINS

## INTERNATIONAL ECUMENICAL FELLOWSHIP

THE INTERNATIONAL Ecumenical Fellowship is an informal European organization founded in Fribourg, Switzerland, in 1967. Its aim is to develop fellowship between Christians of different denominations and nationalities through regional meetings and an annual international conference. It provides a forum for discussion and an opportunity to share in the worship of different traditions as far as church discipline and consciences permit. Its headquarters is in Belgium, and there are branches in several European countries.

JOSINE HAUTFENNE

## INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP OF EVANGELICAL STUDENTS

THE INTERNATIONAL Fellowship of Evangelical Students was founded in 1946-47 by leaders of evangelical student movements of

ten nations – Australia, Britain, Canada, China, France, Holland, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland and the USA. Each successive decade has added 10-20 new members, so that by 2000 IFES was active in 140 countries, with local student chapters together numbering several hundred thousand. Some IFES affiliates have roots which go back to the Student Volunteer Movement and the World Student Christian Federation.\* Others arose indigenously, while still others owe their origin to the pioneer labours of international IFES staff.

IFES groups identify with conservative evangelical theology. They emphasize combining personal and group Bible study with evangelism. Inter-Varsity,\* as the movement is commonly known from the name of the British movement at its founding in 1928, stresses student leadership. The Cambridge University chapter traces its evangelical heritage to Charles Simeon, past mentor of students, in the late 18th century. Cambridge Inter-collegiate Christian Union has served as a model of Inter-Varsity work around the world.

The two largest affiliates are Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship-USA (1941), represented on some 600 campuses, and Nigeria Fellowship of Evangelical Students (1968), represented in more than 270 schools. Some affiliates have had impressive growth without the benefit of national staff (e.g. the Tertiary Students' Christian Fellowship of Papua New Guinea, with several thousand members). In East Africa several IFES-affiliated groups claim that about 10% of the students are members.

Over the years IFES has helped to identify and nurture many third-world Christians who are now leaders in various missions and international agencies, such as the Lausanne movement (see **Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization**) and the World Evangelical Fellowship.\* IFES headquarters are in London.

ROBERT T. COOTE

## INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION

THE INTERNATIONAL Fellowship of Reconciliation, founded in 1919, is an interna-

tional spiritually based movement of women and men committed to active non-violence as a way of life and as a means of personal, social and political change.

IFOR's members include Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Muslims, Baha'is and Hindus. Other members express their faith not in terms of one of the major world religions, but in a spiritual or philosophical understanding that has led them to a commitment to non-violence. IFOR has branches and groups in over 40 countries and on every continent.

The issues may vary, but there is an underlying vision. This vision involves moving towards a culture of non-violence, where relationships and models of destruction and domination are replaced by those of nurture and cooperation. IFOR members are determined to be in solidarity with people struggling for human rights and to overcome oppression. Members believe that the spiritual dimension of non-violence can be a resource for healing. Some IFOR members, such as Jane Addams, Adolfo Perez Esquivel and Mairead Corrigan-Maguire, have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their work. Members have always believed that preparation for peace is essential. The Fellowship's long tradition of peace education and non-violence training stems from this conviction.

The IFOR secretariat, located in the Netherlands, serves the international network by facilitating communication among the membership. IFOR is a non-governmental organization with consultative status at the Economic and Social Council (Ecosoc) of the United Nations.

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## INTERNATIONAL LAW

THERE ARE considerable differences between national law and international law. In most

states national law has developed as part of a legal and constitutional order which attributes authority to legislative, judicial and executive branches of government. Thus, at the national level institutions exist to enact and to enforce the law. However, the international community does not (yet) have central institutions at the global level vested with authority to legislate, to adjudicate and to enforce the law. The law that governs relations between nations\* does not primarily derive its authority from institutions created to enact and to enforce the law but rather from the degree of consent and acceptance on the part of the nations individually and collectively.

The scope of international law has evolved over the centuries. The origin of the international community as presently constituted is usually traced back to the peace of Westphalia (1648), which brought about a recognition of the concept of national sovereign states, initiated a development of making the state independent from the church and affirmed a new political distribution of power in a large part of Europe.

The European nations which at that time were expanding their power positions in the world, shaping the content of the law of nations according to their own interests, used to call themselves "Christian nations". Belonging to the community of Christian nations was considered an entitlement to dominate and rule over peoples in other continents who were to be converted and educated. Christian authorities were an important source for determining the nature and the content of the law of nations, as is also evident from the writings of Francisco de Vitoria and Hugo Grotius, two of the founding fathers of the law of nations.

In the 19th century this limited group gradually lost its exclusively Christian character. To maintain the European balance of power, the Ottoman empire was invited in 1856 "to participate in the public law and concert of Europe"; subsequently Japan, after its military defeated China, was also accepted in the community of nations, known by then as the "civilized nations". One factor which qualified a nation to belong to the "civilized"

world was the capacity to wage war with modern technological equipment. After the war against China a Japanese diplomat observed: "We showed ourselves at least equals in scientific butchery, and at once we are admitted to your council tables as civilized men."

The notion of civilization was very much a guiding principle for shaping international law during the late 19th and the earlier 20th centuries. The conclusion of the Congo act at the congress of Berlin (1885), where Western powers divided among themselves spheres of domination over large parts of Africa, was done with the justification of spreading civilization. The law of warfare codified at The Hague in the beginning of the 20th century stated that in the absence of treaty provisions, belligerents were bound to observe "the principles of the laws of nations, as they result from the usages established among civilized peoples, from the laws of humanity and the dictation of the public conscience". The covenant of the League of Nations (1919) referred to the "sacred trust of civilization" as the basis of the mandates system; the statute of the International Court of Justice still contains an echo of the same notion when it refers to "the general principles of law recognized by civilized nations" as one of the sources of international law (art. 38, para. 1c).

The brutalities committed during the second world war by nations that carried the flag of "civilization" fully discredited this notion. Thus article 4 of the United Nations\* charter requires states that wish to become members of the organization to be "peace-loving". The community of nations has lost the exclusive character inherent in the notions of "Christian" and "civilized", and has assumed universal dimensions, as reflected in the membership of the UN, which comprises virtually all nations that have acquired statehood.

This development has influenced the nature and scope of international law. Traditional international law aimed particularly at guaranteeing the liberty of the sovereign state\* in its relationships with other sovereign states. With the widening of the community of nations into a global society, the claims of the developing nations

for more equitable international structures and relationships brought about, albeit in a compromise fashion, new approaches to international law which take into account the interests of all rather than the interests of the privileged few. Examples of such new approaches can be found in the law of the sea and in the international law of human rights.\*

An enlightening distinction can be made between the international law of co-existence and the international law of co-operation. The essential function of the legal system in traditional international law is to permit and guarantee the *coexistence* of rival and competing entities, organized in the form of sovereign states, without recognizing a higher authority. The law of coexistence aims at keeping states peacefully apart rather than working actively together. The principles of sovereign equality, self-determination and non-intervention are characteristic of the international law of coexistence, which typically views peace as the absence of war.

The international law of *cooperation* requires positive measures on the basis of the interdependence of peoples and nations. Its essence is the recognition of common interests and common needs which can adequately be met only by collaborative efforts. This is reflected in the United Nations charter, which provides for international cooperation in the social, economic, cultural and human rights fields.

One of the most obvious present-day threats to the planet and to humanity, the degradation of the environment, can be effectively tackled only by means of international cooperation, and since the UN conference on the human environment (1972), numerous multilateral conventions have been concluded on a variety of environmental aspects, most in the framework of international organizations.

Development of the international law of cooperation and shaping an international order which upholds the values inherent in peace, justice and the integrity of creation can be realized only through collective efforts in international organizations. Of crucial importance in this respect are the activities of the UN and its specialized agencies. Thus the WCC, through its

Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA), has from the outset strongly supported the central importance of the UN as a forum and instrument of multilateral cooperation. Moreover, among the tasks listed in the bylaws of the CCIA is encouraging "the development of international law and of effective international institutions".

The development of international law was especially prominent on the WCC agenda in its earlier years. The first assembly (Amsterdam 1948) made the point that international law requires international institutions for its effectiveness. Amsterdam regarded international law not only as a means of regulating issues of international concern – such as the use of atomic power, multilateral reduction of armaments, provision of health services and food for all, promoting respect for human rights – but also as a common foundation of moral conviction, "without which any system of law will break down".

This linking of international law with principles of morality was echoed at the second assembly (Evanston 1954), which saw as one of the most obvious barriers to a genuine world community the lack of a common foundation of moral principles, and thus argued that the world of nations needs an international ethos to provide a sound groundwork for the development of international law and institutions. Again in New Delhi (1961) reference was made to the need for an international ethic and for a study of the nature and content of the moral foundations of international law and order to help nations of different traditions understand and accept their common allegiance to basic ethical conceptions. This call was repeated at the assembly at Uppsala (1968); but later WCC pronouncements tended to perceive international law more in terms of its concrete function than in its ethical foundation.

The Evanston assembly also advanced several considerations related to the scope, content and role of international law, among them the principles that all nations should honour their pledged word and international agreements they have accepted and that international disputes should be

settled not by unilateral action but by direct negotiation, conciliation, arbitration or judicial settlement. The New Delhi assembly spoke in the same vein of the need for peaceful settlement of disputes.

The New Delhi report introduced an important new element into the WCC approach to international law: the role of international law as a means to effect just and peaceful changes. Especially in the context of many newly independent states, New Delhi asserted that the protection of the existing order should be accompanied by the recognition of legitimate demands for its alteration, in so far as these further the maintenance of peace and serve the common good of the international community. Uppsala also underscored the twofold role of international law as a means to preserve and to change. Legal enactments and international treaties reveal that law can be a force of order and of change and reform.

A constant theme in the WCC support for the development of international law is the call for the strengthening of international institutions – in particular, the UN as an instrument of cooperation and as a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations. Already in Amsterdam the WCC deemed that the purposes of the UN deserved the support of Christians. New Delhi stressed that the universal vocation of the organization implied the need for universal membership, referring in particular to the People's Republic of China. While New Delhi's positive appreciation of the UN as developing from a conference of national delegations into an organization with an authority and special responsibilities of its own was not always maintained in later years in such optimistic terms, depending on the political climate, WCC support for the world organization remained undiminished.

On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the UN, the WCC central committee, meeting in Buenos Aires in 1985, stated that the world was witnessing a crisis of confidence in international institutions, a growing breakdown in multilateralism and a gradual erosion in the authority of the UN. The strengthening of international institutions for peace and for the

respect of international law was more important than ever. A decade later, in a statement on the 50th anniversary of the UN, the central committee said that a crisis of confidence in the United Nations persisted and had grown, especially in the "South". The crisis in multilateralism "continues almost unabated", further widening and deepening the chasm between rich and poor nations, and virtually abandoning the least developed countries, the vast majority of which are in Africa. The central committee called for significant UN reform that would assure full participation in effective decision making by all member states, and for a comprehensive public review of the structure and functioning of the Security Council, especially with regard to its domination by the present permanent members invested with veto powers.

Sceptical as it was about the ability of the UN to uphold the international rule of law, the central committee strongly reiterated its commitment to the UN, citing as still relevant the statement of the 1966 WCC conference on Church and Society that had said: "The UN is the best structure now available through which to pursue the goals of international peace and justice. Like all institutions it is not sacrosanct and many changes are necessary [for it] to meet the needs of the world today. Nevertheless, we call upon the churches of the world to defend it against all attacks which would weaken or destroy it and to seek out and advocate ways in which it can be transformed into an instrument fully capable of ensuring the peace and guaranteeing justice on a worldwide scale."

As the overall position of the WCC shifted from a predominantly theoretical ethical stand to a more contextual and pragmatic approach to international law after the Uppsala assembly in 1968, fewer references were made in its statements to the role of international law as such. However, frequent appeals were made for respect of existing international agreements or for concluding new agreements, especially in the areas of disarmament, arms control and human rights. For instance, the Vancouver assembly (1983) appealed urgently to all governments of the world to

adopt and ratify international human rights instruments, to respect the rights included in these agreements, and to promote by all means both in law and in practice their fuller realization in every country. A similar appeal was made with respect to international refugee conventions. The WCC also appealed at Vancouver for a comprehensive test ban treaty as a necessary step to stopping the further development of nuclear weapons technology. This functional and pragmatic approach to international law and international institutions is clearly consonant with the strong conviction that they are indispensable means to promote universal peace and justice and to preserve and enhance the integrity of creation.

The Canberra assembly (1991), speaking in the midst of the Gulf war, sharply defended the UN as the chief guardian of international law, criticizing the Gulf coalition powers for sidelining it in this first major world confrontation after the conclusion of the cold war. "For the Security Council or the secretary-general, in the exercise of his good offices, to be for some reason unable to act independently and in the true spirit of the UN charter would be unacceptable... The community of nations cannot afford such a weakening of the UN system. For the sake of world peace, for the sake of the rule of law, for the sake of the authority of the UN, its position as guarantor of a comprehensive international peace order must be strengthened."

This statement set the tone for ecumenical approaches to the series of conflicts that exploded in the Balkans during the 1990s. The central committee in 1999 summarized its discussions through that decade, expressing deep concern about "the erosion of the authority and capacity of the United Nations and its institutions created to develop, codify and guarantee respect for the international rule of law", re-affirming the WCC's support for the United Nations as "the unique instrument of the peoples of the world for guaranteeing respect for the international rule of law".

During the 1970s the WCC was especially active in defending human rights in societies governed by martial law imposed by military dictatorships, especially in Latin America and Asia. A natural out-

growth of this work was a CCIA programme begun in 1993 to address the question of impunity granted to former military rulers. The WCC was also active in an international coalition to promote the creation of an International Criminal Court. Such a court was first proposed by the UN general assembly in 1948 as a means to deal with the authors of genocide during the second world war, but serious efforts were not engaged until the general assembly in 1989. The debate gained momentum in 1993 in the light of the "ethnic cleansing" that characterized the civil conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. Over the objections of the USA, the statute of the International Criminal Court was adopted in Rome on 17 July 1998. As distinct from earlier international instruments for human rights and international law that sometimes took decades to gain the required number of government ratifications for them to be applied, support for the Rome statute came quickly and it came into force on 1 July 2002. Thus the "missing link" in the international legal system was established. The International Court of Justice at The Hague handles only cases between states. For the first time an instrument is now available to try individuals for their involvement in acts of genocide and egregious violations of human rights.

See also **international order, law**.

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## INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL

THE INTERNATIONAL Missionary Council grew out of the world missionary confer-

ence (Edinburgh 1910) and was formally constituted in 1921 in Lake Mohonk, New York, uniting the Protestant national missionary councils and councils of churches in Africa, Asia and Latin America in a federation with Protestant councils of missionary agencies in Europe and North America. Of the original 17 IMC members, 13 were Western missionary councils. One cannot understand either the missionary enterprise in the 20th century or the preparatory stages of the WCC without appreciating the IMC's development through its global network of coordinated activities, common studies, consultations and conferences, and united action.

The IMC's development in thought and activities up until its integration with the WCC in 1961 is chronicled in the entry on mission,\* and the entry on ecumenical conferences\* outlines the highlights of major IMC meetings (Jerusalem 1928, Tambaram 1938, Whitby 1947, Willingen 1952, Accra 1958). This entry considers the ecumenical dynamics leading up to the 1961 integration, noting issues which caused prior hesitations on both sides. Despite 40 years of structural unity within the WCC, these issues still persist, leaving institutional divisions within the missionary enterprise.

An important phenomenon of the early ecumenical movement was the way in which many of the same people were active in and gave leadership to the variety of organizations which were ecumenical in intent, and how these pioneers then sought, inspired and formed talented younger disciples to stand on their shoulders.

John Mott (1865-1955), for example, a Methodist layman, was intercollegiate secretary of the Young Men's Christian Associations (1888), founded the World Student Christian Federation\* (1895) and became its general secretary. He chaired Edinburgh 1910 and its continuation committee, helped establish national missionary councils in Asia, chaired the IMC, helped lead the Oxford Life and Work conference (1937), and became vice-chairman of the WCC provisional committee. After the Edinburgh conference Charles Brent (1862-1929), Episcopalian bishop

in the Philippines, actively participated in the first Life and Work conference (1925) and organized and became president of Faith and Order (1927). Willem Visser 't Hooft (1900-85), Dutch Reformed, was secretary of the World Alliance of YMCAs\* and general secretary of the WSCF before becoming the first WCC general secretary. Lesslie Newbigin (1909-98) was a bishop of the Church of South India, became the last IMC general secretary (1959) and, after the integration, the first director of the Division – later Commission – on World Mission and Evangelism of the WCC (CWME). This general network of friendship and shared commitment meant that those active in the IMC and the pioneers of the WCC were not strangers to one another. But because of differing constituencies, emphases and organizational demands, the IMC as such stood apart from the WCC until 1961.

The IMC Tambaram conference in 1938 discussed the proposed creation of the WCC. It urged cooperation in the formation stage through a joint committee between the two bodies, which Mott chaired. But most members wanted the IMC to maintain its own "separate organization, autonomy and independence". The IMC preferred to be only "in association" with the WCC-to-be, and to give the WCC time to discover its own role in the ecumenical movement.

After 1948 the IMC and WCC had a number of joint activities, e.g. a single IMC-WCC secretariat in the Far East, meeting refugee and other emergency needs in Asia and the Middle East, and integrating the IMC mission research department into the WCC division of studies. But much overlapping and duplication of energies, time and personnel remained. Already in 1945 Samuel McCrea Cavert had judged that it would be "a failure of Christian statesmanship to divide the ecumenical forces permanently into two groups". Underlying the logic of events, organizational alignments and ecumenically committed and talented personnel was a perceived deeper unity of calling and purpose.

The Evanston WCC assembly (1954) set up a joint committee with the IMC to

study full integration. In 1956 the committee recommended to the parent bodies the possibility of integration, "subject to an adequate safeguarding in any plan... of the distinctive expression of the mission of the church as this has been embodied in the IMC". In the next years the joint committee would uncover hesitation and anxiety on both sides.

From the IMC side, the 19th-century missionary advances by European and North American Protestants were seen as the work of missionary societies\* and mission councils who had organized, educated and financed themselves in varying degrees of independence from the classic Reformation churches. Could the large churches in the WCC, with their slow bureaucratic ways and their safe agendas, be trusted to take direct responsibility for world mission, or would that sense of gospel urgency be gradually placed on the margins? Would the direction of missionary strategy be too centralized in Geneva? Would "the greatest achievement of the IMC be put at risk" – a forum of such disparate groups, including those from very conservative theological traditions which were in no way concerned to promote organizational unity, but "exclusively to serve Christians in the task of preaching the gospel and in advising them on the varieties of experience in this preaching which no group could hope to possess by itself" (Max Warren)?

Thus, many IMC member mission councils, especially in Europe, were reluctant to have the close administrative connection with the churches which they saw as an inevitable outcome in any IMC-WCC integration.

There was also anxiety on the WCC side. Would the WCC be altering its character as a council of *churches* if independent mission agencies came aboard the ten-year-old ship? Furthermore, many IMC missionary societies retained a theological tradition and practice of direct evangelism to other Christians whom they judged "nominal" or not truly "Bible-believing". What one mission group regarded as its true witness in evangelism,\* some WCC churches would judge as downright proselytism.\* The WCC Orthodox churches,

such as those in the Middle East, directly experienced Protestant missions which had built up churches composed almost exclusively of converts from among the Orthodox. Would an IMC-WCC integration be sanctioning such proselytizing activities and purposes?

Similar misgivings were discreetly noted by Roman Catholic friends of the WCC, right up to the 1961 integration. The integration, they suggested, could lend more formal and conspicuous support to what RCs judged to be Protestant proselytism among vulnerable flocks in Latin America, Spain, Portugal, Italy, the Middle East and elsewhere. Integration could also break the WCC trend towards doctrinal catholicity\* which F&O was stressing: because of the anti-RC stance and weak ecclesiologies of so many IMC mission societies, the WCC could easily shift towards a diluted "undenominational" form of Christianity.

Proponents of integration pointed out the strong theological currents which wedded mission and church and emphasized the missionary nature of the church (see *missio Dei*). The issue, as Visser 't Hooft put it in 1956, was not one of "churchifying mission but of mobilizing the church for its mission". For their own spiritual health, the churches cannot continue to delegate the missionary enterprise to mission societies; these, in turn, should broaden their understanding of the church in their activities. The WCC should bring the missionary task into the very centre of its life, and the missionary councils and agencies should place their studies and activities in an ecumenical perspective that includes not only the mission of the church but also its unity.\*

As to fears of proselytism, it was argued that the stronger tradition in the IMC was one of cooperation and unity in mission (see **common witness**) and that one of the preparatory documents for approval at the New Delhi assembly was entitled "Christian Witness, Proselytism and Religious Liberty in the Setting of the WCC". Furthermore, the issue of proselytism and practical cases in dispute could be more frankly discussed and more effectively handled within an integrated council than by

two separate bodies. The Middle East Orthodox were even “happy with the idea of having Protestant missionaries somewhat controlled through an organization of which the Orthodox themselves were members” (John Meyendorff).

More important, a non-integrated IMC would still remain a council of councils, and the churches of Asia had been seeking direct links with the WCC rather than with the IMC. In 1961, the majority of the 38 member councils represented the churches in what were formerly called “the mission fields”. The integration would offer entrance into the life of the WCC for many churches that had related to international forums through national councils of churches and missionary organizations. And the integration would introduce mission thinking far beyond the traditional borders of the IMC constituency, e.g. the majority of the Orthodox churches and “independent” third-world churches.

In the vigorous discussion (which lasted over four years) these positive voices won the day. In late 1961 both the IMC and WCC assemblies were held in New Delhi. Integration was approved, with only two IMC dissents: the Norwegian Missionary Council, which feared the submergence of mission in the WCC, and the Congo Protestant Council, which wanted to maintain cooperation with local conservative evangelical bodies that refused WCC membership. The IMC history came to an end, but not the fundamental debate. Many mission agencies, parachurch groups and evangelical churches which are not part of the WCC have judged that the WCC, especially through the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME), has *not* highlighted missionary activity in its thinking, actions and budgets – despite its understanding of church mission and its good intentions to provide “a new frontier, a new dimension of the WCC” (New Delhi). They have questioned whether the aim of CWME remained basically the same as that of the IMC: “to help the churches in the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed so that all may believe and be saved”. Some have said that the WCC

has so changed the understanding of mission and evangelism that it means almost everything the church is called to do, except direct evangelism – using all available means to reach out to “the two-thirds of humankind yet to be evangelized”, so that “every person will have the opportunity to hear, understand and receive the good news” (see **Lausanne covenant**). Such WCC critics prefer to rally themselves, their mission societies and their old or new churches around the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization\* and associations of evangelical missions.

Consequently, structural divisions remain in world mission, forcing too many churches, mission agencies and groups to take sides in their stewardship of personnel, funds and energy and in their search for a world forum of fellowship in mission. A sad symbol was spotlighted in 1980, the 70th anniversary of Edinburgh’s world mission conference. To celebrate their being the children of Edinburgh and of their prolific offspring (now in six continents), Christians held two large mission conferences, independent of one another – the CWME at Melbourne and the Lausanne committee at Pattaya, Thailand.

TOM STRANSKY

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## INTERNATIONAL ORDER

THE TERM “international order” refers to the principles, structures and instruments regulating the relationships between peoples, nations and their governments with the aim of settling disputes, preventing armed conflict and furthering justice and the rule of law. Concern for international order has been one of the driving forces of the modern ecumenical movement since

its beginnings. Used initially at the Stockholm Life and Work conference in 1925, it was fully developed at the time of the Oxford conference on "Church, Community and State" in 1937. Present usage speaks in more neutral terms of "international relations", "international affairs" or "international cooperation". The concern for international order is described in the constitution of the WCC in terms of "breaking down barriers between people, promoting one human family in justice and peace" (art. 3). Ecumenical thought and action regarding the establishment of an international order has moved through several phases in close interaction with world political events.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA OF INTERNATIONAL ORDER

The early ecumenical movement was to a large extent a response to the international consciousness at the turn of the 20th century. The expanding missionary enterprise, following in the footsteps of European colonialism,\* awakened (esp. among the Protestant churches) the sense of the supranational character of the church. The young Nathan Söderblom wrote in 1891: "How glorious it is that Christianity is international." This conviction carried with it the new sense of responsibility for promoting a true international order. The first phase extends from the participation of a Christian delegation in the second peace conference in The Hague (1907), through the founding of the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches\* (1914) to the large ecumenical meetings in Birmingham (COPEC – the Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship, 1924), Stockholm (1925) and Jerusalem (1928). The common basis for all these efforts was the conviction that all peoples were meant to form "one human brotherhood" under the "fatherhood of God". Christianity, because of its universal and supranational character, was believed to be the only force that could hold the world of nations together. While the establishment of the League of Nations in 1919 was widely welcomed (see the Orthodox encyclical of 1920), it was felt that

its "body" lacked a "soul", that it had to be filled with Christian moral and spiritual principles. This Christian leadership in international life was guided by the ideal of the kingdom of God,\* which was to be translated into the social order of humankind.

The hopes for the establishment of a true international order based on Christian principles which would secure justice for all people and eliminate the threat of war were shattered as a consequence of world events from 1929 onwards (world economic and financial crises; emergence of Stalinism, fascism and National Socialism; paralysis of the League of Nations; and finally the second world war). "Man's disorder" (Amsterdam 1948), experienced in the form of growing secularism, aggressive nationalism, totalitarianism\* and eventually the utter destructiveness of war, became the central preoccupation of ecumenical thinking. Christian realism took the place of the liberal optimism of the earlier phase, but it continued to be rooted in the conviction that there existed a basic moral order willed by God. The highlights of ecumenical discussion during this period were the conferences at Oxford (1937) and Tambaram (1938), the joint decision (1946) taken by the WCC and the IMC to form the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA), and the first assembly of the WCC at Amsterdam (1948).

All ecumenical statements about international order during this period were directed towards calling and enabling the churches to be truly the church.\* "In a world where disruptive nationalism and aggressive imperialism make [human] brotherhood seem unreal, the church offers not an ideal but a fact, man united not by his aspiration but by the love of God" (Oxford). Therefore, the Christian church has the responsibility of bringing those who exercise power (states, governments) to the recognition of their responsibility before God. This duty means, in particular, challenging power politics by extending the rule of law\* into the relations between states, coming to terms with the threat of war and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms, especially religious liberty.\*

The founding of the United Nations in 1945 and the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) re-kindled the expectations regarding international order. However, a number of events (e.g. the Berlin blockade, the Korean war, revolution in China) brought into the open the antagonism between the two super-powers in East and West which, under the label of "cold war",\* marked the whole period from the Amsterdam assembly to the early 1960s (e.g. the Cuban missile crisis in 1962). The rapidly expanding threat of nuclear weapons placed the efforts to prevent a further world war into the forefront of the concern for international order. At the same time, however, a basic change of perspective began to take place with the emergence of new nations in Africa and Asia (Bandung conference in 1955). Thus, during the 1960s a new discussion about international order took shape, crystallizing around the goals of "peaceful co-existence" and socio-economic "development" (the first development decade, formation of UNCTAD 1964). The ecumenical debate received fresh impulses from the integration of the International Missionary Council\* into the WCC (New Delhi 1961), from the study on rapid social change (beginning in 1954) leading up to the Geneva conference in 1966, and from new openings in the Roman Catholic Church (Vatican II,\* esp. *Gaudium et Spes* and the encyclicals *Pacem in Terris*, 1963, and *Populorum Progressio*, 1967). The new orientation is captured well in this sentence from *Populorum Progressio*: "Development is the new name for peace."

The basic feature of ecumenical thinking about international order during this period is the gradual shift from the earlier static notion of order\* towards a dynamic understanding of historical change and its meaning in the providence\* of God. Thus, preoccupation with the defence of the order of a "free society" against the threat of totalitarianism and hesitations about the concern for nation-building in Asia and Africa gave way to a dynamic notion of justice\* and of the role of states in the framework of a "welfare world". As the historical perspective of formerly depend-

ent people increasingly influenced ecumenical thinking, the breaking down of traditional forms of order as a consequence of rapid social change was interpreted as a positive sign of God's renewing action in history,\* preparing the way for the order of God's shalom. This led to a new understanding of the role of the state and of the function of law, not only in preserving order but even more in shaping a new social order.

The extensive re-ordering of international relations was brought to an end through a series of developments in the early 1970s: the end of detente and the reappearance of aggressive competition between the super-powers, which was now extended into Africa, Asia and Latin America (Vietnam, Chile, the Middle East, Angola, Mozambique), the failure of international development strategies and blocking of the project of a New International Economic Order (note the effects of the oil crisis beginning in 1973), the promotion of a capitalist international order through the trilateral commission and the implementation of the doctrine of national security.\*

Within the ecumenical movement this emerging crisis in international relations led to a sharper awareness of the critical issues regarding international order: development,\* understood as the promotion of justice through self-reliance, economic growth and people's participation; human and people's rights, especially the right to basic guarantees for life; racism\* as a fundamental denial of justice; a critical analysis of militarism,\* of the transnationalization of capital and production and of the power of science and technology.\* The earlier emphasis on participation in change gave way to the struggle for justice and liberation. An international order based on the maintenance of the existing political, economic and financial structures was perceived as the main obstacle to true liberation and justice. Thus, ecumenical thought and action have increasingly turned away from the preoccupation with international structures to movements of the people with the aim of building up an "oikoumene of solidarity" over against the "oikoumene of domination".

This change in emphasis found expression in the invitation issued by the WCC's Vancouver assembly (1983) to a "conciliar process for justice, peace and the integrity of creation".

The expansion of ecumenical thinking on international order through this process is reflected in the statement by the Canberra assembly (1991) on the Gulf war: "For the sake of all peoples, it is time to build a new world order of justice, the foundation stone of peace: (a) a world economic order which ends the domination and exploitation of the poor by the rich; (b) information and communication systems which... offer all peoples truth in place of distortion, and media disposed to peace rather than violence; and which redress the concentration of control over global communications media in the hands of a few powerful nations and corporations; (c) an environmental order which respects the integrity of God's creation and controls the industrialized nations' insatiable thirst for oil... and leads them to adopt new energy policies which promote conservation." Since then, the emerging features of globalization, particularly of economic and financial systems, pose new challenges to the ecumenical search for a viable international order which counteracts increasing fragmentation and exclusion.

#### THE ECUMENICAL UNDERSTANDING OF INTERNATIONAL ORDER

The concern for an international order has been and is being addressed within the ecumenical movement under a number of different aspects.

Who are the *subjects* of an international order? Traditionally, international affairs have been considered as a matter of organized states and their governments (see *state, nation*). Thus, the ecumenical movement during its early phase and until the mid-1960s focused attention primarily on the responsibility of governments as the primary subjects for establishing and maintaining international order. This emphasis found expression in the efforts to develop criteria and instruments for limiting national sovereignty, especially with regard to war as a means for settling in-

ternational disputes. Since then the picture has become more complex. The process of decolonization gave rise to popular liberation movements which challenged the legitimacy of existing governments. Some have been recognized internationally as legitimate representatives of their peoples and thus as "subjects" in terms of international order. Furthermore, since the 1970s large transnational corporations and banks have begun to influence international order, not only in the economic and financial field. Their effective power exceeds that of most governments, yet they have no formal recognition as international "subjects" and escape control or accountability. And finally, in many countries the military has become the primary reference point for international order. As a consequence, ecumenical discussion has progressively moved away from its earlier concentration on states and governments and has begun to address these new "subjects".

The most important *structures* for promoting international order have been the League of Nations and the United Nations,\* with their specialized agencies and organizations. The ecumenical movement has consistently given its support to these structures as the best available, while encouraging their continuous critical review. Most activities of ecumenical agencies regarding international order during the first half of this century were directed towards these intergovernmental structures. Through the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs the WCC has enjoyed consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN. A special office for UN relations is maintained in New York. Increasingly, however, attention has been given to regional structures within or related to the UN system, especially the Organization of African Unity. With the emergence of the debt crisis,\* the structures maintaining the existing international financial system have come under critical analysis. Very little explicit thinking has been directed towards military alliances as structural elements within the existing international order. However, other structures outside the framework of intergovernmental relation-

ships have become increasingly important for ecumenical efforts regarding international order, such as international federations of trade unions, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the vast network of non-governmental organizations\* (e.g. the International Commission of Jurists and the Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies).

Regarding the *principles* of international order, it has been the conviction within the ecumenical movement from the beginning that international order presupposes bringing the relations between states out of the realm of pure power politics and under the rule of law. This principle is closely related to the modern notion of human rights\* as expressed in the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The rule of law refers to all principles, institutions and procedures which protect individuals, peoples and states from arbitrary action and oppression and safeguard human dignity. Much attention was given in earlier decades to the possibilities of further developing the system of international law\* based on an international ethic, rooted in principles either of natural law\* or of divine order. Already at Oxford in 1937 there was a strong call for an international bill of rights, and through the CCIA the ecumenical movement has actively participated in the drafting of the universal declaration, especially its provisions for religious liberty. Similarly, close attention has been given to the preparation of the other human rights covenants and conventions. More recently, ecumenical concern has focused on the full implementation of accepted human rights standards in view of increasing gross violations and the challenges of "impunity". Human rights, as the rights both of individuals and of peoples, have become the elementary criterion of justice. At its assembly in Vancouver (1983) the WCC urged the churches to press governments to "elaborate and ratify an international legal instrument which would outlaw as a crime against humanity the possession as well as the use of nuclear arms".

The main *instruments* available for building up international order are inter-governmental negotiations with a view to

agreeing on treaties, conventions, covenants, etc. Such negotiations take place either directly between the governments concerned or under UN mandates. Since many international legal instruments of crucial significance still lack ratification by the required minimum number of governments, the WCC has consistently pressed governments to honour their responsibility for international order. Special attention has always been given in the ecumenical movement to the interstate conflicts, e.g. through mediation, arbitration, peace-keeping or observation teams. In recent years the consequences of the application of sanctions as a non-violent means for exercising pressure on parties in conflict as provided for in the charter of the United Nations (art. 41) have received particular attention, especially in connection with the conflicts in Southern Africa, the former Yugoslavia and Iraq.

The concern for international order constitutes a basic *ethical* challenge. Since international law is still deficient in terms of inner cohesiveness, and in the absence of effective instruments of enforcement, international order is largely dependent on some kind of common ethos of humankind. This issue has been addressed in the ecumenical movement from the beginning. Starting from the conviction that only Christian principles could provide a sound basis for an international ethos, the ecumenical movement has come to recognize that in a religiously pluralistic and increasingly secularized world, neither the appeal to Christian principles nor one to some kind of natural law or so-called orders of creation will be universally accepted. In a world where hunger and poverty, wars and violent oppression not only threaten the lives of millions of people but place the very survival of humankind itself at stake, justice and peace coupled with a caring attitude towards nature have become the central ethical issues in the search for international order. Both justice and peace, however, presuppose recognition of human dignity and respect for it.

While in the early phase of the ecumenical movement the concerns for peace and disarmament and for fundamental hu-

man freedoms were paramount, the emerging conflict between North and South has focused attention on the issues of justice and human dignity (poverty, violation of human rights, racism, etc.). In the light of the biblical tradition, justice and peace are inseparable. Yet in concrete situations they frequently enter into tension and conflict. The struggle for justice against structures of oppression often leads to disorder and conflict, including creating threats to peace. Development has been called the new name for peace, yet development inevitably leads into the struggle for justice. This fact brings about the paradoxical situation that struggling for justice and the conflicts it gives rise to must be understood as action that actually is for peace. The ways of achieving a just peace or peace with justice have therefore been at the centre of the more recent ecumenical discussion about international order, particularly in view of the threats posed by the increasing number of intrastate conflicts. This has posed the ethical problem of violence (see **violence and non-violence**) in terms of both the structural violence of oppressive systems and the actions of violent resistance and has inspired the search for non-violent, peaceful ways of conflict resolution. By analogy, the traditional criteria of a just war\* have received renewed attention. But ultimately both the maintenance of peace and the realization of justice are questions of power, and hence recent ecumenical discussions about political ethics have raised again the question of the different forms of power and their legitimization.

What is the *role of the churches* regarding international order? Internationally, the Christian churches represent the largest religious community, but they are a minority among minorities. While the Roman Catholic Church through the Vatican enjoys international status and can directly participate in intergovernmental negotiations, the WCC lacks any such international recognition except its consultative status with the UN as a non-governmental organization. Its member churches have very different forms of relationships with their governments. But generally, the power of the churches to influence actions and decisions about inter-

national order has been decreasing steadily since the beginning of this century. The World Conference on Religion and Peace\* has been trying to bring the united weight of world religions to bear on the questions of world community. The results have so far been very limited.

The ecumenical understanding of the role of the churches in the search for international order has changed radically since the beginning of this century. Starting from the conviction about the Christian leadership role in holding the community of nations together, through the notion of the church as a "factor" or a "sign and instrument" of the coming unity of humankind, the ecumenical movement has come to the recognition that the churches are meant to live as confessing and witnessing communities among the nations of this world. In their ecumenical solidarity, especially with the poor and the victims, the churches are called to manifest God's unconditional love for humankind (see **unity of humankind**). This task implies both the priestly calling for reconciliation\* and the prophetic calling for resistance (see **prophecy**). The relationship between these two dimensions of Christian witness for international order poses the same problems as the relationship between justice and peace. The tension is resolved in the messianic perspective of the witness and praxis of Jesus Christ announcing the presence of the kingdom of God.

KONRAD RAISER

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## INTER-VARSITY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

THE INTER-VARSITY Christian Fellowship, a non-denominational movement of Evangelical college and university students in the US and Canada, is part of an international movement known as the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students\* (IFES). In 2000 IFES counted 114 national affiliates and it has work in about 140 countries.

IVCF is known for evangelism\* and discipleship through student-led inductive Bible studies. In the US some 400 staff members minister on more than 550 campuses, offering training, counsel and encouragement. Weekend retreats and summer camps provide evangelistic outreach and leadership training. InterVarsity Press and Twentyonehundred produce Christian literature and video programmes designed to strengthen intellectual foundations and expand horizons for Christian life and service.

IVCF-Canada, in addition to its university-level work (about 150 chapters), also has an extensive high school programme (some 400 groups), which prepares students for Christian life and witness in tertiary schools.

In the late 1940s IVCF launched the triennial Urbana missions convention at the University of Illinois at Urbana. In 1996 and again in 2000, during the week between Christmas and New Year, more than 19,000 people, mostly students, attended Urbana, and the majority indicated they would consider overseas mission service.

ROBERT T. COOTE

## INVESTMENT

WORLDWIDE, the number of churches and church-related bodies which have capital to invest at their disposal is rather limited, and most of these are in the richer countries. Such investment capital is generally used to help finance ongoing church activities and programmes or in pension and similar funds. For many years, some churches and church-related bodies applied ethical criteria to their investments

according to what might be called an "avoidance" strategy, i.e. not investing in companies which produce tobacco or liquor.

However, since the late 1960s, there has been a growing awareness that investments can also be used actively to promote corporate social responsibility. As shareholders in private companies, churches and church-related agencies can try to exercise their influence by raising questions about social and environmental issues, requesting information or asking companies to take specific actions. One way of doing this is through submitting shareholder resolutions at the company's annual meeting of shareholders. The first shareholder resolution from a church investor, filed in 1971 by the Episcopal Church in the USA, asked General Motors to cease operations in South Africa. Since that time, the corporate responsibility movement in the US has grown tremendously to include churches and public and private pension funds. It is estimated that nearly 10% of all US investments are made with ethical as well as financial considerations in mind. A major protagonist in this movement is the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), sponsored by and related to the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. The ICCR is an international coalition of 275 Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish institutional investors, including religious communities, pension funds, health-care corporations, foundations and dioceses, with an estimated portfolio worth some \$100 billion. Every year ICCR-related organizations sponsor many resolutions to dozens of companies on issues related to social justice, military production and environment.

Since the early 1970s, this second model of using investments as a tool to promote corporate responsibility has spread to a number of other countries where this model is applicable, e.g. England and the Netherlands. At the same time, initiatives have mushroomed for establishing alternative investment funds which concentrate on socially responsible activities. This could be seen as a third model of using investments. While defini-

tions of what constitutes socially responsible investment differ, in general they are seen as those which promote social justice, peace and the protection of the environment. Although the movement for corporate responsibility and alternative investments is much broader than the churches, it is fair to say that some churches and church-related organizations have been and are major protagonists of this movement.

The WCC assembly in Uppsala (1968) recommended that investments in “institutions that perpetuate racism” should be terminated. This recommendation was taken up by the WCC central committee meeting in Utrecht (1972). The committee decided to sell forthwith existing holdings and to make no investments in corporations which were directly involved in investment in, or trade with, a number of countries in Africa, including South Africa. At the same time, all member churches, Christian agencies and individual Christians were urged to use all their influence, including stockholder action and investment, to press corporations to withdraw investments from and cease trading with these countries.

The WCC went beyond merely criticizing certain investment policies. In 1974 the central committee unanimously decided to establish the Ecumenical Development Co-operative Society (EDCS), which changed its name to Oikocredit\* in 1999. The objective of Oikocredit is twofold: first, to work with poor people in their efforts to achieve self-reliance through productive enterprises, by providing loans, guarantees or investment capital; second, to mobilize investment capital of the churches and church-related organizations to be used for human development. Most of the investment capital of Oikocredit is provided through support organizations in which individual people can participate. Churches and church-related organizations account for approximately 20% of the share capital. The WCC itself channels 10% of its investment capital through Oikocredit.

See also **economics, Programme to Combat Racism.**

ROB VAN DRIMMELEN

■ R. van Drimmelen, *Faith in a Global Economy: A Primer for Christians*, WCC, 1998.

## IONA COMMUNITY

THE IONA Community was founded in 1938 by George MacLeod (1895-1991), then a parish minister in Glasgow, who was concerned at the lack of impact of the church and Christianity on the lives of working people. MacLeod gathered a group of young ministers and craftsmen, joined by many volunteer workers, and raised money to re-build the ruined buildings of a 13th-century Benedictine abbey on the small island of Iona, off the west coast of Scotland, where Columba had formed a monastic community on coming from Ireland in 563. The re-building – begun as a sign of hope in times of high unemployment and impending war, and as an experiment in mission and ministerial formation affirming the relevance of faith to the whole of life, through the integration of work and worship, prayer and politics – was completed in 1967.

Alongside the work on Iona, where many came each year to visit the abbey and youth camp and to find inspiration and fellowship, the community’s activities also developed on the mainland – through political commitment, particularly in peace-making and nuclear disarmament; through the work of community members, many of them parish ministers and industrial chaplains in difficult situations; and through the opening of Community House in central Glasgow, with a range of activities in education and politics, drama and film, and social services.

In 1951 the community was formally integrated within the life and organization of the Church of Scotland, although from the outset it has maintained a thoroughly ecumenical dimension.

There are now around 240 members, mostly in Britain but a few serving overseas, drawn from most of the branches of the church, with the Church of Scotland still the largest single tradition. The community remains committed to the process of re-building the lives of individuals, of the church and of society through seeking new ways of living and expressing the

gospel in today's world. There have been significant changes since the early years, particularly with the admission of women to full membership from 1969 and increasing numbers of lay members who are now in the majority.

The members share a commitment to the community's fivefold rule, involving, within a framework of mutual accountability, a spiritual discipline of daily prayer and Bible reading, an economic discipline of tithing for the work of the community and other causes, the planning and balanced use of time, action for peace and justice in society, and regular meeting together (in local family groups, normally meeting monthly, and quarterly plenaries). A wider constituency of around 1500 associate members and over 1500 friends also provides much valued support.

The community maintains two centres on Iona – Iona abbey and the MacLeod centre, which has special facilities for young people, families and people with disabilities – and Camas adventure camp, a former salmon-fishing station in a remote location on the nearby Ross of Mull, a peninsula on the adjoining Isle of Mull. These centres are staffed by a resident staff group, assisted by volunteers, who provide hospitality for over 100 guests each week from March to October.

Besides what members do locally to live out their commitment to the community's aims and concerns, there is also a range of corporate activities on the mainland, based in the community's administrative headquarters in Glasgow. The Wild Goose resource group promotes and explores new and participatory approaches to worship through producing liturgical material, holding workshops and leading worship at ecumenical and local events. The community also supports a youth development worker, publishes the bi-monthly magazine *Coracle* and funds Wild Goose Publications, which produces worship resources and books and pamphlets relating to the community's concerns.

In recent years there has been a strong commitment to peace-making and opposing nuclear weapons, promoting social justice through supporting the cause of the poor and the exploited in Britain and

abroad, political activity to combat racism, and engagement with environmental and constitutional issues. Other concerns relate to the strengthening of inter-denominational understanding and the sharing of communion, the encouragement of inter-religious relations, and the development of the ministry of healing. Undergirding all the community's work is a concern for the re-discovery of an integrated approach to spirituality which recognizes the social dimension and expression of spirituality, affirms that God is to be encountered in engagement with rather than withdrawal from the struggles and issues of everyday life, and reflects the links between work and worship, prayer and politics, based in the conviction that God's Spirit permeates, as George MacLeod put it, "every blessed thing".

NORMAN SHANKS

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## ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH

THE TERM "Israel" in traditional Christian theology referred to the Jewish people, understood in continuity with the biblical Israel of the Hebrew scriptures. In that sense, the theme "Israel and the church" is discussed in the entry on Jewish-Christian dialogue. Today, the word is also used more specifically to refer to "the land (*eretz*) of Israel", in which case the theme "Israel and the church" refers to the wide range of Christian reactions, historical and theological, to the return of the Jewish people to the land of Israel during the 20th century (Zionism) and the rebirth there of a sovereign Jewish state for the first time since the destruction of the temple in the year 70 C.E. While the two understandings cannot finally be separated, this entry will concentrate primarily on the latter.

The theological issues have their origins in the earliest patristic writings, well

before the divisions among the churches of the East and the West and so are inherently ecumenical in that all churches encounter them on virtually equal footing. Two major themes are central. The first, wholly negative, flowed from the logic of the charge that the Jews were collectively guilty for the death of Jesus (“deicide”). The Romans’ destruction of the Jerusalem temple and their expulsion of the Jews from the land of Israel were interpreted as evidence of divine punishment for the crime. Jews were doomed to “perpetual wandering” among the nations until the end of time when they would repent and accept Christ and a remnant would be saved. The anti-Jewish writings of St John Chrysostom represent perhaps the most vivid evocation of this theme.

The second theme also served to undercut Jewish claims to the land. This replaced the Jewish emphasis on the “earthly” (or “carnal”) Israel with stress on a “heavenly Jerusalem” and an eschatological Zion as fulfilling the biblical promises. Justin Martyr, in whose work the phrase “the Holy Land” appears for the first time, argued that “there will be a resurrection of the dead and a thousand-year period in which Jerusalem will be rebuilt, adorned and enlarged, as the prophets Ezekiel, Isaiah and others declare” (*Dialogue with Trypho*, 80.5). Conspicuously absent in the re-building, however, are the temple (cf. the letter to the Hebrews and the book of Revelation) and the Jewish people, whose possession of the land was only temporary, while that of those who accept Christ (and who are therefore the true heirs of the promises) will be eternal. While Justin envisioned a real reign on concrete territory, already in the 3rd century Origen argued that the biblical prophecies and Pauline texts did not refer to an earthly Jerusalem at all, but only to the “heavenly Jerusalem”, a conception supported by his disciple Eusebius.

The tradition of Christian pilgrimage to the holy land beginning already in the 4th century, and, more spectacularly, the crusades\* illustrate that Christianity could not quite free itself from faith in the numinous quality of the land in which Jesus

lived and died, or its “sacramental” and eschatological significance as concrete territory. In either case, the widespread presumption that the diaspora of the Jews was a sign of divine punishment for collective guilt argued powerfully against any Jewish claims to Jerusalem and the holy land. Some Christians, especially among the more fundamentalist British and American Protestants, were persuaded by the theological claims of Zionism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that the ingathering of the Jews in the land was a necessary precondition for the eschaton and became “Christian Zionists”. However, this was normally within the context of the conversion of Jews to Jesus as the Christ, as was the WCC Amsterdam statement of 1948.

The rejection by Pope Pius X of Theodore Herzl’s plea for formal support for the Zionist cause in 1904 likewise appears to reflect ancient patristic presumptions. When in 1947 the United Nations voted to approve the partition of Palestine (and therefore to legitimize the creation of a Jewish state), the holy see did not oppose the resolution, which in fact passed largely because of the virtually unanimous support of the “Catholic” countries, especially in Latin America.

Significantly, the UN partition plan also mandated the establishment of Jerusalem as a *corpus separatum* under international control, a resolution the holy see continued to promote actively until Israel took control over the city of Jerusalem in 1967, when its language changed subtly from a call for “international *status*” to “international *statute*” guaranteeing the rights of Jews, Christians and Muslim alike in the city.

Despite the lack of opposition to the creation of the state, suspicions lingered among most Jews that the holy see’s refusal to grant full diplomatic recognition to the Jewish state was motivated by theological concerns reflecting the Christian “teaching of contempt” towards Jews and Judaism dating back to the patristic period. In 1965, the Second Vatican Council\* formally rejected the notion of collective Jewish guilt for the death of Jesus, thus cutting out the basis for the “dis-

placement/perpetual wandering" interpretation of the Jewish diaspora. If the Jews were not guilty, then there never existed a reason for divine punishment. God's "eternal" covenant with the Jewish people, including the promise of eternal possession of the land (e.g. Gen. 17), had never been revoked by God (Rom. 9-11). Clearly, a profound re-assessment of many ancient theological notions was needed.

This work was undertaken by the churches and denominations, Protestant and Catholic alike, in a series of national and international statements in Europe and the Americas (see **Jewish-Christian dialogue**). In 1985, for example, the Vatican issued official *Notes* for preachers and teachers, which gave a positive interpretation to the diaspora, "which allowed Israel to carry to the whole world a witness... while preserving the memory of the Land of their forebears at the heart of their hope". In 1993, the holy see and the state of Israel signed an historic "fundamental agreement", paving the way for full diplomatic relations and the exchange of ambassadors in 1994.

While all this points to an essential breakthrough, Christian theological reflection on its significance is, as John Pawlikowski has commented, "still at an embryonic stage" among Protestants and Catholics alike. Jews and Christians still

understand the holy land and the holy city of Jerusalem\* differently from a theological point of view, a difference which combines with pastoral reasons (e.g. sympathy with Palestinian Christians) to influence political judgments within the two communities. As Christians need to dialogue with other Christians as well as Jews to understand the implications of a more positive theology of Judaism, so too is the dialogue among Christians over these implications necessarily an ecumenical one.

EUGENE J. FISHER

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# J

## JERUSALEM

FOR OVER 4000 years “the chosen city of God” (Ps. 48:2) has been a religious palimpsest of political control – “pagan”, Jewish, Roman, Christian, Muslim, again Christian, again Muslim, and again Jewish. For all three Abrahamic faith communities the city remains central to their sacred geography, “an echo of eternity” (A. Heschel).

King David made Jerusalem his capital (c.1000 B.C.) and his son Solomon built the first temple, home of the special Presence of the covenantal God. The Babylonians destroyed it (586 B.C.) and exiled the Jews, prompting the prayer, “If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither!” (Ps. 137:5). Herod re-built the temple, the Romans razed it (A.D. 70), levelled the city (135), and the Jews again dispersed. After Israel had declared itself a state in 1948, it

proclaimed Jerusalem “the restored and eternal capital”. For religious Jews it is the holiest focus of messianic hopes. It awaits that redemption which will come only when Yahweh’s Anointed One chooses to arrive.

For the Muslims Jerusalem is the last of their three holiest cities, after Mecca and Medina. They believe that on the mount where Abraham had offered to sacrifice his beloved son (Ishmael) and where the former Jewish temple had stood, Muhammad ascended a ladder to the throne of Allah. This ascension confirmed the continuity between Muhammad and all previous prophets and divine messengers, including Jesus of Nazareth. The entire esplanade is a mosque, the noble sanctuary of prayer, the centre of the final judgment. The Arabs prefer to call the city al-Quds (The Holy), and to claim it as the capital of the new Palestine.

Christian medieval maps place Jerusalem at the centre of the earth, indeed of the universe. The city witnessed the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus the Messiah and Son of the Triune God. Jerusalem also birthed “the mother church”, the locus of “the first-born” (Gal. 4:26; Heb. 12:22), and the mother of all churches of all nations: “Every Christian is born in Jerusalem.”

As elsewhere in the holy land (Israel/Palestine), the number of Jerusalem Christians is decreasing. In 1948 they were around 32,000, or 19%, of the urban population; at the end of 2001, primarily because of forced or voluntary emigration, they were 12,000, or 2%, of the 650,000 city-dwellers – 62% Jewish, 36% mostly Muslim Arabs. Some are concerned that Jerusalem and nearby Bethlehem will become bereft of the Christian “living stones”, a museum for pilgrims.

Jerusalem Christians may be small in number but they are many in churches: Orthodox – Greek (including Russian and Romanian), Armenian, Syrian, Coptic, Ethiopian; Catholic, in full communion with the see of Rome – Melchite, Syrian, Coptic, Ethiopian, Maronite (see **Eastern Catholic churches**), Latin; Protestant – Anglican, Lutheran, Baptist, Pentecostal; non-denominational – Messianic Jews and foreign Zionist fundamentalists.\* Eighty percent are of the Eastern churches, 15% Latin Catholic.

The mother church still bears the not yet fully healed wounds of internecine divisions, long focused on control of the holy sites and, since the 19th century, on practices of crude proselytism.\* With some success, Latin missionaries “converted” Orthodox, and even lured Eastern Catholics into the Latin fold. Through the Anglo-Prussian first Reformation church in the Middle East (Jerusalem 1842), Anglican and Lutheran missionaries “converted” Latin and Eastern Christians. Memories linger as a warning: a few Orthodox leaders wonder whether ecumenism is not in fact a new, more subtle missionary attempt to soften up vulnerable flocks.

As a very small minority vis-à-vis Jewish and Muslim majorities, since the Palestinian uprising (*intifada* 1987) Christian laity, clergy and hierarchs are overly conscious of necessary common witness in conflictual Jerusalem, called to be what its Hebrew

name means – city of peace. Ecumenical and inter-religious sensitivities are becoming pervasive, e.g. in Christian schools and hospitals, and in groups of human rights activists, environmentalists, women, youth leaders and teachers. A spectrum of instruments gather a variety of willing constituents, such as the Ecumenical Fraternity, the Sabeel Centre of Palestinian liberation, the Interfaith Association, and the Tantur Ecumenical Institute.\*

Although there is no local council of churches, twelve church leaders, including the three patriarchs – Greek, Armenian and Latin – try to meet monthly. Occasionally they issue widely publicized joint statements. Their 1994 “Memorandum on the Significance of Jerusalem for Christians” joined the Vatican in proposing for the walled old city a special juridical and political statute which the international community would guarantee. At least in the old city, Jewish, Christian and Muslim dwellers, visitors and pilgrims could say, “it’s ours”, and should not claim, “it’s ours, not yours”.

See also **Middle East**.

TOM STRANSKY

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## JESUS CHRIST

THE CONSTITUTION of the WCC declares that the council is “a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures” (see **WCC, basis of**), and every major ecumenical conference since the Faith and Order\* meeting at Lausanne in 1927 has included in its report some account of Christological fundamentals. However, the apparently straightforward formulation in the constitution (which entered by way of the Faith and Order movement) conceals a number of theological problems. It has become increasingly clear that the unambiguous description of Jesus Christ as “God” can be inadequate

and misleading when divorced from the context of a fully stated theology of the Trinity.\* If “Jesus Christ” is thought to exhaust the meaning of “God”, there is a real risk of what some, especially Eastern Orthodox, theologians have called “Christomonism” – a concentration on the person and narrative of Jesus which ignores the question of how the Holy Spirit\* conforms the life of believers in community to the likeness of Christ, and which tends therefore to keep Jesus at a distance from the community.

From Lausanne onwards, care has been taken to minimize this risk: Lausanne’s report (para. 11) very clearly associates forgiveness and revelation\* with the mission of the Holy Spirit as well as the life, death and resurrection\* of Jesus; and Edinburgh 1937 (paras 2,6,7,20) echoes this. Lund 1952 (para. 10) has a particularly impressive account of Christ’s lordship in the church and of the way in which the Spirit makes believers partakers in the suffering and the sovereignty of Jesus. Since 1961 the membership basis of the WCC has itself included a reference to “the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit”. However, the phraseology of the constitution remains awkward. More recently, the simplistic equation of God with Jesus has provoked some searching questions from feminist theologians, who have pointed out the implications of identifying God, without remainder, with a male human being. A further problem has been opened up as the churches have considered their responses to the Lima document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry\** (BEM): the constitution speaks of confessing Jesus “according to the scriptures”, but as the 1981 Princeton consultation on the implications of BEM for the project “Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith” noted, BEM (in common with many other WCC documents) gives no direct attention to the principles of interpretation by which we may draw from scripture material for contemporary faith statements about Christ (see *hermeneutics*). How are we to move beyond the repetition of New Testament idiom to a theology which is critical, challenging and constructive for the churches today?

This question relates to the very serious problem that arose in the 1930s when the German Confessing Church\* sought to en-

sure that it would not be participating in the work of F&O alongside the Reich church. In 1935 Leonard Hodgson, then secretary of F&O, wrote to Dietrich Bonhoeffer that the ecumenical movement could not repudiate *any* body accepting “Jesus Christ as God and Saviour”. Bonhoeffer pointed out in reply that the Confessing Church had, in the Barmen declaration of 1934, effectively denied the claim of the Reich church to believe in Christ as God and Saviour: Barmen had condemned as incompatible with the confession of Christ the ascribing of revelatory authority to any other source than “the one Word of God”, Jesus Christ, and also the idea that there could be any areas of individual or corporate life not answerable to this authority. The German state church, by accepting the antisemitic legislation of the Third Reich, had betrayed the Christian faith. It could not be enough to rest content with a mere *verbal* conformity with the F&O definition.

In several respects, therefore, the wording of the WCC constitution requires glossing and putting into context. What is it today to confess Jesus as “God and Saviour according to the scriptures”?

## JESUS AND THE EARLY CHURCH

There is no completely unambiguous use of the title “God” for Jesus in the NT (John 20:28 is the nearest; Rom. 9:5 and Titus 2:13 present considerable problems of translation and interpretation). However, it is clear that, within 20 years of the crucifixion (i.e. by the time Paul was writing 1 Cor.), there were Christian communities accustomed to thinking of Jesus as embodying the action of God towards the world, God’s “power” and “wisdom” (1 Cor. 1:24). By the end of the 1st century C.E., when the gospel of John was probably written, Jesus could be seen as the one in whom dwelt the creative and mediating logos of God, the divine mind and purpose, the one upon whom the glory of God’s tangible presence permanently rested. Jesus has become for believers what the temple was to Israel, the place where God is met, but is also the visible form of the power that makes the world. Both Paul and John suggest that, because Jesus is experienced as inaugurating a new age, a new creation, because he bestows on the

believer a new identity in which human life is no longer bound and limited by a past of moral failure and staleness, or self-deceit and spiritual blindness, the history of Jesus is completely continuous with the infinite resource of divine life which brings all things into reality. Just as in the Jewish scriptures, especially the Psalms and Isa. 40-55, the exodus and the return from exile are seen as images of the creation itself, so now is the formation of the new human race through the history of Jesus. The difference is that here the creative act of God is bound up with a *single* human story as never before and that the scale of the restoration and renewal expands all the time towards the limits of the human world, including all men and women equally. It is inevitable that Jesus, as the one who enacts the saving action of God, should, like the God of Israel, be called Lord and should be seen as the touchstone by which all human events are to be judged, the one who possesses “all authority in heaven and on earth” (Matt. 28:18).

Yet this is only part of the picture. Jesus possesses supreme authority but does not simply stand in the place of the God of Israel. He prays to this God as “Father”, “Abba”, and interprets his mission and destiny as the fleshing-out of a purpose not his own. His authority is inseparably interwoven with a loving dependence upon the one he worships, a steady “obedience” – i.e. he allows the pressure of God’s love for the world to mould his human identity without interruption. Particularly in John’s gospel, Jesus is presented simultaneously as entirely and sovereignly free – and as doing nothing from his own human initiative alone. It is this paradox in the way the figure of Jesus is understood in the NT (cf. Phil. 2) that prompts the development of a technical theological account of his person and a new Trinitarian conception of God.\* If Jesus’ life is entirely moulded by the loving will of God, it makes sense to say that it *is* that loving will “made flesh” (see **incarnation**), that there is no obstacle in Jesus to God’s action in renewing the face of the earth.

But the life of Jesus, as we have seen, does not simply express the outgoing action of God but is also a loving response to God. So the conclusion is slowly drawn that the very life of God – if it is this which is ex-

pressed in the life of Jesus – involves *both* the outgoing, generative, creative element *and* the product or issue of that outgoing in the form of total and perfect response, reflection back of the love given. God comes to be conceived as both “Father” and “Son”. In the doctrinal controversies of the 4th century, out of which the Nicene Creed\* emerged, the crucial point established was that God is never to be thought of as a solitary individual: God is eternally *in relation* and so eternally open to the “other”. It is because God is thus that there is no problem about God’s will to create: although this is a free action, it is rooted in the divine life itself, whose nature is to generate in love and to generate love. Because of the relation of Father and Son, creation\* has access to a share in this movement of creative love: creatures can also be creators. This theme, set forth classically by Athanasius in the mid-4th century, is what lies behind the Eastern Christian understanding of salvation\* as *theosis*, sharing in God’s life.

### JESUS AND SALVATION

The confession of Jesus Christ as God must therefore, if it is to be faithful to the NT witness, involve the belief that through Jesus the renewal of the whole human race has become possible and that all human beings may find in Jesus the good news of their absolution and liberation; through Jesus, all have access to the life he lives, the life of liberty and creativity founded upon complete openness to the divine will for the salvation of women and men. In other words, to confess Jesus as God is to presuppose something about the radical character of the salvation he brings – the “new creation” – and to be committed to the new human race, without barriers of race, sex and status, which has begun to exist as a result of his life, death and resurrection. Bonhoeffer was certainly right in insisting that it is impossible to confess Christ as God and Saviour while refusing to be committed to the hope of an integrated, reconciled humanity: the Christological confession poses clear and sharp questions to our political and social loyalties, to our partial and distorted models of human community.

Remembering Paul’s words in 1 Cor. 12:3, “no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except

by the Holy Spirit”, we may conclude that to know Jesus as “Lord”, to acknowledge him as the Creator and final Judge of the new humanity, and as the one who opens for us the way to a share in the freedom of the Creator, is to live in or by the power of God’s Spirit. God is “Father” and “Son” but is equally that agency which draws us *into* the relation between the eternal creative source and the eternal creative response – that which realizes in us the possibility established in the history of Jesus Christ and in the coming-to-be of a community committed to Jesus Christ.

Often in the history of theology, the salvation brought by Christ has been analyzed and theorized about without reference to the witness and work of the Spirit. Some have tended to think (as a superficial reading of certain early Christian writers might suggest) that salvation occurs because God, in becoming flesh, transforms human nature by the mere fact of contact with it. Others have stressed that the cross of Jesus alone brings about our redemption,\* as a sacrifice or an expiation for our sin, and have refined and developed the language of Paul and the letter to the Hebrews about atonement through sacrifice. Both themes have a significant place in Christian theology. It is essential to see Christ as God’s way of pledging absolute faithfulness to our “cause”, God’s identification with the need and agony of human beings. Salvation does involve a transformation of our situation by God’s contact with it. No less is it essential to see the death of Christ as pivotal to the process. Only in the cross do we see clearly the depth of our unfreedom, the way in which our moral, religious and political systems of power fear and reject the life God offers, and strive to obliterate the threatening hope of conversion. Only here do we see the *cost* of our slavery to ourselves and protection of ourselves. To say, as Christians have consistently said, that the cross is God’s bearing of this cost may be a metaphor, but it is an untranslatable and irreplaceable one.

However, neither of these themes alone will carry the full weight of what the Bible understands as salvation. For this we need a doctrine of the work of the Spirit actively forming Christ’s likeness in us, ceaselessly bringing us to conversion and hope.

We cannot speak of Jesus as God without speaking of him as Saviour; but equally we cannot speak of him as God without speaking of the God he calls Father, and we cannot speak of him as Saviour without speaking of the life in us of God as Spirit. This point is made with admirable clarity in the 1979 document from the Klingenthal consultation on the filioque:\* “We are ‘christified’, ‘made christ’, in the church by the indwelling in us of the Holy Spirit, who communicates the very life of Christ to us, who in Christ makes us the brothers and sisters of Christ, and strengthens us in our new condition as the adopted children of the Heavenly Father.”

### THE CHALCEDONIAN SCHISM

In the early centuries of the church, Christology proved to be a deeply divisive force at least as much as it was a unifying one. The classic definition at Chalcedon\* in 451 of the inseparable co-existence in Jesus of full divinity and full humanity looked back on what was already a complex history of controversy and was itself to fuel further division. The churches that refused Chalcedon did so because some believed it to compromise the necessary distinction between divine and human nature, while others saw it as over-emphasizing the disjunction between the divine Word and the human Jesus.

The 20th century saw great advances in overcoming the ancient schism. Representatives of Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian churches (esp. those of the so-called monophysite tradition – a misleading label – in Egypt, Syria, Armenia, Ethiopia and India) have had candid, fruitful conversations; recent popes have issued joint statements of faith with leaders of the non-Chalcedonian churches (e.g. the joint declaration of Pope John Paul II and the Syrian Orthodox patriarch of Antioch in 1984). There is a growing recognition that terminological confusion and misunderstanding, as well as political and ethnic rivalries, have long embittered what is at heart a disagreement in idiom and emphasis *within* a common faith. Non-Chalcedonians have played an active role in the work of F&O, not least in the recent studies towards an ecumenical explication of the apostolic faith as confessed in the Nicene

Creed (381) (the sub-title of the 1991 study document *Confessing the One Faith*). These studies have made it clear that a Christology firmly anchored in Trinitarian belief, grounded in a careful, critical and imaginative reading of scripture, and oriented towards the priorities of mission and of proclaiming a shared hope for the human world, remains the fundamental inspiration and critique of all ecumenical endeavour. Such an emphasis has increasingly dominated reflection on the doctrine of Christ outside the European and North American context.

### JESUS CHRIST IN NON-WESTERN THEOLOGIES

As with all theological topics, the doctrine of Christ has largely been explored and developed by theologians from a particular social and cultural world, that of Western Europe and its North American offshoots. Recent years have witnessed the rapid development of theologies whose priorities and criteria do not depend in the same way on a Western tradition moulded by classical Hellenism and the medieval cultural synthesis (what Bernard Lonergan called the world of "classical" thought in the widest sense). Christology is now being written from the standpoint of newer Christian communities, or Christian communities that have only recently discovered a voice of their own, and the insights coming from this burgeoning world of fresh reflection have put some serious questions to aspects of "traditional" Christological thinking in the North Atlantic intellectual world. Asia, Africa and Latin America are all developing distinctive styles of Christological thought, in response to the pressures of being Christian in these diverse environments. What it means to have the life of Christ communicated to us and, indeed, what the divinity of Christ means in terms of critically available images of God in a particular cultural context are matters not to be resolved by easy abstractions and generalizations.

*Asia.* Perhaps the longest tradition of trying to express Christological convictions in non-Western language and thought-forms is to be found in India. Since the middle of the 19th century, a variety of Indian Christian writers have attempted to re-conceive the doctrine of the Trinity in terms of the classi-

cal Hindu threefold formula for the absolute: *saccidānanda*, i.e. *sat* (being), *cit* (consciousness) and *ānanda* (bliss). In this perspective, the second person of the Trinity becomes the divine as active and communicative, the exemplar of creation, and, in the remarkable phrase of Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-84), "the journeying God". Jesus is the absolute turned towards relation and love, made particular in the world so as to become the first moment of a new creation in which human beings are enabled to overcome the cycles of karma (the determinism of moral cause and effect, the round of expiation requiring re-birth again and again until the effects of the past are neutralized). These themes are very common in Indian theologians of the later 19th and early-to-mid-20th centuries (Brahmabandhav Upādhyāya, Pandippedi Chenchiah, etc.); they are sometimes combined with a stress on Jesus' self-emptying, so that he becomes without ego, a "universal person" to whom all without exception can relate (Chandra Sen, V. Chakkarai).

This appropriation of classical Hindu metaphysical and mystical categories, reaching its most sophisticated form perhaps in the early writings of Raymond Panikkar, has not been the only Indian response to Christ. Some Indian Christians (Sundar Singh, A.J. Appasamy) have preferred to underline the native tradition of Bhakti, devotion to a personal "lord", as the entry point for Christian insight. Without necessarily denying the identification of Christ with the relational form of the divine usually referred to as *Isvara*, they concentrate on how that relational form generates individual love and devotion in the believer. There is a rich and little-known heritage of poetry in several Indian languages, especially Tamil and Marathi, expressing this approach, concentrating on the saving work of Jesus, and strongly reminiscent of both Western evangelical piety and the passionate religious poetry addressed in various Indian languages to Krishna or Siva.

More recently, however, Indian writers have become conscious of the difficulties implicit in an approach which privileges either the speculative religion of the higher caste groups or the individualized piety of devotional circles, in a country of acute social di-

visions and inequality. M.M. Thomas, one of the greatest of Indian Christian writers and a formidably important figure in the history of the WCC, produced an influential book on *The Acknowledged Christ of the Indian Renaissance* (1970), pointing out that Hindu reformers had seen in Christ a stimulus towards the critique of classical Hinduism, a vision of the just social order, even a challenge to the idea of a sacrally validated society. Hindu culture itself is not as static as some Indian speculative theologians seemed to assume. For the first time, Thomas argues, India is discovering a critical dynamic in its life, a sense of the imperative to *make* history;\* the Jesus who creates a new historical community of human beings in unrestricted fellowship, a new humanity, is the Jesus who must now be preached in India. The interest of some earlier writers in Jesus as Second Adam, as the beginning of the new creation and as the one whose ego does not stand in the way of any other person's full humanity, is here given a more directly political focus. Thomas's work, prolonged in his own *Risking Christ for Christ's Sake* (1987), has been of the first importance in preparing the way for a "liberation" Christology in India, and for engagement not simply with the philosophy of a Hindu elite but with the images, hopes, stories and songs of the working people of India in their search for a fuller humanity. The work of Roman Catholic theologians such as Samuel Rayan and Sebastian Kappen has, in recent years, extended this theme in a dialogue with both popular religions and Marxism.

Elsewhere in Asia, distinctively Christological developments have been less in evidence. The minjung theology\* of Korea has moved a little in this direction, identifying the oppressed and marginal peoples of today with those with whom Jesus identified in his ministry; so that the minjung, the marginal and despised classes, become, like the friends of Jesus, an eschatological people, the bearers of God's ultimate distance from and repudiation of worldly power. In this perspective, Jesus becomes not only the fellow sufferer but also the fool, the "clown", wholly free from anxiety about status and dignity, knowing the (divine) truth that God laughs the powerful to scorn. More

than one Japanese theologian (Kazo Kitamori, Kosuke Koyama) has found that a theology of the cross, a theology of divine passion and suffering, is a necessary critical tool in confronting both Western abstraction in theology and a Buddhism one-sidedly concerned with overcoming rather than transforming history. Koyama has written of the need to keep Buddhism and Christianity in a close and balanced interaction as two responses to human violence and acquisitiveness – the moment of distance and detachment and the moment of creative and vulnerable engagement, neither making sense without the other. The crucified Jesus once again acts as a challenge to notions of human power and security.

The encounter with Buddhism has gone further still in the work of Aloysius Pieris, a Sri Lankan Jesuit, who has written of "Buddhology" and "Christology" as complementary ways of identifying a particular human being with the non-worldly power of liberation. Both are "crystallizations" of liberating praxis, understood as the movement into the world of final truthfulness and freedom (God for the Christian, the dharma for the Buddhist). Buddhist "gnosis" and Christian agape are both the ways of the divine in the world, and only in mutual relation can they be fully themselves. Pieris's approach has much in common with some of the Indian approaches outlined earlier but is more definitely pluralist in its implications.

*Africa.* African theology as a whole is still in a fairly inchoate condition, though developing rapidly; it will likely have some very distinctive questions to put to classic formulations from the point of view of a world-picture dominated by a spirituality of *creation*, of continuities with the natural order and with the human past. Gabriel Setiloane, writing from a South African perspective, notes that incarnational language presents few difficulties in a culture for which possession of a human subject by divine spirit is a readily accessible notion; the difficulty comes in understanding what is unique about this. Setiloane gives a hint at an answer in drawing attention to the Sotho-Tswana concept of "flowering" or "coming into vision" (like the sun rising) as a possible "carrier" for traditional doctrinal approaches to conversion in the African con-

text. Jesus' status would be defined, in this perspective, as that of the bringer of a *corporate* "flowering" of the human family in its new unity and communion. Earlier African theologians had debated the question of how far traditional African language about the status and authority of the tribal chief could be used to describe the position of Jesus. An initial enthusiasm for this possibility gave way to caution about borrowing an uncriticized model of political power which in fact carried associations of remoteness in many contexts.

John Pobee of Ghana suggested a middle way, using the Akan idea of the royal spokesman as a metaphor for the role of Christ. It is important to preserve the positive aspects of the imagery of the chief – as the one who connects the living and the dead, as the one whose word is wholly to be relied on, as the community's priest – while both maintaining the difference between Jesus as the "speaker" and mediator and the real chief, the High God, and also developing a theology of the cross which insists that the metaphor of chiefship, like every other metaphor, stands under the judgment of the sacrificial death of Jesus.

Both African writers mentioned here are at best ambivalent about the doctrine of a Trinitarian sharing of the divine substance; the African context seems to assimilate more readily a narrative pattern focused on Jesus' relation to the Father, who delegates to him the power of conserving the community and freeing its members from evil and alienation.

*Latin America.* The liberation theology of Latin America has proved particularly resourceful in the exploration of Christology. Heavy emphasis has been laid upon the humanity of Jesus as the keystone of a theology of liberation; however, this stress is meant not as a denial but as a re-locating of classic confessions of his divinity. Leonardo Boff has presented this relocation in terms of seeing Christ's divinity in the freedom and the universal accessibility of his humanity. Because the human being Jesus takes his stand beyond the slaveries of history to speak for and from the "utopian" position of God's justice and love for all, he stands in judgment upon the whole of history. Because he offers himself as the focus for an unrestricted human fellowship, he is bound by no local

constraint. As the one who proclaims the possibility of a *worldwide* exodus from unfreedom and oppression, he is outside the realm of the merely human. And from the side of God, it can be said that Jesus has and communicates this freedom by virtue of realizing completely the human potential for communion with God; his life, death and resurrection show that to be thus given into God's hands without reserve *is* to be given to the human world without reserve, and so to be the place where all may meet – once they have abandoned their struggles for dominance or privilege. Jesus' self-gift to the Father is of immediate political significance because it is creative of a different social network.

Jon Sobrino shares with Boff the concern to present Jesus as the paradigm of faith as well as its creator and its object; he has linked this understanding with a new and challenging exegesis of the spiritual exercises of Ignatius Loyola, the foundational text for Jesuit spirituality. His contention is that the following of Jesus along the way presented by the gospel narrative is to move from seeing this following as dictated by a logic independent of Jesus (Jesus as a way to arrive in a kingdom whose nature and promise are already known from elsewhere) to grasping that Jesus is to be followed even when there is no correspondence to what we *think* the kingdom should be. This attitude means following Jesus to the "failure" of the cross; walking in the way of justice, exposed to the power of oppression, even where there is no tangible hope of what we would consider a successful outcome. *Doing* this, Sobrino argues, is what it means to confess Jesus as Lord and God; it is a praxis which, by putting the following of Christ and the search for the kingdom above and beyond all refutation and undermining by history, sets Jesus himself above the vicissitudes of this world's present order, and so places him with God. Orthodoxy lies in this kind of commitment to the justice of God, to the kingdom, to Jesus crucified.

Latin American theology has also been involved in examining the images of Christ available in its culture. The "official" faces of Christ tend to be either the Man of Sorrows, expressing the helplessness of the sufferer, or the glorified heavenly Monarch.

Neither of these provides a vehicle for hope. To do that, an image of Christ must somehow articulate the way in which, because of Jesus' cross and resurrection, human pain is now taken up into the story of God's struggle with human rebellion and alienation, our alienation from our own humanity. Hugo Assmann has argued that practically all images of Christ, like all formulas about Christ, turn a process into a substantive state of affairs; when this happens, the inevitable corruption sets in of identifying the rule of Christ with the prevailing administration of human power, and we lose sight of Christ as the permanent "counter-power". Cross and resurrection must be kept inseparably together in their dialectical relation within the human story of the struggle for humanization – which is the story God has made *his* story.

Liberation Christologies have generally understood the belief in Jesus' divinity to be intelligible only through commitment to the authority of Jesus in social practice. They have thus – without necessarily wanting to deny or set aside the traditional creeds and formulations of faith – drawn our attention back to the origins of Christological confession in the simple acceptance of Jesus as authorized to define the shape of one's human hope and effort, Jesus as judge and prophet. The divinity of Jesus is shown rather than defined, shown in the radicalism of this commitment. Although many liberationists are heavily influenced by a residually liberal conviction about the "natural" utopian aspirations of human beings and hold to a theological anthropology still marked by the influence of writers such as Karl Rahner, their central direction is towards a more austere and cross-centred account of the cost of discipleship.

See also **theology, liberation; uniqueness of Christ.**

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## JEWISH-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

INCREASING awareness of the horror of the Shoah (holocaust) of 1938-45, in which 6 million Jews were exterminated, is bringing about a gradual but radical re-appraisal of the relationship between Christians and Jews. The long history of anti-Judaic sentiment, the systematic teaching of contempt, legal discrimination and pogroms prepared the ground for 19th- and 20th-century anti-semitism,\* which culminated in the Nazi tragedy. A recognition of this history has brought about a determination by all Christian bodies to oppose every form of anti-semitism. This was expressed at the first assembly of the WCC at Amsterdam (1948) and even more strongly at the third assembly at New Delhi (1961). The International Council of Christians and Jews (composed of Protestants, Catholics and Jews), meeting at Seelisberg in 1947, published ten points to make such good intentions a reality, including the need to correct distorted images of Judaism and to present the passion of Christ in a way that avoids anti-Judaic references.

The Second Vatican Council\* published its historic document *Nostra Aetate* in 1965, and this has revolutionized official Roman

Catholic attitudes. Affirming a common "spiritual patrimony", it said that the passion of Christ "cannot be charged against all the Jews" and affirmed that the relationship between Jews and Christians "concerns the church as such". Numerous documents from bodies in the Vatican and conferences of Catholic bishops in the USA and Europe and guidelines for individual dioceses have developed this teaching and sought practical ways of implementing it. However, despite this and the work of *Service internationale de documentation judéo-chrétienne* in giving detailed teaching on how to avoid negative images of Judaism, it is questionable how much has really changed at the parish level. In Protestant churches, where there is less systematic follow-up, it may be that despite expressions of good will, even less has actually changed.

Another factor in bringing about a new relationship between Christianity and Judaism is a historical study of the Bible. It is clear that the New Testament was written when the church and the synagogue had already split, and its writings reflect a mutual hostility which need no longer be shared by us. Furthermore, the re-discovery of Jesus as a Jew, against a Jewish background, as much by Jewish scholars as by Christian, shows how important it is for Christian self-understanding to reach a proper appreciation of Judaism.

The WCC at Amsterdam stressed the Christian responsibility to bring Jews to faith in Christ. This is still the view of agencies such as the Church's Ministry among the Jews and the Jews for Jesus movement which, at the same time, urge that converted Jews should retain their Jewish heritage and identity. In contrast, the Roman Catholic order of the Sisters of Zion, which was founded in the 19th century to convert Jews, has totally changed its role and now works to help Christians to understand Judaism, and vice versa. Similarly, many official church pronouncements, for example that of the synod of the Protestant churches of the Rhineland in 1980, repudiate all attempts to convert Jews to Christianity. This approach emphasizes the one hope for the kingdom, shared by Jews and Christians, the joint mission that God's name be hallowed, and the mutual witness for equal partners in the dia-

logue. It provides the basis for the growing cooperation of Jews and Christians on social and moral issues. The question of mission to the Jews remains highly contentious.

Behind the disagreements lie unresolved theological questions. There is agreement that the Christian church has not directly replaced or superseded the people of Israel, in any easy sense, and that God remains faithful to those with whom he has made a covenant.\* There is not yet a common mind, however, on whether there is one covenant or two and, if two, how they are related. For some, faith in Christ admits to a relationship with God which Jews already enjoy by virtue of their historic faith; and the resurrection\* validates belief in the God and Father of Jesus, who was then, and is now, in a loving relationship to Jews.

Jews, for their part, stress that Judaism must be defined in Jewish, not Christian, terms and that Judaism is a living religion, culture and people which has continued to develop through the centuries and should not simply be equated with the religion of the Hebrew scriptures. For most, though not all, Jews, the state of Israel is seen as fulfilling the religious longing of centuries and as providing the political homeland which has been denied them for nearly 2000 years. The recognition by the Vatican of the state of Israel ended years of unease on this issue. However, the political policies of some Israeli governments have been cause for anguish among many Jews as well as Christians. Furthermore, the natural sympathy of church bodies for the Palestinian cause is sometimes a cause of disquiet for many Jews. Despite the real advance that has been made since 1947, great sensitivity is required to avoid the hurts that still continue to be caused, and at a parish level there is still an enormous educational task to be done.

The key documents of the major Christian bodies up to 1983 are collected in *Stepping Stones* and *More Stepping Stones*, listed below. Since then there have been major statements by, among others, the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the USA (June 1987), the Episcopal Church of the USA (October 1987), the Lambeth conference (August 1988), *Notes on the Correct Way to Present Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis* in the Roman Catholic

Church (Vatican 1995) and other instructions by the Catholic hierarchy of different countries.

The WCC held a consultation in 1988 in Sigtuna, Sweden, where a set of affirmations were made trying to sum up what Christians have learned in the Jewish-Christian encounters during past decades. (1) In God's love for the Jewish people, confirmed in Jesus Christ, God's love for all humanity is shown. (2) Christians share spiritual treasures with the Jewish people. (3) Jesus Christ both binds together and divides Christians and Jews. (4) Christians reject the view that the sufferings of Jews in history are due to any corporate complicity in the death of Christ. (5) Out of the Jewish community emerged two communities of faith, sharing the same spiritual roots, yet making very different claims. (6) Claims of faith as weapons have been used against the Jewish people, culminating in the Shoah. (7) The Jewish people are not rejected by God. (8) The continuing vocation of the Jewish people is a sign of God's love. Their covenant remains. (9) The Jewish people today are in continuation with biblical Israel. The dialogue is gradually becoming more truly ecumenical with the presence of Christians from Africa, Asia and Latin America and continuing involvement in the Middle East.

See also **Israel and the church.**

RICHARD HARRIES

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## JIAGGE, ANNIE

B. 7 Oct. 1918, Lomé; d. 12 June 1996, Ghana. A president of the WCC (1975-83), she was moderator of the WCC's commission on the Programme to Combat Racism and the committee on laity and CIGARWS. Daughter of Robert Domingo Baeta, a revered synod clerk of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana, she became interested in the ecumenical movement already in 1947 when she attended the world conference of Christian youth in Oslo.



After studies in law at the London School of Economics and Political Science and Lincoln's Inn, she practised law in Ghana (1951-56) and went on to be a magistrate (1956-59), circuit court judge (1959-61) and high court judge (1961-69). She served the YWCA in various capacities at home and abroad, including as vice-chairperson of the World YWCA (1958-62). As president of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (1962-72), she was the author

of the basic draft of the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and for this service received the Gimbles International Award in 1969. She attended WCC assemblies at Evanston (1954), Uppsala (1968), Nairobi (1975) and Vancouver (1983). In 1968 she represented the WCC at the Roman Catholic laity conference in Rome. At home in Ghana she served as counsellor of the Christian council and as chair of the commission on the churches' participation in development. For her numerous contributions to the nation and the world, the University of Ghana awarded her an LLD (1974), and the government of Ghana the Grand Medal of Ghana (1969).

JOHN POBEE

### JOHN XXIII (Angelo Roncalli)

B. 25 Nov. 1881, Sotto il Monte, Italy; d. 3 June 1963, Rome. Born of peasant farmers on the slopes of the Italian Alps and ordained a priest in 1904, in 1910 Roncalli became secretary to the bishop of Bergamo, Giacomo Radini-Tadeschi, who was so strong-minded in the church's social mission and defence of the working class that he and Roncalli were suspect in some Vatican circles. He served in the army as chaplain during the first world war, then in 1921 became the first national director of foreign missions, with his office in Rome.

In 1925 Roncalli began a Vatican diplomatic career. For nine years he was the apostolic visitor to Bulgaria where, amid the Muslims, the dominant Christians were Orthodox then divided among themselves, and the Catholics were both Latin and Eastern. As part of what he called his "mission of peace", his ecumenical apprenticeship began in a ministry of charity among the Orthodox laity, clergy and hierarchy. His 1927 visit to Patriarch Basil III of Constantinople strengthened his conviction that "one can hasten the unity of the church by charity... rather than theological discussion".

Roncalli then served as apostolic delegate to Turkey and Greece (1934-44). He quickly became known for his diplomatic skills amid hostile nationalities, governments and religious factions, and during the



grim war years for his practical charity towards various social groups, in particular among prisoners of war and refugees, especially Jews. Roncalli tried to be "above all nationalistic disputes... as a teacher of mercy and truth" with "principles and exhortations from my lips and encouragement from my conduct in the eyes of all - Catholics, Orthodox, Turks and Jews" (1940).

The archbishop left Turkey in late 1944 for Paris. As the apostolic nuncio in post-war France, his primary task was to heal the divisions between the victorious followers of De Gaulle and the discredited compromising bishops of the Vichy regime. He had frequent contacts with Orthodox, Protestant and Catholic promoters of church unity, especially with Lambert Beauduin, the Benedictine liturgist and ecumenist. In Paris he was also the first permanent observer of the holy see to UNESCO. In 1953 Pius XII appointed Roncalli cardinal patriarch of Venice. There he resumed direct pastoral work, especially with the working class, and initiated reconciliation with the socialists.

After the long firm papacy of Pius XII (1939-58), the college of cardinals elected the 77-year old Roncalli as pope on 28 Oct. 1958, thinking they had put an elderly transitional person at the helm. On 25 Jan. 1959, three months into his pontificate and

without prior consultation, John XXIII announced his intention to convoke “an ecumenical council for the universal church”, envisaging the event as “an invitation to the separated communities to seek again that unity for which so many souls are longing in these days throughout the world”.

In 1960 he set up the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (now Pontifical Council for Christian Unity\*), approved the delegation of official observers to the WCC 1961 assembly (New Delhi), and invited the Orthodox, Anglicans and Protestants to delegate observers to Vatican II. He eliminated antisemitic expressions in the Good Friday liturgy, and placed Catholic-Jewish relations on the Council’s agenda.

The Council was the pope’s major achievement. His own public contributions to it were his contagious confidence that the Roman Catholic Church needed serious *aggiornamento* (updating) in order to be faithful; his optimism about the action of God in the world as discerned in “the signs of the times”; and his conviction that the church should “use the medicine of mercy rather than severity” and that since error was best dissipated by the force of truth, dialogue could not begin or end with mutual fulminations. He considered his private contribution to be “what the Lord requires from me – my suffering”, for he kept secret what his doctors had told him a month before the Council opened: he had inoperable stomach cancer and his months were numbered.

Most noteworthy among his seven encyclicals\* were *Mater et Magistra* (1961) on modern social questions, *Princeps Pastorum* (1959) on updating missionary activities, and his last will and testament addressed “to all people of good will” – *Pacem in Terris* (1963) concerning peace among all nations based on truth, justice, charity, freedom and the right organization of society.

After increasing continual pain, he died in June 1963, before Vatican II began its second session. “At least I have launched this big ship,” he said; “others will bring it into port.” His successor was Paul VI.

Transparently wide-hearted and affable, humble with his own gifts and limitations, lively and witty, “good pope John” shattered the cult of the aloof pontifical personality and easily won the affection of Catholics

and non-Catholics alike. As bishop of Rome, John XXIII restored the tradition of visiting the parishes, hospitals, schools, charitable institutions and prisons of the city. His posthumously published diary reveals the journey of a priest who never felt awkward with his traditional Italian Catholic piety and who had unwavering trust in divine providence (his episcopal motto was *voluntas Dei, pax nostra* – God’s will, our peace). The “mere transitional pope” had initiated a new age in Roman Catholicism. He was declared saint by John Paul II on 3 Sept. 2000.

TOM STRANSKY

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## JOHN PAUL II (Karol Wojtyła)

B. 18 May 1920, Wadowice Poland; elected bishop of Rome and pope, 16 Nov. 1978. During the early Nazi occupation he laboured in a quarry and chemical plant in Wadowice, near Krakow. During his Krakow university studies in literature, when he had begun to write poetry and dramas and to act on stage, he decided to study for the priesthood in a clandestine seminary (1942). Ordained in 1946, Wojtyła was sent to Rome for a doctorate in philosophy. Two years later he returned to Krakow for pastoral ministry in parishes and among university students. In 1953 he became professor in ethics and moral theology at Krakow and at Poland’s only Catholic university, Lublin. He was named auxiliary bishop of Krakow (1958), later its archbishop (1964) and cardinal (1967).

During the four sessions of Vatican II\* (1962-65), Wojtyła strongly defended the draft on religious freedom, and on other subjects he spoke often in the name of his fellow Polish bishops. He participated in the first five bishops’ synods in Rome, whose members always elected him a European representative on the synod’s interim planning committee. After Paul VI’s death in Aug. 1978 and the month-long papacy of Albino Luciani as John Paul I (26 Aug.-28

Sept.), Cardinal Wojtyła was elected pope – the first non-Italian in the papal chair since the Dutchman Adrian VI (1522-23), the first not from Western Europe since Zaccaria (741-59), and the youngest since Pius IX (1846).

In the 19th century Roman Slowachi, a Polish romantic poet, forecast a Slavic pope who would be “brave as God himself”, dispense love and charm “as great powers today distribute arms”, and “stand and give fight”. The first Slavic pope may fit that prophecy; perhaps he also has made it fit himself. Against the background of Vatican Council II and the papacy of Paul VI, the heroic image seems to strain to the limits the church’s power to contain it, as he intentionally is trying to pull back in line a church that “threatened to run away” from what he understands were the contents and intent of Vatican II. For some, he is not conservative enough (e.g. Archbishop Lefebvre’s schismatic Traditionalist movement); for others, he is wrongly putting a brake on authentic renewal; for some, he is saving Roman Catholicism from disintegration; for others, the pope has an impossible task, whatever the intent.

In any case, for most, especially Western Christians, the pope cannot be typecast. Even in his vigorous, forward stances towards a more just world order, he seems free from Western preconceptions: “The future of the world cannot be Moscow, and it cannot be New York either.”

Early on in his papacy, he pulled Eastern Europe away from the margins on the world’s map, judging as “the key fact of our times” that “millions of our contemporaries legitimately yearn to recover those basic freedoms of which they were deprived by totalitarian and atheistic regimes”. Some historians already trace the extraordinary and sudden demise of autocratic communist governments in Eastern and Central Europe to John Paul II’s trip to Poland in June 1978.

Despite the internal injuries which inflicted the pope from the gunshots of an attempted assassination (May 1981), he continues to seem indefatigable, whether in Rome or not. As the city’s bishop, he visits a different parish almost every Sunday, and Italy has become accustomed to his presence throughout the land. By June 2001 the pope

had taken over 93 journeys outside Italy, to over 127 countries in six continents – on the road for the equivalent of almost two years. The pope is careful to meet other Christian leaders during his travels (e.g. to the WCC offices in Geneva, June 1982) and in Rome.

By 2000 his writings and speeches (*Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, Vatican Press) filled over 60 thick volumes, ranging (as of May 2001) from his 13 encyclicals\* to the hagiographic addresses on the many occasions of canonization of saints (447) and beatification of exemplary men and women (999).

He oversaw the completion of the revised code of canon law for the Latin church (1983) and the code of canons for the Eastern churches (1990), as well as the *Catechism of the Universal Catholic Church* (1992). He tightened the organization of the Roman curia\* (1988) and initiated a more careful management of Vatican finances. He clearly wants men sympathetic to his views in key episcopal sees and in his diplomatic corps (papal nuncios and apostolic delegates). At the every-five-year *ad limina* visits of national or regional conferences of bishops, the pope offers more than formal courtesies, and the bishops exchange updatings with the staffs of key curial offices.

Pope John Paul champions religious freedom and defends all liberties as consonant with strong convictions, yet he seems over-restrictive in freedom within the church, especially in the enterprises of theologians (e.g. regarding sexual ethics\*). He supports the strong cautious positions taken by the curial congregations for the doctrine of the faith, for seminaries and institutes of study, and for divine worship.

In his 1995 encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*,\* John Paul II reflects on the ecumenical experiences of the post-Vatican II church and of his own. “Ecumenism is the way of the church” and “the commitment is irrevocable”. The pope’s own explicit commitment has been lauded, and questioned. He has contacts with Anglicans and Protestants but pays more attention to the healing of the schism between the church of Rome and the Orthodox church. Yet that very interest in the political and ecclesial *Ostpolitik* suddenly proved an objective priority in the delicate post-1989 relations in Eastern Europe

between the Orthodox and the Eastern Catholic churches\* (esp. in the Ukraine). A wide spectrum of Evangelical Christians support the pope as a courageous defender of biblical faith on such issues as the right to life against abortion, the indissolubility of Christian marriage, and the condemnation of premarital sex and active homosexuality.

Wojtyla frequently expresses his own glimpse into the future. His vision is almost apocalyptic in describing the present battle between good and evil – “a culture of life and a culture of death” – which the pope believes cannot be won except with a united renewed church, humbly marching with non-compromising steps into the new millennium.

TOM STRANSKY

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## JOINT WORKING GROUP

THE JOINT Working Group (JWG) is the official consultative forum of the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church to initiate, evaluate and sustain collaboration between their respective organs and programmes. Established in 1965 by the WCC central committee and the Vatican, the JWG meets annually and publishes official reports to its two authorities: the WCC assembly and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity\* (1966, 1967, 1971, 1975, 1982, 1990, 1998). The JWG seeks to be flexible in its styles of collaboration. It keeps new structures to a minimum while concentrating on ad hoc initiatives in proposing new steps and programmes.

The JWG has facilitated RC membership in the Faith and Order\* Commission, membership in the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, consultative relations with other WCC bodies (e.g. the Christian

Medical Commission), and staff visits and consultations between the Geneva offices and the Roman curia.\* It helped to form the 1968-80 joint committee on Society, Development and Peace (SODEPAX\*) and collaborates in the annual joint preparation of the materials for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.\* The JWG has conducted its own studies, notably “Catholicity and Apostolicity” (1968), “Common Witness and Proselytism” (1970), “Common Witness” (1980), “Hierarchy of Truths”\* (1990), “The Church: Local and Universal” (1990), “Ecumenical Formation” (1994), “Common Witness and Proselytism” (1996) and “Ecumenical Dialogue on Moral Issues” (1996).

Since 1980 the JWG has structured its agenda around the unity of the church, common witness, social collaboration and ongoing collaboration. The JWG interprets major streams of ecumenical thought and action, as well as present successes and obstacles in common witness;\* relation between bilateral and multilateral dialogues; mission,\* dialogue and evangelism;\* Christian women in church and society; education (general and religious); mixed marriages;\* national and local councils of churches; ethical issues as new sources of division; human rights and religious freedom.\*

From its beginning the JWG has been conscious that despite a shared commitment to common witness within one ecumenical movement, a disparity between the two parent bodies affects the extent, style and content of collaboration. The WCC is a fellowship of churches, and its members do not take direct juridical responsibility for WCC studies, actions and statements; the RCC is one church with a universal mission and structure of teaching and governance as an essential element of its identity.

This RC self-understanding and structure of operation on a world level, which differs from those of the WCC member churches, was offered as a main (but not the only) reason why the RCC in 1972 declined to ask for WCC membership\* “in the immediate future”. Since then the question has not been buried. The consequence of non-membership is that no further structural links between the two bodies would be developed, and even existing ones would come under critical scrutiny. But WCC senior offi-

cials note that the RCC is in fact a more active partner in most WCC programmes than many of the member churches.

The JWG mandate gives priority to encouragement of collaboration on local and national levels, but besides the offering of JWG reflective studies this task has become more difficult. It has proved equally difficult "to establish or maintain cooperation in areas where WCC programmes are oriented towards action, that is, where the WCC relates directly to particular local constituencies and responds to stated needs of its member churches" (K. Raiser).

Furthermore, it has been noted that the very common ground or basis which the JWG has forged to undergird its present RCC/WCC collaboration with the member churches works more naturally and with less strain when neither the RCC nor the WCC as such is directly involved.

TOM STRANSKY

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## JUST, PARTICIPATORY AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

THE SEARCH for a just, participatory and sustainable society (JPSS) was a major theme for study and reflection during the period between the fifth WCC assembly at Nairobi (1975) and the sixth assembly at Vancouver (1983). The central committee meeting in 1976 identified it as one of the four main programme emphases for the WCC in the ensuing years. As a programme emphasis, JPSS was to be treated as a framework for the coordination of programmes and as an area of concentration for concerted efforts by the different sub-units, especially those in-

involved in the social field. But it was soon recognized that JPSS could also serve the more important role of evoking a common vision of a new human society, the need for which had long been a concern of many in the ecumenical movement. The first assembly at Amsterdam (1948), with its concept of "responsible society", had attempted to address the issue. Since then, however, enormous changes had taken place in world society, with societal issues becoming more complex and challenging. Changes had also taken place in the ecumenical movement itself and in Christian social thinking and experience.

Believing that the concept of JPSS might meet this need, the central committee initiated a process of enquiry and reflection. In 1977 it appointed an advisory committee to stimulate theological reflection on JPSS among the churches, assist the sub-units of the WCC to intensify their action/reflection programmes towards JPSS, and prepare a document to clarify and elaborate the concept.

The choice of JPSS was not arbitrary but arose out of the experiences of the churches and the ecumenical movement through the years. The issue of *justice*\* had been a central concern of the WCC throughout its history, with the promotion of justice one of the functions of the WCC listed in its constitution. Since the Church and Society conference in 1966 and the Uppsala assembly in 1968, the efforts in combating injustice became more intense and wide-ranging. Justice was the primary goal of the development concern, a major preoccupation of the WCC and member churches during those years. Systemic injustice had been recognized as the root cause of poverty. The ecumenical concern for peace\* also had to include the issue of justice, as situations of injustice posed a constant threat to peace. The re-structuring of society and the elimination of injustice were called for by those engaged in combating racism,\* discrimination against women, and human rights violations. These and other societal issues in which the WCC was heavily involved in the 1960s and early 1970s had revealed the intensity, complexity and universality of the forces of injustice entrenched in the social, economic and political structures.

The issue of *participation*\* had emerged as a vital concern in the ecumenical discussions on development.\* People's participa-

tion was identified as a major goal of development and the most effective means of promoting it. The Nairobi assembly re-defined development as "essentially a people's struggle in which the poor and the oppressed should be the active agents and immediate beneficiaries". Similarly the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development came to the conviction that "people, the poor and the oppressed, are the subjects and not the objects of the development process". The right of people to participate in making decisions that affect their lives was also a guiding principle in many other ecumenical concerns, such as decolonization, racial equality, human rights\* and women's liberation.

The concept of *sustainability*\* was relatively new in ecumenical discussions, with the first major discussion of this issue taking place at Bucharest in 1974. The concern arose out of the recognition of several alarming trends in modern society that threaten the lives of people now living, future generations, all living creatures and nature itself: environmental deterioration; pollution of water, air and land; deforestation and desertification; depletion of non-renewable resources such as oil and minerals; changes in eco-systems, the atmosphere and the ozone layer, etc. The major source of these threats to survival was identified as the patterns of production and consumption. The concept of sustainability was introduced to challenge the rapidly accelerating growth process pursued in recent years and to recognize the need instead for selective growth and limits to growth.

Following the discussions and decisions of the central committee on JPSS, a series of consultations were held at national, regional and world levels, assisted and monitored by the JPSS advisory committee. The committee had two meetings of its own and later submitted a report to the central committee in 1979.

The report identified the search for a just, participatory and sustainable society as the major thrust of the ongoing struggle of the people. The need for the churches to strive for JPSS arises from this historical reality, as God's call to the church is a direct response to the cries of God's people, the poor\* and the oppressed. The report articulated theological perspectives on justice, participation and sustainability, affirming the emphasis on

justice in the biblical tradition. "Justice is a messianic category. It embraces both God's righteousness and fidelity and his will for a right ordering of human community... In messianic perspective, 'participation' is an essential manifestation of the true koinonia in which there is no domination of one over the other, but where all are mutually accountable to one another... 'Sustainability' in the Bible is expressed by the faithfulness of God to his lasting covenant. God blesses continually his creation, preserving it from destruction and leading it to the fullness of life abundant. We have received God's earth as our common inheritance, not as a privilege for some and a source of frustration for others."

Discussion of the report raised important theological issues, such as the tension between realism and utopianism and the relation between God's justifying righteousness and human justice. The majority of the central committee, however, rejected the theological framework and approved only later the recommendations made to the WCC. The old debate about the relationship between the kingdom of God and history, which had been carried on around the Oxford conference (1937), now re-surfaced, with much the same tensions and contradictions.

One of the major recommendations for follow-up was a programme of study and reflection on political ethics, i.e. "an examination of structures of power, participation and political organization on local, national and international levels". As a result, an ecumenical consultation was held in Cyprus, the report of which was published under the title *Perspectives on Political Ethics*.

Vancouver 1983 issued a historic call for churches "to engage in a conciliar process of mutual commitment (covenant) to justice, peace and the integrity of creation". The JPSS programme paved the way for this momentous decision.

See also **human rights; justice, peace and the integrity of creation; responsible society.**

C.I. ITTY

## JUST WAR

THE DOCTRINE of just war constitutes the dominant teaching of the mainline churches concerning war and violence. Traceable back to the classical teaching of Cicero (d.43

B.C.), the doctrine appeared in Christian theology through Ambrose of Milan (c.339-97). Subsequent teachers of the church such as Augustine and Aquinas established just-war theory as a part of the Christian ethos, and Luther and Calvin carried it into the Protestant Reformation.

Each of these writers and subsequent scholars have emphasized different aspects of the doctrine of just war. At times it has been firmly in the service of the rulers; at other times the church has struggled to distance itself from oppressive regimes by affirming an alternative liberative tradition. The following are the essential emphases of just-war theory.

*Just cause.* The church has traditionally taught that, in order for a war to be regarded as just, it must be fought for a just cause (a notion whose meaning has admittedly differed over the years). Just-war theorists commonly argue today that it involves restraint of an aggressor, protection of the innocent, restoration of rights wrongly taken, and restoration of a just order.

*Just end.* Perceptions of a just or acceptable end differ vastly. For those living in situations of extreme oppression, the possibility of future anarchy is often seen as an end to be preferred to continued oppression. The point of the criteria is that the goal of war ought to be peace and justice, rather than merely vengeance or increased power.

*Just means.* Possibly the most difficult of all just-war criteria to follow in the heat of battle, this criterion requires restraint in the choice of weapons, with a view to minimizing suffering and death. The Geneva convention (1949) and two subsequent Geneva protocols (1977), for example, are in accordance with this criterion in seeking to prohibit "direct intentional attacks on non-combatants and non-military targets", arguing for the banning of nuclear arms and seeking to prohibit the use of torture.\* Using this criterion, some argue that modern military technology has rendered all wars unjust.

*Last resort.* This is possibly the most important emphasis of just-war theory. All other means of correcting a wrong are to be tried before a resort to arms can be regarded as justifiable.

*Legitimate authority.\** The dominant tradition of the church since the time of Constantine has consistently favoured de facto rulers over armed revolution. In this context resort to arms was seen to be a legitimate function solely of the king. The church also, however, allowed that a de facto leader is not necessarily a legitimate leader; the time may come when a tyrant needs to be removed from power. There is little agreement in the church, however, on whose responsibility it is to do the removing.

Calvin took the first cautious step towards allowing for just revolution.\* He recognized that in extreme situations of tyranny it could be the obligation of the magistrate (a recognized leader of the people) to lead the people in rebellion. "In South Africa", a young black Christian once said, "it is our legitimate community leaders who are required to protect our right and lead us in such actions as may be necessary to ensure that the present unjust rulers are removed from power." Theodore Beza, Calvin's successor in Geneva, went beyond Calvin in legitimating revolution, and in the turbulent religious wars and rebellion that followed much of the restraint of earlier ages was thrown to the wind. The teaching that resulted ranged from Zwinglian notions of legitimate war and the exploits of Thomas Münzer, Karlstadt and the Zwickau prophets, to Oliver Cromwell and John Knox, who insisted that to remain passive in the face of tyranny was tantamount to complicity with the tyrant.

Just-war theory has been abused over the years to legitimate a variety of unjust wars, and there can be a narrow line between the theology of just war and that of holy war or crusade. This distinction makes the challenge of pacifism\* a disturbing factor in the church. Believing that in extreme situations armed struggle may be the only responsible option available to a suffering people but being unwilling to affirm pacifism in principle, many committed just-war theorists nevertheless find that the option of non-violence continues to haunt their conscience.

Discussion of this question has been a part of the ecumenical movement from the beginning. While the Stockholm Life and Work\* conference (1925) limited itself to expressing its horror of war and its hope for

peace, the Oxford conference (1937), with the world then on the verge of an almost inevitable conflict, was forced to discuss the issue of Christian participation. The conference recognized the existence of “widely diverging views regarding war”, which it summarized in three positions. Eleven years later, after the second world war had been fought, views had not changed significantly. The three Oxford positions were taken up at Amsterdam 1948: “(1) There are those who hold that, even though entering a war may be a Christian’s duty in particular circumstances, modern warfare, with its mass destruction, can never be an act of justice. (2) In the absence of impartial supranational institutions, there are those who hold that military action is the ultimate sanction of the rule of law, and that citizens must be distinctly taught that it is their duty to defend the law by force if necessary. (3) Others, again, refuse military service of all kinds, convinced that an absolute witness against war and for peace is for them the will of God and they desire that the church should speak to the same effect.”

The ecumenical discussion on just war has so far produced no larger agreement. Efforts have concentrated on the means and ways to prevent war, an emphasis on which all can agree (see *peace*). Meanwhile, new situations have re-opened the debate, posing the question of “just revolution”. It was extensively discussed in relation to the decision in 1970 of the WCC central committee to establish a special fund to make financial grants available to liberation movements engaged in armed combat against oppressing regimes in Southern Africa and other areas (see *Programme to Combat Racism*).

The theology of just war was originally written from the perspective of the dominant classes of society. Developed from the perspective of the poor and oppressed, just-war theory acquires the character of a theology of just revolution. Theological continuity requires that such a theory, like that of just war, be used only in a restraining manner. Just-war theory traditionally allowed that in certain extreme situations war might be justified, even if never entirely “just” or “good”; as a theory of revolution it also allows that revolution, under certain circumstances, might be justified.

See also *church and state; justice; violence and non-violence; violence, religious roots of; war guilt*.

CHARLES VILLA-VICENCIO

■ L.S. Cahill, *Love Your Enemies: Discipleship, Pacifism, and Just War Theory*, Minneapolis, Fortress, 1994.

## JUSTICE

DIFFERING ideas of justice exist in the Bible and throughout church history, and indeed in the modern ecumenical movement.

### JUSTICE IN THE BIBLE AND IN CHURCH HISTORY

Biblically speaking, justice is a relational concept involving structures and behaviours based on trust, solidarity and mutuality versus those relying on betrayal, oppression and exploitation. When relations among God, human beings and creation are whole, shalom (peace) prevails (Isa. 32:17). Particularly through the power structures of highly advanced civilizations, community relations have in practice been endangered or destroyed. In this situation God’s judgment means the restoration of justice and shalom as God in his mercy hears the cries of the oppressed and liberates them (J. Miranda). In the light of the sinful structures of unevenly distributed power, justice implies struggle. If the oppressors do not repent, God’s justice becomes their punishment.

The classic example is Yahweh’s liberation of the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt (Ex. 3-15). After their liberation God’s people were to act as God himself acts and create an alternative, just society for which God gave them specific ordinances (see Ex. 21:1-23:19 and 20:1-17). When Israel’s civilization itself took the form of a monarchy (1 Sam. 8), serving the idol of power (1 Kings 18) and thus dividing into poor and rich (1 Kings 21), Yahweh sent prophets calling for justice (Amos 5:24). Helping the poor\* and the weak to obtain justice is identical with the knowledge of God (Jer. 22:16). After the fall of the kingdom, hope grew of God’s kingship, the kingdom of God.\*

Jesus inaugurated this kingdom and God’s justice and was thus seen to be the Messiah. The poor were encouraged (Luke 4:16-22), and small communities of the new

righteousness developed (Matt. 5:13-14 and Acts 4:32) that were to reject unjust structures of power (Mark 10:42-45). Jesus' resurrection\* proved God's power to show that life is produced by suffering\* and dying for the sake of justice. Paul saw the righteousness and justice of God in God's calling even the gentiles and the entire creation through the Holy Spirit\* and giving them the power to turn away from injustice and perdition and to serve justice (NRSV margin: righteousness) unto eternal life (Rom. 5:21).

Biblically there is no conflict between God's justice and human justice. God's just action calls for the participation of God's creatures. Receiving answers in prayer is thus indissolubly bound up with cooperation in the struggle for justice.

In the history of the church, monastic movements and the historic peace churches\* followed the early Christian pattern of resisting injustice and building up an alternative community as (preliminary) signs of the kingdom of God, born of suffering. The majority churches, especially of the West, have developed a different model. After Christianity was accepted as the official religion of the Roman empire in the 4th century, the church tried to share in power. Justice and peace were thus changed from their biblical setting into a Graeco-Roman and later a European imperial context. Plato's concept of justice as an ordinance of authority\* was taken over politically in the rule over the artisans by the philosopher-kings, assisted by the warriors, and anthropologically in the rule over the desires by reason, assisted by the will. Thus justice became a virtue. Aristotle distinguishes between commutative justice (in acts of exchange) and distributive justice (in the distribution of goods). In Roman legal thought justice is "the constant and enduring will to grant their rights to all" (Ulpian, fragment 10).

In the Roman context "to each his own" meant pre-eminently the protection of those with possessions, not the protection of the poor. In the periods of the middle ages and the Reformation, law\* as an order\* was understood primarily as penal and compulsive (the ordinance of the sword). The participation of Christians and churches in this order was tied to criteria: within a particular society, the order must minister to the common good, and in foreign politics any war waged

had to be judged a just war.\* If compulsion was exercised on Christians to make them sin,\* they must refuse to do so (see also, e.g., the Augsburg confession, art. 16).

Defined as the human virtue of mastery over the desires and as the established power of the authorities to exercise compulsion, justice as a human concern ended up in tension with divine justice. Various classifications of the two types of justice were attempted: supremacy of divine justice as the rule of the church over the world (the Curialists), a harmonious graded order (Aquinas), a correlative status (nominalists) and a dialectical relationship (Luther). The theological basis for the correlation of biblical faith\* with power structures is the assumption that the perspectives of love and reason are essentially the same. In the modern bourgeois age a rigid dualism developed between, on the one hand, divine justice for the individual soul and personal relations and, on the other, rigid arbitrary laws in economics\* and politics that, like the laws of nature, are wholly separated from religion and ethics.\* Indeed in economics justice is replaced by market value (first of all in Hobbes). For the most part the majority churches either refuse or are unable to resist this view.

Not till the 1960s did a third way of "being the church" develop – the liberation church model, which harks back to biblical traditions. The majority church of Constantine's day did not succeed in taming power\* in the interests of justice (i.e. of God's will), while later the misuse of power in countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America by this same "Christian" European civilization became increasingly violent and destructive. Hence counter-movements have arisen "from below", struggling for liberation including various people's movements and new social movements and, on the basis of their praxis, liberation theology (Latin America), minjung theology (Asia), black theology (South Africa and North America) and feminist theology (see **theology: Asian, black, feminist, liberation, minjung**). These movements reject "imperial", Constantinian-type civilization and create new participating communities (see **church base communities**) that, at the cost of suffering, have been building up the counter-power of the people, thus trying to transform the unjust structures to achieve justice and participation.

## JUSTICE IN ECUMENICAL DISCUSSION

The first major world conferences of the ecumenical movement were entirely under the influence of the majority churches. The crux of the conflict they considered was how to understand the kingdom of God and God's justice in relation to history.

At the world missionary conference in Edinburgh (1910), realization of the kingdom of God meant primarily the Christianization of the world (i.e. educating people into the ways of Western civilization), although it undoubtedly also meant criticism of the colonialist policies of the colonial powers. In Stockholm at the first world conference of Life and Work (1925), the German and English positions clashed violently. The German bishop Ludwig Ihmels, for instance, took the view that the kingdom of God was supramundane, that it had to do with human hearts and that it penetrated the community life only of Christians, and even then never completely, because of sin. In contrast, English bishop F.T. Woods spoke in terms of setting up "the kingdom of God on earth". Stockholm defined the aim of the movement as "united practical action in Christian Life and Work".

The second world missionary conference (Jerusalem 1928) gave practical shape to the social relevance of the kingdom of God by rejecting in principle the worship of money as the "religion of a capitalistic society". The object of mission\* was to shape not merely the life of individual Christians and Christian communities but also social and political life as Christ intended, though no questions were asked here about the relevance of the model represented by the positive aspects of Western civilization.

Following these initial and still-tentative attempts to mobilize the biblical perspective of the kingdom of God against modern secularism and the worldwide structures of exploitation in the economic system and in colonialism,\* the 1937 Oxford Life and Work conference ("Church, Community and State") reverted to the medieval and Reformation majority church model of "taming power" by participating in it, which laid the foundation for ecumenical social ethics until 1966-68. The great world economic crisis and the rise of fascist totalitarian states (see

fascism) constituted the background to this "Christian realism", behind which stood theologians like Reinhold Niebuhr, J.H. Oldham and Emil Brunner. Between the line taken by the kingdom-of-God theology (transformation of the worldly orders and resistance on the basis of an alternative Christian society) and resigned accommodation to the worldly orders in privatized piety, the majority at Oxford supported a critical but constructive approach which was intended to contribute to relative justice on the basis of natural law\* or the "moral law". Conference participants openly admitted that this approach was not taken from the Bible. Rather, the criterion for prophetic criticism of the existing orders and for their relative improvement was middle axioms\* (Oldham), which could mediate between the absoluteness of Christian love and the realities conditioning socio-economic and political life.

On this basis the founding assembly of the WCC in Amsterdam (1948) developed the idea of the responsible society\* as a socio-ethical criterion for assessing all individual questions. This idea seeks to balance freedom, justice and the control of power. Ideologically and politically this position rejects both laissez-faire capitalism\* and communism and endorses a kind of social-democratic liberal democracy.

The world conference on Church and Society (Geneva 1966) and the Uppsala assembly (1968) represent the beginning of a new period in the life of the ecumenical movement. Prompted by the greatly increased participation of the churches of Africa, Asia and Latin America, the WCC shifted its orientation from the top (seeking to influence power holders) to a perspective more from below (participating in the actual struggles of the oppressed in their imitation of the suffering Messiah).

In terms of method, this new approach means a switch from studies of universal concepts to models of contextual participatory action and reflection (see **praxis**), from "value-free" education to "conscientization" (Paulo Freire) and from aid hand-outs to committed participation. Spirituality and prayer complement struggle as a second pole in the new approach, which expresses the transcendence of the kingdom and justice of God.

Within the WCC this approach from liberation theology was adopted against racism\* (Programme to Combat Racism\*), against economic exploitation (Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development; Just, Participatory and Sustainable Society;\* and Urban Rural Mission) and discrimination against women; it also supported human rights, including socio-economic and political rights. The 1983 Vancouver assembly extended this approach in two ways. First, the inter-related study of justice, peace and the integrity of creation\* was placed on the agenda. Second, it became clear that this new approach has profound consequences for the understanding of the church. As Visser 't Hooft said at Uppsala in 1968: "Church members who deny in fact their responsibility for the needy in any part of the world are just as much guilty of heresy as those who deny this or that article of the faith." The two lines of Life and Work\* and Faith and Order\* came together.

Labelling as heresy\* the structural racism of apartheid\* and its theological justification (LWF 1977/WARC 1982) first raised the issue of justice to that of *status confessionis*. As regards the idol of the all-powerful transnational economic system, Vancouver 1983 also stated: "The church is... challenged not only in what it does but in its very faith and being" (see **economics, transnational corporations**). In extreme situations of systematic and flagrant injustice, the approach of the liberation church is therefore linked to that of the "confessing church".\* It also relates to the Orthodox-inspired understanding of the eucharist\* as the sacrament that shapes the life of its participants who have encountered God as movement from death to life (see **life and death**), from injustice to justice, from violence to peace, from hatred to love, from vengeance to forgiveness, from selfishness to sharing, from division to unity.

Attempts to create a worldwide socialist alternative failed dramatically in 1989. Since then finance, business and the media have been using their transnational power over human beings and nature for the one goal of profit-making (see **globalization, economic**). The rich industrialized countries (G8) and their international instruments (IMF, World Bank and GATT/WTO) have tolerated and

even fostered this goal by implementing policies of deregulation, liberalization, privatization and "structural adjustment". In this neo-liberal approach justice is no longer an issue; the laws of the capitalist market are regarded as the only normative principle.

What can the church do in this situation? First, it can reject the ideological totalitarianism\* of the deregulated global market and its values, which lead to social disintegration and environmental degradation. Then it can adopt the twofold strategy of getting involved in small-scale alternatives and helping to regain ideological and political control of the economy at all levels. In practical terms the church must therefore stand alongside those who are suffering in refusing to countenance injustice, and it must itself begin to practise justice in its own life. Only thus, as a peace church and liberation church, can it transcend the majority church model. In so far as the liberation church model seeks, in cooperation with people's movements, to have a transforming effect on socio-economic and political structures, it must itself develop aims and criteria for change. Methodologically it thus has points of contact with the majority church approaches, e.g. the middle axioms\* or Roman Catholic social teaching, despite all the differences in content. All approaches remain dependent on the twofold prayer "thy kingdom come, thy will be done". "For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil..." (Eph. 6:12).

See also **ecclesiology and ethics, peace**.

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## JUSTICE, PEACE AND THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION

THE PHRASE “justice, peace and the integrity of creation” (JPIC) is shorthand for a fuller statement: “To engage member churches in a conciliar process of mutual commitment (covenant) to justice, peace and the integrity of creation should be a priority for World Council programmes.” Originally intended as a programme priority for the WCC by its Vancouver assembly (1983) and addressed to its member churches, it was subsequently expanded to include churches that are not members of the WCC, regional and national ecumenical organizations and all other movements committed to these issues.

In issuing this invitation, Vancouver was responding to a situation of crisis as outlined in the assembly statement on peace\* and justice:\* “Humanity is now living in the dark shadows of an arms race more intense and of *systems of injustice* more widespread than the world has ever known. Never before has the human race been as close as it is now to total self-destruction. Never before have so many lived in the grip of deprivation and oppression.” It goes on to state what the Christian response to this situation should be: “The churches today are called to *confess anew their faith* and to repent for the times when Christians have remained silent in the face of injustice or threats to peace. *The biblical vision of peace with justice for all* is not one of several options for the followers of Christ but is an *imperative for our times*.” And it repeats what it considers to be the nature of the Christian response at this time: “The [single, though twofold] foundation of this emphasis should be *confessing Christ as the life of the world* and *Christian resistance* to the powers of death in racism, sexism, caste oppression, economic exploitation, militarism, violations of human rights, and the misuse of science and technology.”

In taking this position, Vancouver clearly shifted from the position of understanding Christian involvement in world affairs largely as a concern of Christian ethics – to translate the values of the kingdom into achievable social goals (the middle axioms\* of the responsible society). Instead, it placed the emphasis on confessing the faith,\* which calls for a new understanding of the mis-

sionary task of the church. To realize this intention, the assembly envisaged a “conciliar process of mutual commitment” that would bring the churches together to take a common stand on the urgent issues concerning the survival of humankind. It envisioned such a council taking the churches to a new stage in the covenant relationship into which they had entered at the inaugural assembly at Amsterdam (1948).

### GOALS

The JPIC preparatory group, constituted by the WCC executive committee to oversee and bring to fruition the process, had to clarify the intention in terms of realizable goals.

*A world convocation rather than a council.* Except as a general reference to JPIC, the term “conciliar process” had to be abandoned. In the Vancouver call it was used rather loosely to mean a method of churches in a common fellowship or *koinonia*,\* as in the WCC, working together to resolve differences and achieve common goals that are to be given public expression in a council. In view of the differences that persist between the churches, however, it soon became clear that the time for holding a council in the strict sense of the term had not yet come. It was therefore decided to call the first global Christian gathering on JPIC a world convocation. Its purpose, as defined by the WCC executive committee (March 1988), was “to make theological affirmations on justice, peace and the integrity of creation, and to identify the major threats to life in these three areas and show their interconnectedness, and make and propose to the churches acts of mutual commitment in response to them”.

*Justice, peace and the integrity of creation.* Vancouver intended these elements to be viewed as three aspects of one reality: as a single vision towards which we work and as three entry points into a common struggle in these areas. The addition of the term “integrity of creation” to help clarify “the biblical vision of peace with justice” was particularly useful. Besides alluding to the damage being done to the environment and the threat posed to the survival of life, the term also gave a new prominence to the doctrine of creation and the opportunity to re-affirm

our Trinitarian faith, beginning with God as Creator and therefore also Liberator and Sustainer.

*Covenant for JPIC.* At first, the term “covenant”\* given in brackets in the JPIC formula did more to confuse than to clarify the meaning of “mutual commitment”. Four main difficulties were encountered. (1) The term is used in common parlance to refer to pacts and alliances between human partners, so that it is not clear what more is meant when it is used as a theological term in conjunction with “mutual commitment”. (2) The Bible mentions several types of covenant, each with its own character and emphasis, so that we cannot assume a common biblical understanding of the term. (3) The term has ecclesiological significance in some church traditions but not all, which makes it suspect as a way of stating the mutual commitment of all churches to JPIC. (4) Churches generally understand God’s covenant to have been accomplished “once for all” in Jesus Christ. So what does it mean theologically to speak of covenanting?

The way out of this impasse was to use an insight from scripture. Because God is a faithful covenant partner, the people were often called upon in times of crisis to renew their covenant with God, which they had broken, and to re-constitute themselves as a covenant community open to the world, especially to the suffering and the destitute. With this basic biblical understanding of covenant renewal, we can speak of covenanting for justice, peace and the integrity or wholeness of God’s creation at this time of crisis as a way of working together to resist the threats to life and to seek alternatives that will affirm life in all its fullness for all people and the world.

## A WORLDWIDE PROCESS

The Vancouver call touched off a worldwide JPIC process, as many national, regional and confessional ecumenical initiatives contributed to the richness of JPIC and the preparations for a world convocation. “A Historical Survey of the JPIC Process”, in *Between the Flood and the Rainbow*, lists the major events on JPIC. The world convocation that took place in Seoul, Korea, in 1990 was “an important stage on the road towards common and binding pronounce-

ments and actions on the urgent questions of survival of humankind” (WCC central committee 1987). The convocation made ten affirmations, regarding the exercise of power as accountable to God, God’s option for the poor,\* the equal value of all races and peoples, male and female as created in the image of God, truth is at the foundation of a community of free people, the peace of Jesus Christ, the creation as beloved of God, the earth as the Lord’s, the dignity and commitment of the younger generation, and human rights\* as being given by God. The participants at Seoul also entered into covenant regarding four concrete issues: a just economic order and liberation from the bondage of foreign debt; the true security of all nations and peoples and a culture of non-violence; building a culture that can live in harmony with creation’s integrity and preserving the gift of the earth’s atmosphere to nurture and sustain the world’s life; the eradication of racism\* and discrimination on all levels for all peoples and the dismantling of patterns of behaviour that perpetuate the sin of racism.

At its Canberra assembly (1991) the WCC gave prominence to JPIC. The assembly section reports have extensive discussions on JPIC, with specific recommendations on why and how it is to be continued. Reflecting the work in the sections, the assembly programme policy committee said: “Working towards justice, peace and the integrity of creation will help the churches understand their task in the world, provided we develop a rigorous social analysis, deepen our theological reflection and vigorously promote these concerns. This has emerged as the central vision of the WCC and its member churches.” The theme was re-affirmed in the Harare assembly programme guidelines committee report.

The specifics of the world situation have changed since 1983. The underlying threats continue, however, leading JPIC to spawn new ecumenical initiatives. In seeking a renewed basis for ecumenical social thought and action, a theology of life focuses on the life of all creation and not just on human life. Various local groups are endeavouring to achieve the concerns of the civil society for inclusiveness and equity. Projects on costly unity, costly discipleship and costly

obedience are creating new opportunities for relating unity and mission as well as ecclesiology and ethics. As yet to emerge is a coherent theology for Christian cooperation with people of other faiths and beliefs who are also committed to the cause of JPIC.

See also **church and world; just, participatory and sustainable society.**

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## JUSTIFICATION

THE DOCTRINE of justification can be properly treated only within the wider context of the doctrine of salvation\* as a whole. The will of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit (see **Trinity**) – is to reconcile to himself all that he has created and sustains, to set free the creation\* from its bondage to decay and to draw all humanity into communion\* with himself. Though we, God's creatures, turn away from God through sin,\* God continues to call us and opens up for us the way to find him anew. To bring us to union with himself, the Father sent into the world Jesus Christ,\* his only Son. Through Christ's life, death and resurrection, the mystery of God's love is revealed, we are saved from the powers of evil, sin and death and we receive a share in the life of God.

Within the Christian tradition there has always been a great deal of agreement about the doctrine of salvation, including justification, despite some familiar controversies. It has been agreed, above all, that the act of God in bringing salvation to the human race and summoning individuals into a community to serve God is due solely

to God's mercy and grace,\* mediated and manifested through Jesus Christ in his ministry, atoning death and rising again. Nor has it been disputed that God's grace evokes an authentic human response of faith\* which takes effect not only in the life of the individual but also in the corporate life of the church.\* Difficulties have arisen in explaining how divine grace relates to human response: (1) the understanding of the *faith* through which we are justified, in so far as this includes the individual's confidence in his or her own final salvation; (2) the understanding of *justification* and the associated concepts of righteousness and justice;\* (3) the bearing of *good works* on salvation; (4) the *role of the church* in the process of salvation.

## BIBLICAL ORIGINS

The biblical terms "righteousness" and "justification" have a rich background and a wide variety of uses. As images they are drawn from juridical, forensic (law court) settings and are employed to describe the right relationship of human beings to God or one another and the mode or process by which such a relationship comes about. The descriptions of the way in which a person is brought to righteousness in the sight of God vary among the Old Testament authors and in the New Testament, especially in the writings of Paul. When predicated of God, "righteousness" is understood as God's fundamental uprightness; God's triumph(s) in a holy war, in a law-court dispute with Israel, or in legal decisions (Ps. 9:4); but above all, especially in the post-exilic period, as God's gracious salvific activity, manifest in a just judgment (Isa. 46:13, 51:5-8, 56:1; Hos. 2:18-19; Pss. 40:9-10, 98:2).

Clearly in the 30s and 40s of the 1st century the early Christian community was making use of this OT imagery to express the claim that by Christ's death and resurrection human beings stand righteous before God's tribunal. Inheriting the righteousness/justification language of the OT and its previous applications to Christ, Paul sharpened the meaning, especially, though not exclusively, in Galatians, Romans and Philippians. He related the process of justification to grace and set forth the theme of "justified by

faith apart from works prescribed by the law" (Rom. 3:28), though he also insisted on "the obedience of faith" (Rom. 1:5) and response to the gospel in believers' lives. Justification is not simply a future or past event, but it is an eschatological reality which stretches from the past through the present and into the future. Hence Paul, in writing to the Philippians, can enjoin: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling", and then immediately adds: "For it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (2:12-13). Faith includes for Paul both allegiance to God in Christ and the inescapability of good deeds flowing therefrom. It thus differs greatly from the "faith" dismissed as insufficient in James 2, namely, acceptance of revelation\* without corresponding behaviour.

### PATRISTIC USAGE

Historical research has greatly increased our awareness of the degree to which the 16th-century debate over justification was conditioned by a specifically Western and Augustinian understanding of the context of salvation which, in reliance on Paul, stressed the scriptural theme of righteousness. Eastern theologians generally saw salvation within the framework of a cosmic process and stressed the divinizing character of grace. Augustine's intention in developing the doctrine of grace was to protect the absolute priority of God's action over all human endeavour. His distinctions between "operating" and "cooperating", "preventive" and "subsequent" grace point in this direction. Early scholasticism added further categories such as first grace, grace freely given (*gratia gratis data*) and justifying grace (*gratia gratum faciens*) in order to clarify various stages of the process of the transformation of the individual believer. In view of a growing awareness that the difference between the natural and the supernatural is not simply identical with that between creatures and God, a distinction came to be made between two types of supernatural grace – the uncreated grace (*gratia increata*, i.e. God himself or the indwelling of the Holy Spirit) and the created "habit", or disposition, of grace (*gratia creata*). For some theologians, such as Aquinas, God re-

mained in total command as the initiator and perfecter of the movement from sinner to saint, but for many the insistence on infused grace and on the presence of special assisting graces (*gratiae gratis datae*) was combined with a strong emphasis on the ability of free will to contribute to salvation, not simply on the basis of grace, but independently.

A similar shift can be traced in the expanding thought on merit before the Reformation. Augustine wanted to emphasize God's absolute priority: "When God rewards our merits, he crowns his own gifts." The shift of interest to the role of human nature eventually led to the distinction between "congruous" and "condign" merit. The former in one of its meanings designated the basis for a hope that God "does not deny grace to those who do what is in them". This assertion can be understood as affirming God's priority in the sense that merciful inspiration and direction are necessary for every good action of the human creature. It is in this sense that Aquinas speaks of doing what is in one's power. This formula, however, can also be used in a Pelagianizing sense if "doing what is in one" is thought of as a consideration which calls for the conferral of grace but which human beings can and must fulfill by relying on the unaided powers of their fallen nature.

### THE 16TH-CENTURY CONTROVERSIES

Instead of a progressive transformation under the power of grace, the imputation of an alien righteousness received in faith implies for Luther an ongoing and paradoxical simultaneity; the justification is complete in the imputing of it, so that the believer is "simultaneously a righteous person and a sinner" (*simul iustus et peccator*). It is not on the basis of their gifts of infused grace, or inherent righteousness of good works, that God declares sinners just, but on the basis of Jesus Christ's righteousness. For the reformers, the "alien", "extrinsic" justification is the article on which the church stands or falls.

The theological opposition, as indicated by the censures passed in 1518-21 by the theological faculties of Mainz, Cologne, Louvain and Paris, centred not on the doc-

trine of justification by faith taken by itself but on questions related to free will, the alleged sinfulness of all good works, the role of contrition, confession and satisfaction in the sacrament of penance,\* the *ex opere operato* efficacy of the sacraments,\* the sinfulness of concupiscence and the value of indulgences.

The council of Trent (1545-47, 1551-52 and 1562-63) dealt extensively with many interconnected topics such as original sin, justification, grace and merit, the sacraments and indulgences. In its teachings on justification the council re-affirmed the unique role of Christ, who died for all and who grants grace "through the merits of his passion" to those reborn in him, and without rebirth in him one can never be justified. The council further taught that "nothing prior to justification, whether faith or works, truly merits the grace of justification".

In a central paragraph the council of Trent expounded the nature of justification with the help of scholastic causal categories. The final cause is the glory of God and of Christ, and eternal life. The efficient cause is the merciful God, who freely cleanses and sanctifies, sealing and anointing by the Holy Spirit. The meritorious cause is Jesus Christ, who by his passion merited our justification and made satisfaction for us to God the Father. The formal cause is "the righteousness of God – not that whereby God is righteous but that whereby he makes us righteous".

## RECENT HISTORY

In the centuries since the Reformation both the Roman Catholic and the Lutheran churches continued to affirm their 16th-century pronouncements on justification. Since the council of Trent and their own Book of Concord, Lutheran theologians have usually claimed that the doctrine is of central importance but have interpreted it in a variety of ways; Roman Catholics, although debating the issues of sin, freedom, nature and grace, have for the most part not made justification itself a primary object of attention. In both cases, furthermore, the discussions have been chiefly within, rather than between, the two communions.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, however, there has been renewed attention to the Re-

formation doctrine of justification. Especially the growth of dialogue in recent decades between Catholics and the heirs of the Reformation has stimulated research into the interconfessional aspects of justification. Vatican II\* (1962-65) gave little explicit attention to the theme of justification, but it touched on the subject indirectly in its teachings on matters such as faith, grace, salvation and the ministry of the church. By broadening the definition of faith beyond intellectualistic concepts that had been prevalent in modern scholasticism, the Council left open the possibility that faith might include the entire response of the faithful to justifying grace. In its references to cooperation and merit, the Council showed sensitivity to Protestant concerns and to the need to resist any Pelagianizing tendencies that might exist among Catholics.

The fourth assembly of the Lutheran World Federation\* (Helsinki 1963) gave particular attention to justification. The Reformation witness to justification was said to have been in a threefold "Babylonian captivity" of "doctrinalization, individualization and spiritualization". The opposition between forensic and transformationist views of justification was questioned: "The old alternative whether the sinner is considered justified 'forensically' or 'effectively' is begging the question, for God's action brings about 'rebirth'." The document "The Gospel and the Church" of the international Lutheran-Roman Catholic study commission also deals with the question of how the two sides understand justification. In its Malta report (1972) the commission says: "Catholic theologians also emphasize in reference to justification that God's gift of salvation for the believer is unconditional as far as human accomplishments are concerned. Lutheran theologians emphasize that the event of justification is not limited to individual forgiveness of sins, and they do not see in it a purely external declaration of the justification of the sinner. Rather the righteousness of God actualized in the Christ event is conveyed to the sinner through the message of justification as an encompassing reality basic to the new life of the believer." Besides issues relating to understanding the doctrine of justification itself, other questions arise here. What is

the theological importance of this doctrine? Do both sides similarly evaluate its implications for the life and teaching of the church?

A beginning of an answer is given in the document "Justification by Faith" of the US Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue\* group (1983). Lutherans and Catholics wholeheartedly accept the "fundamental affirmation" that their "entire hope of justification and salvation rests on Christ Jesus and on the gospel, whereby the good news of God's merciful action in Christ is made known; we do not place our ultimate trust in anything other than God's promise and saving work in Christ" (paras 4 and 157). They admit that this affirmation is not fully equivalent to the Reformation teaching on justification, according to which God accepts sinners as righteous for Christ's sake on the basis of faith alone; but by insisting that reliance for salvation should be placed entirely on God, their agreed affirmation expresses a central concern of that doctrine. While granting that the principle of justification by faith alone must not be employed to erode the fullness of the apostolic heritage and of the means whereby this heritage is to be mediated in any given time and place, the Lutherans maintain that this principle retains its critical importance. Catholics, on their side, are wary of using any one doctrine as the absolute principle by which to purify from outside, so to speak, the Catholic heritage. While conceding that the church stands under the gospel and is to be judged by it, Catholics insist that the gospel cannot be rightly interpreted without drawing on the full resources available within the church. To speak of "Christ alone" or "faith alone", they contend, could lead, contrary to the intentions of Lutherans themselves, to the position that the grace of Christ is given apart from the external word of scripture, Christian preaching, the sacraments and the ordained ministry.

Here, as on other points such as the imputational or forensic character of justification, the sinfulness of the justified, the sufficiency of faith, or questions of merit and satisfaction, there is much common ground, but there are still divergences too. So the Lutherans, e.g., continue to ask whether,

even in modern Catholicism, it has been made sufficiently evident that (as the Malta report expressed the Lutheran position) "the rites and orders of the church are not to be imposed as conditions for salvation, but are valid only as the free unfolding of the obedience of faith".

Based on the results of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue in the US (1983) and in Germany ("The Condemnations of the Reformation Era: Do They Still Divide?", 1986) and of the international dialogue between these two traditions ("Church and Justification", 1994), it became possible to produce a Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ), which representatives of the Lutheran World Federation and of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity signed in Augsburg on Reformation Day 1999. The heart of the JDDJ lies in paragraphs 15-17, which read as follows:

"[15] In faith we together hold the conviction that justification is the work of the triune God. The Father sent his Son into the world to save sinners. The foundation and presupposition of justification is the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ. Justification thus means that Christ himself is our righteousness, in which we share through the Holy Spirit in accord with the will of the Father. Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works.

"[16] All people are called by God to salvation in Christ. Through Christ alone are we justified, when we receive this salvation in faith. Faith is itself God's gift through the Holy Spirit who works through word and sacrament in the community of believers and who, at the same time, leads believers into that renewal of life which God will bring to completion in eternal life.

"[17] We also share the conviction that the message of justification directs us in a special way towards the heart of the New Testament witness to God's saving action in Christ: it tells us that as sinners our new life is solely due to the forgiving and renewing mercy that God imparts as a gift and we receive in faith, and never can merit in any way."

Subsequent paragraphs then expound current positions on historically controversial questions as “differences of language, theological elaboration and emphasis in the understanding of justification” that do not destroy the stated “consensus in basic truths”, so that the Lutheran and Catholic explications are “open to one another” in the matters of “human powerlessness and sin in relation to justification”, “justification as forgiveness of sins and making righteous”, “justification by faith and through grace”, “the justified as sinner”, “law and gospel”, “assurance of salvation” and “the good works of the justified”. Finally, the mutual condemnations of the 16th century are declared not to apply to the teachings jointly and respectively laid out in the present document.

A further elaboration of the ecclesiological consequences of the doctrine of justification is given in the agreed statement “Salvation and the Church” by the second Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC II). The church is itself a sign of the gospel, for its vocation is to embody and reveal the redemptive power contained within the gospel. The once-for-all atoning work of Christ, realized and experienced in the life of the church and celebrated in the eucharist,\* constitutes the free gift of God which is proclaimed in the gospel. In the service of this mystery the church is entrusted with a responsibility of stewardship. The church is called to fulfill this stewardship by proclaiming the gospel and by its sacramental and pastoral life. The church is also an instrument for the realization of God’s eternal design, the salvation of humanity. The church is therefore – so the ARCIC II texts say – called to be, and by the power of the Spirit actually is, a *sign, steward* and *instrument* of God’s design. For this reason it can be described as *sacrament* of God’s saving work. The church, as the community of the justified, is called to embody the good news that forgiveness is a gift to be received from God and shared with others. Thus the message of the church is not a private pietism irrelevant to contemporary society, nor can it be reduced to a political or social programme. Only a reconciled and reconciling community, faithful to its Lord, in which human divisions are being

overcome, can speak with full integrity to an alienated, divided world and so be a credible witness to God’s saving action in Christ and a foretaste of God’s kingdom.\*

To work out these eschatological perspectives will be a test case for a really ecumenical understanding of the relation of justification and sanctification.\* The church participates in Christ’s mission to the world through the proclamations of the gospel of salvation by its words and deeds. It is called to affirm the sacredness and dignity of the person, the value of righteous social and political structures and the divine purpose for the human race as a whole; to witness against the structures of sin in society, addressing humanity with the gospel of repentance and forgiveness and making intercession for the world. It is called to be an agent of justice and compassion, challenging and assisting society’s attempts to achieve just judgment, never forgetting that in the light of God’s justice all human solutions are provisional.

MARTIEN E. BRINKMAN

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# K

## KAGAWA, TOYOHICO

B. 10 July 1888, Kobe, Japan; d. 23 April 1960, Tokyo. Social reformer and evangelist, Kagawa in 1928 was in the forefront of an evangelistic campaign – the “Million Souls” movement – which led, with the National Christian Council’s nationwide campaign, to the formation of the Kingdom of God movement, 1930-32, of which Kagawa was the central figure. He played a leading role at the International Missionary Council’s Tambaram conference, 1938. After the second world war, Kagawa led many Christians in the national penitential movement. He was the president of the Japanese cooperative federation, travelling widely and insisting everywhere that evangelism must be “spiritually motivated, educationally undergirded and industriously demonstrated”. His writ-



ings had a significant influence on the ecumenical movement and on the development of Asian theology, especially his emphasis on the vital role of lay Christians.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ G.B. Bikle, *The New Jerusalem: Aspects of Utopianism in the Thought of Kagawa Toyohiko*, Tucson, Univ. of Arizona Press, 1976 ■ T. Kagawa, *Meditations on the Cross*, Chicago, Willet & Clark, 1935 ■ J.M. Trout, *Kagawa, Japanese Prophet*, New York, Association Press, 1959.

## KAIROS DOCUMENT

THE KAIROS document is a biblical and theological comment on the political crisis in South Africa. First published in 1985, it arose out of the struggle to discover how to respond as Christians to what it calls a situation of death.

The "moment of truth" (kairos) is defined as "the moment of grace and opportunity, the favourable time in which God issues a challenge to decisive action". The document critiques "state theology", which justifies theologically the status quo. It also critiques "church theology", which in only "a limited, guarded and cautious way... is critical of apartheid". The document promotes "prophetic theology" as an alternative, in which biblical teaching on suffering and oppression is considered in relation to a social analysis of the structures of oppression in South Africa. Defining the South African regime as tyrannical, the document challenges Christians to participate in the struggle for liberation.\*

The theological methodology employed in writing the document is as important as the document itself. The document emerged from serious group theological reflection. Frank Chikane (general secretary of the South African Council of Churches, 1988-95), a formative influence in the production of the Kairos document, has said of the process: "Reflection on experience in faith becomes the word of God. This document is actually a byproduct of a process, the process of struggle to remove the apartheid regime. This is the issue, not the document per se."

The writing process began as a group, consisting largely of grassroots black Chris-

tians, who met in Soweto to initiate the reflection process. The writing of the document was assigned to different people at different times. These drafts were often rejected by the group as theologically too traditional, failing to reflect their experience of oppression and of faith. The language of the document, severely criticized by some traditional theologians as being too millenarian and apocalyptic, reflects the context out of which the document emerged. Vigorous debate on the wording continued right until it was submitted for publication. "The first publication, therefore," as the preface puts it, "must be taken as a beginning, a basis for further discussion by all Christians in the country." Numerous responses from the international community and from within South Africa led to a second edition of the document, published in September 1986.

In South Africa the Kairos document is regarded as a theological watershed. It calls for Christian action against a state which it described as "having no moral legitimacy" and which had become "an enemy of the common good". For the church to be the church, it must stand "unequivocally and consistently with the poor and the oppressed". Not all Christians or churches in South Africa were prepared to receive this "Challenge to the Church" (the subtitle of the Kairos document).

See also **apartheid, kairos documents**.

CHARLES VILLA-VICENCIO

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## KAIROS DOCUMENTS

INSPIRED by the South African Kairos document\* of 1985, many similar kairos documents were drafted, accepted and published in different forms, by a large number of diverse groups and in different contexts, in the years to follow. Some of the well-known documents or initiatives include the following.

“Kairos Central America: A Challenge to the Churches of the World” was published in 1988. A variety of Christian groups in countries of Central America cooperated. The signatories, from different denominations and backgrounds, included laypeople, members of religious orders, Protestant pastors, Catholic priests and three bishops. Some North Americans living and working in Central America also signed, but because of the controversial content the names of most of the participants from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras were omitted in order to protect them. Other countries represented included Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Mexico and Belize. The document consisted of three parts. The first described “the reality we live in”, reflecting on life and specifically on geopolitical presence in Central America. The second part was an attempt at “seeing this historic hour in Central America from a perspective of faith”: signs of the kingdom and of the anti-kingdom were discerned, in what was described as constituting a kairos, posing concrete challenges and calling for specific responses. In the final part, on “acting today”, different audiences were challenged directly, including the ecumenical church, Latin American communities, the United States government, Latin American governments, the United Nations, multilateral organizations, churches and Christians worldwide, all in the name of the urgent need for “a new order with justice and peace”.

During 1989, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the triumph of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, “The Road to Damascus: Kairos and Conversion” was issued as a joint effort by people in Africa, Central America and Asia, following a two-year process of reflection and consultation. The signatories included people from Korea, the Philippines, Namibia, South Africa, El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua. In spite of the difficulties of communication and geographical distance, the preamble claimed that hundreds of people had been involved in the preparation and that thousands to whom it had been circulated agreed to sign it. Although this document also contained social and historical analysis, the main focus was on a struggle perceived within churches, between “two antagonistic forms of Chris-

tianity”. What they had in common was “not only a situation of violent political conflict, but also the phenomenon of Christians on both sides of the conflict”. The one form was seen as a deep commitment to the liberation of the poor. The other, different according to context, was seen as seeking to use church and theology to protect and serve the interests of the rich and powerful. The document’s four chapters laid bare the historical and political roots of the conflict; affirmed the faith of poor and oppressed Christians; condemned the sins of those who oppress, exploit, persecute and kill people; and called to conversion those who have strayed from the truth of Christian faith and commitment. The term “conversion” in the title, therefore, refers to a need for continuous conversion on the part of the signatories, but even more to the conversion of those who use Christian faith to sanction the evils of injustice. The sense of historical urgency in the original South African Kairos document is again present: “The time for us has come to take a stand and to speak out.”

Already in the late 1980s many individuals and groups in the USA were asking whether it was time for a Kairos USA document, and initiatives through a number of networks led to many consultations, drafts and publications. In 1989 conferences at Kirkridge, Pennsylvania, and Minneapolis, Minnesota, attempted “to discern the signs of the times” characteristic of their situation. An important question was whether there was a need for confession of their historical complicity in “ruptures of the social good”. The multiple and even contradictory agendas of diverse groups in the USA raised the question whether a single Kairos document would indeed be possible and meaningful. The anniversary in 1992 of the arrival of Columbus became the occasion for intense discussion of a 1992/Kairos USA. As many as 500 groups were participating in grassroots theological discussion, in local congregations, denominational and ecumenical bodies, and especially among movements for justice and peace. Both internal conflicts, like racism, and international policies and conflicts further fuelled these initiatives to “repent, remember, renew”. A racially, ethnically and geographically diverse steering committee issued a “Call to the Work of Re-

penance”, urging discernment of the Kairos. A draft was discussed at a gathering of Kairos participants in Washington, DC, in 1993, where the theme of Jubilee came to the fore. A final document, “On the Way: From Kairos to Jubilee”, was published at Pentecost 1994.

In 1995, at a celebration of the tenth anniversary of the South African Kairos document in Chicago, with people from the Netherlands and the WCC, Geneva, also present, the issue of land was added and the theme of “Jubilee justice” developed, which led to a new statement of purpose, “Jubilee Justice – Free the Land”. This became the focus of an international network of groups and meetings, until a new mission statement was adopted in 1999.

Similar processes were taking place in Europe, through a grassroots network of justice initiatives, cooperating with social movements, churches, trade unions, and NGOs in and outside Europe, called Kairos Europa. In 1992, after five days in Strasbourg, 800 people, calling themselves “Parliament of Peoples”, agreed on a Kairos declaration for Europe, also addressed to the European Parliament, claiming: “We do not accept this Europe, it is destroying us and our future! We do not accept this economy, it is plundering our planet! We do not accept politicians, who despise the people they are supposed to serve. No to a Fortress Europe perpetuating the old colonial claims to domination. Yes to a Europe of justice with borders open to all continents as part of a humane society worldwide!”

There have been many foci in this complex alliance-building process, but resistance against what is called neo-liberal globalization started to play a crucial role. A European Kairos document was published in 1998, calling for a socially just, life-sustaining and democratic Europe. It consisted of two parts. The first “saw the truth of the situation”, “recognized the causes”, “made a judgment with our hearts and minds”, and finally offered alternatives for “acting together”, which included resistance through boycotts, designing a new vision, developing small-scale alternatives at local and regional levels, and building alliances to push for the political regaining control of transnational capital. In the second part, the focus is on

churches and theology, including criticism of superficial reconciliation in church theology and a call for prophetic theology. An open letter is offered in summary.

Through the campaign starting from the United Kingdom called Jubilee 2000, the concept of a Jubilee was popularized throughout Europe. Soon calls were made for moving “beyond Jubilee 2000”. The Kairos 2000 project declared 1999 a year of reflection for liberation, 2000 a year of action for liberation and 2001 a time of liberation. The purpose was “to build alliances for liberating people from the stranglehold of the globalized deregulated economy and its culture of competition, by developing concrete alternatives in a double strategy, strengthening local economies, communities and a new spirituality of solidarity, resistance and identity among people, as well as promoting proposals for politically re-regulating the economy at all levels according to more social, ecological and democratic criteria”.

In post-independent Africa kairos theology has also found expression. Shortly before the WCC’s eighth assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1998, a group of Zimbabwean Christians published a Zimbabwean Kairos document, denouncing “poverty, ill-health, bad governance, corruption, fear and hopelessness” in their country. The document, in preparation since 1996, was produced by the Ecumenical Support Services. It explicitly employed the methodology of the South African Kairos document, arguing that the Zimbabwean nation “had been plunged into a political, economic, and above all moral crisis shaking its very foundation”. It particularly criticized the ruling ZANU (PF) party of President Robert Mugabe, claiming that “despite our hopes and expectations (at independence and the end of white minority rule) in 1980, today we find new black political and economic elites within the same structures”. The churches were also criticized, since “while some have constantly challenged injustice, both before and after independence, many have failed to educate their members about abuses of power by authorities”. The Zimbabwean Kairos document responded not only to the political situation, but also to the economic system and the marginalization and poverty

it caused. It was intended “to encourage debate among Christians and as a guideline for those who want to engage in prophetic action”.

During the eighth assembly itself a plenary session dealt with “*ubuntu* and the African *kairos*”. *Ubuntu* refers to an African sense of belonging and sharing and finding identity in being with and for others. Well-known African ecumenical theologians Barney Pityana (South Africa) and Mercy Oduyoye (Nigeria) gave introductions, linking the lived experience of African believers with the global context. Oduyoye concluded her presentation with a prayer-like “call to conversion and commitment”. The session ended with a liturgical act of “commitment to a journey of hope” by all Africans “from the continent and diaspora” to work for a better Africa, saying “never again” to the many forms of suffering and humiliation that the continent’s people have known, and joining in an act of “covenant with God”. The assembly was called to accompany them on their journey of hope and the delegates sang *Nkosi Zikilela Africa* as a symbol of mutual ecumenical solidarity.

All these documents and initiatives share characteristics, based on a common methodology which is often described as *kairos* theology.

It always begins from a sense of extreme urgency, irrespective of the deep differences between contexts and the diverse foci of the analyses of causes and consequences. It is always described as an either/or situation. The moment is decisive. The stakes are immeasurably high. They concern matters of life and death. Neutrality is no longer possible. One must be for or against. Everyone should be challenged to make this choice, to take an option. Prophetic action is called for.

All the documents and initiatives claim to be the result of group processes, over a long period of time, and representing the masses or popular, grassroots movements. They are never official, institutional documents, commissioned by authoritative bodies. The signers always claim to represent a wide variety of faith convictions, church memberships, races, classes, colours and degrees of learning.

Although in different ways, they all begin by analyzing a particular situation in the

present, using diverse forms and tools of social analysis, whether concentrating on violence, exploitation, injustice, oppression, exclusion, class struggles or corruption, and regard theological reflection as a second-order activity, preceded by active engagement with and commitment to poor, suffering, oppressed and marginalized people.

All these documents take the role of churches in these historical struggles very seriously, often by being very critical, challenging others and calling them to conversion and radical change; but mostly they are self-critical and aware of their own complicity in the historical development of the evils, injustices and spirals of violence.

They all prophetically dare to name a concrete historical enemy and to locate the major causes of destruction in their respective contexts. Attempts to unmask contemporary forms of idolatry are common.

They all affirm hope, historical and social hope for those often without hope, as a major contribution of the gospel, and conclude with often detailed and specific calls for a variety of practical steps and actions, always controversial and challenging.

D. J. SMIT

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## KING, MARTIN LUTHER, Jr

B. 15 Jan. 1929, Atlanta, GA, USA; d. 4 April 1968, Memphis, TN. A leader in the mass civil rights movement in the USA from the mid-1950s until his assassination, King won the Nobel peace prize in 1964 for his leadership in applying principles of non-violent resistance to the struggle for racial equality. Educated at Morehouse College, Crozer Theological Seminary and Boston University (PhD 1955), in 1954 he became pastor of Drexler Avenue Baptist Church, Montgomery, AL, and in 1959 co-pastor with his father of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Atlanta. Involved in the struggle over segregation on buses in Montgomery, in 1955 he



organized a boycott by blacks which lasted more than a year. It inspired opposition to discrimination, which resulted in an order of the supreme court imposing desegregation on Alabama public transportation. He organized the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, was the leading figure in the march on Washington in 1963, which led to the 1964-65 civil rights acts, and was active in voter registration drives. He arranged further demonstrations in Florida, Alabama, Mississippi and elsewhere. Much influenced by the thinking of Gandhi, he was also committed to the belief that the reconciliation of the black to the white population was as important as that of the whites to the blacks. His success was more marked in the South than in the North, where the black church was less well organized and less discrimination existed. He urged settlement of the Vietnam conflict and admission of China to the United Nations.

He was invited to give the opening sermon at the WCC's Uppsala assembly in 1968, and the reference in the assembly message to "the shock of assassinations" recalls his tragic death three months before the meeting. The WCC established a Martin Luther King memorial fund for reconciliation, rehabilitation and relief, and invited national and regional councils of churches

throughout the world to subscribe to a project of the Mississippi Delta Ministry, set up by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## KINGDOM OF GOD

THE ECUMENICAL movement inherited conflicting historical understandings of the concept "kingdom of God". When the early church's imminent hope waned, chiliasm (Tertullian, Irenaeus) and spiritualization (Clement, Origen) helped the church to bear with persecution. After Constantine, it became a political category, almost identical with the earthly rule of the *sacrum imperium*, establishing the peace of God within human history (Eusebius). In Augustine's distinction between *civitas Dei* and *civitas terrena* as ideal types, an identification of the kingdom either with the church's rule over society or with a Christian emperor's political rule was rejected. Soon, however, these ideal types were exchanged for identifications of the earthly state with the *civitas terrena* and the institutional church with the *civitas Dei*, with the resulting power struggles of the middle ages between *regnum* and *sacerdotium*, including a loss of the kingdom's eschatological aspect. To settle this struggle, the Western church distinguished between emperor (*potestas*) and pope (*auctoritas*), both instituted by God, to lead the *christianitas*, the society of church-and-state, to the kingdom, but soon the church claimed identity with the kingdom (Gregory VII, Innocent III, Boniface VIII) against the emperor's religious claims. Repeatedly, interpretations were given critical of these identifications of the kingdom of God with church and/or state (e.g., by Joachim of Fiore, the Franciscans, mystics, also philosophers, Dante).

Luther spoke of two realms to criticize the claims of the papal church and to see earthly government as autonomous, yet ac-

ording to God's will. Again, implications and variations included diverse attempts to realize the kingdom immediately in either church or society. Well known was Thomas Münzer's radical political interpretation, with the imminent kingdom to be brought about by divinely elected instruments through struggle against oppression from the side of the official church, spurred on by the certainty of God's own final victory. Calvinists sought to erect a theocratic society wherein individuals played an active part under God. Catholic theology often identified church and kingdom. After the Enlightenment new interpretations became popular: pietism, linking the coming of the kingdom with individual faith and the winning of souls; utopian visions of a secular kingdom (Thomas More, Campanella, but also Marxism), expecting a final state of consummation; religious perversions like Nazi Germany's propaganda; philosophical notions of a realm of ideal human relations on earth, with ideas of development, evolution and material prosperity (Hobbes, Herder, Lessing, Fichte; also Kant, Schleiermacher, Ritschl). Important was the motivation of the kingdom in the social gospel, a practical kingdom theology (Walter Rauschenbusch), and religious socialism (Ragaz, the Blumhardts).

Ecumenism inherited all these occurring tensions: between present and future aspects, between different concepts of power\* or rule, between the kingdom and the church, between socio-political and individual interpretations, between views that the kingdom is completely a gift of grace\* and that human beings participate in its coming, between gift and responsibility or hope and action, between salvation history\* and world history. In the 20th century, important shifts took place: Western theology witnessed a re-discovery of the eschatological dimension, influenced especially by biblical scholarship in German Protestantism, where Johannes Weiss, followed by Albert Schweitzer, rejected the dominant ethical notion of a kingdom to be built.

In ecumenical circles, the concept, although undefined, played a major role in several contexts. Generalizing, one can say that the notion of the kingdom as an ideal society, characterized by equality, justice and

freedom, has gradually been accepted. Socio-ethical implications, and conclusions critical of church structures and its life and worship, are often drawn.

Already at Edinburgh (1910), Sloane Coffin, from the social-gospel tradition, said: "Christianity's... ethical ideal is the kingdom of God – a redeemed social order under the reign of the Christlike God in which every relationship is Christlike, and each individual and social group – the family, the trade-organization, the state – comes not to be ministered unto, but to minister, is perfect... and the whole of human society incarnates the love of God once embodied in Jesus of Nazareth." This vision led to controversy. Again, for example at Stockholm (1925), the theological debate of the day between this (evolutionary, ethical) Anglo-Saxon view and (eschatological, a-political) European views was reflected, and in the early ecumenical movement these differences continued.

The WCC Humanum Studies\* (1969-75) can serve as a typical illustration of the growing use of the concept of the kingdom of God in ecumenical documents. Without definition, it is used to criticize the present state of affairs in church and society, in that full community between human beings is not practised and that "churches are in open and hidden alliance with various exploitative kingdoms of men". Similar use of the concept is made in other places: "Christ – the hope of the world" (Evanston 1954); studies on the community of men and women; several discussions of the eucharist as "paradigm of the kingdom"; etc. More explicit discussions of the concept appeared in the study "Giving Account of the Hope That Is within Us" (Faith and Order: Accra 1974, Bangalore 1978) and the 1977 Chiang Mai papers *Faith in the Midst of Faiths*.

A major occasion was the Melbourne world conference on mission and evangelism (1980). "Our theme, 'Your Kingdom Come', has been at the heart of the missionary movement throughout Christian history, and not least in this century" (Philip Potter). The sections discussed good news to the poor,\* the kingdom of God and human struggles, the church witnesses to the kingdom, and Christ – crucified and risen – challenges human power. Special emphasis was attached

to a vision of the kingdom in which “the gospel is meant for the poor, and Christians and the church must be involved in all the struggles of history, resisting the oppressive realities and oppressive forces of the anti-kingdom”.

Another important context is the F&O study on “The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community”, focusing on “the church as mystery and prophetic sign”. The concept plays a major role, as “church” and “human community” are related within the broader perspective of the kingdom (Limouris, 58ff.; F&O minutes Madrid 1987, 16-30). Careful distinctions are made in attempts to avoid the misunderstandings inherited from the conflictual history.

In 20th-century Catholicism, the concept has functioned, for example, in Vatican II’s *Lumen Gentium* (e.g., 3,9,35ff.) and *Gaudium et Spes* (e.g., 39,72), and in theologies of liberation. During Vatican II,\* in spite of some formulations to the contrary, the results of biblical investigations came to the fore. In theologies of liberation, the kingdom serves as central paradigm for the human condition, where all people will participate in God’s total salvation\* as subjects in freedom, equality and justice; a salvation of which the church must provisionally be an active sign and promise in the divinely qualified kairos of the present situations of death. Discipleship in this kingdom consists in following Jesus’ option for the poor in concrete praxis and prophetic criticism. Although the final realization of the kingdom remains God’s gift, so that the “eschatological proviso” must remain as a critical instance against all partial realizations, human beings are nevertheless liberated to participate actively in establishing at least signs of the kingdom.

From the perspective of the Orthodox, several other questions are related to the theme of the kingdom of God, specifically, how the salvation history of Jesus Christ (the same yesterday, today and forever, Heb. 13:8) is actualized in the life of the church, and what concept of history – time and space – undergirds the vision of the ecumenical movement. The Orthodox tradition underscores the doctrine that not only justification but also glorification (*theosis* – the transformation by divine uncreated energies)

begins in this life. It is not only the life and ministry of Jesus that are eschatological, but in his cross and resurrection the new rule (*basileia*) has come into history. This rule affects not only mystical experience and liturgical life but also the institutional character of the church. The church is not a mere copy of society; its historical structures, offices and decisions should be constantly judged by what the reign of God calls us to be: glorified in Christ. Without such an eschatological vision the ecumenical movement will deteriorate into an ephemeral secular affair. Some are doubtful whether “such an eschatological vision marks the ecumenical movement in its entirety and in a decisive way” (Metropolitan John Zizioulas). According to the Orthodox, there must be a real correspondence in the life of the church between the vision of the reign of God and the permanent invocation of the Holy Spirit (*epiclesis*\*). The identity between the manifestation of the Holy Spirit and the *basileia* is the key to keeping alive the eschatological vision in ecumenical spirituality.

See also **church and state, eschatology.**

D.J. SMIT

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## KOINONIA

IT IS NOTEWORTHY that from its inception the Faith and Order\* commission has perceived the essential nature of the church\* as koinonia. The 1927 conference in Lausanne referred to the “communion of believers in Christ Jesus” (sec. 3.17-18) and described this unity\* without, however, making use of the term “koinonia”. But it was at the centre of discussions at Edinburgh in 1937 on the “communion of saints” (4.52,54,56-58,61; 5.69), and again at Lund in 1952 (1.26-30).

The Evanston assembly of 1954 was indebted to the F&O commission for the following declaration: "Thus the fellowship (koinonia) that the members of the church have is not simply human fellowship; it is fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit and fellowship with the saints, in the church triumphant" (report, B.8).

The report of the section on unity produced by the assembly at New Delhi (1961) offers further elucidation: "The word 'fellowship' (koinonia) has been chosen because it describes what the church truly is. 'Fellowship' clearly implies that the church is not merely an institution or organization. It is a fellowship of those who are called together by the Holy Spirit and in baptism confess Christ as Lord and Saviour. They are thus 'fully committed' to him and to one another" (para. 10).

Section 2 (paras 3-7) of the Nairobi (1975) report depicted "conciliar fellowship" in terms of the Triune God (see Trinity) drawing Christians together, in all their diversity, into a communion in the Spirit around the eucharistic presence of the Lord. It is clear that the notion of koinonia has emerged as one of the motivating ideas of the ecumenical movement in this century; it has thus not been by chance that since Lima (1982) the F&O commission has directed a great deal of its attention to this theme. The theme of the fifth world conference of F&O (Santiago 1993) was "Towards Koinonia in Faith, Life and Witness" and its report was entitled *On the Way to Fuller Koinonia*.

The concept of koinonia has also come to the fore in several of the bilateral discussions. Often, as in the case of ARCIC I (see **Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue**), it has arisen in the course of clarifying points of Catholic theology and studying the texts of Vatican II\* rather than directly from the work of F&O. Another example is the Munich document involving the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox churches; in it koinonia was quite literally the centre around which the whole document was constructed (see 2.1-4, in which the word appears over two dozen times). The theme is equally prominent in the Moscow statement (1976) which followed the Anglican-Orthodox conversations.

The introduction to the final report (1981) of ARCIC I affirmed that reference to koinonia is fundamental to all reflection on the nature of the church and that, in consequence, it is the base on which the whole report rests. The report then proceeded to demonstrate how the eucharist,\* episcopacy (see **episcopacy**) and primacy\* are all to be understood in terms of koinonia. Koinonia was also given a predominant place by the 1986 Nairobi report of the Roman Catholic-Methodist International Commission, *Towards a Statement on the Church*. Here there was an endeavour to define the term, which was seen to represent a reality and an experience transcending all other models of union as their origin and goal. There are several references to koinonia in the opening phase of the conversations between the Disciples of Christ and the Roman Catholics (see the 1981 report, secs 6-7), where "fellowship" is used to translate *koinonia*.

In the 1977 final report of the Reformed-Roman Catholic conversations, *The Presence of Christ in Church and World*, both koinonia and *communio* are used in order to emphasize a dual affinity that comes to expression in the eucharist, i.e. the believers' relationship with the Lord himself and with his other followers. The Anglican-Lutheran Pullach report (1972) also interprets koinonia in the same sense of "fellowship".

The ecumenical revival of koinonia is without doubt significant in the sphere of ecclesiology. It is illuminating to observe that the Roman Catholic Church's reconsiderations of ecclesial doctrine at Vatican II were based on the ecclesiology of *communio* (see *Lumen Gentium* 7,9,13,15,18,50, etc.). The encyclical letter *Ut Unum Sint*\* (1995) is the latest illustration of this influence. Koinonia functions as a leading theme if not the fundamental concept in the major post-Santiago project of F&O on ecclesiology (interim report, *The Nature and Purpose of the Church*, 1998).

## THE DATA OF REVELATION

The word "koinonia" is found fairly often within the apostolic writings (Acts 2:42; Rom. 15:26; 1 Cor. 1:9, 10:16; 2 Cor. 6:14, 8:4, 9:13, 13:13; Gal. 2:9; Phil. 1:5, 2:1, 3:10; Philemon 6; Heb. 13:16; 1 John 1:3,6-

7). It does not occur in the gospel narratives and is never explicitly used as a synonym of ecclesia. Sometimes it may have no religious significance (as in Rom. 15:16; 2 Cor. 8:4), which is also true of other expressions with the same root.

But we should not be bound by any limitation requiring the use of the actual word “koinonia”, for the concept is recurrent throughout the New Testament, implicit in such terms as covenant,\* unity, participation\* and sharing, and in images such as vine, temple, Body of Christ, spouse and others (see **images of the church**).

The Christian community sees an objective reality which is bestowed by God upon all who accept the gospel: God gives the Holy Spirit,\* object of the promise (Rom. 5:5, 8:15-17; Gal. 4:6; Acts 2:33,38, 10:44-47, 11:15; John 7:39, 16:7, 20:22; Eph. 1:13, 2:22, 4:30; 1 Pet. 1:2). This Spirit of the “last days” is, on several counts, a gift of communion.\* It is linked to the pardon which restores the communion desired by the Creator. It harks back to what Ezekiel described as an interior principle of obedience to the law by a purified Israel once again gathered together in its own land (Ezek. 11:19, 36:26-28, 37:14, 39:29; cf. Jer. 31:31). In Christ this gift acquires a hitherto unsuspected depth. It changes the meaning of our human destiny.

The reality which establishes this koinonia belongs to the mystery of the living God.\* For Paul, our koinonia is with the Son of God (1 Cor. 1:9), the one and only Lord (8:6). It has its “sacramental abode” in the communal sharing of the cup and of the one and only broken bread, which is a participation in the blood and the Body of Christ in association with his sacrifice (10:14-22). If it leads to an association with Christ’s victory (15:12-28; cf. 1 Thess. 4:14-18), it does so by way of real communion with his sufferings (Phil. 3:10 and, without the word “koinonia”, 2 Cor. 4:10; Gal. 6:17). In order to explain this union Paul writes: “It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me” (Gal. 2:20; cf. Phil. 1:21).

According to Paul, this is the richness of the divine gift. In taking hold of people, it draws them into what the letter to the Romans calls adoptive sonship: without resort

to the term “koinonia”, the passage abounds in phrases depicting this intimate relationship to Christ and to God (Rom. 8:15-17). The participation of believers in Christ’s relationship to his Father results from koinonia of and in the Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14; Phil. 2:1). It does not distort Paul’s intuition to say that koinonia represents the sure substance of God’s gospel; it is God’s work, his gift (see Gal. 4:7; cf. Rom. 1:1, 15:16).

The beneficiaries of this gift are among themselves in a “state of koinonia”. The expression is used to describe their association in the faith\* (Phil. 1:5-6), the sufferings endured for the gospel and the consolation given by God (2 Cor. 1:7). More precisely, from now on both Jews and pagans are *synkoinōnoi* (partners together) because the pagans are to share in the richness which has its “root” in Israel (Rom. 11:17, cf. 4:16; Gal. 3:26-29). The image of the body stresses the bond uniting to Christ and to one another all those who are quickened by the “one and same Spirit” (cf. 1 Cor. 12:11-14; Rom. 12:4-5; Gal. 3:26-29). Unity and diversity are both proclaimed. The latter appears in the multiplicity of ministries and responsibilities (1 Cor. 12:4-6,27-31), in the wide range of social conditions (12:13) and in the different rootage in the divine plan and covenant (12:13). There is no question of a simple addition of persons or of a fusion into a *tertium quid* which would eliminate all differences. Out of a diversity which continues to manifest its richness, the indivisible reality of the Spirit brings forth a unity of immeasurable depth.

In directing attention to the association of the gentiles with privileges conferred on the Jews, the letter to the Ephesians (which makes no use of the word “koinonia”) develops a Pauline thought (Eph. 2:11-22, 3:4-6). Communion is not to be limited to the personal relationship of each believer with Christ and his Father; it also involves the reuniting in Christ of the two sections of humanity. The breaking down of the wall of division means that from henceforth “the others” participate in what had been set aside for Israel until the cross. The frequent use of terms prefixed with some form of *syn-* (“with”) – *synklēronomoi* (inheritors together), *syssōmos* (a body together), *symmetochoi* (participating together) and *sympoli-*

*tai* (citizens together) – clearly points to the reality of *koinonia*. And this reality is the church (2:19-22, 3:10).

The first letter of John employs “*koinonia*” in order to signify in one word the simultaneous union of Christians with the Father and the Son and among themselves (1 John 1:3, 6-7). Similarly, although without making use of “*koinonia*”, John’s gospel speaks of the disciples’ “being-one” and of this state of oneness finding its source in the “being-one” of the Father and the Son “before the world existed” (John 17:5). The disciples are meant to be one just as (*kathōs*) the Father and the Son are one. The word *kathōs* does not imply merely similarity but includes the notion that Christians are taken up into the divine relationship which is the ground of their unity. This relationship is a profound one which not only embraces communion in the Son’s mission (17:18) but extends also to the participation in his state of glory (v.24). The Johannine tradition never states that *koinonia* or “being-one” constitutes the church, but these phrases sum up what it is to “gather into one the dispersed children of God” (11:52), and they correspond to what the image of the true vine seeks to convey. The community of disciples is far more than the sum of its members.

*Koinonia* must express itself in a relationship of fraternal communion. This intuition is the basis of Paul’s insistence on an authentic *agape*, which translates in terms of human conduct the meaning of communion with Christ. Or, as the author of the letter to the Hebrews describes it, communion with Christ passes over into human communion, in flesh and blood (Heb. 2:14). Once again it is clear that the reality conveyed by *koinonia* may be equally well conveyed by other expressions: it is only necessary to read 1 John 3:16-17 and all the passages on *agape*.

Paul’s line of thought is particularly revealing when he was occupied with the collection for the church in Jerusalem. Recalling his meeting with James, Cephas and John (Gal. 2:1-10), he remarked that they had extended to him the hand of *koinonia*, thus confirming the unity of the mission\* to both pagans and circumcised. Here the *koinonia* thus sealed is bound up with the injunction to “remember the poor” in Jerusalem (2:10). The way in which Paul re-

peats and develops this point suggests that he regards it as the concrete expression of the unity between the mother church (Jerusalem) and the gentile churches (Rom. 15:25-26; 1 Cor. 16:15-17; 2 Cor. 8:1-9,15; Acts 24:17). This is far more than a simple distribution of alms (Rom. 15:25-26). The action of sharing material goods corresponds to a call that is implied in the logic of ecclesial communion; the differences between Jews and gentile, rich and poor are transformed into *agape*.

In Acts the summary descriptions of the church at Pentecost are concerned to show the interior unity of a single community (Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-35, 5:12-16). The word “*koinonia*” and the expression *hapanta koina* (everything in common, 2:44, 4:32) are employed in a cluster of expressions to describe the many facets of communion. To list some of these phrases is illuminating: they were together (Acts 2:44,47), of one heart and one spirit (4:32), devoted to the apostles’ teaching and to the temple (2:42,46), holding everything in common (2:44, 4:32), sharing the proceeds from the sale of their possessions according to the needs of each (2:45, 4:34-35), faithful in the breaking of bread and in prayer (2:42), safeguarding the *koinonia* (2:42). With the restored unity of language as its sign (2:6-11), the church is born by the fire of the Spirit, not simply as a society but as a communion. At once palpable and deeply hidden, this communion seeks willing hearts prepared to take such practical steps as the sharing of possessions, even to the point of privation. In this context *koinonia* (2:42) discloses its real meaning, about which exegetes continue to debate. However, one thing is certain: *koinonia* means more than table fellowship; nor is it simply interior harmony. Rather, it also actively engages people in a communal sharing, the sign of spiritual unanimity expressed within the fabric of daily social life. The terms used in the “summaries”, for their true meaning to be understood, must imply a communion in the Lord’s own generosity, which may extend when necessary to following him in the total gift of self. This is what Luke stresses in his first book (Luke 14:26-27,33, cf. 12:13-34, 16:1-13, 18:1-30), and probably a similar meaning should be given to *koinonia* in Heb. 13:16.

The scriptures never provide a precise definition of the church (local or universal). Nevertheless, some texts like 1 Cor. 12:11-28, Col. 1:24 and Eph. 1:22-23 reveal that there was present right from the beginning the awareness of something profound which transcended all of its members and which was established by the binding together of Christians to God and to one another. When 1 Pet. 2:4-10 applies the titles of the *qahal* (assembly) of the old covenant to the church, it transforms the latter into the long-awaited communion between God and his people. Thus, in koinonia is expressed the most profound and all-embracing reality which founds and establishes the *ekklēsia tou theou*, church of God. The church of God is given to participate in the life of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and to manifest this participation in a fraternal koinonia. The ministries, too, are held in this embrace.

### THE DOCTRINE OF THE FATHERS

The Tradition of the early centuries attaches great importance to the reality of koinonia, usually translated in Latin by *communio* or *communicatio*.

The bold identification of God's plan with *communio* was suggested by Irenaeus at an early date. If the mission of the Son brought him into a close *communio* with humanity, this was in order that our *communio* with God in adoptive sonship might be complete (*Against Heresies* 3.18.7, 5.1.1, 5.14.2). Again, if Christ poured out the Spirit of the Father, this was to bring about a true and effective union and *communio* of God and humankind (5.1.1). Thus, the eucharist, in which we in our human bodily state *communicate* in the risen state of the Lord, is essential (4.18.5, 5.2.2-3). Our whole being must express this *communio* (5.1.1). This view of salvation as koinonia runs through the whole of Tradition and is found in the West, e.g. in Thomas Aquinas (*Against Gentiles* 4.54-55, etc.), and in the East in Nicholas Cabasilas (*Commentary on the Divine Liturgy* 26.4, 36.1, 49.29; *Explanation of Rites* 12).

There was a similar conviction with regard to the bond between eucharist and church. Writers in the early centuries linked 1 Cor. 10:16-22, 12:27 and Eph. 1:22-23 and reasoned that the eucharist "makes" the

church. At the dawn of Tradition, Ignatius of Antioch clearly affirmed that the eucharist is the food of the unity that was won on the cross, for "it gathers together all holy and faithful people both Jews and gentiles into the unique Body which is the church" (*Letters to the Smyrnaeans* 1.2, *to the Magnesians* 8.1-2, *to the Philadelphians* 4). This unity is of such importance that where division is found, God is not present (*Letter to the Philadelphians* 8.1), and the eucharist ratifies the presence of unity only when it is received in unity. The guarantee of unity lies in communion in the one and only faith, gathered around the bishops with his *presbyterium* and the deacons (*Letters to the Philadelphians* 4, *to the Smyrnaeans* 7.2, 9.1). It is the divine will that "you unite in one and the same faith and in Jesus Christ... obeying the bishop and the *presbyterium*, living in harmony, breaking the one bread, the medicine of immortality" (*Letter to the Ephesians* 20.2). The eucharist is woven into the very fabric of the communion that it establishes.

Very early the *Didache* (9.4) made the connection between the one bread and the "assembling of the church". Cyprian wrote on the same theme in more explicit terms (*Letters* 63.1-4, 69.5.2) and Hilary of Poitiers took it up (*On the Trinity* 8.12.13, 8.16); then liturgies began to incorporate it in the realization that it encapsulated the fruits of the Spirit invoked at the epiclesis\* or proclaimed by the post-communion prayers. Several rites such as the *fermentum* and the *commixtio* draw attention to the importance of this association.

Since the documentation is extensive, this discussion will have to remain focused on those fathers whose reflections on this subject are the most fully developed. The most compelling among them is, without doubt, John Chrysostom (above all in *Homily 24 on Cor.* and *Homily 48 on John*): "We are *this* body... not several bodies, but one single body." In a penetrating passage he insists on the indivisible bond uniting the eucharistic body and the koinonia of the afflicted members of the Body of Christ (*Homily on Mat.* 50.2-4). Theodore of Mopsoestia is among the most forceful in proclaiming the unifying power of the eucharist (*Homily 15*, no. 1 on the Mass, 40; *Homily*

16, no. 2 on the Mass, 24). Cyril of Alexandria chose realistic language in order to make clear that in the eucharistic koinonia all, with their individual peculiarities, are formed into a single body, the ecclesial Body of Christ (*Against Nestorius* 4.4-5; *Commentary on John* 11.11, ed. Pusey 735ff.; *On the Trinity* 1).

A place must be reserved here for Augustine; he is the master. In his most important writings on the subject (esp. *Sermons* 71,112,131,227,272; *Denis* 6; *Guelferbytanus* 7; *Treatises on John* 25,26), he explains how the sacramental body and the ecclesial body comprising all communicants are one and the same: "It is to what you are that you respond Amen" (*Sermon* 272); "it is the sacrament of our unity that you behold" (*Guelferbytanus* 7); "it is the Lord alone who bears us all within himself... receive what you are" (*Sermon* 272). However, to receive truly one must already be in unity. This unity is nothing less than the *communio* between Father and Son into which believers are, in the love of God, introduced by the Holy Spirit (*Sermon* 71,12,18). In order to receive the Lord's body, it is necessary to be part of it, most importantly by faith: "It is not what we see but what we believe that nourishes us" (*Sermon* 112.4); "believe, and you have eaten" (*Treatises on John* 25.12). No *communio* without eucharist, no eucharist without *communio*.

Towards the end of the patristic age John of Damascus summarized the position held in both East and West in a passage that has frequent recourse to the terms "koinonia" and the related verb *koinōnein* (*On Orthodoxy* 4.13; *PG* 94.1153). Other writings from all the early Christian traditions which make use of koinonia and *communio* to signify the act of reception in the eucharist do so only within an ecclesial context.

It was soon understood that to participate (*koinōnein*) at the same eucharistic table was to belong to the koinonia or *communio* which is the church. The next step was to regard exclusion from koinonia as severance from the church, as is clearly stated by Cyprian in *Letters* 55.6, 69.6, 75.14, and this expression came into common use. To be in the church is to be in koinonia (*communio*) and vice versa.

Tertullian insisted on the *communio* of each local church with the apostolic churches (*On the Prescription of Heretics* 21.7, 38.2), and he thereby gave to *communio* all of its ecclesiological dimensions. This overtone comes through at least implicitly in the majority of texts which identify "being in koinonia" (or *communio*) with "being in the church". To be in koinonia, to maintain *communio*, goes further than belonging to the local eucharistic assembly; it involves a close relationship with the whole multitude of churches. No one has expressed this idea more poignantly than Augustine: "As for me, I am in the church, which has for its members all the churches born and established thanks to the labour of the apostles, and all of them together noted down in the canonical writings. With the help which the Lord gives to me, I shall never abandon their *communio*, neither in Africa nor anywhere else. If in this *communio* there are traitors of any kind, show them to me" (*Against Cresconius* 3.35,39). It should be noted that alongside the use of "koinonia" (*communio*) to denote this "being together" of all the churches, in monastic circles the term was applied to the small community inspired by Pachomius. Its members sought to live in accordance with the ideal expressed in the "summaries" in Acts, the invitation being given to "all of you to embrace the common life following the example which was given us in the apostles' time" (*Letters* 295). A similar ideal was set forth by Augustine in his celebrated *regula*. In his theological treatises, Aquinas used the distinction between *communio* and *communicatio*: the church is the *communio* whose cause and perpetual source is God *communicating* a share in his own life through the Son and the Holy Spirit.

## CONCLUSION

At the end of this brief survey it should not be difficult to recognize in koinonia the deepest stratum within the church of God on earth, by means of which we are enabled to see God's fundamental gift to humanity. It is not only on the mystical level that a person who has received the Spirit is introduced into the koinonia of Father and Son; it is also on the practical level that this supreme grace takes form in a community that binds together a common faith, a fellowship of

sharing and of service, a common undertaking for the sake of the gospel and common acts of divine worship. In other words, all the biblical images which serve as representatives or models of the church are intended to convey the single reality which is *koinonia*.

See also **communion of saints**.

J.-M.R. TILLARD

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## KRAEMER, HENDRIK

B. 17 May 1888, Amsterdam, Netherlands; d. 11 Nov. 1965, Driebergen. Kraemer was the first director of the WCC's Ecumenical Institute in Bossey\* (1948-55), advocate of the “spiritual mobilization” of laity\* in the ecumenical movement (his 1958 book *Theology of the Laity* is a classic in the field) and one of the most influential Protestant thinkers of his time on the question of the relationship of the gospel to the great world religions and cultures.

Assisted by Suzanne de Diétrich, Kraemer taught courses at Bossey to young laypeople from many countries who had lived through the war years and were eager to take part in re-building their churches and nations. Afterwards, he was the leading figure of the institute *Kerk en Wereld* (“church and world”) in Driebergen, travelling and

lecturing widely and rendering pastoral services to parishes in the Netherlands.

W.A. Visser 't Hooft wrote of Kraemer that his “life work has so many different aspects that anyone who desires to write about him must first select which of Kraemer's varied contributions he will discuss. There is the philologist; there is the expert on Islam; there is the leader of the spiritual resistance against National Socialism; there is the fighter for the renewal of the Netherlands Reformed Church; there is the professor of theology who is really a layman and there is the layman who asks theological questions about modern culture; there is the first director of the Ecumenical Institute who gave shape to that new adventure; and there is, of course, the missionary, or rather the missionary thinker, strategist and statesman.”

After studying Javanese at the University of Leiden and Islam at El Azhar University in Cairo, Kraemer worked for the Dutch Bible Society in Indonesia from 1922 to 1937. His experiences there convinced him that the missionary should be a *guru kedewasaan* – a guide to maturity. Only if “mission fields” became indigenous churches would Christians be able to relate the Christian message to their social and cultural environment and be in responsible dialogue with neighbours of other faiths.

In 1937, Kraemer, who had received an honorary doctorate from the University of Utrecht the year before, was appointed professor of sociology of religion at Leiden. Later he was interned in the concentration camp of St Michielgestel for protesting the removal of two Jewish colleagues. After the war, he was a member of the delegation of the churches of the US, UK, France, Netherlands and Switzerland which met in Stuttgart with the new Council of the Evangelical Church of Germany and issued the Stuttgart declaration\* of guilt.

In preparation for its 1938 meeting in Tambaram, India, the International Missionary Council\* (IMC) commissioned Kraemer to write what became his best-known book, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, which influenced subsequent decades of missiological thinking. Insisting on “biblical realism”, Kraemer argued that “the radical religious realism of



the biblical revelation, in which all religious and moral life revolves around one point only, namely the creative and redemptive will of the living, holy, righteous God of love, the exclusive ground of nature and history, of man and the world, has to be the standard of reference". But while this "biblical realism" has been seen as an important contribution to the ecumenical vision of "the whole church with the whole gospel to the whole world", many subsequent missiologists have faulted Kraemer for over-emphasizing the exclusiveness of the Christian message and "its radical discontinuity" with other faiths, thus not doing sufficient justice to God's active presence in them (see **uniqueness of Christ**).

Kraemer was also a chief proponent of the plan, taken up by the IMC following its Willingen meeting (1947), of setting up regional study centres at which specialists could devote time to study, research and promotion of dialogue with representatives of living movements of thought outside the church.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ "The Church and the World of Religions and Cultures: Kraemer in Retrospect", *ER*, 41, 1, 1989 ■ C.F. Hallencreutz, *Kraemer towards Tambaram*, Lund, Gleerup, 1966 ■ A.Th. van Leeuwen, Hendrik Kraemer, *Pionier der Ökumene*, Basel, Basilea, 1962.

## KÜNG, HANS

B. 19 March 1928, Sursee, Switzerland. Küng, a controversial and widely influential Catholic theologian, has studied at the Gregorian University and the Institut catholique at the Sorbonne in Paris (doctorate, 1957). His published dissertation on Karl Barth and justification prompted new questioning of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation positions. At the university of Tübingen from 1960, he was professor of dogmatic and ecumenical theology in the Catholic faculty and director of the Institute for Ecumenical Research. In 1961 his popular best-seller on the ecumenical necessity of the renewal of the church through the upcoming Vatican Council II\* (*Konzil und Wiedervereinigung*, ET *The Council and Reunion*) was attacked by conservatives. Nevertheless, he was an official expert (*peritus*) for the theological commission at the Council.

His writings on the structures of the church and on infallibility generated a worldwide debate among theologians and church authorities. After censures, the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith finally declared in December 1979 that Küng could no longer be considered "a Catholic theologian", and it withdrew his canonical mission to teach Catholic theology. At Tübingen he continued to direct the Institute for Ecumenical Research until 1996.

TOM STRANSKY

■ H. Küng, *Christianity and World Religions*, New York, Doubleday, 1986 ■ *The Church*, London, Burns & Oates, 1968 ■ *Global Responsibility: In Search of a New World Ethic*, London, SMS, 1991 ■ *Infallible? An Inquiry*, London, Collins, 1971 ■ *Judaism*, New York, Crossroad, 1992 ■ *On Being a Christian*, London, Collins, 1978 ■ *Theology for the Third Millennium*, New York, Doubleday, 1988.

# L

## LABOUR

THE LABOUR movement is the product of the 19th-century industrial revolution in the West. To defend their interests and protect themselves from exploitation, those employed in the new manufacturing industries organized themselves in political parties and trade unions, thereby seeking to promote social justice and to benefit economically.

Defining the relation of the churches to this movement is complicated by geographical and confessional variations and by the difference between churches with a high proportion of working-class members and those more predominantly middle class. The influence of the latter on the labour movement has largely been indirect.

Ecumenical influence on the labour question has been very minimal. Despite such in-

ternational ecumenical gatherings as the Oxford Life and Work conference (1937), relations with the labour movement have on the whole been denominational and national.

The most interesting exception to this generalization has occurred in the United States, largely because of its more cosmopolitan society and its widespread church membership. The claim that in the US "the ecumenical movement and church support for labour developed hand in hand" could hardly be applied to any European country. Across US denominational boundaries a powerful concern for social justice developed from the end of the 19th century. George McClain writes: "With the flowering of the social gospel in the 1890s, the labour question for the first time became also a religious question. Outspoken church leaders

such as Vida Scudder, Washington Gladden, Richard T. Ely, George D. Heiron and Walter Rauschenbusch challenged *laissez-faire* economics and championed labour's right to organize."

Commitment to the social gospel waned in face of theological criticism of its too facile optimism about the possibility of establishing the kingdom of God\* by human effort, and US churches as a whole retreated from any pretence of being the voice of the labour movement. The most notable personal exception was probably Reinhold Niebuhr, whose early ministry among the workers of Detroit led to his developed theological and political realism, a combination which others have been slow to emulate.

The impetus for involvement of US churches in the labour movement came from outside the ranks of working people. The picture is different in the predominantly Roman Catholic countries of Europe. For example, in Italy, France, Spain and Ireland, working people have constituted the majority of those owing some kind of allegiance to the church, but their influence has been severely restricted by the official policy of the hierarchy. Reasons include Vatican concern to retain political power and its fear of communism.

Giorgio Girardet identifies different stages in relations between the Italian state and the Roman Catholic Church: "After the crisis of 1870 when Rome was occupied by the Italian army, with subsequent prohibition for Catholics to participate in political life, in 1891 the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Leo XII admitted, though paternalistically, the right of the workers to organize. From 1906 to 1914 a Democratic-Christian movement was created, prudently open to workers; and the first Catholic unions were created, without support from or against the will of a more conservatively oriented church."

After the first world war Pope Benedict XV allowed the formation of a new popular party under the inspiration of a Sicilian priest, Luigi Sturzo, who was general secretary of Catholic Social Action. It won over 100 seats in the national assembly and promised to become a leading promoter of working-class interests. However, this movement came to an abrupt end with the con-

cordat between Mussolini and Pope Pius XI in 1929. Henceforth conservative views prevailed in the Vatican; more informal groups had to advocate social change, without official ecclesiastical support.

Although 80% of the French population is claimed as Catholic, the separation of church and state in 1905 led to the rapid secularization\* of national life. But from within the church and among its working-class members, powerful voices have arisen for social justice, despite the conservative orientation of the hierarchy and the majority of its members. To quote Girardet again: "The French Catholic church has manifested from the 19th century a strong concern for what may be called the social question." The most important manifestation of this concern was the movement of worker-priests, who identified themselves with those engaged on the shop floor in industry. Beginning in 1943 with the Mission de France, the movement was terminated abruptly in 1954 by the intervention of the Vatican because of fears that it could lead to too close an alliance with the then powerful French Communist Party. Thus the Italian pattern of a hierarchy suppressing identification with working-class aspirations was repeated. Nevertheless, social witness continued through such organizations as Action catholique ouvrière and Jeunesse catholique.

In Latin America the stream of European immigration, particularly to the Atlantic coast, brought people who had been active in the labour movement in their countries of origin (esp. Italy and Spain), who introduced the trade-union movement in the incipient industrial proletariat of these countries. The churches were not paying much attention to this issue. The RCC had just produced the first declaration on the labour movement (*Rerum Novarum*), and the Protestant missions reflected a liberal view more interested in the entrepreneurial and educated sectors. However, the large percentage of Italian and Spanish immigrants in missionary churches in Argentina, Uruguay and Chile created a certain sympathy for the labour movement, expressed in their publications in the first two decades of the 20th century.

Since the 1930s the RCC developed Young Christian Workers. Less institutionally related to the RCC but adopting a philo-

sophical and ideological stance based on Catholic social doctrine, the Christian democratic trade unions later organized themselves as the Latin American Confederation of Workers, with its headquarters in Caracas, Venezuela, as an alternative both to the Marxist trade-union organizations and to the Regional Inter-American Organization of Workers, which was clearly related to the US trade-union movement. Among the Protestant churches the sector related to the ecumenical urban industrial mission\* has since the 1950s developed a relation to the trade unions.

The British story is very different. The working class has never been identified with the Church of England, and only a tiny minority with the Church of Scotland and the Free churches. The rise of the labour party in the early years of the 20th century and its dependence on the trade unions, with their leadership drawn from the ranks of the working class, meant that the churches have had only a peripheral relationship to these two arms of the labour movement. There are, however, qualifications to this generalization. In the 19th century the Free churches, particularly the Methodist, were the backbone of the old Liberal party, out of which the Labour party emerged and which it replaced as the main challenge to conservatism. Its early leaders included a number of Free churchmen; a case can be made for saying that the Labour party was born out of Methodism and its reaction to conservatism and the Anglican church. However, Free church influence diminished over the century, despite the involvement of prominent Free church lay leaders. Roman Catholic involvement in labour has closely paralleled that of the continental churches.

From outside the ranks of the labour movement significant voices have been raised within the Anglican church to champion the cause of the working class, most notably the Christian socialist movement of the 19th century, primarily associated with the name of Frederick Maurice. And still more significantly in the interwar years, William Temple, later to become archbishop of Canterbury, attacked conservative complacency in public utterances and in his famous paperback *Christianity and Social Order*. With his friend R.H. Tawney he took a

leading part in the workers educational association. Tawney, an Anglican layman, was recognized during these years as the leading theoretician of the labour party, even writing its manifesto for the general election of 1929.

In so far as a generalization is possible, it may be said that only Roman Catholicism has had a hold on the working population at large. They have played a passive role, discouraged by a hierarchy entrenched in the perpetuation of its own power structures and fearful of the spread of Marxism. Such influence as other churches have exerted has largely been from middle-class origins.

In light of the marked right-wing tendency in the West following the collapse of Marxist regimes and the weakening of the trade-union movement, an underclass of the underprivileged is now emerging which comprises the unemployed, one-parent families and ethnic minorities. Churches are beginning to see their fidelity to the gospel in terms of "a bias towards the poor" (see **poor**), thus aligning themselves with the clear emphasis of the WCC and reflecting in a different context the liberation theology\* of Latin America and the church base communities\* throughout the third world. The traditional labour movement has scarcely begun to come to terms with this new agenda.

See also **capitalism, socialism, work**.

PAUL ROWNTREE CLIFFORD

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## LACEY, JANET

B. 23 Oct. 1903, Sunderland, UK; d. 11 July 1988, UK. An ecumenical administrator, writer, dramatist and speaker, Lacey produced her first play at the age of 13 with 25



children in the local Wesleyan chapel. She studied drama and elocution at a small private drama school. As a young woman she saw poverty in the raw among the Durham miners in the strike of 1926: "I was shattered, and drama did not seem to matter any more." After training at the YWCA as a youth leader, she worked for many years with youth clubs, employing her dramatic talents to help build membership. From 1931 to 1945 she worked in a vast housing estate in Dagenham, Essex, where 200,000 artisans had been uprooted from the East End of London. Later she was secretary of the youth department of the British Council of Churches, where she encouraged youth to be aware of community responsibilities, including the quarter million refugees who had come to Britain. From 1952 to 1968 Lacey was director of Christian Aid, the inter-church aid and refugee service of the British Council of Churches. During these years she built Christian Aid into an internationally recognized organization, raising millions of pounds annually through drama, advertising, films, television, concerts in Trafalgar Square with folk singers and a variety of other innovative techniques.

For the WCC's Evanston assembly (1954), Lacey wrote a drama called *By the*

*Waters of Babylon*: the play was later published in Britain and performed in churches all over the country. For New Delhi (1961), she produced a film for the interchurch aid presentation. From 1961 to 1968 she was vice-chairperson of the WCC's Division of Inter-church Aid, Refugee and World Service. She was what she called the "token female" president for the world conference on Church and Society in Geneva, 1966. Again acting as impresario, she arranged for director Patrick Garland to write and produce a play about revolutionaries called *The Rebel*, which was performed at the conference.

A layperson, Janet Lacey was the first woman to preach in St Paul's Cathedral, London, and in St George's Cathedral in Jerusalem. Although brought up as a Methodist, she became an Anglican. In the 1950s and 1960s, when women were seldom found in leadership roles in the WCC, she was an exception. Her keen mind, her gifts of diplomacy and courage, and her eloquence earned her a place in the male-dominated structures of the ecumenical movement.

BETTY THOMPSON

## LAITY

"NEVER in church history... has the role and responsibility of the laity in church and world been a matter of so basic, systematic, comprehensive and intensive discussion in the total oikoumene as today" (Hendrik Kraemer, 1961). The re-discovery of the laity was probably the most important aspect of the renewal\* of the church in the 1950s and 1960s.

## DEFINITION

In the history of Christianity the concept of laypeople as it is now understood was a later development. Only from the 3rd and especially the 4th century onwards did the term gradually become part of ecclesiastical language, usually referring to what is profane, distinguishing the laity from the priests/clergy and deacons.

Laypeople are the unordained members of the church.\* That is the most common definition of the word "laity". The problem with it is its negative character: laypeople are

defined by the lack of ordination,\* the lack of training and competence, and thus are seen as being secondary to the ordained members of the church. This misconception of their place and role in the church has often led to negative connotations regarding the ministry of the laity. Indeed, throughout church history the clergy has seen the laity mainly as the objects of its preaching, teaching and pastoral care, and theologians have not developed a positive description of the function of the laity. Very often laypeople have had to assert themselves against the clergy (see **laity/clergy**). Lay movements fought the clericalization of the church in the middle ages and during the early stages of the Reformation. The Reformation proclaimed the biblical concept of the priesthood of all believers (1 Pet. 2:9).

There is no exact equivalent in biblical vocabulary for the word "lay" or "laity". The Greek term *laikos* as noun or adjective appears only in the writings of the fathers (Clement of Rome in 95). But the word *laos* from which it derives has an important place in biblical writing. In the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) it is predominantly used for the people of God,\* Israel; in the New Testament it refers to Christians, the people of God including both Jews and gentiles. In the church, therefore, *laikos* means "pertaining to the community chosen in Christ" (Hans-Herman Walz).

The ecumenical movement uses the biblical concept of the people of God in order to define the laity not by comparison with the ordained clergy, the theologians, the professional church workers, but by a new appreciation of the church in the world (see **church and world**). The real battles of the faith today are being fought in factories and shops, offices and farms, in political parties, government agencies and countless homes; in the press, radio, television, and in the relationship between nations. It is often said that the church should go into these spheres, but the church is in fact already there. Laypeople are "those members of the church, both men and women, who earn their livelihood in a secular job and who, therefore, spend most of their working hours in a 'worldly' occupation". "The phrase 'the ministry of the laity' expresses the privilege

of the whole church to share in Christ's ministry to the world" (Evanston 1954).

### TOWARDS THE RE-DISCOVERY OF THE LAITY

One of the roots of the 20th-century ecumenical movement was the ecumenical lay movements founded in the 19th century: the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association and the Student Christian Movement. John R. Mott, himself a layman and leader in these worldwide movements, called for "liberating the lay forces of Christianity" in order to participate in the missionary task of the church. Also in the Roman Catholic Church there has been a new emphasis on the laity. In 1922 Pius XI, in his pastoral letter *Ubi Arcana*, called on the laity "to participate in the hierarchical apostolate" and proclaimed the foundation of the Catholic lay movement Action catholique.

Another reason for the re-discovery of the laity was the world situation: the breaking down of the corpus Christianum and growing secularization,\* as recognized by the Jerusalem meeting of the International Missionary Council in 1928. J.H. Oldham, in preparing the Oxford world conference on "Church, Community and State" in 1937, pointed to the role of the laity as a crucial matter of ecumenical concern: "If the church is to be an effective force in the social and political sphere, our first task is to laicize our thought about it. We stand before a great historic task – the task of restoring the lost unity between worship and work."

Another impulse for bringing the laity on to the ecumenical agenda came from the founding of lay academies\* as attempts for re-thinking and renewal. Such institutions appeared in both parts of Germany after 1945 and in Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands, France, Italy and Scotland. They were centres for dialogue among laypeople of different professions and functions, who tried to understand the relevance of the gospel in their secular activities. Even before the foundation of the WCC, in 1946 the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey\* near Geneva had been opened, led by Suzanne de Diétrich and Hendrik Kraemer, for a similar purpose: "The laity, men and women, had discovered a new vision of their responsibility for expressing the true nature and task of

the church, not only within its own fellowship, but in the world in which the church has been set and their own lives are lived." The German Kirchentag movement, also a post-war phenomenon, initiated by a layman, Reinhold von Thadden-Trieglaff, was another form of church renewal which emphasized the vocation of the laity.

### THE LAITY DEPARTMENT OF THE WCC

It was in the context of these ecumenical developments that a committee on the "significance of the laity in the church" was appointed at the first assembly of the WCC in Amsterdam in 1948, with Kraemer as its secretary. The report underlines the need for "relevant Christianity" in the modern secularized world: "Only by the witness of a spiritually intelligent and active laity can the church meet the modern world in its actual perplexities and life situations." In 1949 Walz was appointed as WCC staff person responsible for a Secretariat for Laymen's Work. He organized a European laymen's conference in Bad Boll, Federal Republic of Germany (1951), followed by a North American conference in Buffalo (1952), and published a bulletin *Laymen's Work* (1951-55).

This secretariat and the Ecumenical Institute increasingly became the focal point for pioneer thinking and experimentation regarding the ministry of the laity. During the first post-war years the attention was on Europe and North America, but soon it became clear that it was a burning issue in the churches of all continents. When the second assembly of the WCC at Evanston in 1954 was planned, the rediscovery of the laity became one of the six major subjects. The assembly report on it focused on the Christian in his or her vocation\* but also made an attempt to define the ministry of the laity and to see its implications for the renewal of the life and structure of the church (see **ministry in the church**).

Evanston also acknowledged the importance of the issue by replacing the provisional Secretariat for Laymen's Work with a regular Department on the Laity, of which Hans-Ruedi Weber became the secretary (1955-61). He edited a new periodical, *Laity* (from 1959 onward co-edited with Madeleine Barot from the Department on

the Cooperation of Men and Women), in which laypeople from all traditions and regions discussed and shared experiences. The publication had a wide circulation and considerable impact on the ecumenical thinking of laypeople and church leaders throughout the world. The ongoing studies of the department were reflected in the topics dealt with, which included laity training, the house church, saints in everyday life, Christians in power structures, stewardship concepts, the role of the laity in church history, the world of tomorrow. In 1959 one issue was devoted to Asia and reported on the inaugural assembly of the East Asia Christian Conference in Kuala Lumpur, which decided to establish a standing committee on the witness of the laity.

In Africa the Laity department played an important role in the founding of the Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation in 1958, a centre for study, leadership training and worship with special reference to the laity. Mindolo "attempts to relate the Christian faith to the mainstream of life in Africa today" (Peter Matthews, first director).

The increasing influence of the work of the Laity department was obvious at the New Delhi assembly in 1961, where the ministry of the laity was a central issue in all three sections: witness, service and unity. Under the theme "The Laity: The Church in the World", three laypersons addressed the assembly. And the message from New Delhi states: "The real letter written to the world today does not consist of words. We Christian people, wherever we are, are a letter from Christ to the world." The majority of Christians are laypeople, whose witness comes through their daily lives, work and relationships wherever they are. New Delhi called for full lay participation in the ecumenical movement. Several subsequent sessions of the WCC's central committee dealt with questions relating to the various ministries of the laity.

New Delhi also decided that the Department on Evangelism, with the cooperation of the Laity department, should undertake a study on the "missionary structure of the congregation",\* clearly a consequence of the new understanding of the church in the world. During the time of the Second Vatican Council the Laity department cooper-

ated closely with the related Roman Catholic bodies. In 1964 a joint consultation took place in Glion on "The Ministry of the Church".

The ecumenical theology of the laity as the people of God had prepared a new approach to the world as the place of God's action. The emphasis of the Uppsala assembly (1968) was on the dilemmas and hopes of the world, on development,\* justice\* and peace\* issues, and on the participation of Christians in God's renewal of the world. Soon after the assembly new programmes and commissions were created: the Programme to Combat Racism\* (1969) and the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development (1970), of which C.I. Itty, who had worked for several years with the Laity department, became the director.

In a sense, Uppsala was a turning point. Further consideration of the laity and their self-understanding became less important than the content of their mission and service in the world in the struggle against racial, economic and political injustices. During a re-structuring of the WCC in 1971, with the integration of the World Council of Christian Education, the Laity department was absorbed in the Sub-unit on Renewal and Congregational Life. Thus began a period when the word "laity" disappeared from ecumenical discussions. The main emphasis of the sub-unit was spiritual and liturgical renewal; it conducted workshops and related to church base communities\* and networks. It had a desk for lay and study centres, which functioned as a secretariat for the World Collaboration Committee for Christian Lay Centres, Academies and Movements for Social Concern (WCOLC), founded in Crete in 1972. The academy movement has spread into many parts of the world, and continental associations have been formed.

### ACADEMIES, LAY CENTRES, COURSES

The origins of the World Collaboration Committee go back to the first course for leaders in lay training (CLLT) in 1968, sponsored by the directors association of evangelical academies and lay institutes in Europe and the WCC Laity department: lay trainers from Africa, Asia and Latin America saw what was being done in Europe, which enabled them to understand better their own

work. A second course took place in 1970. In Africa and Asia CLLT participants and other leaders began organizing their own regional associations, partly as a consequence of the new self-confidence that resulted from participation in the CLLTs.

In 1972, representatives of academies and lay centres who attended a WCC consultation on centres for social concern and related Christian movements at the Orthodox academy in Crete, Greece, set up the World Collaboration Committee. Originally composed of African, Asian and European associations, it grew into a worldwide network, offering opportunities for an exchange of experiences, renewal of faith, and encouragement and hope.

The impetus for the establishment of the WCOLC came from the associations of Africa and Asia (both founded 1970). The committee always operated jointly with the WCC. At its 20th meeting in 1997, it concluded an evaluation of its work since 1972, and decided to take a new name: OIKOSNET – a global ecumenical network of Christian laity centres, academies and movements for social concern working for an inclusive, just, participatory and sustainable community and society. Today, about 600 centres are related to the WCC, and some 300 to the regional associations. Most are ecumenically oriented and committed to the renewal of the churches.

OIKOSNET is currently focusing on the WCC's Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV), and on a world gathering in 2005 to evaluate work done so far around the DOV, share findings and evaluate achievements and obstacles at mid-decade point; to support and strengthen one another; and to plan input for the next WCC assembly. There are plans to hold a global course for lay leadership training every five years.

Since the evaluation of the regional CLLTs, the African association has focused on training-of-trainers CLLTs.

The European association organized a CLLT in France in 1998 on the theme "Globalization and Ecumenical Action", at which participants developed an ecumenical response for the lay centre movement to engage the dynamics of globalization.

The courses and programmes organized by the World Collaboration Committee/

OIKOSNET aim to equip participants to become dynamic agents of social development in their countries in the light of the Christian faith; to help them understand the nature, problems and forces at work within personal, societal and global dimensions; and to enable them to develop styles and methods of involvement which put the Christian faith into the context of local and regional situations. The courses offer opportunity for encounter and exposure, and are thus different from seminary courses.

### LAY PARTICIPATION TOWARDS INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

In 1992, as a result of re-structuring of the WCC following the 1991 Canberra assembly, the ecumenical concept of the laity re-appeared under the stream on Lay Participation towards Inclusive Community. The laity issue no longer implied the old distinction between the church and the world and hence the contrast between the clergy and church office bearers on one side and the laity on the other. Instead, the main emphasis was now on the wider question of participatory structures in the church and in society. One of the key programme priorities of the stream on Lay Participation was the development of a new profile of the laity, which was to emerge from a number of consultations.

The meeting in Montreat, North Carolina, USA, in 1993 was a historic moment in the story of the ecumenical lay movement. The issue of the laity was re-discovered after a long period of silence, and the discussion moved from the concept of the post-war period to beginning to bridge the gap between spirituality\* and secularization, koinonia and community, the promise of the kingdom and the struggle for justice, peace and integrity of creation.\* Montreat resulted in a new focus on ecumenical learning, laity formation and lay training leadership, and a new impetus for lay training courses.

A special plenary session on the laos at the WCC's central committee in Johannesburg in 1994 highlighted the ecumenical concept of the laity and its new profile. The discussion underlined that further work was needed on the clarification of the terms, especially in view of the strong ecclesiological implications attached to the term "laity",

and on the general issue of lay movements and their relationship with the church.

In 1995, an international course in lay training leadership for women in Brazil focused on questions of justice and sustainability, particularly the debt issue and climate change.

Marking the 50th anniversary of the WCC and the 500th of Vasco da Gama's voyage around the world, in 1998 Asian and African centres organized a missionary journey to Europe, specifically to visit churches, banks and the institutions of the European Union.

Another result of the Johannesburg plenary was the course in lay training leadership in Zimbabwe in 1998 under the theme "Being Communities of Hope", which included exposure visits to South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and led to a covenanting document entitled "Towards a Shared Vision for Our Work as Laity".

### LAITY IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

The idea that laypeople have only an inadequate knowledge of their faith\* and therefore need the constant help of the ordained ministry is quite alien to the Orthodox tradition. Therefore the Orthodox member churches of the WCC shared readily in the ecumenical re-discovery of the laity. Several Orthodox lay movements like the Russian Orthodox Student Christian Movement in France, Germany and the USA; the Zoe brotherhood and Aktines movement in Greece; and Syndesmos\* in the Middle East were related to international lay movements. Orthodox academies were founded in Crete and Finland.

In the Orthodox tradition all members of the church are qualitatively equal in receiving God's grace and in realizing it as a new life. The laity is not unordained according to Orthodox tradition. At baptism\* they receive the anointing of the Holy Spirit\* in the sacrament of chrismation and participate as members of the Body of Christ in the royal priesthood (1 Pet. 2:9). The important discovery of post-war Orthodoxy was that God is Lord both in the church and in the world. The life of the world itself was seen to be of significance to the gospel. In the eucharist the whole world is presented to God. "The whole church participates in the priesthood

of Christ and in his continuing shepherdly ministry in the world" (Paul Verghese, later Metropolitan Mar Gregorios). "The laymen can be, must be and are, by what they say and by the example they give, the best witnesses of Christ to non-Christians and non-believers" (Vitali Borovoy).

### THE LAY APOSTOLATE IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

In 1922 Pope Pius XI called the laypeople "to participate in the hierarchical apostolate"; in 1946 Pope Pius XII spoke of the laity as "not only belonging to the church but being the church". Under his pontificate two world congresses on the lay apostolate took place in Rome, in 1951 and 1957. They emphasized the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the church and their calling to be evangelists to their fellow human beings and to humanize the conditions of the world. In 1959 a permanent committee for international congresses of the lay apostolate was formed by Pope John XXIII.

Vatican II\* approved officially what had developed, and in several statements it underlined the importance of the lay apostolate. The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (1964), which includes a chapter on the laity, begins by stating that all who are baptized are the people of God, the holy priesthood (1 Pet. 2:4-10), and all of humankind is called to become the people of God. Following a chapter on the hierarchical structure of the church, the chapter on the laity describes the particular function of laypeople as leaven and salt: "The laity is called in particular to make the church present and effective in those places and circumstances where only through them can she become the salt of the earth" (no. 33).

The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (1965) argues that because of the growing autonomy of many realms of human life, the work of the lay apostolate is more important than ever before and needs to be intensified. The church has one mission and many different services. The realms of service – family, community, society, profession and politics – and the different forms in groups, congregations, lay movements and the training for the lay apostolate are outlined. Finally the Pastoral Constitution on

the Church in the Modern World (1965) affirms that involvement in cultural, social, economic, political and international affairs is to be seen as a task of the church in the world. "The people of God and the human race in whose midst it lives render service to each other. Thus the mission of the church will show its religious, and by that very fact, its supremely human character" (no. 11). In 1989, following the bishops' synod of 1988, Pope John Paul II appealed in a pastoral letter for a clear distinction between ordained and unordained members of the church.

### THEOLOGICAL CONCEPTS OF THE MINISTRY OF THE LAITY

No systematic ecumenical theology on the laity has yet been evolved, but many new theological insights have been gained. Nothing less than a "re-defined ecclesiology" (Yves Congar, Kraemer) was required in considering the ministry of the laity as God's action in the world. New insights have come in at least four areas.

*The ministry of the laity.* "We must understand anew the implications of the fact that we are all baptized, that, as Christ came to minister, so must all Christians become ministers of his saving purpose according to the particular gift of the Spirit which each has received, as messengers of the hope received in Christ. Therefore in daily living and work the laity are not mere fragments of the church who are scattered about in the world and who come together again for worship, instruction and specifically Christian fellowship on Sundays. They are the church's representatives, no matter where they are. It is the laity who draw together work and worship, it is they who manifest in word and action the lordship of Christ over the world, which claims so much of their time and energy and labour. This, and not some new order or organization, is the ministry of the laity" (Evanston 1954).

*The church – gathered and dispersed.* The church has traditionally been regarded from the aspect of the gathered flock, while the fact that it lives and works mainly as a scattered community is largely neglected. Two biblical images of the Christian community – the salt of the earth and the city on the hill – have been used to illuminate the two poles of the life of the Christian com-

munity. The church's function as salt of the earth can be carried out only by the laity. The church is seen in terms not of an established institution but of a "pilgrim people", constantly on the move into the world but also returning to the city on the mountain, where God's people come together for worship (WCC, Galyatetö 1956).

*The function of the ordained ministry.* Trained theologians and ordained ministers are in a bad position to be evangelists: they are in a good position to be the biblical and theological instructors of the evangelists. "It is not the duty of the laity to help the pastor to carry out his pastoral work, it is the pastor's duty to equip the laity to carry out their work in the world. The work of the laity is not secondary to that of the pastor, but vice versa" (Weber). Laypeople do not leave the church when they leave the church building. They are fulltime Christians just as much as the pastor is.

*Christ in the world.* God loved the world so much that he gave his Son. It is the world that matters. "Christ the light did not remain outside the world to illuminate it from above, but entered into human life, conquered the darkness and radiates light from within. This says to us that wherever we are in the world, God is there before us – the light is already there. The responsibility of the laity is to serve as reflecting mirrors or focusing lenses, to beam the light into all parts of the life of the world" (New Delhi).

A new form of lay activities has emerged in church base communities, peace movements, solidarity and ecological groups and the women's movement, often outside traditional church structures, in dialogue or co-operation with non-Christians. What was said about the laity in the churches could be said of these groups too: "The laity are members of God's people, specifically God's people present in the world" (Weber).

ELISABETH ADLER and JONAH KATONEENE

■ *All Are Called: Towards a Theology of the Laity*, London, CIO, 1985 ■ N. Apostola ed., *A Letter from Christ to the World: An Exploration of the Role of the Laity in the Church Today*, WCC, 1998 ■ Y.M.J. Congar, *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat* (ET *Lay People in the Church: A Study for a Theology of the*

*Laity*, London, Bloomsbury, 1957) ■ M. Gibbs & T.R. Morton, *God's Frozen People*, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1964 ■ H. Kraemer, *A Theology of the Laity*, London, Lutterworth, 1958 ■ "The Laity", *Student World*, 3, 1956 ■ *Lay Participation towards Inclusive Community, Report to the WCC's Eighth Assembly*, 1998 ■ S.C. Neill & H.R. Weber, *The Layman in Christian History*, London, SCM Press, 1963 ■ K. Raiser, "Laity in the Ecumenical Movement: Redefining the Profile", *ER*, 45, 4, 1993 ■ "Re-opening the Ecumenical Discussion of the Laity", *ER*, 45, 4, 1993 ■ W. Simpfendorfer, *The New Fisherfolk*, WCC, 1988.

## LAITY/CLERGY

THE SEMANTIC field covered by these words is immense, and their meanings vary, depending both on the sociologist's analysis of them as an outsider and on the theologian's interpretation of them from the inside.

Sociologists note a difference among church members between those with a function or special status (the clergy) and other people (the laity). They ask whether that difference is connected with certain professional qualifications of members of the clergy, with the exercise of legal or moral authority,\* with the existence of "clergy" as a social group, and so on.

For their part, theologians raise questions about whether the nature of this difference lies in the exercise of some power or "divine right" or in just serving the community, or whether it has some symbolic or "sacred" quality and so on. To a great extent the theory and practice of the various churches in this regard are a historical legacy: social positions and theological arguments have conditioned each other within it.

For sociologists the variety of models is more closely bound up with socio-political situations than with the confessions. The clergy of national churches (paid by the state and perhaps appointed by the civil authorities) are on a similar footing in Lutheran Sweden, Orthodox Greece or (until recently at least) Roman Catholic Spain – just as elsewhere the Roman Catholic worker-priest or the émigré Orthodox priest who works to earn his living or the Protestant pastor in Japan scarcely counts as part of the "clergy".

In contrast, theologians see a disparity between the great Christian confessions. In this connection, a significant gulf has come into existence between the old (Roman Catholic and Orthodox) churches and most of the churches which resulted from the Reformation, with the Anglican communion occupying a special position.

Among the Roman Catholics or the Orthodox, developments in the theology of the ordained ministry led to an accentuation of the difference between a cleric who has received ordination\* and a layperson, as the sacramental interpretation of ordination leads to its being understood as inner transformation of the persons concerned (the theory of *character [indelibilis]* which we find in scholastic theology). In reaction to this view, the Protestant churches stress the fundamental sameness of all baptized persons, the difference between ministers and other people being only an organizational matter, so that it can be said (etymologically, at least) that ministers are also laypeople, i.e. one of the people.

During the last few decades the Roman Catholic Church has again stressed the importance of the idea of the priesthood of all believers, while some of its theologians have been warning against improperly ontological interpretations of "character". In the same period all the churches have felt the need or desire for more active participation\* by all baptized persons in the life of congregations and in the ministry of evangelism.\* Thus the gulf between Roman Catholics and Protestants is in this connection less noticed in practice than it is emphasized in theory.

For the sake of rather more completeness, an ambiguous use of the terms within the Roman Catholic Church must be noted: generally not only ordained ministers but also those persons described as religious (monks, recluses or members of other communities) are distinguished from those called the laity. It should finally be noted that, from a totally different standpoint, the word "lay" is used in some countries not to refer to a person's status within the Christian community but to describe facts or people which are, in a secularized world, alien or even hostile to the church.

See also **church order, diaconate, episcopacy, laity, ministry in the church, presbyterate, priesthood, religious communities.**

JEAN ROGUES

■ Y. Congar, *Jalons pour une théologie du laïc* (ET *Lay People in the Church*, rev. ed., London, Chapman, 1965) ■ H. Kraemer, *A Theology of the Laity*, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1958 ■ D.N. Power, *Gifts That Differ: Lay Ministries Established and Unestablished*, New York, Pueblo, 1980.

## LAMBETH QUADRILATERAL

THE SO-CALLED Lambeth Quadrilateral is a four-part statement of the basic elements which the Anglican communion\* wants honoured in any plans for reunion with other churches. Originally intended as a basis for organic union\* within American denominationalism,\* the four points were accepted by a general convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church at Chicago in 1886. This church affirmed these elements to be "the substantial deposit of Christian faith and order committed by Christ and his apostles to the church unto the end of the world".

"As inherent parts of this sacred deposit, and therefore as essential to the restoration of unity among the divided branches of Christendom, we account the following, to wit: (1) the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the revealed word of God; (2) the Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith; (3) the two sacraments – baptism and the supper of the Lord – ministered with unfailing use of Christ's words of institution and of the elements ordained by him; (4) the historic episcopate locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of his church."

The 1888 Lambeth conference of the Anglican communion adopted the Chicago Quadrilateral but slightly altered the wording and added the Apostles' Creed\* to the second article. The 1920 Lambeth conference incorporated the Lambeth Quadrilateral into its "Appeal 'for Reunion' to all Christian People", though now the fourth article was more cautiously worded: "A ministry acknowledged by every part of the church as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit but also the commission of Christ and the authority of the whole body." A "claim" follows that the episcopate alone can meet these criteria.

The 1958 Lambeth conference endorsed this form, though the more general use of the phrase “Lambeth Quadrilateral” usually is thought to be including the historic episcopate as a *sine qua non* within the text, and not as a lesser commentary on it. In the Lambeth Quadrilateral’s role as a clear statement of Anglican desiderata in the reunion of the churches, some have criticized it either as being too minimal or as making too much of the historical episcopate. Arguably, the Lambeth Quadrilateral has served its purpose well, for example, in the coming into being of the united churches of the Indian sub-continent.

COLIN BUCHANAN

■ J. Draper ed., *Communion and Episcopacy*, Cuddesdon, UK, Ripon College, 1988 ■ R.B. Slocum, “The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral: Development in an Anglican Approach to Christian Unity”, *JES*, 33, 4, 1996 ■ J.R. Wright ed., *Quadrilateral at One Hundred*, Cincinnati OH, Forward Movement, 1988.

## LAND

AWARENESS of the fundamental significance of the land has played a major role in the cultural, social and religious history of humankind. In different forms, almost all cultures have celebrated the life-giving power and beauty of the earth, offered it sacrifices, offerings and libations, recognized it as primal Mother and tireless fountain of existence and related her to the crucial moments of human life (birth, marriage, fertility and death). This “spirituality” of the land must be recognized and honoured as we face the crucial questions of land rights, land reform or the relation of peoples to “their” lands.

The biblical creation stories point to the inseparable relationship between the three actors that are central to the whole biblical story: God, Adam (humankind) and the land. The last, as the solid space and location but also as a determining factor in the development of this history, is created by God on “the third day”. Then God creates humankind and commends the land to it as a gift, a responsibility and a task (Gen. 1-2). As the story develops (Gen. 3-4), however, the land and its fruit become an object of temptation and strife for humankind and, as a consequence, a place of suffering and a threat.

Land as promise and gift, as task and demand, and as temptation and threat is ever-present in the biblical history of Israel. As promise it accompanies the people as landless sojourners in the desert or as temporary dwellers in slavery in a foreign land. As gift it is appropriated and celebrated in the conquest and occupation of the promised land. As task and demand it occupies a prominent place in the law. As the temptation for greed and injustice and as threat of a new landlessness, it is prominent in the message of the prophets.

The gift of land to Adam is not exhausted with the land of Israel, for every people has its land. As the universality of Yahweh’s rule is more clearly perceived, it becomes evident that the same God of Israel has brought the peoples to their land (Amos 9:7-15) and determined “the boundaries of their habitation”, as Paul would put it (Acts 17:26, RSV). Biblical thinking thus affirms an indissoluble bond between the people and the land.

In our contemporary situation, the churches have faced serious theological and ethical questions related to land. It is unfortunate, however, that modern theology, in both its confessional and its ecumenical expressions, has hardly developed a theology of the land or seriously grappled with the theological dimensions of the concrete issues now needing resolution. The proper concern to recover the biblical message of the relation of God and humankind to time and history has overshadowed an equally biblical concern, namely, the relation of God and humankind to “space” as a dimension of God’s revelation and of human identity.

## THE USE OF THE LAND

The land itself can be abused and must be protected. The Deuteronomic and Levitical regulations prescribe the “rest” that the land should enjoy – what could be called the rights of the land – in terms of the rights of the poor\* and the question of justice.\*

The appropriation, distribution, care and use of the land have taken very different forms through human history but have remained a significant human issue, frequently connected with religious faith, doctrine and ritual. With capitalism,\* however, land becomes a source of profit. The accumulation

of land, therefore, is not merely a form of social prestige but an investment from which the greatest possible profit is sought. This perspective has led to the dispossession of the land in the colonized territories and to the accumulation of land in the hands of a few people or families or, recently, agribusiness companies, creating masses of landless peasants. Land reforms (see below) aim at redressing these situations.

### LAND RIGHTS

Over the centuries, aboriginal and indigenous peoples\* have been brutally subjugated as a result of colonization and national development. Pseudo-philosophical and religious theories of racial inferiority were used to justify the large-scale genocide perpetrated in the Americas within decades after the arrival of the Europeans. Those who survived were systematically denied title to and use of land. Their land was expropriated (in Mexico, Puerto Rico, Guatemala); they were forcibly relocated (in Brazil, Paraguay, Philippines); treaties with them were abrogated (by Canada, USA, Aotearoa New Zealand) and they were subjected to ill-conceived and badly administered policies of assimilation (in Chile, Australia, Colombia), if not genocide. The rising economic value of their lands has led to increased national and private appropriation for cattle raising, mining, the construction of roads or the opening of forests to logging in lands once considered the exclusive territories of indigenous peoples (see **colonialism**).

Even where governments have guaranteed reserves to indigenous peoples, such guarantees have not generally included rights to the natural resources of their land, and the laws have not included the provision of resources, tools and adequate (bilingual) education necessary for a more profitable use of the land. In Australia the government has given only limited protection to sites of religious or cultural importance. In the USA, Australia and Canada, various agreements about royalty payments and compensation have been made, but governments retain the final decision over whether and under what conditions mining will occur on the lands of indigenous peoples.

Over the past 20 years, indigenous peoples have organized themselves nationally

and internationally to defend their rights, especially their land rights. Simultaneously, international conferences jointly sponsored by indigenous and non-governmental organizations, including the churches, have increasingly argued that establishing and preserving land rights is the first step towards ensuring the physical and cultural survival of indigenous peoples.

Important international agreements include the Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention and Recommendation, adopted by the International Labour Organization in 1957; the International NGO Conference on Discrimination against Indigenous Populations in the Americas (1977); and the 1989 revision of the 1957 ILO convention, rewritten because of indigenous opposition to the "integrationist" tendency of the 1977 document. In 1982 the UN itself set up an open working group on indigenous peoples with advisory capacity to the UN Commission on Human Rights. Its task was to provide hearings for the indigenous peoples and to draft UN standards with a view to producing a declaration on the rights of indigenous people. That draft was finally completed in 1997 and has been accepted by indigenous nations and communities as "the minimum standard for their survival". It is still being debated by governments, however, before it is finally sent to the UN general assembly.

Churches have frequently legitimized the colonial policies of their respective countries and have even entertained doctrines of racial inferiority of indigenous peoples, thus supporting discrimination and subjugation. In contrast, prophetic voices have sometimes denounced indigenous oppression, genocide and forced exile in slavery, particularly in the Americas and Africa. Colonization made missionary societies\* owners of land that traditionally belonged to indigenous inhabitants, which created dominance-dependence relationships between them. Geographical concentration (e.g., in the "reductions" in Latin America) was seen as facilitating the missionary goal of evangelization. Indigenous people reacted either by refusing evangelization and abandoning huge areas of their traditional territories in order to preserve their own cultural patterns or by reluctantly accepting evangelization and reloca-

tion, thus losing part of their territory. Over the last few decades, some missions have inserted in their titles a clause promising to transfer the land in their possession to indigenous communities free of charge when it is legally allowed. Churches are working with indigenous peoples to seek legal formulas for their collective ownership of the land and guarantee of their sovereignty.

Through its Programme to Combat Racism\* the WCC has supported many groups of indigenous peoples in their struggle for land rights. In 1971 and 1977 it also sponsored two symposia, both held in Barbados, of anthropologists, ethnologists and representatives of the indigenous peoples, who discussed the situation of indigenous peoples in South America. Participants' severe criticism of church and mission activities as interfering in the life of the Indian societies provoked considerable criticism and continues to be debated.

In 1979 the WCC central committee received a PCR staff document on "Land Rights and Racially Oppressed Peoples", which it requested be made available to WCC member churches and to organizations of the racially oppressed and their support groups, particularly in Australia and Brazil, on which the document focused. The 1980 WCC world consultation on racism\* devoted considerable attention to land rights, considering the issue in relation to the people's right to sources of water, minerals, clean air and political rights, including the right to self-government.

In 1982 the WCC central committee adopted its first statement on land rights, declaring: "Indigenous people claim that the recognition of prior ownership of their traditional territories is fundamental to the issue of land rights. Thus for them, land rights must include the right to political power through self-government and economic power through the right to choose what happens on the land... The indigenous people's struggle for land rights is challenging the church to be faithful to its gospel of reconciliation and to the biblical affirmation of the creation of all human beings in the image of God." The committee recommended that member churches commit significant financial and human resources to the struggle of indigenous peoples for land rights and that

they become politically involved on the side of indigenous peoples against powers which seek to deny their land rights and human rights.

The issue of land rights was also on the agenda of the Vancouver (1983) and Canberra (1991) assemblies. In 1989 the WCC sponsored the first international indigenous meeting on land, called "Land Is Our Life", held in Darwin, Australia.

## LAND REFORM

Both in the Bible and in most ancient cultures, land is a gift of the deity which humans must preserve and cultivate as a source of life and peace. In most ancient cultures land belongs to the extended family. In some Near Eastern cultures, however, the land belongs to the king as the representative or a manifestation of the god. The clash between these two understandings appears dramatically in the episode of Ahab and Naboth (1 Kings 21). Prophets like Isaiah, Amos and Micah denounced the greed of "the palace" and its clients which takes land from the common people. The Mosaic law has a number of measures, including the jubilee laws, to redress dispossession of land which occurs through accident, carelessness or injustice.

In our time, land reform laws, which follow different models, aim at redressing these situations. The power struggle related to this question, which results in many cases in violent confrontation, raises issues of justice\* which the churches cannot ignore.

Traditional Christian thinking on this issue rests on a pre-capitalist view which sees a direct relation between people and land. Now, however, the relation of people to the land is mediated by the global economic structure and therefore poses difficult ethical, economic and ecological problems which demand from the churches a greater attention and reflection than they have so far received.

Churches have individually or ecumenically expressed concern for issues related to land possession. The Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the US Economy, prepared by the US Roman Catholic bishops, devotes an entire section to this issue. In his visits to Latin America, Pope John Paul II has vigorously defended the right of

peasants to own land. Churches in many countries have worked ecumenically to support land reform, developing in Brazil what is called a "pastoral of the land" (*pastoral da terra*). Regional ecumenical organizations in Africa, Asia and Latin America have repeatedly denounced situations of injustice in relation to land, identifying land reform as an important priority.

A 1989 Lutheran World Federation consultation "Land Is Life" concluded that although land problems must be confronted in the light of particular national, historical, cultural and religious contexts, they "are part of many other economic, social and cultural struggles which in turn are inter-related on an international level". Within the WCC, the need for "radical reform of land tenure systems" was identified as essential to a "positive programme for social justice" in East Asia (1952 study conference in Lucknow, India).

The WCC has channelled ecumenical support to landless people, notably through its programme on Urban Rural Mission.\* URM's advisory group said in a 1979 report that "lack of access to land, though a problem for both urban and rural people, is for the rural poor a threat to their very survival. Land is the key commodity coveted by dominant powers, especially by repressive regimes, large landowners, ranchers and transnational corporations", adding that "dramatic and brutal" repression against the rural poor often goes unnoticed because of their geographical remoteness and lack of access to the legal and pastoral services available in urban areas. In recent episodes in the Amazonia hundreds of peasants who were claiming their land according to the provisions of a land reform law which was not being enforced were murdered by private armies of landowners. This outrage, which illustrates the seriousness of the problem, has been denounced by the Brazilian council of churches. Roman Catholic bishops and the *pastoral da terra* are playing an important role of public advocacy in this tragic situation. In 1996 the WCC sponsored a consultation on "Mining and Indigenous Peoples" with representatives from indigenous communities involved in land claim struggles against transnational mining companies. Since then, a global in-

formation network linking indigenous peoples on these specific issues has arisen.

The WCC's sixth assembly (Vancouver 1983) linked landlessness with the so-called international food disorder: "Much of the productive land is controlled by large landowners and transnational corporations who exploit the land and do not allow the farmers, peasants and landless rural workers to participate in making decisions which would benefit them." "Just Sharing of the Land" was one sub-theme in the section report on "The Earth Is the Lord's" at the 1989 world mission conference in San Antonio, which said the WCC should "stand in solidarity with landless people in their struggles, organizations and movements to occupy land for their sustenance and survival". But it also called for a global ecumenical strategy "for a genuine land reform programme controlled by its beneficiaries, beginning with the sharing of church lands with the landless and homeless". Land figured in one of the affirmations from the world conference on justice, peace and the integrity of creation (Seoul 1990), again under the heading "The Earth Is the Lord's". Participants pledged to resist policies that allow land speculation at the expense of the poor or prevent "those who live directly from the land from being its real trustees".

Following the appointment of a consultant on indigenous peoples in 1995, the WCC expanded its contacts with indigenous communities, assisting them especially to advocate their own concerns at the United Nations. A series of regional workshops, beginning with a consultation on "Indigenous Spirituality and the Land", held in Norway in 1997, made their insights available to the 1998 WCC Harare assembly where 42 representatives of indigenous peoples from 19 different countries attended as delegates of their churches. Noting that their lives, spiritualities, languages and cultures as distinct peoples are constantly under threat, they appealed to the WCC to include the issue of indigenous peoples in the core programme of the Council, and a staff position was included when the WCC was re-organized in 1999. The assembly's statement on human rights called upon the churches to support indigenous peoples' right to self-determination with regard to their political and eco-

conomic future, culture, land rights, spirituality, language, traditions and forms of organization, and intellectual property.

### LAND AND THE STATE OF ISRAEL

The return of Jews to Palestine and the establishment of the state of Israel opened a problematic for which the churches were not ready. Since the diaspora, Christianity was used to a Jewish people who were landless and had no universally recognized organization. Christians believed that God's covenant\* with Israel was fulfilled in Jesus the Christ: but did that mean that the new covenant had superseded the old? If the old covenant is still valid, what does it mean for the theological understanding of the return of the Jews to the promised land and the creation of a state? The terrible record of many Christians and Christian churches in relation to Israel coloured their pronouncements on the subject. "We all have to realize that Christian words have now become disqualified and suspect in the ears of most Jews," said the Bristol meeting of Faith and Order in 1967 (see **antisemitism**).

Slowly and falteringly, in church pronouncements, ecumenical discussion and dialogue with the Jews themselves, the churches and the ecumenical movement began to hammer out some shared convictions. "We believe that God's promise to the people of Israel which he elected is still in force," said the synod of the Evangelical Church of Germany in 1950 (see **Israel and the church**). "The Christian church shares Israel's faith in the one God," said the executive committee in 1982.

The meanings of these affirmations for an understanding of the relation between the land and the state, however, were not so clear. The Roman Catholic Church, in the much-debated declaration *Nostra Aetate* (1965), formulated in a carefully worded sentence the idea of continuity and the validity of the covenant, but it did not include any reference to the question of the land or the state of Israel. In successive dialogues and declarations it has continued to distinguish between the theologico-religious question of the church and Judaism and the question of Israel's land and state, which is seen as a purely social and political reality. Other churches, although perhaps less rigorously,

have also pointed to the need for proper consideration of this distinction.

In 1970 the general synod of the Dutch Reformed Church made perhaps the first attempt to face this issue directly. It recognizes the Jewish people of today as the continuation of the biblical Israel; it argues forcefully for the indissoluble relation of the people to the land. Then it concludes: "If the election of the people and the promises connected with it remains valid, it follows that the tie between the people and the land also remains by the grace of God." It affirms that "anyone who accepts the reunion of the Jewish people and the land for reasons of faith, has also to accept that in the given circumstances the people should have a state of its own". It further specifies that the state of Israel is one of the forms "in which the Jewish people appear". In its affirmations and hesitations this statement seems to reflect the state of the question for most churches. Some Christians, however, particularly from the third world and from the Middle East, are radically critical of these views. "We have come to recognize", said Anglican canon Naim A'teeq (St George's, Jerusalem) in 1986, "that God is no longer the God of Israel." Rather, "God is the God of all people. I understand the Jewish origin, I recognize the Israel of God, but with Jesus Christ the church continues the line that began in the Old Testament."

The war of 1967, the annexation of the new areas and the condition of the Palestinian populations have made this issue even more vexing. The United Methodist statement of 1972 recognizes that "dialogues presently are complicated by... turbulent political struggles such as the search for Jewish and Arab security and dignity in the Middle East". The plight of the Palestinians appears quite strongly in recent ecumenical documents. Perhaps the American Lutheran statement of 1974 best portrays these difficulties when it identifies three positions: *theology of the land*, which recognizes the return of the Jews to the promised land (and consequently the creation of a state) as "a sign of the faithfulness of God towards its people"; *theology of the poor*, in which concern for the plight of the Palestinians makes a favourable theological statement on the state of Israel quite problematic; and *theology of survival*, which

affirms the validity of the state of Israel on "juridical and moral" (rather than theological) grounds. Its conclusion that "there is no consensus among Lutherans with respect to the relations between 'the chosen people' and the territory comprising the present state of Israel" reflects quite faithfully the ecumenical understanding of this issue.

We are still far from having found an adequate theological hermeneutic for addressing the issue of the covenant and the land as related to present historical and political issues. It seems clear that the attempt to separate the theological and the politico-religious issues misunderstands both the biblical teaching and the meaning of land and state for Jews then and today. Yet to deal with the issue simply on the basis of God's choice of Israel and the covenant leaves us unable to articulate the theological significance of the political situation, the rights of Palestinians, the complex history of that land and the universal covenant of God with humankind.

A 1984 document of the Presbyterian Church (USA) is probably the most elaborate church pronouncement on this question. After affirming that God's covenant with Israel "included a promise of the land", it places this promise in the context of God's universal purpose for all peoples. "We understand land to be an earthly, geographical, political place where one can be safe and secure, free from pressure and coercion. It implies a home, a means of life, a source of wealth and a place where individuals can become a people." After briefly developing this theology of the land, it deals with the specific question of "the abiding character of God's promise of a particular land to the Jewish people", noting that it "does not assign fixed boundaries to the promised land" and that "land and political sovereignty are by no means identical". It goes on to discuss the issue of the state of Israel, affirming it but also keeping a distance from its concrete operation ("the ways of God... should not be confused with the policies of the state"). A more Trinitarian approach to the theology of the land and the state would give the churches a clearer basis both for dealing with the undeniable particularity of the promise to Israel and for interpreting it in the context of God's universal covenant and promise to humankind.

See also **Jewish-Christian dialogue; justice, peace and the integrity of creation.**

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## LATIN AMERICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

THE CONSEJO Latinoamericano de Iglesias (CLAI) is a continental ecumenical body covering Latin America and the Hispanic Caribbean, with headquarters in Quito, Ecuador. It consists of 150 churches and ecumenical organizations. The latter are associate or fraternal members.

The Panama conference (1916) is traditionally recognized as the starting point of the ecumenical movement in Latin America. That conference was convened as a Latin American response to the great Edinburgh missionary conference of 1910, at which Protestant missions working in Latin America were not accepted, as it was considered that this region was Roman Catholic territory which had already been evangelized. In Panama, Protestant missionaries met to discuss questions of relations and strategies, including evangelization and mission, secular education and training of ministers. Since then, a number of conferences and consultations have brought Protestant Christians in Latin America and the Caribbean closer together. Several bodies came into existence for cooperation and study, among them the Latin American Protestant Commission for Christian Education (CELADEC), the World Student Christian Federation in Latin America (FUMECAL), Church and Society in Latin

America (ISAL) and the Latin American Union of Protestant Youth (ULAJE). In the 1960s the Protestant "Pro-Unity" Commission in Latin America (UNELAM) came into existence. UNELAM soon saw the need for Protestant churches to adopt a more realistic position in relation to the ecumenical question and resolved to invite the churches to a continental assembly to decide on the possibility of setting up an ecumenical council. The theme of that assembly was "Unity and Mission in Latin America".

This assembly of churches, meeting at Oaxtepec, Mexico, in September 1978, approved the setting up of a Latin American council of churches. It also decided that no later than four years afterwards, a constituent assembly should be convened to discuss all the ecclesiological and constitutional points relating to this kind of council. CLAI was, therefore, described as being "in formation". That assembly in fact met at Huampaní, Peru, in 1982, when the constitution of CLAI was promulgated and its standing orders were approved. The second assembly was held in Indaiatuba, São Paulo, Brazil, in 1988; the third assembly took place in Concepción, Chile, in 1995; and the fourth assembly was convened in Barranquilla, Colombia, in 2001.

CLAI includes Methodists, Lutherans, Presbyterians and Reformed, Anglicans, Waldensians, Pentecostals, Baptists, Moravians, Disciples of Christ, united churches, independent churches and Orthodox churches. In ecumenical fellowship all these churches and the associated or fraternal bodies recognize the doctrinal basis of CLAI, i.e. the confession of "Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures". In unity, they seek to "fulfill together their common calling to the glory of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (see **WCC, basis of**).

The main object of CLAI is to promote the "unity of the people of God in Latin America as a local expression of the universal church of Christ and as a testimony and contribution to the unity of the Latin American people". The ecumenical purpose of CLAI is indissolubly linked to the great political, economic, social and religious issues and the hopes of the peoples of this continent. CLAI is governed by an assembly that meets at an interval of not less than four or

more than six years. Between these meetings the council is managed by a board that consists of a president and 16 members. In this board a balanced denominational and regional representation is sought, including representatives of the neglected sectors (indigenous peoples, women, blacks, young people, etc.)

The priorities of CLAI have been determined by the various demands and challenges coming from the most deprived sectors of Latin American society and the churches. It has separate programme areas for women, children and family; pastoral work with indigenous peoples and blacks; pastoral care, solidarity and human rights; evangelization, spirituality and worship; communications; health and environment; education for peace and ecumenical peace efforts; and ecumenical dialogue. The liturgy network created by CLAI connects dozens of ministers, theologians, liturgists and church members all over the region by the Internet; its work has renewed worship and has strengthened Latin American identity at local church services. The work for peace and human rights has been very strong. In the early 1990s it focused in Central America, and at the end of this decade it selected Guatemala, Peru and Colombia as focal points to develop a peace programme. Involving churches, civil society organizations and the people, this programme includes peace actions, education and theological reflection. CLAI has also endorsed joint work among theological institutes and seminars to promote ecumenical thinking and exchanges. Dialogue with the new Pentecostal independent movements that grow rapidly in the region is one of its main concerns. With its work centred in the churches, CLAI promotes practical participation, the training and enabling of leaders, the contribution of women and youth and of indigenous and black theology to the ecumenical movement, common celebration, dialogue and cooperation among its member churches and bodies.

CLAI edits books, the quarterly magazine *Signos de Vida* (Signs of Life) and the monthly newspaper *Rápidas*.

See also **South America**.

JUAN SCHWINDT, SERGIO MARCOS  
PINTO LOPES and DAFNE SABANES PLOU

**LAUBACH, FRANK CHARLES**

B. 2 Sept. 1884, Benton, PA, USA; d. 11 June 1970, Syracuse, NY. A Congregational educator and evangelist, in 1929 Laubach began an educational project of teaching reading by phonetic symbols and pictures, eventually developing literacy primers for some 300 languages and dialects in over 100 countries and localities in Asia, Africa and Latin America. As originator of the “each-one-teach-one” concept of adult literacy instruction, he founded Laubach Literacy in 1955, with headquarters in Syracuse, but with branch offices and centres in many parts of the world. Educated at Princeton and Union theological seminaries and at Columbia University, he was a missionary for the American Board among the Lanao Moros in the Philippines. He later became professor at the Manila Union Theological Seminary, dean of Union College in Manila, dean of the College of Education at Manila University and director of Maranaw folk schools. He also served as special counsellor to the Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature of the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ F.C. Laubach, *The Silent Billion Speak*, New York, Friendship, 1943 ■ *Teaching the World to Read*, New York, Friendship, 1947 ■ D.E. Mason, *Frank C. Laubach: Teacher of Millions*, Minneapolis, Denison, 1967.

**LAUSANNE COMMITTEE FOR WORLD EVANGELIZATION**

THE LAUSANNE Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE) came into existence after the International Congress on World Evangelization (Lausanne 1974). The congress, sponsored by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, brought together almost 2500 participants from about 150 nations for ten days of intensive focus on “the unfinished task of world evangelization”. According to honorary chairman Billy Graham, one main purpose of the congress was to “frame a biblical declaration on evangelism... [and] state what the relationship is between evangelism and social responsibility”. The result was the 15-article Lausanne covenant,\* drafted un-

der the leadership of Anglican John Stott and signed by a majority of the participants. Both Graham and the Lausanne covenant challenged “the whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole world”.

The congress organizers did not anticipate an ongoing “Lausanne” structure and let it be known that they did not envisage a new version of the International Missionary Council,\* which had been integrated into the WCC in 1961. During the congress, however, the participants favoured a vehicle which could sustain the spirit and momentum of Lausanne. A few months later some 50 Evangelical men and women, nominated by regional groups around the world, met in Mexico City to give shape to the LCWE. In 1989 the committee almost doubled in size and secured balanced representation from the six continents.

In the early 1990s the movement’s current leaders, drawn from a new generation, restructured Lausanne to make it less dependent on Western funding as well as more flexible to regional leadership and to non-Western agendas. Two recent consultations – on modernity (Sweden 1993) and on Islam (Cyprus 1995) – resulted in new titles in the Lausanne *Occasional Papers* series.

See also **evangelical missions; evangelism**.

ROBERT T. COOTE

**LAUSANNE COVENANT**

IN JULY 1974 some 2500 evangelical leaders from about 150 nations met in Lausanne, Switzerland, for the International Congress on World Evangelization, called by evangelist Billy Graham to “frame a biblical declaration on evangelism”. Under the leadership of John R.W. Stott, an Anglican pastor in London, the Lausanne covenant was discussed and revised during the congress and finally presented for acceptance. While no single document can represent all Evangelicals,\* the covenant is widely acknowledged as a major milestone, reflecting the spirit and stance of the evangelical community in the late 20th century.

In 3000 words, organized in 15 articles, the covenant articulates the biblical basis of the Christian world mission as its signers

understood it. Typical of Evangelical hallmarks is article 2: it identifies the Old and New Testaments as “the only written word of God, without error in all that it affirms, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice”. This wording prevailed over one using “inerrancy”, a term many conservatives preferred. Other articles addressed “the uniqueness and universality of Christ”, “Christian social responsibility” (the covenant expresses “penitence... for having sometimes regarded evangelism and social concern as mutually exclusive”) and “the urgency of the evangelistic task”. The last grants that a missionary moratorium\* “may sometimes be necessary to facilitate the national church’s growth in self-reliance and to release resources for unevangelized areas”.

Not infrequently the Lausanne covenant is studied alongside of, and compared favourably with, Pope Paul VI’s Evangelization in the Modern World (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 1975), with the section report “Confessing Christ Today” (WCC fifth assembly, Nairobi 1975), and with “Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation”, prepared in 1982 by the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the WCC.

The substance of the Lausanne covenant was affirmed and elaborated at the 1989 congress, Lausanne II, in Manila, where Stott again provided leadership in drafting the Manila manifesto, informally affirmed by some 3600 participants.

See also **evangelism, Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization.**

ROBERT T. COOTE

■ C.R. Padilla ed., *The New Face of Evangelicalism: An International Symposium on the Lausanne Covenant*, Downers Grove IL, Intervarsity, 1976 ■ J.R.W. Stott ed., *Historic Documents from the Lausanne Movement 1974-1989*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1997.

## LAW

THE IDEA of law is an indispensable element, and plays an important pragmatic role, in the life of individuals and social groups. At the same time, it is a concept whose content and basis are far from self-evident. Its ob-

scurity is particularly evident in secularized societies (see **secularization**).

## LAW AND JUSTICE

In common usage, what is lawful is confused with what is just, and injustice is what fails to conform with the law. In the legal sense, however, law is what is laid down in a set of rules or norms by the political and social authorities in accordance with various procedures. These rules are embodied in codes which govern the relationships and conduct of human beings in society. Known also as laws, these rules are legion. The proliferation of laws is indeed a salient feature of our societies: whenever a new activity is established, new rules need to be formulated. Thus alongside the penal code and the civil code, which apply in principle to every human being endowed with normal mental capacities, special codes have also come into existence for labour, taxation, social security, various professions (doctors, lawyers, journalists, etc.). Given this proliferation and increasing complexity of laws, the principle to which the courts appeal in penalizing breaches of the law (i.e. “ignorance of the law is no defence”) becomes inapplicable. A significant difference emerges here between law and morality. An enlightened educated conscience ordinarily manages to distinguish between good and evil. But only with the greatest difficulty is the same conscience able to discern what the law allows and what it forbids. It has to consult the experts (lawyer, solicitor, notary, etc.).

In modern societies, law has come to replace custom and tradition, though often retaining many of their elements. But in the attempt to systematize and rationalize, law has become increasingly complex. The effect of this trend has been to deepen the divide between justice\* and law, between morality and law. Behind the constant revision of the system of laws lie purely technical considerations, but moral considerations also play a part. It has come to be realized that the law is not always just, that it can even generate injustice. In South Africa, apartheid\* was built into the law until 1994, but who would say that this fact made it just? The Geneva convention is an international law regulating the conduct of war; it outlaws the execution or inhumane treatment of prisoners of war

and the wounded, attacks on civilians, etc. But even if these regulations were scrupulously respected, the war being fought would not thereby become a just act.

In the Old Testament the terms for law and justice are in practice interchangeable. But we no longer today have the same situation; we are sometimes obliged to combat this or that provision of a legal code in the very interests of justice.

Is there then no longer any connection between law and ethics? No, for many rights recognized by law (the right to life, the right to human dignity, freedom of conscience) are the legal expression of axiomatic moral values. Yet these moral values must also be deeply embedded in custom and be really the expression of majority public opinion. Clearly this is not always the case. Nazism was the subversion at the same time of both law and the moral conscience. In the Christian churches themselves, while there may be a certain consensus on the individual right to property,\* there is also very vigorous argument over the limits to this right and the possibility of legal expropriation in the name of justice. The relationship between law and morality may be envisaged schematically as that of two overlapping circles with an area common to them both. This common area varies in size depending on the historical epoch and the society in question. Our impression is that today this common area is contracting.

There are several reasons for this partial dissociation of law and morality. One of the most important is the uncertainty in our secularized and specialized societies concerning the *source* of law; another is the uncertainty concerning the *basis* of law.

*The source of law.* In the Old Testament and in the New, the unique author of law is the holy God, who is just in judgments and who abhors sin.\* God is free to delegate divine power to chosen human beings: Moses, judges, kings, priests and also prophets, who denounce the injustice of rulers and people when they depart from God's laws and who declare the just judgments of God on the failure of one or the other to repent. This justice, however, though it can be extremely severe (note the many examples in the book of the prophet Jeremiah), is always set within a divinely initiated covenant\* in

which God freely chooses a partner (the people of Israel). This covenant is irrevocable, which is why, beyond the threats of dispersion, destruction and annihilation, there shines the hope of re-establishment, re-integration and a happy future. The law – the content of this covenant (the ritual code of Ex. 34:10-26; the decalogue in the strict sense, Ex. 20:2-17 and Deut. 5:6-21), the code of the covenant (Ex. 20:22-23), the code rediscovered in the reign of King Josiah (Deut. 1-26), the holiness code of Lev. 17-26, the priestly code, which is scattered throughout the Pentateuch and deals with the respect due to the institutions which are the basis of Israel's identity (i.e. the sabbath and circumcision) – is not exclusively repressive but is located within a promise of which God is author. It nonetheless fulfills the function of all law, i.e. it regulates the relationships of the people with God, the relationships of human beings with one another, of tribe with tribe.

In many parts, moreover, the law also focuses attention primarily on those who, in virtue of their weakness or marginal situation, are more likely than most to become victims of injustice: the widow, the orphan, the foreigner. God as the author of law is revealed as the friend of the weak. This concern for the weak is emphasized again, even more, in the NT. For the Reformers, particularly Calvin, the rejection of legalism does not intend to diminish the positive functions of the law: to admonish believers, disclose human sinfulness, deter evil, protect the community from the unjust, restrain malefactors, lead to grace, show God's righteousness, encourage believers to do good.

In our modern secularized societies, which, before the rise of technology, were strongly influenced not only by the Judaeo-Christian tradition but also, and sometimes still more strongly, by the Graeco-Roman tradition, the author and guarantor of law has become increasingly a more uncertain, vague and abstract figure. In the Graeco-Roman tradition, law has its source in reason or in human nature as subject to reason, though also the figure of the legislator may be prominent (e.g. Solon). In accordance with the Judaeo-Christian tradition as interpreted by the Catholic church, from the moment Christianity became the official reli-

gion of the Roman empire and, above all, from the time the church had to take the place of that empire in its decline, God became once more the legislator par excellence. At the same time, however, the church integrated the idea of the natural or rational law into its theology. To be sure, God is the author of such law. But since God made humanity in God's own image and this image, though damaged by original sin, still subsists in humanity, the law which God wills is one which conforms to, and expresses, the nature of humanity. It is also a rational law, since reason is the human faculty least damaged by sin. But God delegates power to establish and interpret laws to the human beings God has specially chosen – and first and foremost to the head of the church, the pope. It can be said that the church was the sole lawgiver in the West in the 12th century and that, thanks to the work of the monk Gratian in compiling what is known as Gratian's *Decretum* (c.1140), not only the church but society as a whole was ruled by the same canon law\* (see **church and state**).

This reign of canon law was fairly brief (though it lasted until 1919 in the church), since the temporal lords (emperor, king, prince, free town) claimed the right to publish a civil law more or less independent of canon law. This second source of law explains many conflicts, for it introduced a certain secularization of law. In virtue of their consecration, emperors and kings to some extent share the religious authority. Just as the pope is assisted by the council, so too are temporal lords assisted in their legislative task by assemblies: the diet in the holy Roman empire, the provincial or national "estates" and parliaments in certain kingdoms (England, France, etc.).

The breach caused by the Reformation in the *corpus Christianum* and the constitution of national churches are related to this development. The two-kingdoms doctrine – formulated in similar terms although with different emphases by Luther and Calvin – marks the beginning of the secularization of law. The temporal lord was not to meddle in spiritual matters, and the churches recognized the lord's right to legislate in the temporal realm. In Reformation thought, however, it still remains clear that these two legislative powers (independent but paral-

lel) are both meant to serve the dual aspects of the same goal – the conservation and the salvation\* of creation – and that both aspects are conjoined in God.

The advent of constitutional monarchies and democracies in the West from the 18th century onwards modified radically the system of law and ended in the establishment of an exclusively civil law. Legislative power was gradually passed to elected assemblies in a variety of arrangements, and in the future, despite the emergence here and there of unchecked dictatorial regimes, the notion of "popular sovereignty" prevailed. The people, holding power directly but more often indirectly through its elected representatives, became the sole author of law. A constitutional state is one whose laws are voted by the majority of the people's representatives, are universally valid throughout the nation and cannot have retrospective force. But what one parliament has done can obviously be undone by its successor. Another feature of the constitutional state is the separation of powers. Parliament legislates and controls the application of laws though the executive (government), whose power to make rules and regulations is limited to the framework defined by the laws. A third power, independent of the two already mentioned, is charged with the punishment of breaches of the law by individuals, social groups and even the administration itself.

While democracy has in this way made a major contribution to the promotion of human rights (especially the idea that all human beings are equal before the law) and diminished the arbitrary exercise of power by an authority believing itself free simply to do as it pleases, still it rests in a morally debatable postulate, namely, that the popular will as expressed in free elections is the sole source of all law. Is it legitimate to affirm as axiomatic that the voice of the people equals the voice of God (*vox populi, vox Dei*)? Laws are rarely passed unanimously; the majority imposes its will. But is it enough to be in a majority to be also in the right? Nothing could be less axiomatic. Who would dare to claim that the code of law which emerges is always just? Even in a genuine democracy, might not an appeal be appropriate against a law promulgated by the political establishment (as of Antigone

against the law of Creon)? One of the tasks of the Christian church, whether or not it enjoys full freedom within a state, is in certain circumstances to oppose the law in the name of justice and, by its influence on public opinion, to secure a change in the law whenever it violates the dignity of God's creatures and the integrity of God's creation (see the statement adopted by the 1968 Uppsala assembly on the role of the churches in the formation of public opinion).

A number of modern democracies have realized the dangers of an exclusive appeal to popular sovereignty. They have therefore provided themselves with constitutions and declarations of human rights\* which, placed above the laws voted by parliament, constitute a possible court of appeal against unjust laws. Although these constitutions and declarations have themselves also been established by popular suffrage, they nevertheless constitute a sort of self-limitation which checks and balances the power of the legislature, particularly if there are supreme courts or constitutional councils with a mandate to monitor the agreement of laws with constitutional principles. But such institutions must enjoy genuine autonomy vis-a-vis the political establishment. These fundamental texts (e.g. the 1945 Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the 1966 covenants on economic, social and cultural rights; the international conventions on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination and on the rights of the child finalized in 1989) often contain principles in a secularized form which nonetheless reflect values deriving from the Judaeo-Christian tradition.

*The content of law.* The same uncertainty surrounding the source of the law also clouds its content. Lawyers have always distinguished between, on the one hand, a fundamental law or right, often called natural law,\* which is in principle unaffected by the hazards of politics and out of reach of modification by political regimes, and, on the other hand, a positive law as elaborated by legislative bodies with the aid of experts. Natural law is held in principle to be superior to positive law. Unfortunately, this natural law is often left undefined and of uncertain content, especially at the international level. During the famous Nuremberg trials, international judges had to for-

mulate the concept of "a crime against humanity", which had never previously been either defined or recognized. In consequence, regardless of the monstrous acts these judges had to penalize, it is impossible to recall this historic trial without a certain feeling of unease. The Nazi leaders were condemned in the name of a law made retrospective in effect, which constitutes, from a formal standpoint, a dangerous precedent. It is indeed difficult to predict just how far "man's inhumanity to man" may go; some legal scholars therefore proposed the notion of "a natural law with variable content", but this too is a bastard concept.

As for positive law, the proliferation of special codes has often made it difficult to identify its basis. Projects of laws which are submitted to parliamentary vote generally emanate not from the parliament itself or even from the government. The latter may have intuited the existence of a need – or the absence of any need – to legislate on a given matter. The content of the proposed text, however, is drafted by specialists, experts and lawyers. A veritable legal technology has established itself in our modern societies. Taught and brought to perfection in the law faculties, it enjoys a real autonomy and is sometimes constructed in accordance with mathematical models. In consequence, the relation between positive law and natural law becomes extremely problematic. The difficulty is not a new one. In the OT the decalogue, with its very clear profile and perfect intelligibility, was taken in hand by doctors of the law who developed a real casuistry which was hard to understand and already constituted a legal technology. In our modern societies, however, where the need has been felt to develop a fiscal law, a commercial law, an industrial law, etc., legal technology has undergone a considerable scientific development.

The fundamental uncertainty surrounding both the source and the content of law in modern secularized societies and the relationships existing between natural or rational or even universal law and positive law can actually result in a growing gap between law, on the one hand, and justice and equity, on the other. We continue to honour with the name of justice the courts whose business it is to state the law, ensure respect for

the law and determine the penalties to be imposed in order to erase infringements of the law and to prevent it from falling into desuetude. But the law which the courts enunciate can be unjust law. In democratic regimes, to be sure, parliaments can always revoke an unjust law and replace it by a more equitable one. But parliaments are inescapably exposed to the pressures of a public opinion which can itself be moved by concerns which have nothing to do with justice. Economic interests, class interests, racial interests can direct the passing of the laws which the courts must implement.

### ECUMENICAL DISCUSSION

In view of the gap between (1) law and (2) equity or justice, what attitude are Christians and churches to adopt towards law? The ecumenical movement, especially in its early stages, made several attempts to come to grips with this question. The issue of penal theories was discussed at the Stockholm Life and Work\* conference in 1925, and at a similar conference in Oxford in 1937 the question of law was placed in the context of church-state relations. After 1945 the study department of the WCC discussed the relationship of law and justice to biblical authority in the modern world. Questions of natural law, law and ethics,\* and international law and justice were debated at several conferences, as well as the question of a Trinitarian and Christological approach to law and justice. These conferences culminated in 1950 in a conference in Treysa, Federal Republic of Germany, and the publication of *The Biblical Doctrine of Justice and Law* (1955). The WCC's 1975 Nairobi assembly, the Melbourne declaration on participation in struggles for human rights (1980) and the 1983 publication on human rights in the ecumenical agenda have continued and deepened this tradition.

On the basis of our own study and the ecumenical discussion of this theme, the answer to the question may be summarized in the following points. First, Christians and churches must defend the constitutional state, i.e. a state in which each citizen enjoys equality before the law and is not judged according to one's opinions but only according to one's actions measured against a law promulgated prior to these actions. They

must therefore resist the opposing dangers of anarchy and tyranny. Civil disobedience and even revolution may be necessary as a last resort in a situation of flagrant injustice and violation of justice, but the legal vacuum thus created must be speedily filled to avoid the danger of a reign of terror.

Second, Christians and churches must be especially vigilant to point out and denounce a growing gap between law and justice as well as violations of justice, a stand taken courageously by organizations such as Amnesty International, the WCC, and Action of Christians for the Abolition of Torture. Although Christians should as a rule be reformist rather than revolutionary, revolution can be a final resort when all attempts at reform fail.

Third, Christians and churches should constantly re-examine the law established by legislation, not only because it may be unjust, but also because account must be taken of new problems, such as those arising from advances in biology and the human sciences (bio-ethics,\* genetic engineering, euthanasia,\* abortion,\* etc.). But while recognizing the need for legislation, conscience and responsibility may in certain circumstances set a limit to the intervention of law.

Fourth, Christians and churches regard the word of God\* as the norm for their conduct. This norm holds good whenever a body of law must be formulated and clothed with authority, but it would be legalistic to look for ready-made answers in scripture to all legal problems. We find in scripture indications, directions and warnings about limits that may not be transgressed, but it offers no possibility of formulating "a Christian legislation". Above all, in Jesus Christ, scripture provides a fundamental inspiration which Paul calls the law of love.

Finally, the realm of law is not that of love. The law authorizes, forbids and punishes. In the creation of law, however, Christians and churches should do their utmost to ensure that despite its inadequacies, the law remains – in the words of Karl Barth – analogous to the order and justice of the kingdom of God.\* Law is not ethics, but the creation of law is an ethical task which cannot be left solely either to political authorities or in the hands of experts. Christians should not try to impose the demands of their

Christian faith on all the rest of their society, although they are indeed called to promote a law which is universal in scope. They should devote themselves to this task in a way which corresponds to the provisional order of this sinful world.

See also **authority, international law, order.**

ROGER MEHL

■ J. Ellul, *Le fondement théologique du droit* (ET *The Theological Foundation of Law*, Garden City NY, Doubleday, 1960) ■ R. Cotterrell, *Emile Durkheim: Law in a Moral Domain*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh UP, 1999.

### LEUENBERG CHURCH FELLOWSHIP

THE LEUENBERG Church Fellowship (LCF) comprises over 100 churches – Lutheran, Reformed, United, Hussite, Waldensian, and Czech Brethren – which have by now endorsed the original Leuenberg agreement of 1973 (see Lutheran-Reformed dialogue) or, as with the Methodists, signed a “joint declaration of church fellowship”. Located principally in Europe (though including some South American churches earlier founded by German immigrants), these “churches with different confessional positions accord each other fellowship in word and sacrament and strive for the fullest possible cooperation in witness and service to the world” (LA 29). The relationship includes mutual recognition of ordination and the practice of reciprocal presidency at the Lord’s table.

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT

### LEX ORANDI, LEX CREDENDI

LITERALLY “law of praying, law of believing”, the Latin tag “lex orandi, lex credendi” is used with varying degrees of precision. Its origin resides in the phrase *ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*, which was long attributed to Pope Celestine I (422-32) but is now considered to come from a lay monk of that time, Prosper of Aquitaine. A disciple of Augustine, Prosper was arguing against semi-Pelagianism that all true faith, even the beginnings of good will as well as growth and perseverance, is from start to finish a work of grace.\* In various writings he points out that,

following 1 Tim. 2:1-4, catholic churches everywhere, led by the Spirit of God, daily plead the cause of the human race, asking that all categories of unbelievers may be brought to salvation. In this context, the expression then means quite precisely that “the apostolic *injunction to pray* [for all people, which the church obeys in its intercessions, that they may come to the faith] sets the *obligation to believe* [that even the first motions towards faith are themselves a gift of God]”.

In more recent use, the phrase has come to represent the more general claim – which may be descriptive and/or normative – that liturgical practice has in historical fact governed, and/or should in theological right govern, what is taught, whether as solemn dogma, official doctrine, catechetical instruction or academic exposition. Historically, it can easily be shown, for instance, that the worship of Christ, the practice already in the first three centuries of addressing praise and prayers to him, helped to establish the Nicene teaching of the Son as *homoousios* with the Father, the dogmatic recognition of Christ’s deity. Theologically, it can be argued that the more immediate, spontaneous act of worship rightly possesses priority over the more distanced activity of theological reflection itself, in which believers, as it were, “step back” a little to think about their faith.

From historical research and theological reflection, however, it soon emerges that it is too simple, both descriptively and normatively, to attribute priority to “praying” over “teaching”, or at least to see the shaping and controlling influences as flowing only in the one direction; and so the abbreviated phrase “lex orandi, lex credendi” often serves, in a vague but useful way, as a rubric under which to explore, both historically and theologically, the rather complex relationships between worship and doctrine. To stay with the example of Christ’s deity: it can only have been by theological reflection – admittedly on the basis of a present experience of salvation\* in Christ – that Christians very early came to attribute to him a role in the creation of the world, which they then sang in the hymns from which the apostle in turn quotes in a doctrinal argument (1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:15-20); and in its own day, the council of Nicea chose to in-

sert its teaching in a creed,\* a form which was used in both catechesis\* and baptism\* and which before too long found a place also in the eucharistic liturgy. Nor did the Arians, however, hesitate to appeal to the catholic liturgy for evidence of an alleged “subordination” of the Son, which the Nicenes then had the theological task of explaining in an orthodox sense. Clearly there is much historical material here for theological reflection.

### WORSHIP AND DOCTRINE DISTINGUISHED

Perhaps the first task is to see how and why worship and doctrine inevitably became and become distinguished and the problems which, with equal inevitability, thereby arise. According to the gospels, the first declaration of the Christian faith can be either a second-person address to its object (“You are the Christ”, Mark 8:29) or a first-person proclamation to others concerning him (“We have found the Christ”, John 1:41). Transferred to the third person, the confession “Jesus is Lord” (Rom. 10:9; 1 Cor. 12:3) is at once an acclamation, an announcement and an assertion. In the most elemental cases of Christian speech, “liturgy” and “doctrine” thus coincide. However, a diversification of purposes and contexts soon brings a differentiation of linguistic usage.

In its loving address to God, *worship* tends towards exuberance and abandon. In the very act of self-surrender (note “a sacrifice of praise”, Heb. 13:15), worshippers will not find it necessary to justify what is taking place, but they will quickly want to sing the praises of their divine Lover before the world.

In *evangelization* Christian preachers have to accommodate to the culture\* which is hearing the gospel for the first time. Other languages will be corrected and filled, converted and brought captive to Christ, as their speakers are challenged and changed by the gospel. This process, when successful, will also enrich the linguistic repertoire of the whole Christian tradition.

In *apologetics* the defenders of the faith engage with those who resist, oppose and even attack it. Here language acquires a sharp point, a combative edge. Yet the aim must remain to persuade opponents and win

them for God’s church and kingdom. Linguistic swords and spears are destined to become ploughshares and pruning hooks.

In its *internal controversies* the church is seeking by argument to clarify the gospel and the faith.\* Fine distinctions are drawn. When, after examination and debate, a position is deemed heretical, a doctrinal definition is made that will exclude it. In a combination of positive statement and explicit or implicit exclusion, the definition declares the faith. It thereby sets the rules for other Christian speech on the topic and may even itself get taken up into direct doxological usage.

Signalled by the shifts and variety of linguistic usage, an element of *theological reflection* thus belongs to debate within the church, to the defence and proclamation of the gospel, and even to the Christian worship of God. While such reflection, which also develops its own linguistic style, is in a sense secondary, it is not essentially alien to the faith. Since the gospel is addressed to the whole person and calls for a total response, faith involves the intelligence from the very start. The initial gift and act of faith already contain a moment of understanding, the *intellectus fidei*, whereby God enlightens the heart and mind and enables it to accept the truth of God’s own being and history as these are testified in the gospel.

Since Christians speak differently according to these different functions and circumstances just enumerated, there is a danger that they will cease to be substantially consistent. There is a perpetual need to correlate what is said in the several modes in order to ensure that the reference and meaning remain the same. Part of the servant task of reflective theology is to assist in that correlation for the sake of the more primary activities of the church. Yet it is also in reflective theology that critical inquiry and speculative construction may seek to rule and thereby lose touch with the message and purpose. The over-riding consideration must, of course, be fidelity to the gospel (*lex credendi*), so that God may be rightly glorified (*lex orandi*). That is not the responsibility solely of reflective theology, let alone “professional theologians”. The controversial question of *pastoral authority* inescapably arises.

### CONFESSIONAL PATTERNS IN CONTROVERSY

There is a case to be made that differences, both theoretical and practical, in handling the sometimes problematic relations between worship and doctrine have played a part in the maintenance, and perhaps even the origin, of different “confessional identities” within the broader Christian movement. At the unavoidable risk of caricature, three or four types may be sketched by way of example. The purpose of this analysis is to set the background for various efforts already made towards some use of a *lex orandi*, *lex credendi* approach in ecumenism, and for some suggestions as to what is further needed.

In *Eastern Orthodoxy* the relation between worship and doctrine is so close that the Reformed theologian Dietrich Ritschl was misled into suspecting that the Orthodox “worship the doctrine of the Trinity” (*Zur Logik der Theologie*, 1984, 154). Certainly the Orthodox liturgy bears a high dogmatic density, and Orthodox theologians in turn are expected to operate within and for the worshipping community. The Orthodox do not make the sharp distinction between the doxological and the scientific genres that the more critical Westerners make. The heavy reliance upon inherited texts certainly raises hermeneutical problems (see *hermeneutics*); but the writings of an Alexander Schmemmann, such as his theological commentary on the rites of initiation (*Of Water and the Spirit*, 1974) and his *The Eucharist – Sacrament of the Kingdom* (1987), show that it is possible to expound the Tradition\* from within its own continuum in ways that challenge rather than simply confirm the surrounding culture. Nevertheless, Orthodox theologians rightly owe their Western counterparts an account of the authority\* that is accorded to the liturgy, as also of what is happening when the liturgical tradition becomes (as Schmemmann admits) distorted in certain particulars, and of the criteria and means of correction.

*Roman Catholicism* offers some notable examples of devotion leading doctrine. But even here the matter is complex. For while, say, the spontaneous celebration of Mary’s holiness marks a starting point, it took many centuries of theological debate – and

this in relation to the (itself speculative) Augustinian interpretation of original sin – before Pius IX came in 1854 to the point of declaring her immaculate conception as a dogma,\* thereby re-inforcing also the obligatory character of its feast (which it had not enjoyed before the 18th century). The Roman see has in fact a history of increasing doctrinal and pastoral control over the worship of churches in the papal communion, so that Pius XII, speaking magisterially in *Mediator Dei* (1947), could even reverse the ancient maxim to say that “the law of believing must set the law of praying”, in the sense that the liturgy “is subject to the church’s supreme teaching authority”.

The Protestant Reformation may be understood, at least in part, as a doctrinal revolt, on the basis of a Bible that was believed to be clear in its own message, against liturgical and devotional practices that expressed false understandings of God, humankind and salvation. In the revised, recast – indeed, newly created – service books, the reformers sought to provide for worship that would be in accord with the pure gospel. In turn, of course, the worship service would function as a teaching instrument, so that it would indeed sometimes acquire such a strongly didactic character that the prayers and sermons sound like courses in dogmatic or moral theology rather than praise and proclamation.

*Anglicans*, with appeal to a more or less uniform Book of Common Prayer, have often proposed an ostensive definition of their faith: “If you want to know what we believe, look at what we pray” (and *Methodists* have sometimes pointed in a similar way to the Wesley hymns). But, as S.W. Sykes has shown in *The Integrity of Anglicanism* (1978) and *The Identity of Christianity* (1984), this is to be rather disingenuous about the play of forces between scripture, Tradition, experience, reason, culture and church order. As recent liturgical revisions in most Western churches have made clear, all these factors enter into any theologically responsible attempt to shape and re-shape worship; and “books” of worship have to be in some way both authorized and accepted within the communities for which they are intended.

### ECUMENICAL EFFORTS AND POSSIBILITIES

In a seminal essay of 1957 on "The Structure of Dogmatic Statements as an Ecumenical Problem", the Lutheran Edmund Schlink observed that a "category shift" takes place when what is expressed in prayer and preaching is translated into the form of dogma. In worship and witness, we face God and our fellow human beings more directly. In dogmatic statements, however, we are *talking about* (the proper way to) worship and witness; we are *teaching about* God, God's acts, and the human response. The risk is that the teacher withdraws to "a neutral position from which the encounter between God and man may be observed, described and be cast into didactic formulas". Problems arise when "attention moves away from the experience of salvation which comes through the gospel and is concentrated instead on giving a theoretical definition of the relationship between the divine and human contributions in redemption". Schlink holds that the "structural change" from doxology to doctrine is responsible for some of the most persistent dogmatic problems in Christendom, for it is at the second level that differences show up. Schlink is not so naive as to think that dogma is unnecessary, but it is secondary and subject to marked historical and anthropological conditioning. He proposes an ecumenical concentration upon the primary forms of worship and witness, where (he is persuaded) we shall re-discover an already-existing unity and fullness which differences in doctrinal statements had obscured.

Meanwhile, the Roman Catholic theologian H.J. Schulz in 1976 devoted a substantial book to arguing that an adequate "unity in faith" can be drawn from the ancient eucharistic tradition which the divided churches have retained or restored. The words, actions and celebration of the eucharistic rites, and particularly the great eucharistic prayer or anaphora, provide sufficient expression of Trinitarian faith and of doctrine concerning church, sacraments and ministry. It was to relations between the Roman and the Eastern churches that Schulz gave most attention, but he saw positive prospects also for reconciliation with the churches of the Reformation by this route. (In a later work, of 1996, Schulz pointed

even more sharply the priority of "confession" over "dogma".)

Faith and Order\* was already working along somewhat similar lines and across the widest ecumenical range, as the Lima text on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* was to show (1982). The principal source of BEM was the holy scriptures, which are themselves the main liturgical book of the church: much of the material in the scriptures arose in the context of worship or was destined for it; it was their use in worship which helped to establish the canonical status of the biblical writings (see **canon**); and the liturgical assembly remained the chief locus of their preservation, transmission and interpretation. That the scriptures thus used within the continuing Tradition govern BEM is appreciated by the official response of the Roman Catholic Church, which says in part: "The sources employed for the interpretation of the meaning of the eucharist and the form of celebration are scripture and Tradition. The classical liturgies of the first millennium and patristic theology are important points of reference in this text." Or in the words of the response from the United Methodist Church, USA: "BEM deftly unites the truths and testimonies of the New Testament and the ecumenical creeds." The popular reception of the Lima liturgy\* in many places – even though it was an "occasional" composition which does not enjoy the "maturity" of BEM itself – is at least an indication of the felt need for an instrument whereby a common faith can be confessed, celebrated, proclaimed and taught together.

Yet the responses of the churches to BEM also indicate that there is still some way to go along this liturgical road to fuller unity in faith, order and life. While BEM is found to imply a significant rudimentary agreement in matters of Trinity, Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology and eschatology, most churches still require greater clarification and confirmation of the dogmatic context before unity can be declared. Hence the importance of the F&O project "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today". Here again it is remarkable that the Apostles' and Nicene creeds were taken as the "theological basis and methodological tool" of the study. For it is the faith

learned in catechesis, confessed at baptism and renewed by the eucharist which brings closest together the *lex orandi* and the *lex credendi*. It is an encouraging fact that several prominent contemporary theologians have expounded the faith in terms of the creeds: thus Karl Barth's *Dogmatics in Outline* (1947, ET 1949), Joseph Ratzinger's *Introduction to the Christian Faith* (1968, ET 1969), Wolfhart Pannenberg's *The Apostles' Creed in the Light of Today's Questions* (1972, ET 1972), Jan Milic Lochman's *The Faith We Confess – an Ecumenical Dogmatics* (1982, ET 1984).

Our theme returned to the Faith and Order agenda following the fifth world conference at Santiago de Compostela (1993). A consultation held at Ditchingham (near Norwich), England, in 1994 produced a significant report that began to draw out the theological and practical implications for growth in ecclesial *koinonia*\* of several developments in liturgical life during the 20th century: "convergence towards fundamental patterns of Christian worship... rooted in the New Testament, witnessed to in the sources of the ancient church, practised increasingly, and with more conscious intent, among more and more churches today"; inculturation,\* whereby "different local churches... tend to grow together in adopting local cultural forms to express the universal Christian faith"; and the experience of uniting churches, where "theological agreements are put into liturgical form, thus bringing them most effectively into the life of local congregations", and of ecumenical parishes, where "together various traditions shape worship which expresses their commitment to common confession, witness and work".

What Yves Congar says of the Dombes Group (see *Groupe des Dombes*) is true of much modern ecumenical work towards doctrinal agreement: "The hallmark of their method is the integration of theological discussion and prayer, and the fecundity of the Group is due to this interaction"; and it is by pressing on in this direction, both theoretically and practically, that divided Christendom may most likely come to a unity in a *lex orandi* and a *lex credendi* that are themselves mutually consistent. The mainspring of the ecumenical movement from the start

has been the *prayer* of Jesus, into which Christians themselves have entered, that they might be one in order that, through their witness to the faith, the world also might *believe* in the divine mission of the Son (John 17).

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## LIBERATION

THE WORD "liberation" has assumed a special significance in ecumenical discussion, providing a touchstone for determining an authentic mode of theologizing and a fundamental guideline for ethical reflection and action.

Broadly defined, liberation is a process by which a subjugated or marginalized group of people, having gained an awareness of their condition of oppression, take control of their destiny and fight until overthrowing all the fetters of bondage. This process may include a new social consciousness (conscientization) in a submerged group, appropriation of the means of production by the poor,\* a freeing from colonialism,\* movements against racially oppressive and authoritative regimes and organized struggle against all forms of cultural and gender domination. Liberation involves the struggle of the marginalized everywhere

– blacks, women, dalits, tribal and indigenous people, landless and unorganized workers – for their dignity and justice.

The perspective of people as subjects of history, who resist manipulation by external forces, raises sharp challenges to traditional ways of knowledge, ideologies, systems of government, church structures and forms of service. Education that legitimizes the value system of the dominant groups in a given society is rejected for the sake of education for liberation. Social action directed towards a radical alteration of unjust structures is preferred to charitable services which cause no ripples in the existing system.

In three areas of concern, liberation has brought a distinctively new emphasis: development, political movement and theology.

### DEVELOPMENT

The concept of development\* is gradually being replaced by the more dynamic and humanistic concept of liberation. The term “development” does not adequately express the aspirations of the poorer nations and peoples simply because, even after considerable developmental activities, a wide gap remains between the rich and the poor countries. The pattern of economic growth today is linked with globalization, which integrates economies of the different countries into the world capitalist system. The most significant aspect of this integration is the increasing centralization of the world’s production and trade in the hands of a few hundred multinational companies and financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Media and information systems are agents of this development and its culture. Human relationships are distorted by a consumerist ideology and life-style, which a commodity mentality pervades. Rural communities that had maintained a degree of interpersonal relationships are fast coming under the influence of technology, which destroys much of the traditional infrastructure. It is increasingly realized today that liberation from the domination of economically powerful countries is a prerequisite for the development of countries in the third world. Unless development is placed within the control of international social justice, “development” is an empty word.

Economic development within the third-world countries, which is controlled by a powerful elite with the cooperation of multinationals and external resources, favours the rich and continues to create imbalances between different sections of the people. Capital investment is concentrated primarily in the industrial or advanced sector in the belief that rapid industrialization will create conditions for wider use of the abundant labour available and reduce inequalities in income distribution. In fact, however, the advanced sector achieves considerably more expansion, leading to the greater relative impoverishment of the traditional sector, thus widening the gap between the two. In other words, the majority of the population are left outside the development process. This growth-oriented development has the concomitant problem of ecological crisis, with pressures created on the ecosystem largely caused by the life-style of the rich. Without a change, pollution and other ecological problems will only worsen.

As a critical response to this scenario, development needs to become a liberating process. Ecumenical documents, particularly those of the WCC’s Commission on the Churches’ Participation in Development (CCPD) and material related to issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation, articulate this perspective forcefully. The central issue is posed as “development by whom and for whom?” Development becomes a liberating process when the oppressed and marginal are able to identify their own needs, mobilize their own resources and shape their future on their own terms. The church is challenged to commit itself to that form of development.

### POLITICAL MOVEMENT

The political dimension of liberation is best illustrated in the freedom fighting in Asia and Africa that led to the overthrow of colonialism (see **decolonization**). Today liberation struggles are being waged on many fronts. Some vestiges of colonialism and forces of neo-colonialism continue to strangle the life of many countries in the third world. Regimes by racial minorities and military dictatorships and other totalitarian systems of governments continue to oppress people.

Even in presumably democratic countries in the third world, the political system often features a concentration of the decision-making process in the hands of persons or groups whose interests are fundamentally inimical to the well-being of life as a whole. They typically keep the masses away from the centres of power and fail to resolve the basic problems of mass poverty, glaring inequalities, growing unemployment and rising prices. Organized efforts by the masses to redress their grievances may be brutally suppressed. Imposition of authoritarian and repressive regimes, denial of human rights and excessive dependence on foreign resources are the natural consequences of domination by the elite.

The emergence of liberation groups as a countervailing power to unjust systems of government has created many situations of conflict, some of which have turned violent. What form must a Christian presence take in the face of such violent conflicts? Dogmatic renunciation of violence can reduce Christian principles to empty slogans and talk of justice to a mockery. But uncritical acceptance of violence destroys the critical edge of our Christian witness to the gospel of love. This issue cannot be settled in abstract academic debate. The church's commitment to violent or non-violent strategies must be evaluated in each situation in light of its overall commitment to liberation. In any case, the church's commitment to liberation necessarily expresses itself in its solidarity with liberation movements.

## THEOLOGY

Concern for liberation has brought a distinctly new emphasis in theology (see **theology, liberation**). Radically challenging the traditional mode of theologizing at every point, Latin American theologians have argued that authentic theology is reflection on faith and praxis for the poor. A commitment to liberation is the starting point from which to think through the faith.

The concept of liberation appears in ancient philosophy and in the religions of Asia, where it is primarily personal and interior and does not envisage any radical change of social structure. The present emphasis, however, situates liberation in concrete historical events (see **history**) and arises out of a fresh reading of the

Bible). The God of the Bible is a liberator God, the God of the exodus. The biblical view of liberation is integral, not divided into an inner, private or religious realm and an outer, public or secular realm. It is from the outset a personal and social reality which brings the whole common life to a new fruition. Furthermore, there is a recognition that the poor play a pivotal role in God's liberation.

Asian discussion of biblical liberation has emphasized its cultural and religious dimensions. More than a class struggle, it is seen there as a religious experience of the poor. To affirm the biblical faith in the liberator God is to affirm a life in solidarity with the poor. But in a context like Asia, where the majority of the poor are not Christians, to make this affirmation is to enter deeply into the religious and cultural (non-Christian) experience of the poor. The conviction gained is that in the third world, where all religions together face the challenges of enslaving social and cultural systems and the need to struggle for justice, religions should meet each other, exploring and sharing their liberative elements. Inter-religious dialogue should be concerned about what each religion can contribute to human liberation.

See also **globalization, economic; hermeneutics; violence and non-violence**.

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## LIBERTY/FREEDOM

THE TENSION between freedom and order\* at the ethico-social and political and economic levels represents a dialectics that seems in-

trinsic to human culture\* and that finds expression in one's theology of humankind and of the church.\* Although this article is concerned with liberty as related to theological social ethics in the ecumenical movement, such discussion should not be isolated from the wider cultural and theological context.

### USE OF THE NOTION OF LIBERTY/FREEDOM

At the ethico-social level, the tension has been present in the discussion of development,\* reform and revolution\* as the relative priorities between justice and order, in the economic debates about planned and market economies and in the consideration of the role of the state\* in granting security for the whole society and preserving individual rights and liberties. The effort to find a balanced and dynamic relation of these terms is clearly visible in the attempts to delineate a type or vision of society which can become a criterion for judging and a stimulus for pursuing a social order closer to God's design and human fulfilment. From the beginning of the ecumenical movement, the ideal of freedom/liberty played an important role. It is part of the mandate of the WCC to assist the churches in combating poverty, injustice and oppression and to facilitate ecumenical cooperation in service to human need and in promoting freedom, justice, peace, human dignity and world community. However, the concept of liberty/freedom as a basic element of social organization was never systematically analyzed in WCC studies and discussions, which makes it impossible to provide a neat conceptual or philosophical account of the way in which it has been understood in the ecumenical movement.

The reasons for this situation are manifold: in many different contexts and studies the word "freedom" has been used almost rhetorically, as if its meaning were clear and speaks for itself: freedom of the church itself, freedom within the church, freedom as "freedom for" as opposed to "freedom from", freedom "through" but also "from" technology, freedom from poverty, freedom "from" but also "for" culture, freedom from racism,\* freedom from sexism,\* freedom from national-security or law-and-order ideologies. Even when it was used in the theme of conferences, meetings or study groups, it

was not necessarily reflected in the documents but almost seen as a generally accepted umbrella term.

Several synonymous terms have been and still are used in ecumenical documents on the structuring of society, e.g. self-reliance, affirming the selfhood of people, self-government, self-determination, defending human dignity, participation, people's power, emancipation. The plural "liberties" was part of the human rights studies, which in itself witnessed a shift from an accent on individual rights and liberties to contextual involvement in the struggles for social rights, especially in third-world situations.

As religious liberty,\* it has been an important issue since Oxford's report on church and state (1937). As liberation,\* it was introduced in the early 1970s to replace the concept of development.

### FREEDOM IN ECUMENICAL HISTORY

Some important events, conferences and documents are highlighted here, indicating a few general periods and trends.

The pre-WCC period (1925-48) can be seen as a first phase. The accent of ecumenical social thought was on a commitment to social justice\* and peace,\* conceived mainly in terms of Western perspectives on justice, human dignity and freedoms.

Stockholm (1925) offered an idealistic vision of Christian action in society. The Oxford conference on "Church, Community and State" (1937) then focused more realistically on the ambiguity of all attempts at achieving social justice, emphasizing among other things economic planning and justice in a "free society". It offered criticisms both of "the economic order in the industrialized world", and of "the actual development of communism". Although reflecting the views of its participants, coming mainly from industrialized democracies and presupposing the existence of dominantly capitalistic economies, it did not identify Christianity with capitalism\* or any other system.

During a second phase, the Amsterdam period (1948-61), the first WCC formulations of political and economic policy were made. Now the concept of liberty/freedom was used in important definitions, still from the then-prevailing Western, first-world perspective, within the context of the search for a responsible society.\*

J.H. Oldham defended the preference for a “free” or “responsible” society, in the world power struggle of the time, by saying that “two things belong inseparably together – liberty and equal justice”. The term “responsible society” was preferable to “free society”, which was associated with old-fashioned laissez-faire liberalism. In explaining the principles of this vision, Oldham said: “Christians must stand firmly for the freedom of men to obey God and to act in accordance with their conscience. This is the foundation of a responsible society... To obey God men must be free to seek the truth, to speak the truth and to educate one another through a common search for the truth. Only through the freedom of its members to expose error, to criticize existing institutions and to express fresh creative ideas can society advance to fresh levels of life... Political freedom [the freedom of a people to control, criticize and change its government] is the foundation and guarantee of all other freedoms. It is not the *source* of all freedoms... But so far as freedom in an earthly society is involved, no freedoms are in the long run secure without political freedom” (*The Church and the Disorder of Society*, 1948, 147,152).

The report of the WCC’s founding assembly in Amsterdam (1948) summarized: “For a society to be responsible under modern conditions, it is required that the people have freedom to control, to criticize and to change their governments, that the power be made responsible by law and tradition, and be distributed as widely as possible through the whole community. It is required that economic justice and provision of equality of opportunity be established for all members of society” (77-78). The perspective was clear: “A responsible society is one where freedom is the freedom of men who acknowledge responsibility to justice and public order.”

Already in the first year after the assembly, the commission on Christian action in society made the vital connection between freedom and social justice even clearer: “Freedom lacks substance unless it is combined with economic justice, and... the quest for economic justice leads to new forms of oppression unless it is united with an insistent concern for political and spiritual freedom.”

Through the 1950s, this tension remained, while attention was increasingly focused on worldwide movements for political and economic independence and self-determination, especially in areas of rapid social change. This development, together with the rapidly changing constituency of the ecumenical movement itself, made it urgent that the applicability of ecumenical social thought to the new situations be reviewed.

The years 1962-68 can be regarded as a third phase, “a time of review” (Paul Abrecht). The 1966 Geneva world conference on Church and Society represented the focal point of this process. The report on “Towards Justice and Peace in International Affairs” from Uppsala (1968) clearly reflected the new orientation. The central concerns were no longer freedom and order in the framework of a responsible world society but, rather, social justice and human dignity.

The period beginning in 1969 brought a next phase, that of liberation ecumenism, of impatience with the approach to social ethics of the first three periods, of “increasing pressure to make a more absolute and a more definitive commitment to radical political action for justice and freedom” (Abrecht). Under the growing influence of voices from the third world, the emphasis shifted to issues of justice in society and to participation in struggles for liberation. Instead of abstract ideals of human freedom(s), the diverse, very specific, historical realities of present-day contexts became important, and therefore very concrete demands for freedom arose in the face of the very real absence of specific freedoms, e.g. affirming people’s rights against the dominating and oppressive influence of transnational capital, people’s dignity against authoritarian and national security systems, self-reliance in the use of raw materials, as well as seeking solutions to structural unemployment and defending social rights to corporate identity, culturally and spiritually. Action, not merely study, became the new initiative.

During the Nairobi assembly (1975), with its theme “Jesus Christ Frees and Unites”, many of these emphases came together. Two sections discussed structures of injustice and struggles for liberation, and education for liberation and community.

In the programme for a Just, Participatory and Sustainable Society\* (JPSS), begun in 1977, the accent on participation\* represented this insight that the involvement of all constitutes a necessary condition for the full realization of social justice. Participation called for a recognition of each person's right to be consulted, heard and understood, whatever his or her political, economic and societal status may be. Justice will be achieved in a society only where people are regarded as subjects able to transform by their own resources their political, social and natural environment and to establish and maintain relationships of equality with one another. Respect for the civil and social rights of all was seen as an essential condition for justice. In this way, JPSS tried to avoid the dilemma often alleged between social equality and human liberties.

### UNRESOLVED TENSIONS: FREEDOM AND LIBERATION

During these years, however, conflicts between diverse theological and ethical perspectives in ecumenical social thought became more apparent and difficult to resolve. Especially important was the influence of liberation theology,\* challenging the Oxford-Amsterdam understanding of social responsibility as favouring the ideology of liberal capitalist democracy, and propagating a liberation socialist perspective to replace the older liberal capitalist approach, thereby also giving radical new content to the ideal of freedom. Many insiders experienced this period as one of deep divisions and unresolved tensions in ecumenical social thought. Meanwhile, the JPSS programme was replaced by Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation.\* The matter of participation, however, has remained an enduring issue.

In the Roman Catholic Church, issues of liberation, liberty and freedom have been important over several decades. The social teaching of the church has been reflected in various documents over these years, also showing the developments and ambiguities seen in the ecumenical movement. Well-known documents on the thinking of liberation theology in the Catholic church are those of Medellín (1968) and Puebla (1979), from Latin America, as well as the critical and controversial instructions "Certain As-

pects of the Theology of Liberation" (1984) and "Christian Freedom and Liberation" (1986), from the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The Protestant approach is represented by ISAL (Church and Society in Latin America) and its journals such as *Cristianismo y Sociedad*. In Latin America there was close cooperation and common reflection between Catholic and Protestant theologians committed to the struggle for liberation.

Since its inception in 1976, the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians\* has concentrated on issues of liberation from different forms of oppression. Its regular conferences and publications reflect this emphasis in many ways and in diverse contexts. In its consultation on religion and liberation in New Delhi (1987), it focused on the liberative potential of religions.

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### LIFE AND DEATH

LIFE AND DEATH, unlike such controversial issues as the ordination of women and sacramental doctrine, does not appear on the ecumenical agenda as a discrete item seeking resolution. But the subject is so fundamental to the Christian faith and potentially so all-inclusive that virtually every ecumenical discussion bears upon it in some way. The centrality of life and death was underscored by the theme of the sixth assembly of WCC (Vancouver 1983): "Jesus Christ – the Life of the World" (John 6:51, 10:10). Studies and reports related to this assembly, as well as other documents, suggest four prominent ways in which the subject enters ecumenical discourse.

### CREATION, FALL AND REDEMPTION

God has created the world, the assembly proclaims, to share in God's own life, in the

loving and eternal communion of Father, Son and Holy Spirit (see **Trinity**). "The glory of God is humanity fully alive," wrote Irenaeus. However, humankind's sinful rejection of God's design for life has brought destruction and death (see **sin**).

Eastern and Western Christianity have viewed the human predicament with different emphases. The East alleges that the West so concentrates on sin, atonement and justification\* by faith\* that the catastrophe and tyranny of death are not sufficiently confronted by Christ's resurrection\* and his bestowal of eternal life through the Spirit (see **Holy Spirit**). The West, in turn, has charged the East with minimizing the gravity of human godlessness and sin by focusing, at the expense of the cross, on incarnation,\* resurrection and our *theosis*, or "divinization" (human life made God-like in Christ). Ecumenical discussions have rejected any opposition between a "theology of the cross" and a "theology of the resurrection"; it is not an either-or decision. Both theologies are found in each tradition. Redemption\* from sin is placed by the East in the primary context of Christ's victory over death. Anselm, who is often blamed for the West's fixation on atonement, speaks also in *Cur Deus Homo?* of our perfect restoration through the resurrection of the dead. Each charge, when pressed too far, is a distortion. However, the tension between the respective emphases of East and West remains to be faced squarely, both as an ecumenical problem and as a potential source of ecumenical growth.

Christ redeems us from both sin and death; he has come to heal the whole of life, as the theme of Vancouver expresses. In the gospels, Jesus forgives sin, feeds the hungry, raises the dead, releases the captives, befriends the outcast and preaches good news to the poor (Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38). He offers the very life of God to a distressed and dying world (John 5:19-36).

### CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

Christ's ministry to the world continues through his church.\* Baptism\* means death to the sinful self and new life in Christ (Rom. 6:3-11; cf. Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21). Believers are made members of the one Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). Feeding on the risen Christ in the eucharist,\* Christians are to give them-

selves in loving service to the world, just as Christ gave himself, even to the point of death. In Christ, suffering can be redemptive (Phil. 3:10). The martyr's willingness to die for Christ and neighbour testifies that this life is not an absolute good but is oriented towards and fulfilled in God's kingdom\* (1 Pet. 4:13; Rev. 2:10). "The recognition of martyrs already transcends confessional boundaries and brings us all back to the centre of the faith, the source of hope, and the example of love for God and fellow human beings" ("Witness unto Death", in *Sharing the One Hope*, WCC, 1978). Yet the memory of those martyred because of confessional disputes convicts the churches of the seriousness of their division (see **martyrdom**).

As reflected in reports to the Vancouver assembly, the most vigorous ecumenical discussions of life and death today are evoked by the need for a common Christian witness against "the politics of death" practised globally – injustice, poverty,\* racism,\* sexism,\* war and the threat of nuclear annihilation. True life is found in Christ, not in military, cultural or economic dominance. However, the assembly warns, this claim for Christ does not justify Christian intolerance and persecution of non-Christians, but it should foster honest dialogue (see **dialogue**, **intrafaith**) with other religions and beliefs. Vancouver was also concerned with the questions posed for Christian discipleship by issues such as abortion,\* euthanasia\* and the humane use of technology.\* Pope John Paul II addressed these issues in his encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* (1995).

### LIFE EVERLASTING

For a variety of theological and cultural reasons, ecumenical discussion in recent decades has focused more on redeeming the present order than on the life to come, though there are exceptions to this trend (see **eschatology**). Both, however, rightfully belong to the fullness of Christian faith sought by the ecumenical movement and cannot be separated (1 Cor. 15:19). Christ's resurrection has broken the barrier of death. He unites all who belong to him – the living and the dead – in the communion of saints\* (Rom. 8:28; Col. 1:12). In their eucharistic celebrations, the Orthodox and the Roman

Catholics invoke the saints and pray for the dead. Anglican liturgies vary on these matters. The abusive practice by the medieval Western church of selling indulgences for the dead in purgatory was a focus of Protestant attacks from the beginning of the Reformation. In the 1978 report of the Joint Roman Catholic-Lutheran Commission on "The Eucharist", there was agreement that Christ's gift of himself in the eucharist must be appropriated through active, believing participation and cannot be transferred from one person to another. Yet Christians may hope that the Lord allows them to share in his saving assistance. All intercessions – for the living and the dead, whether from the saints on earth or in heaven – are completely dependent upon the sovereign love of Christ, and none restricts his freedom (similarly, "The Communion of Saints and the Departed", in the 1984 Dublin statement of the Anglican-Orthodox dialogue\*). Still, Protestants are constrained from praying for the dead by doctrinal reticence concerning their state and, in keeping with the Reformation, reject the invocation of the saints as a denial of the sole mediation of Christ (though the Reformation did not deny their heavenly intercession).

In modern times, individual Protestant theologians have expressed openness to belief in purgatory, and some have even sought to extend it beyond its traditional definition in Catholicism (i.e. a purification of those who died in Christ) to include a "second chance" of salvation\* for those who in this life rejected Christ. These efforts, however, have never been officially accepted by Protestantism. Historically, the churches have all rejected programmatic universalism\* – the notion that God must save all – as an infringement upon both divine and human freedom. Yet many Christians, across the entire confessional spectrum, maintain the *hope* of universal salvation and witness accordingly. In their dialogue report "Together in God's Grace" (1987), theologians from the Reformed and Methodist traditions think their historic conflict over predestination should no longer divide them. Their respective emphases – God's sovereignty in election and the freedom of human response, in unresolvable tension with each other – together constitute the fundamental mystery of

salvation, which for both traditions depends upon God's grace\* at every point.

Ecumenical discourse has typically stressed that God's wrath and judgment cannot be separated from God's saving deed in Christ (2 Cor. 5:10; John 5:22; Rev. 1:17-18). "[The] Judge is indeed our Deliverer, Jesus, who has already shown in his cross and resurrection that what he desires is our life, not our death" (cf. Ezek. 33:11), writes a group of Protestant, Orthodox and Roman Catholic theologians in *The Report of the Third European Ecumenical Encounter* (WCC, 1985). Final judgment, the report continues, belongs not to humanity but to Christ, friend of sinners and partisan for the dispossessed, when he returns in final glory. The consummation of history can thus be anticipated with joy, trust and good works. The meaning of every human life will be disclosed by the Lord (1 Cor. 4:5), though Christians cannot know now what precise form eternal life will take.

### CHRISTIAN UNITY

"God's purpose", the Vancouver assembly stated, "is to restore all things into unity in Christ" (see Col. 1:17-20). Through the Holy Spirit, God has called and empowered the church to be the divine instrument of healing and reconciliation.\* Yet Christians, in their multifarious divisions, evidence and indeed contribute to the fragmentation of the world. The ecumenical movement, at heart, is a witness to the unifying power of Christ against the divisive forces of sin and death, both in the churches and the world.

This basic purpose is sometimes obscured by the complexity of ecumenical discussions, which by necessity range far and wide. But they all have as their ultimate goal a united offering to the world of new life in Christ, through common doctrine, worship and ministry. The world should be able to see in the church a concrete sign of its own unity restored in God. Commitment to the unity\* of the church and concern for its redemptive outreach to humanity are thus inseparable; when one weakens, the other falters. For Christians to acquiesce in disunity would be a denial of Christ's power over sin and death and consequently a legitimation, rather than challenge, of creation's broken-

ness. Christian unity is essential, not secondary, to the gospel message of life and death.

See also **bio-ethics, creation.**

ROWAN D. CREWS, Jr

■ Bilaterale Arbeitsgruppe der Deutschen Bischofskonferenz und der Kirchenleitung der VELKD, *Communio Sanctorum: Die Kirche als Gemeinschaft der Heiligen*, Paderborn, Bonifatius, 2000, esp. paras 201-52 ■ I. Bria ed., *Jesus Christ – the Life of the World: An Orthodox Contribution to the Vancouver Theme*, WCC, 1982 ■ N. Greinacher, “The Experience of Dying”, *Concilium*, 94, 1974 ■ G. Griffin, *Death and the Church*, East Malvern, UK, Dove, 1978 ■ B. Hebblethwaite, *The Christian Hope*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1985 ■ O. Kaiser & E. Lohse, *Death and Life*, Nashville TN, Abingdon, 1981 ■ H. Küng & W. Jens, *A Dignified Dying: A Plea for Personal Responsibility*, London, SCM Press, 1995 ■ W. Lazareth ed., *The Lord of Life*, WCC, 1983 ■ K. Rahner, *Zur Theologie des Todes* (ET *On the Theology of Death*, London, Burns & Oates, 1965) ■ H. Thielicke, *Leben mit dem Tod* (ET *Living with Death*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1983).

## LIFE AND WORK

THE IDEA of forming a worldwide movement of churches to work for peace\* and justice\* between the nations had been often discussed in Christian peace movements before the first world war, and during the war the need became far more urgent. Many church leaders began to see that that conflict was an immense human and social catastrophe which their national churches had done little to prevent and in which they had too readily participated. Though church leaders from neutral countries instigated attempts to stop the fighting, few churches from the warring powers were prepared to cope with the political and moral problems which this same bold stand would have involved.

At the end of the fighting the churches started plans for a conference which would help work for a just and lasting peace and formulate a Christian response to the economic, social and moral issues in the post-war world. In August 1920 some 90 church leaders, representing Protestant churches in 15 countries, met in Geneva to make plans for such a world Christian meeting. The leading figure was Nathan Söderblom, archbishop of the Lutheran Church of Sweden, a churchman

with a deep social concern, a passion for Christian unity\* and remarkable talents as an ecclesiastical statesman and diplomat. Söderblom was determined that this world meeting of churches on social issues should support the idea of an ecumenical council of churches. Thus all churches, including the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox, were invited to take part. As chairman of the committee on arrangements, Söderblom instilled his ecumenical vision into this pioneer event – the universal Christian conference on life and work, in Stockholm, August 1925.

The words “life and work” expressed the organizers’ determination to set forth “the Christian way of life” as the “the world’s greatest need”. The aim was “to formulate programmes and devise means... whereby the *fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of all peoples* will become more completely realized through the church of Christ”. This idealistic goal was unfortunately not matched by a realistic estimation of the immense and complex problems facing society in the post-war years. Not surprisingly, the results of the Stockholm conference failed to measure up to expectations.

The spiritual strength of Stockholm was in its insight that “the world is too strong for a divided church”; its weakness was its deliberate avoidance of theological issues, justified in the phrase “doctrine divides while service unites”. In fact, the conference became deeply divided on how to relate the Christian hope\* for the kingdom of God\* to the church’s responsibility for the world. The result was vague, with too general statements about “applying the gospel in all realms of life”.

The harsh realities of increasing political and economic disorder in the years 1929-33 and the rise of Hitlerism and other totalitarian systems frustrated the optimistic and idealistic hopes of Stockholm, forcing the movement to engage in deeper analysis and study of the world social and spiritual situation.

Fortunately in these years, new developments in theology at this critical juncture gave fresh spiritual vitality to the Life and Work movement: Barthian theology in Europe, dynamic forms of neo-orthodox theology in North America (esp. in the thought of Reinhold Niebuhr), and a revitalized Orthodox theology in the writing of Russians, such as

Sergius Bulgakov and Nicolas Berdyaev. As preparations began in 1934 for the second Life and Work conference (Oxford 1937), the new leaders were determined to find more solid theological-ethical foundations for this work. Prominent among them were two English churchmen: William Temple, then archbishop of York, and J.H. Oldham, secretary of the International Missionary Council.\* In a determined attack on the theological-ethical problem, seven major theological-ethical studies were published: *The Christian Understanding of Man*; *The Kingdom of God and History*; *The Christian Faith and the Common Life*; *Church and Community*; *Church, Community and State in Relation to Education*; *The Universal Church and the World of Nations*; and *The Church and Its Function in Society*. These volumes were pioneering theological statements, on the basis of which the Life and Work movement re-formulated its view of the church's role in society.

The central theme of the new theological-ethical approach is summed up in a line from Niebuhr in one of these volumes: "It is a dangerous theology... which does not recognize how dialectically the kingdom of God is related to the sinful world in every moment of existence, offering both judgment and a more excellent way in considering every problem of justice."

This preparatory study for the Oxford conference was a remarkable ecumenical and intellectual achievement for the Life and Work movement. It involved contributions of several hundred leading theological and lay thinkers of that period, including representatives of all the major denominational and confessional communities. It established Life and Work as a movement which could truly help the churches and the secular world in addressing political and social problems. The conference report on its central theme, *Church, Community and State*, thus represents the first theologically formulated statement on the Christian task in the modern world. Its influence on Protestant and Orthodox thought may be compared with such historic Roman Catholic social encyclicals\* as Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and Pius XI's *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931).

The rapid progress of Life and Work in 1934-37 made it the leading force in 1938 in

the formation of the WCC (then "in process of formation"). In his memoirs W.A. Visser 't Hooft makes clear that in the merger of two movements to form the WCC, Faith and Order\* was a hesitant and uncertain partner, whereas Life and Work was the motor of advance, seeing in the dangerous and tumultuous social situation of the world the compelling reason for moving decisively towards a dynamic and informed ecumenical council of churches. Only in this way could the churches be helped to do everything within their power to bring the spirit of the living God to a world in great spiritual and social turmoil. And by its emphasis on the contribution of the laity, the Life and Work movement vastly enlarged the field of ecumenical support and endeavour, reaching into the worlds of the university, government and social life for new talent and new fields of ecumenical advance. In this sense it is fair to say that Life and Work carried the ecumenical movement far beyond the confines which Faith and Order or the International Missionary Council\* had initially set.

From this pioneering movement flows the contemporary ecumenical concern with such issues as international relations, racism,\* economic justice\* and order,\* democracy, human rights\* and religious liberty.\*

See also **church and world**.

PAUL ABRECHT

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## LIFE-STYLE

A BRITISH Council of Churches conference in Birmingham in September 1972 urged

Christians "to pledge themselves to a simplicity of life which is generous to others and content with enough rather than excess". About a dozen participants did so pledge, and the Life-Style movement was born. A written commitment was formulated, revised several times since, which about a thousand people have now signed. This "Commitment to Personal Change" contains the following statement: "The Life-Style movement offers a voluntary common discipline to those who are committed to a more equitable distribution of the earth's resources and to the conservation and development of those resources for our own and future generations." The commitment embodies six points: "live simply that all may simply live; give freely that all may be free to give; avoid wasteful use of resources and show care for the environment; work with others for social justice through appropriate action; enjoy such good things as are compatible with this commitment; share my commitment with others".

Thus the movement seeks to hold together issues of justice\* and peace,\* of human development and ecological conservation, of political action and personal moderation, of enjoyment of God's gifts and a measure of self-denial. Although its origins are Christian and a survey has shown that some 80% of members profess the Christian faith, the movement is open to people of all faiths or none. To facilitate this openness, care has been taken to exclude from the commitment any reference to religion.

Most members live in the United Kingdom, but they form part of a worldwide trend of some complexity. As long ago as 1978 the *Los Angeles Times* reported that "an estimated 45 million Americans are living lives fully committed to the concept of voluntary simplicity, while perhaps twice that many are partial adherents". In Scandinavia Erik Dammann and others founded "The Future in Our Hands" in 1974, with aims very similar to those of the Life-Style movement. This group has attracted far more support than Life-Style.

Global ecumenical reflection on life-style has been rather general, for reasons already apparent in the WCC's first and only major treatment of the subject - at the fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968).

The section "Towards New Styles of Living" declared that "Christian life requires a willingness to be changed and to change the world... Even though we are unable to establish any perfect order for human life in this world, we are convinced that things can be bettered while we wait for the renewal of all things which God himself will accomplish." However, "there is no single style of Christian life"; and the Uppsala report, which limits itself to "proposing some contours of Christian styles of living", also makes apparent several obstacles to going beyond generalities in the global ecumenical discussion.

As political, social, economic and cultural contexts differ from place to place, so do questions of life-style for Christians. Moreover, discussion of life-style invariably elicits tensions between those who emphasize the need to be disciplined by "human rules" and those who emphasize the need to be able to discern through the Spirit the "signs of the times". The report insists that "the problem of rules and of personal responsibility in each situation can only be solved within the framework of community", suggesting that "the moral conduct of each person can benefit from mutual advice and criticism". Churches, too, can learn from one another. More controversial was Uppsala's acknowledgment that "middle-class people" dominate global church assemblies. What such bodies say about life-style is thus likely to reflect a preference for gradual reform of the existing order and to stress the importance of human relations, family life, material success, efficiency and "interiorized moral standards".

In the late 1970s an "action/reflection" process on "new life-styles" within the WCC's Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development was rooted in growing concern about the quality of life in view of the ecological crisis and the perceived discrepancy between the life-style of many churches and the gospel message of "judgment to the rich and hope to the poor".

Several reports adopted by the WCC's sixth assembly (Vancouver 1983) mentioned life-style without elaborating on it. One said that "a more simple life-style and even a life of poverty is laid on the church and Christians as a witness to the poverty of Christ",

but it added the same qualification made in Uppsala: "Christians and churches, of course, find themselves in very different circumstances." Another report acknowledged that "we have much to learn from one another's spirituality, in prayer, life-style, suffering and struggle".

See also **renewal**.

ALFRED HOUNSELL DAMMERS and  
MARLIN VANELDEREN

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## LILJE, HANNS

B. 20 Aug. 1899, Hanover, Germany; d. 6 Jan. 1977, Hanover. One of the pioneers of the ecumenical movement, who helped pave the way for reconciliation between the churches of Germany and those of other



countries, Lilje was general secretary of the German Student Christian Movement, 1924-34, and involved in the German church struggle from 1933 onwards. Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hanover from 1947 until his retirement in 1971, he was presiding bishop of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany, 1955-69, president of the Lutheran World Federation, 1952-57, member of the LWF's executive committee, 1947-70, and a president of the WCC, 1968-75. Under the title of Johannes XI, he was the life-time abbot of the monastery of Loccum near Hanover. Condemned by a people's court in 1944 for preaching "inner resistance" and related to the group which attempted to assassinate Hitler, Lilje was liberated from a prison in Nuremberg by the Allied army.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## LIMA LITURGY

THE EUCHARISTIC liturgy which has come to be known as the Lima liturgy was drawn up by Max Thurian in preparation for the plenary session of the Faith and Order\* commission held in Lima in 1982. At the session itself the text of the liturgy was slightly revised and then used for the first time on 15 January 1982. The presiding celebrant was Robert Wright, an Episcopalian priest. The Orthodox and Roman Catholic members of the commission participated in the service but did not receive communion. The liturgy was used again (with Philip Potter presiding) in Geneva during the meeting of the central committee of the WCC in July 1982. A year later, the celebration of the Lima liturgy was one of the high points of the sixth assembly of the WCC in Vancouver.

The ensuing (and largely unexpected) wide-ranging use of the Lima liturgy is due in part to its having been celebrated at these important points within the recent life of the ecumenical movement. The reception is also due to this liturgy's being an expression of the convergence reached in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry\** (BEM) and becoming part of the reception\* of this document as a

whole. At the assembly of the WCC in Canberra (1991) the eucharistic service used a version of the Lima liturgy prepared in light of the responses to BEM.

The Lima liturgy is one possible expression of the eucharistic theology embodied in BEM and, in particular, of a eucharistic liturgy based on the elements outlined in E27. Overall, the Lima liturgy follows a Western pattern of eucharistic celebration, although important inspirations from the Eastern tradition should not be overlooked.

The liturgy of entrance consists of an entrance psalm, a greeting (2 Cor. 13:13), a confession and absolution (taken from the Lutheran Book of Worship, USA, 1978), a Kyrie litaney (in analogy of the Byzantine liturgy, but taking up the themes of baptism, eucharist and ministry) and the gloria. The liturgy of the word begins with an opening prayer and makes provision for three scripture readings. These are followed by a sermon and a time of silent meditation. The confession of the Nicene Creed\* uses the text of 381. Intercessions follow, modelled on early Roman usage. The liturgy of the meal opens with preparatory prayers (two berakoth from the Jewish liturgy and a prayer inspired by the *Didache*). The eucharistic prayer has a fixed preface, followed – after the sanctus – by a first epiclesis, to which there is a congregational response (as is the case at other points in the eucharistic prayer); the institution narrative, the anamnesis and a second epiclesis follow; before the Trinitarian conclusion there is a set of commemorations. The Lord's prayer, the peace, the breaking of the bread and the Agnus Dei immediately precede communion. The liturgy ends with a thanksgiving prayer, a final hymn and a sending with blessing.

The liturgical reception of this rather full liturgy has hardly ever left its texts and structure unchanged but adapted them to a great variety of different situations. This is to be expected, since the Lima liturgy provides only a text (not even rubrics are given) and as such is only the manuscript guiding a specific eucharistic celebration of a specific community of faith.

In the reception of the Lima liturgy, which has been both critical and enthusiastic, one thing has become clear: there is an obvious desire among the people of God\* to

see emerging doctrinal convergences become embodied and rooted in the liturgical life of the church. The final locus for doctrinal convergence is not the discussion table but the table of the word and the table of bread and wine. The Lima liturgy has drawn ecumenical attention to this fact.

See also **worship in the ecumenical movement**.

TERESA BERGER

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## LITURGICAL MOVEMENT

THE TERM "liturgical movement" denotes the phenomenon of recovering the centrality of worship in the life of the 20th-century church. This movement had antecedents in attempts at liturgical reform\* and renewal during the Enlightenment and, particularly, in the 19th century. To name but two: the Anglo-Catholic revival brought a renewed interest in liturgical sources as well as liturgical theology and led to a renewal of liturgical life in many Anglo-Catholic communities. Within the Roman Catholic Church (RCC), Prosper Guéranger (1805-75) overshadows other forerunners of the liturgical movement in the 19th century (such as the Benedictines at the abbeys of Beuron in Bavaria and Maredsous in Belgium). Guéranger, himself a Benedictine, in 1832 re-founded the abbey of Solesmes in France, which quickly became an advocate for the liturgical tradition of the Roman church and in particular for its Gregorian chant.

In the 20th century the liturgical movement first gained momentum in the RCC. Although this movement can be seen as consisting of different strands of interdependent "liturgical movements", its beginnings are traditionally dated to one event: the address of Lambert Beauduin (1873-1960) at a pastoral congress at Malines, Belgium, in 1909. Beauduin, a Benedictine monk (who in 1925 founded a monastery particularly dedicated to Christian unity, now Chevetogne\*), gave

the nascent liturgical movement its pastoral orientation. This orientation was shared by a number of other developing centres of the liturgical movement, such as Klosterneuburg in Austria, where Pius Parsch (1884-1954), an Augustinian canon, developed a strong biblical perspective for the liturgical renewal. A pastoral orientation also lay at the heart of the beginning liturgical movement in the USA, where the Benedictine Virgil Michel (1890-1938) of St John's Abbey, Collegeville, MN, in 1926 began to publish a journal with the title *Orate Fratres* (now *Worship*). In France the Centre de pastorale liturgique was established in 1941 and soon began issuing its journal, *La Maison-Dieu*.

Other emphases were championed by other centres of the liturgical movement. The German Benedictine abbey of Maria Laach, particularly through Ildefons Herwegen (1874-1946) and Odo Casel (1886-1948), gave to the movement a solid foundation of historical and theological research and reflection (see its series *Ecclesia Orans* and journal *Jahrbuch der Liturgiewissenschaft*). A strong historical and pastoral orientation also characterized the work of the Austrian Jesuit Joseph Andreas Jungmann (1889-1975). Romano Guardini (1885-1968) worked particularly with groups of intellectuals and with the youth movement. The concerns of the liturgical movement also fell on fruitful ground in many non-Western countries, where the churches had long suffered under the alienation between traditional Roman liturgical life and the local worshipping community.

After a time of heightened tensions, Rome gave its stamp of approval to the liturgical movement with Pius XII's encyclical *Mediator Dei* in 1947, although the dawn of official support for the renewal of liturgical life can already be seen in Pius X's *motu proprio Tra le Sollecitudini* of 1903, which introduces "active participation", one of the key themes of the liturgical movement. Liturgical congresses, journals and centres now flourished and opened the way for systematic liturgical reform.

The different strands of liturgical renewal within the RCC find their ecumenically significant parallels within communities of faith stemming from the Reformation. The Lutheran church in Germany, for exam-

ple, saw a high-church movement form in the 20th century with a keen interest in liturgical life. The Alpertsbacher circle, the Berneuchener circle and the Michaelsbruderschaft re-discovered Gregorian chant and the liturgy of the hours and nourished a revival of eucharistic celebrations and of private confession. The Reformed churches also had their liturgical pioneers both in theology and praxis: Eugène Bersier, Wilfred Monod and then the Taizé\* community in France, Richard Paquier and Jean-Jacques von Allmen in Switzerland, the Mercersburg movement in the US, William D. Maxwell and the Iona community in Scotland. The Anglican communion contributed fine historical scholars to the nascent liturgical movement, among them Walter Howard Frere (1863-1938), who was also involved in the beginning of the ecumenical movement, and Gregory Dix (1901-52). The beginnings of the liturgical movement within the Church of England, however, are often dated more specifically by reference to a book by Gabriel Hebert, *Liturgy and Society*, which was published in 1935. The Methodist churches saw a number of liturgical societies grow up in their midst, such as the Methodist Sacramental Fellowship in Britain and the Order of St Luke in the USA.

It is usually maintained that the Orthodox churches have not known a liturgical movement in the 20th century, since they have not seen the same fundamental liturgical reforms which other churches have witnessed. However, there has certainly been a renewal of liturgical theology (Nikolai Afanas'ev, Alexander Schmemmann and others), as well as small steps at liturgical reform which parallel the reforms the liturgical movement initiated in other churches. In some Orthodox churches the 20th century has seen a move to an audible recitation of the eucharistic prayer and a move away from "private baptisms".

The liturgical renewal sweeping through the churches in the 20th century obviously had a strong ecumenical impetus. Liturgical conferences, for example, were soon attended by liturgists from different ecclesial traditions. This implicit ecumenical impetus became an explicit ecumenical programme with the formation of *Societas Liturgica*, an ecumenical society for the study and renewal

of the liturgy.\* Founded in 1965 by the Netherlands Reformed pastor Wiebe Vos, *Societas Liturgica* now has over 300 members from all over the world and every major ecclesial communion. The number of members from the so-called two-thirds world and of women – the latter very active already in the traditional liturgical movement – has steadily increased.

One can ask whether the liturgical movement as a historical phenomenon has come to an end with, say, its fruition in the Vatican II Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (1963) and the ensuing liturgical reforms in the churches. Wherever one decides to place the end of the historical phenomenon known as the liturgical movement, its primary concern – the recovery of the centrality of the worshipping community – is and will remain a central task of the church of every age and place.

See also **Lima liturgy; liturgical texts, common; worship in the ecumenical movement.**

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## LITURGICAL REFORMS

THE LITURGICAL reforms which have in varying degrees changed the face of worship in West-

ern Christian churches in recent decades are the fruit of the liturgical movement,\* which may be described as one of the great spiritual movements of church history. (The Byzantine East knows no liturgical movement, and only occasional, timid attempts at liturgical reform have been made there.)

Following a predominantly cerebral era in which worship tended to be seen as a marginal aspect of Christian life, members of Western Christian churches began to recover the central importance of the liturgical celebration of the faith\* and to initiate reforms to purge it of accretions from various sources. Decisively, an intense new interest in liturgical history focused greater attention on the original intention of the liturgy – on what Vatican II\* in its Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 1963, hereafter SC) called the *norma Patrum* (SC 50). This made it easier to differentiate between organic development and accretions distorting the basic norm. For the Reformation churches there was the added bonus that research revealed the liturgical intentions of the Reformation's own "fathers".

In the Roman Catholic Church the liturgical movement, building on tentative efforts during the Enlightenment, arose anew in Belgium in 1909 and spread rapidly to France and Germany. One of its basic insights, and thus a basic impetus to reform, was the re-discovery of the active role in worship of the (hierarchically led) congregation of the faithful. The assembled holy people of God\*, led by the presiding priest (see **priesthood**), was seen as the subject of the liturgical and especially the eucharistic celebration (see **eucharist**), contrary to the widely held idea that the priest alone was subject and the faithful "assisted" in his sacred action. The reforming aims resulting from this insight, i.e. towards a "democratization" of the RC liturgy (thus Lambert Beauduin, who inaugurated the movement in Belgium), included the use of the vernacular, tentative at first but then increasingly and universally permitted, even if never with a deliberate exclusiveness. The desired reforms were achieved to a surprisingly generous degree in SC and in the revised liturgical books which the Consilium, the group mandated to implement the constitution, prepared between 1965 and 1970.

These post-conciliar liturgical texts ensured that believers were no longer the “silent spectators” that Pius XI complained (1928) they had become, but once again “fellow actors”, responsibly resuming the role originally intended for them in the mass. They are at last seen once again as co-offerers of the sacred gifts on the altar in the mass (SC 48). Again they utter the acclamations which in the course of the centuries had come to be assigned to the servers at the altar, i.e. the responses of the people to the celebrant’s invitations. Once again, too, they join in the recitation of the Lord’s prayer and (where the proposal for its introduction is accepted) in the greeting of peace. In the eucharistic communion, in accordance with ancient church custom, each communicant answers the words of administration with an “Amen!” Here, too, the Council pushed open a little the long-closed door excluding the laity from the chalice (SC 55), and this door has since been opened wide. The turning of the eucharistic celebrant to face the people, recommended and soon generally practised even if never officially prescribed, did more than any other measure of reform to cut the ground from beneath the idea of the mass as an act of the priest at which the faithful piously assisted.

In the daily office, so long mistakenly regarded as a clerical prerogative (“breviary”), the faithful recognize again their ancient rights in a realm of prayer which from time immemorial had been intended and fashioned as a “prayer of the church”. In the celebration of the sacraments\* they again join with their acclamations in the invocation of the Spirit on the elements and the congregation. The participation of the catechists and sponsors in the rite of admission into church membership (which once again takes place via the three initiatory sacraments of baptism\*, confirmation\* and eucharist) has recovered its ancient status – wherever the new Order for the Christian Initiation of Adults (1972) is given its chance. That has happened to a very large extent in the USA (in contrast to the German-speaking countries), where, faithful to the intention of this rite, the learning process under the guidance of the clergy has become the life-long process of growing into the church\* (a process of which the indispensable element of “learning” is an organic part).

An outstanding feature of the RC liturgical reform and its popular democratic thrust is the clean break with the anti-Reformation devaluation of the role of the word of God\* in RC worship. Of decisive importance here is the statement of the liturgy constitution that Christ is also present when the holy scriptures are read in church (SC 7); and this truth may be extended to the preached word of God in the sermon. Along the same line, the Council directed that sermons should, contrary to previous custom, be preached *ex textu sacro* (SC 52) – a measure which has produced lasting changes in post-conciliar RC worship. Finally, the Council spoke of “opening up the treasures of the Bible more lavishly” (SC 51) by the transition from a one-year cycle of biblical passages to a three-year cycle for Sundays and feast days, together with a two-year cycle for working days.

While the calendrical reforms cannot be listed here in detail, mention should be made of the radical reform of the paschal vigil (now restored to the night between Holy Saturday and Easter Day), a reform already completed in the decade prior to the opening of the Council (see **Easter, resurrection**).

Further sacramental reforms in the RCC include the return to the original idea of the anointing of the sick\* as a sacrament for the seriously ill (not just for the dying) and the decision in the case of infant baptism to take seriously the condition of infancy (parents and sponsors confess their own faith, not that of the child).

The 20th century also witnessed liturgical reform in the Western churches of the Reformation tradition. Its basis was a similar reconsideration of the importance of worship, but the Protestant churches also noticed the astonishing reform occurring in their once so traditionalistic Roman Catholic sister church, and they were able to appreciate this change all the more in the light of the new ecumenical climate which increasingly prevailed after the Council.

The thrust here could not be (and did not need to be) democratization or the upgrading of the word of God. In the heat of the Reformation controversy, the sometimes exaggerated emphasis placed on the preached and expounded word of God had in places

led to a corresponding devaluation of the sacramental dimension, particularly in the Sunday service. Most Protestant churches had also displaced the words of institution from their context in a eucharistic prayer in the style of the *berakah* (as must certainly be presupposed for the Last Supper of Jesus). Contrary to the intentions of most of the reformers, the Lord's supper had largely become an appendix to the Sunday act of worship and was only infrequently celebrated. The anomaly of this situation became clear in the light of the new reflection on the liturgy and prompted liturgical leaders in the Protestant churches to seek a remedy.

The appearance in 1955 of the first volume of the new service book (*Agende I*) for the Lutheran churches and congregations of Germany was a landmark in the history of the recovery of the eucharistic prayer and the regular (i.e. weekly) celebration of the Lord's supper. This included for the first time, alongside Form A of the Lord's supper, which followed the sequence in Luther's German mass of the Lord's prayer, words of institution (consecration) and distribution, an optional Form B with a broad-ranging eucharistic prayer with an anamnesis and epiclesis such as had been part of the Sunday eucharistic celebration since the beginning of the 3rd century. Alfred Niebergall called this "a novum in the history of recent Protestant service books". It was only an option, to be sure, and even as such still had to clear the hurdle of a regional church decision in each case, which it failed to do in some instances. This modest step in the direction of liturgical reform was nevertheless something of a breakthrough. Niebergall's reference to "increasing agreement and general diffusion" has been confirmed to an astonishing degree in the subsequent decades. One has only to think of the Lima liturgy\* of 1982 or of the revised service book of the German Lutheran, Reformed and United churches intended as a continuation of the book of 1955 (draft *Erneuerte Agende*, 1990; definitive *Evangelisches Gottesdienstbuch*, 1999). Equally if not more important was the decision made in *Agende I*, ten years before the Second Vatican Council, to "combine the celebration of the Lord's supper with the preaching service to constitute the evangelical mass".

A similar development took place in the Anglican communion,\* here too in the shape of an option. Since 1928 the revised English Book of Common Prayer in its service of holy communion has offered a richer alternative order including an epiclesis. The Alternative Service Book of 1980 contained, besides a prayer like that of the Lord's supper of 1662, six other forms of a full eucharistic prayer. Similar principles were followed in the successor book, *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England* (2000).

Characteristic of the recent trend in the North American churches in the Reformation tradition is the production by an ecumenical commission of a eucharistic prayer closely related to the fourth eucharistic prayer of the revised Roman missal. Versions of this prayer are found in the Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopal Church in the USA (1979, prayer II D), the Book of Common Worship of the Presbyterian Church in the USA (1993, prayer F), the Book of Alternative Services of the Anglican Church of Canada (1986, prayer 6) and the Uniting Church in Australia's *Uniting in Worship* (1988, prayer H). The re-discovery of the great eucharistic prayer in the churches of the Reformation (which does not necessarily always mean its re-introduction) is therefore not limited to the European scene but is a reality too on the North American continent. (There, as in Britain, the liturgy of the Church of South India of 1963 helped to ease the way.)

This increasingly worldwide trend became spectacularly clear in the Lima liturgy, a classic formulation of the eucharistic prayer including anamnesis and two epicleses (before and after the words of institution), which was produced at the WCC's Faith and Order meeting in Lima, Peru, in 1982. It was intended not as a standard form for the future, to replace the existing liturgies, but as a model. It is highly significant that, whenever it has been used at transconfessional church conferences – in Lima (15 January 1982), Geneva (27 July 1982) and, above all, Vancouver (31 July 1983) – it has met with an enthusiastic reception on the part of those participating, in spite of all individual reservations; even Catholic and Orthodox delegates, who were

unable to receive communion, accepted roles in the liturgy of the word. For the churches deriving from the Reformation, we have evidence here of a clearly irreversible reform movement in the celebration of the Lord's supper.

Analogously to the RC development, the reforms in the Reformation churches also extend well beyond the central area of the celebration of the Lord's supper, or eucharist. They can only be hinted at here. The order of infant baptism (where it is practised) and the admission of adults to church membership have everywhere been revised. Interestingly enough, in the reform of infant baptism a "countermove" to the corresponding RC reform is observable. While the latter, for the first time in the history of infant baptism, produced an order tailored to the *conditio infantis*, in both the Book of Common Prayer of the American Episcopalians and other Protestant service books the baptismal order is made the same for infants and adults.

Another universal feature is the reform of the lectionaries: in many places in Protestantism, particularly in the English-speaking countries, an adapted version of the three-year Sunday cycle of the post-conciliar Roman *Ordo Lectionum Missae* (1969) has been introduced (see **liturgical texts, common**). Movement is also observable in the re-introduction of an optional anointing of the sick (though not as a sacrament) in the German North Elbian church; the admission of unconfirmed children (sometimes even infants) to the Lord's supper; and a partial return to the use of liturgical vestments where this had fallen out of use.

An era of liturgical reforms – which the 20th century certainly was for Christian churches across the board – is the appropriate matrix for what has recently come to be called inculturation.\* There is a growing realization everywhere that no one should be made to celebrate the liturgy\* in forms which contradict one's traditional cultural inheritance. The example set in this area at the Second Vatican Council by the RCC, which has always had a reputation for immobility, will in the long run prove fruitful (SC 39-40). A quarter of a century after the appearance of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, we find the initial results of an

inculturated celebration of the mass in the Zairian mass, to which Rome agreed on 30 April 1988. This mass includes an invocation of the ancestors, a dance around the altar during the gloria, rhythmic movements on the part of the faithful and the use of drums (Evenou). Earlier, an experimental order of mass for India, prepared by the National Biblical, Catechetical and Liturgical Centre at Bangalore and containing a good deal of the language from the ancient Indian scriptures, had been vetoed by the Vatican (Pulsfort).

The hopeful situation of a growing "koinonia in worship", which appeared in the Faith and Order consultation on the role of worship within the search for unity at Ditchingham, England (1994), was at least partially due to the liturgical reforms meanwhile introduced almost everywhere in the oikumene.

See also **worship in the ecumenical movement**.

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## LITURGICAL TEXTS, COMMON

THE SECOND Vatican Council\* of the Roman Catholic Church, with its Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (1963), stimulated an extraordinary reform and renewal of liturgical orders and texts throughout the churches of the Western rites, Catholic and Protestant. Liturgical movements in many of these churches going back a full century had helped prepare for this dramatic development (see **liturgical movement**). Ecumenical contacts, especially in the English-speaking world, facilitated widespread cooperation during and following the Council. Beginning in 1964, an informal sequence of annual meetings of Protestant and Catholic liturgists in the US took place which resulted in the formation of the (North American) Consultation on Common Texts (CCT). At the same time, Roman Catholic bishops in English-speaking lands formed the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL), with a secretariat in Washington, DC.

The ICEL set about preparing English translations of the new liturgical books of the Roman rite, beginning with the Roman missal in 1969 and finishing with the rite for funerals in 1989. The CCT took upon itself the task of producing English translations of certain important liturgical texts which could be used by a wide variety of churches, such as the Lord's prayer, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, the ordinary of mass, and office canticles. This effort resulted in the formation of an international ecumenical body corresponding to ICEL known as the International Consultation on English Texts (ICET). Its revision of these texts was published as *Prayers We Have in Common* (1970, 1971 and 1975). During the same decade quite a number of Protestant and Anglican churches produced new service books incorporating these texts as part of rites in modern English.

In addition to this remarkable accommodation in the matter of texts, many of these

books included, with some editing, the table of scripture readings for the Sunday mass of the Roman rite, *Ordo Lectionum Missae* (1969). In the US the Consultation on Church Union\* produced in 1974 a consensus version of these denominational adaptations of the Roman *Ordo*. And in 1978 the CCT convened a consultation in Washington, DC, to survey the ecumenical use and acceptability of these adaptations. As a result of this meeting there was prepared a harmonization of these versions of the Roman lectionary table for submission to churches which were using it in one way or another. This was published in 1983 as *Common Lectionary: The Lectionary Proposed by the Consultation on Common Texts*.

This proposal differs from the Roman table only in that for the Sundays after Pentecost ("Ordinary Time") the Old Testament lection is no longer chosen for its "typological" relation to the gospel for the day but on the basis of a broader typology wherein for year A, the year of Matthew, the patriarchal and Mosaic narratives are read on a semi-continuous basis; for year B, the year of Mark, the Davidic narrative is read semi-continuously; and for year C, the year of Luke, the Elijah-Elisha narrative is read, together with selections from the minor prophets.

After trial use by many churches throughout the English-speaking world for a period of nine years (ie., three full three-year cycles), the CCT prepared a revision, published in 1992 as *Revised Common Lectionary* (RCL). This table of readings for the principal service for the Lord's day, as well as certain other Christological feasts, has found widespread use, not only in the English-speaking world but also by other language groups throughout Europe and Scandinavia and in the third world. The work of disseminating and interpreting this document has been undertaken by an international group known as the English Language Liturgical Consultation (ELLC), which was formed at Boston University in 1985 and which meets biennially. It was formed by CCT, the Joint Liturgical Group of Great Britain, ICEL, the Australian Consultation on Liturgy, the Joint Liturgical Consultation within New Zealand, and the Canadian

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Churches Coordinating Group on Worship. In 1994 it made overtures to the holy see of the Roman Catholic Church concerning the possibility of the use of RCL in that church. Thus far no further progress has been made. The ELLC continues to work on the production of ecumenically acceptable eucharistic prayers. In North America the CCT is working on a three-year set of opening prayers for the Sunday service, which will be thematically related to the lections for the day, as in RCL.

Such impressive convergences in textual and scriptural use are probably furthest advanced in the English-speaking world. But besides a common Lord's prayer in German, the Arbeitsgemeinschaft für liturgische Texte produced texts of the Apostles' and Nicene creeds, the Gloria in Excelsis, the Sanctus, the Agnus Dei, and the Gloria Patri, which were accepted by both Catholic and Protestant churches; the Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Ökumenisches Liedgut produced common versions of over 100 hymns; and there are orders for "ecumenical weddings". The German Bible exists in an "Einheitsübersetzung", but as yet the German-speaking churches are not agreed on a common lectionary or choice of texts. The French speakers have a common Lord's prayer and the *Traduction oecuménique de la Bible*, as well as a common liturgical psalter (see *La Maison-Dieu*, no. 105, 1971, pp.46-65).

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## LITURGY

LITURGY, or worship (and the forms it takes), is the public, common action of a Christian community in which the church\* is both manifested and realized. From apostolic times, Christians would gather at appointed times for prayer and for the "breaking of

bread" (e.g. Acts 2:42,46, 20:7). Numerous references in the New Testament and in early Christian writings amply witness to the importance of these liturgical assemblies. It was precisely such gatherings – criminal in the eyes of the Roman authorities – which led to persecutions. Citizens of the empire could believe whatever they wished, as long as they did not challenge the official state cult. Yet, despite these dangers, Christians continued to assemble, by their actions rejecting the state religion. Nearly 2000 years later, Christians throughout the world continue to gather at least as frequently as every Lord's day, each time affirming their identity as the people of God.\*

Not surprisingly, the vast majority of early Christian literature is liturgical in nature: commentaries on the scripture which was read aloud at the liturgy; instructions on the ordering of the assembly, such as the various church orders; and later, liturgical prayers and hymnography. Even credal formulas were originally used in the context of baptismal celebrations. It was in the liturgy that Christians assembled to become the church, that they came to know the incarnate God and to participate in his very being by sharing in his body and blood. It was also in the liturgy that they learned about the Christian faith,\* for it was only much later that theological schools, academic learning or even Sunday schools became widespread. Even today, the vast majority of Christians in the world have contact with church teaching almost exclusively in the liturgical gathering of the local community.

Liturgy, therefore, embodied the faith of the church. This is the implication of the statement by Prosper of Aquitaine in the 5th century: *ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi* – better known in its shorter form, *lex orandi, lex credendi*.\* As people worship, so they believe. Not surprisingly, the liturgical assembly itself eventually became a source of theology, particularly from the 4th century, when the Christian faith had to be explained to the masses of new converts who flocked to the church after the peace of Constantine. The mystagogical writings of important figures such as Cyril of Jerusalem, Theodore of Mopsuestia, John Chrysostom and Ambrose of Milan are important sources for both liturgy and theology. These

and many other sources also reveal the variety which characterized liturgical practice from the very beginning.

In the early centuries, each locality followed its own practices, although there was a remarkable uniformity in the overall structure of worship, as we see already in the "classic shape" of the eucharist described by Justin Martyr in his *First Apology* (c.150). But by the 3rd and 4th centuries, there was in each region a process of unification, a consolidation where local patterns were absorbed into regional patterns. One can by this time speak of the Egyptian, Roman, West Syrian and East Syrian liturgical families, ancestors of our modern rites. Each of these families continued to develop, sometimes in isolation from the others, sometimes strongly influenced by them. At first the families were distinguished geographically, so that each area or province had its own characteristic practices. But eventually, as the unity of the church was broken by various schisms,\* liturgical families increasingly came to be identified with confessional bodies. Each splinter group would develop its inherited liturgical tradition along its own lines, consistent with its own theological, social and political realities. Various political, social and theological factors also played a great role in the growing predominance of certain families, particularly the Roman in the West and the Byzantine in the East. This is the context in which we understand the term "rite" today: it characterizes the total ecclesial tradition, the life, of a particular church or communion. Thus the various rites are invaluable sources for an understanding of the different streams within world Christianity.

## EASTERN CHURCHES

Although there are several different liturgical and theological traditions among the Eastern churches, as enumerated below, it is quite proper to speak of a particular Eastern style, distinct from that of the West. The Eastern approach to reality is more Platonic, not bound by the Aristotelian categories prevalent in the West. For the Easterner, earthly reality is reflective of a higher, heavenly reality which can be communicated. The theology of icons\* is a typical example of this approach. The church is perceived

not so much as a militant society but as a theophany, the coming of the eternal into time. Spirituality is defined in terms of *theosis*, divinization: grace\* is seen as the transforming action of God, not as a means of living in this world. All these differences are reflected in Eastern liturgies. Western worship is generally more austere and simple; its symbols are more direct; there is emphasis on action and involvement. In the East, the liturgy is perceived as an ascent to a higher world, beyond the cares and suffering of this world. This orientation is reflected in the church building – the church is "heaven on earth, where God dwells and moves", says Germanos of Constantinople in his 8th-century commentary on the liturgy. In the liturgy, as in architecture, the emphasis is vertical, transcendental and eschatological. Prayer, particularly liturgical prayer, is seen as the way to be close to God, as true theology. The following are the most significant extant Eastern rites.

*Byzantine rite.* This rite is used today by all the Eastern Orthodox, who compose the vast majority of Eastern Christians. It is also used, in a somewhat Latinized form, by a significant number of Eastern Catholics, former Orthodox who were absorbed by the Roman church from the end of the 16th century. The Byzantine rite originated in 4th-century Antioch but was later substantially re-worked under the influence of Jerusalem, as well as through monasticism. It reached its present form by the 15th century, after which the fixity brought by the printing of books effectively halted its further development. Because it was the rite of Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern empire, it eventually supplanted all other rites among the Orthodox. This rite is perhaps best known for its eucharistic liturgy, ascribed to John Chrysostom. Closely related to the Byzantine is the Armenian rite, in use by the non-Chalcedonian church of Armenia.

*Syrian rites.* The *East Syrian* rite is in use today by the so-called Church of the East, sometimes still called the Nestorian or Chaldean church, as well as by the larger Malabar church in India. This rite derives from the usage of Edessa. The *West Syrian* rite is used primarily by the non-Chalcedonian Jacobite church in Palestine and Syria, as well as by the Malankara church in India.

This rite derives from Antiochian and Jerusalem practices, but with Greek (euchologic) and East Syrian (poetic) elements. Also derivative of this tradition is the *Maronite rite*, used by the Maronite Christians, chiefly in Lebanon. This is the only Eastern church totally in communion with Rome. Like the Jacobite rite, this is an Antiochian tradition with significant influence from the usages of Edessa.

*Alexandrian rites.* The *Coptic* rite of Egypt and the *Ethiopian* rite are the two descendants of the ancient Alexandrian tradition. The respective churches are both non-Chalcedonian, or "monophysite".

### WESTERN CHURCHES

In the early period the Western liturgical tradition was quite as rich and varied as the Eastern. The *Roman* rite existed side by side with its close relative, the *Ambrosian* rite in Milan, as well as the more independent *Mozarabic* rite in Spain, the *Gallican* in Gaul, and the *Celtic* in Ireland and Scotland. Gradually, the Roman rite came to predominate, though it absorbed numerous elements from the rites which it supplanted. With the council of Trent, the Roman rite reigned supreme throughout the Latin West, with the major exceptions of only the local Ambrosian rite of Milan and the newly emerging rites of the Protestant Reformation, which derived from Roman practice.

*Roman rite.* The Roman rite, as indeed all extant Western rites, can be characterized by its brevity and simplicity of expression. Movements, gestures and words are all kept to a minimum. It seems quite austere in comparison to the Eastern liturgies, despite an infusion of more ceremonial and poetic elements from the Gallican and Mozarabic rites during the medieval period. It was to some of these accretions, as well as to excesses in popular piety, that the reformers objected in the 16th century. From the time of the council of Trent, Roman practice has been rigidly controlled by the Congregation for Sacred Rites in Rome, which has tended to suppress all local variation. The new rite promulgated after Vatican II\* allows for greater flexibility and the use of the vernacular and even contains elements borrowed from Eastern liturgies. Significantly, the new Roman rite can

hardly be distinguished from that of the more conservative churches of the Reformation, particularly the Lutheran and Anglican.

*Protestant rites.* The various Protestant rites can be categorized by the degree to which each body "reformed" the worship tradition it inherited from a medieval West strongly marked by Rome. Thus the *Lutheran* tradition preserved as much of the Roman rite as it felt was consistent with its theology. Lutheran worship stresses preaching, music, ritual and even the eucharistic sacrament, though the latter until recently played a lesser role due to the influences of pietism and the Enlightenment. The *Reformed* tradition is far less ceremonial and stresses the preaching of the word and the singing of psalms. It has a strongly didactic and penitential bent.

The *Anglican* communion's Book of Common Prayer has in many ways provided a kind of liturgical via media among the Western churches. Closely related to the Anglican rite is the *Methodist*, which has also been influential through its rich hymn tradition.

Another strain is the so-called *Free church* tradition, which bases worship more exclusively on scripture and emphasizes congregational autonomy in the ordering of its liturgy. Tradition is perceived as merely human invention. The *Quakers* abolished all external forms of worship except the act of gathering in assembly for silent meditation. Yet another form of Free church worship emerged in 19th-century America, which can be categorized as pragmatic. Not tied down to any predetermined order or tradition, each congregation employs whatever forms work, chiefly in attracting converts – much American Protestantism falls into this pattern. The most recent development arising within Protestant worship is the *Pentecostal* tradition, which originated in the US in the early 20th century but has since spread throughout the world. Speaking in tongues is the most visible manifestation of this form of worship, and it is characterized by great spontaneity and the avoidance of any formal order. But even spontaneous forms of worship quickly develop definite patterns which are familiar to regular participants.

## CONCLUSION

Modern Protestantism contains by far the greatest variety of liturgical practice, from “high church” Anglicanism, with forms of worship hardly distinguishable from those of medieval Roman Catholicism, to the silent “waiting on God” of Quakers and the ecstatic glossolalia of Pentecostals. By contrast, Eastern rites are remarkably consistent in style and approach: differences are due more to cultural and historical than to theological or spiritual factors. The Eastern churches have never undergone the trauma of a reformation, and their worship derives from an unbroken, if constantly evolving, tradition (see **Tradition and traditions**). Liturgical change in the East is not the task of any individual local congregation or even any official liturgical commission; change occurs gradually, almost imperceptibly.

But Eastern worship, just as Western, expresses the faith, culture and spirituality of a given ecclesial body, its understanding of orders, its approach to tradition. Thus a deeper understanding of the various churches’ liturgical traditions is a *sine qua non* for future ecumenical progress.

See also **liturgical reforms, worship in the ecumenical movement**.

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## LITURGY AFTER THE LITURGY

THE CONCEPT of mission\* as “liturgy after the Liturgy”, which emerged as an Orthodox

contribution to the ecumenical debate on mission in the early 1970s, centres on the double liturgical rhythm of the local Christian community: gathered for worship\* and eucharist\* on Sunday, then dispersed for everyday life, mission, sacrifice and witness\* in the world. It draws on the insight of St John Chrysostom that outside the temple, in the public market place, compassion for the poor\* is a sacred liturgy in which the faithful are the priests.

In the eucharistic celebration the worshipping community is prepared to become an evangelizing community, and vice versa. Within this liturgical venue the faithful are both recipients of God’s gifts and agents who share these gifts with others. Eucharist is the “pilgrim bread” (Melbourne 1980), “food for missionaries”. The words “let us go forth in peace” at the end of the liturgy signify the sending of the people on an apostolic journey into the *oikoumene*, to become “martyrs” (witnesses; see **martyrdom**) of the resurrection of the crucified Christ.

There is a variety of extensions and communications of the eucharistic liturgy in the world in diverse ministries and forms, which touch mission, ethics,\* culture\* and society.\* Evangelism\* means not only oral proclamation of the gospel but also public celebration of faith, sanctification of creation, glorification of the name of God among nations. It is linked to moral and religious experience, diakonia,\* spirituality\* and renewal.

The dynamics of liturgy in mission include the mutual recognition of various missiologies in the ecumenical movement, in which the tendency to intellectualism in the *sola scriptura* (preaching) tradition and the tendency to ritualism in the sacramental (*ex opere operato*) tradition can be corrected.

The resistance of liturgical communities in the face of restrictions and persecution under atheistic regimes constitutes a solid basis and hope for pursuing mission in this way. The liturgical-sacramental model is not absolute, but within this context the church creates a new culture, ethos, and spirituality of receiving and sharing the gospel.

The question of how the life of the eucharistic community contributes to the life of the world, of how churches mediate the eucharistic bread of life so that it can reach

and nourish the whole world is one for the whole ecumenical community. Certainly it involves the community's life-style: the quality of life of the "communion of saints"\* is essential for mission. As an early Christian apologist declared, "See how these Christians love one another!" But the potentialities of eucharistic and non-eucharistic worship need to be unfolded and their implications for wider moral, social and cultural issues cultivated.

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## LOCAL CHURCH

THE VARIOUS statements on unity\* which were approved by the assemblies of the WCC since New Delhi (1961) focus on the local church as the basic unit of unity. New Delhi speaks of a unity which "is being made visible as all in each place who are baptized... and confess... are brought... into one fully committed fellowship... [and] are united with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages". Uppsala (1968) places additional emphasis on "all Christians in all places". Nairobi (1975) sees the one church "as a conciliar fellowship of local churches which are themselves truly united", stressing that "each local church possesses, in communion with the others, the fullness of catholicity". These statements seek to recover the biblical dynamic of "local" and "universal" church as the common origin and background of the various ecclesial structures which have developed throughout history. In the New Testament, *ekklesia* means both the universal Christian fellowship (Eph. 1:22; 1 Tim. 3:5) and the visible congregation connected to a particular house, city or province (Rom. 16:3-5; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 8:1). The universal church, according to the NT, exists in local churches and in the communion\* between them.

As the organization of the church and its various ministries grew more complex, how-

ever, the term "local church" lost its unequivocal reference (see **church order**). In early church history, the presence of a bishop and the celebration of the eucharist\* clearly marked the identity of a local church. Later, both larger and smaller church structures developed which were also called local. In Orthodoxy, this was the case with the autocephalous church. In Western Christianity, it was the parish which caused complications. For some time, the terms "diocese" and "parish" were largely synonymous. Gradually, however, the term "parish" began to refer to pastoral units, supervised by a priest (presbyter), smaller than the diocese and subordinate to it. This distinction contributed to the emergence of a Rome-centred, pyramidal view of the structure of the church.

In opposition to this view, the churches of the Reformation took their point of departure in the parish: the place where the assembly of the faithful under the preaching of the word and the celebration of the sacraments was realized without subordination to supra-local episcopal authority. This territorial point of departure led to the organization of supra-local structures proportionate to political units (nations). Besides this presbyterial approach, an understanding of "local church" emerged in the wake of the Reformation which made it exclusively dependent on the covenant of the faithful.

As a result of all these developments, the term "local church" can refer to dioceses, archdioceses, parishes, national churches and other territorial-ecclesial units, and it can have episcopal, presbyterial and community-centred connotations. In this confusion, the original meaning of both "universal" ("catholic") and "local", as well as the essential significance of the inter-relation between these two, is easily obscured.

In the 20th century various factors contributed to a re-discovery of more fundamental dimensions. Due to common problems and challenges, Protestant churches experienced the limitation of their national-territorial structures and need for broader communion and cooperation. At the same time, developments in modern industrial societies relativized the significance of mere territorial givenness of local churches and led to a new emphasis on the missionary

quality of church structures (see Uppsala assembly, sec. 2) and to a proliferation of small groups intent upon a creative interaction between church and context. The Roman Catholic Church re-discovered the specific place and function of the laity\* and experienced a “re-invention of the church” (Leonardo Boff) in the form of base communities (see **church base communities**). The ecclesiology of the documents of the Second Vatican Council\* reflects the implications of this revitalization of the local church and of the growth of “universal” networks of communion and communication. The notions of the “particular church” (*ecclesia particularis*) and of the communion between these churches (*collegialis unio*), in which the universal church exists (see *Lumen Gentium* 23, *Christus Dominus* 11), revive the insight that episcopal ministry and eucharistic celebration determine the core-unit of the church, rather than specific “local” characteristics. (Similarly, the Lima text on the eucharist underlines that “eucharistic celebrations always have to do with the whole church, and the whole church is involved in each local eucharistic celebration” [*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*,\* E19]). A 1992 Vatican statement on the church as communion gave rise to further discussion on the relation between visible forms of the worldwide nature of the church, on the one hand, and the local churches, on the other: which of these comes first in historical and theological perspective? The question appears to be of vital ecclesiological significance, not only for Roman Catholic ecclesiology.

Although ecumenical consensus on the precise meaning of the term “local church” is still lacking, this brief sketch shows a common direction of thought and the possibilities for a re-conception of the local-universal relation. Supra-local church structures are relativized in favour of a dynamic vision of local churches in networks of universal (worldwide) communication. The ecumenical movement provides these networks; it is there that the full implications of the problems of global society become visible, and that the search for common memory and common life in the promise of the unity of humankind takes shape. At the local level this search is translated into the daily life of obedience and witness. The church in its na-

tional and regional organization of boards, colleges and synods has the function of keeping alive this interaction between local and global and of making it fruitful in both directions.

See also **church, unity of “all in each place”**.

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## LOCAL ECUMENICAL OBEDIENCE

“THE ECUMENICAL movement is not alive unless it is local,” said the Faith and Order conference at Lund in 1952, and the New Delhi assembly of the WCC (1961) built this idea into the classic definition of the goal of Christian unity:\* “We believe that the unity which is both God’s will and his gift to his church is being made visible as all in each place who are baptized into Jesus Christ and confess him as Lord and Saviour are brought by the Holy Spirit into one fully committed fellowship... in such wise that ministry and members are accepted by all and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls his people.”

There is a limitless variety to local situations, to the priorities in the “tasks to which God calls his people” in any one place, to the obstacles to Christian unity, to the social conditions within and for which it is to be sought and to the potential partners for any one group of Christians. There is, moreover, a wide divergence between the ways different churches envisage the “local unity of the church” and the decision making proper to that goal. No less important are the particu-

lar ways in which churches psychologically understand themselves (e.g. as “majority” or “minority”, as “of the people” or “international”) and their proper relations with other Christian groups in the area.

This variety should not be seen as a problem. Christian unity does not mean uniformity: it is natural and proper that different things should happen in different places, although the people in any one place will have a lot to learn from others. Still more, the chief actor in the striving towards Christian unity, at the local level, as on the wider scene, is the Holy Spirit,\* who inspires, encourages, cajoles and nudges Christians in divided churches to take the next steps towards and with one another in love for the surrounding world, within an ecumenical movement, a pilgrimage into the fullness and wholeness of what God wants for his people, which has no necessary starting point and which will be completed only in the kingdom of God.\*

This article is written chiefly out of experience in Britain, especially England, one of the areas where successive divisions have torn the one church into fragments (each tending to involve people of different social standing, ethnic origin, cultural background, etc.) and yet where Christians have been able to take steps towards reconciliation\* and united witness\* at the local level.

### MILESTONES ON THE ECUMENICAL WAY

By the end of the 18th century and throughout the 19th, when the bitter hatreds of reformation and civil war had been tamed by tolerance and a measure of social stability, Christians in Britain from both the established churches (Anglican in England and Wales, Presbyterian in Scotland) and the various Free or Nonconformist churches began to come together to promote and undertake certain “good works”. There were, for example, foreign missions through the London Missionary Society, the distribution and translation of Bibles through the British and Foreign Bible Society, Sunday schools and other open educational ventures, and youth work through the Young Men’s and Young Women’s Christian Associations. These specific causes, and so the organizations that served them, were seen as Christian yet not necessarily tied to any one church. Leader-

ship was often given by lay Christians. Friendship, trust and a sense of common purpose could be built up in an open-minded, generally “evangelical” spirit that saw this kind of obedience as “non-denominational”, i.e. free from the particular doctrines and requirements that served to divide these church institutions.

Later in the 19th century the formation of the Evangelical Alliance encouraged Christians to meet locally, especially for united prayer. So also in the 1890s local Free church councils began to be formed in which the general witness of the Free churches could be jointly promoted and a certain sharing of tasks agreed (e.g. hospital chaplaincies). At this same time, the newly formed Christian unions in the universities were open to students from any church background or none for the sake of evangelism in the university and throughout the world. They were thus an “interdenominational” movement, a central part of whose aims was to help the churches overcome division and move towards unity. The resulting Student Christian Movement, whose leaders were instrumental in convening the world mission conference in Edinburgh 1910, was thus foreshadowing the request of the 1952 Faith and Order Lund gathering: “Should not our churches ask themselves whether they are showing sufficient eagerness to enter into conversation with other churches, and whether they should not act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately? Should they not acknowledge the fact that they often allow themselves to be separated from each other by secular forces and influences instead of witnessing together to the sole lordship of Christ who gathers his people out of all nations, races and tongues?” (see **Lund principle**).

The first local councils of churches\* in Britain, bringing churches officially into a common framework for joint action and the eventual achievement of full unity, sprang up in Bolton, Manchester and St Albans in 1918-19, under the inspiration of the Edinburgh 1910 conference and in revulsion at the horror of the first world war. They rapidly created a wide range of sub-committees and joint projects, the majority handling ma-

major social needs and problems of the time but also involving pulpit exchanges and occasions of common prayer. The great international church conferences of the 1920s and 1930s gave much inspiration to the local level, as did the Religion and Life weeks held in many towns and cities during the second world war, with the active involvement of the Roman Catholic Sword of the Spirit movement. By 1946, two years before the formation of the WCC, there were 126 local councils in association with the British Council of Churches (BCC), itself formed in 1942.

A new boost in local ecumenical activity occurred after the war. In Britain in 1957 Christian Aid weeks started (a week when church members try to visit every house in their area to collect for the poor and hungry throughout the world); the first British F&O conference was held in 1964; the new openness and enthusiasm of Roman Catholics in many places as a result of Vatican II\* led to a particular boost for the January Week of Prayer for Christian Unity;\* and the People Next Door campaign of 1967 brought together denominationally mixed small groups in hundreds of neighbourhoods meeting without their clergy and going out to meet and interact with people of other convictions and backgrounds in their area.

Meanwhile the 1964 F&O conference, while issuing a startling appeal for church unity in Britain by Easter day 1980, also recommended that the churches establish “areas of ecumenical experiment” where denominational disciplines could be suspended. Progress was slow, but in a number of new housing estates joint churches were built by two or more denominations and jointly staffed, providing a single new congregation, as if the churches concerned were already united. Since 1964 over 800 such local “experiments” have sprung up and earned the formal approval of their regional denominational authorities, each one – as always in examples of local ecumenical advance – being distinctive in its particular spirituality and forms of response to the opportunities the Holy Spirit is holding out to Christ’s people in that distinctive place.

Where these efforts take the form of two or more congregations jointly deciding to “move from cooperation to commitment” (a

key phrase in the moves to create the new national ecumenical instruments in 1990), openings for mission and evangelism in the overall local community are playing a central part. Those responsible for the life of the churches discover that ecumenical obedience is not a matter of doing some specifically ecumenical things together from time to time, but rather of doing whatever the church is called to do in the ecumenical partnerships the Holy Spirit provides.

Very important in the growth of this network of local ecumenical partnerships (LEPs) has been the bringing into existence of “sponsoring bodies”, at the level of wider church leadership, to approve, accompany and, where necessary, warn and correct the local projects. These are sometimes formed to guide a single project; more typically they bring together bishops and denominational leaders at the level of a county or city. In the 1980s these groupings often pioneered the formation of county/city ecumenical bodies, typically entitled “Churches Together in ...”, which take on wider responsibilities for the common leadership and witness of the entire Christian community there. In some counties, consultation over the appropriate deployment by the separate churches of their resources of personnel, finance and buildings for mission in the area is actively on their agenda.

By 2000 the UK council of churches, now called Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, through the associated national and regional ecumenical bodies, was in touch with well over 1000 local groupings, the majority of which called themselves similarly “Churches Together in ...”.

Many other challenges and inspirations have helped towards significant local initiatives. Two that have been important in Britain in recent years have been the movement of charismatic renewal, releasing many Christians into a spontaneity of prayer and fellowship that has broken down many previous social and denominational barriers, and the many new possibilities in common action and in growing together spiritually between local Roman Catholic congregations and their neighbours of other churches. These opportunities have often been eagerly seized on since 1990, when the Roman Catholic Church entered into the “new ecu-

menical instruments” in England, Scotland and Wales. Paradoxically, the “top-level” difficulties between the Vatican and the Anglican communion over the ordination of women to the priesthood appear to have positively strengthened the rapidly growing sympathy between local Christians, alike at the level of bishops consulting personally about priests wishing to move into another church and at that of lay leaders yearning to pursue reconciliation in practice. Within this second “movement” a key pioneering role is being played by the Association of Inter-church Families,\* in which married couples – one partner a loyal Roman Catholic, the other from another church – and their children have learned to live out a critical solidarity with both churches and to explore the demands and the joys of the unity they can already anticipate in their “domestic church” (see *marriage, mixed*).

Beyond Britain, New Zealand is one country where local initiatives have in many places forged ahead of denominational leaders in bringing into existence formal anticipations of the united church of tomorrow. More and more countries are experimenting with local councils of churches, the Netherlands and the USA perhaps pre-eminent. Still more important in the long run may well prove the church base communities\* of Brazil and other majority Roman Catholic countries. There a new flexibility in the structures of church life in response to the huge challenges of poverty and oppression often includes a new openness to partnership with fellow Christians of other denominations.

### LESSONS WORTH LEARNING

This developing pilgrimage at the local level is helpfully seen as moving through five stages: (1) *competition*, where each church sees itself as entirely adequate and the others as wrong or in rivalry; (2) *coexistence*, where acknowledgment is made, more or less explicitly, that Christ is known in other churches, yet where there is little readiness to take positive initiative towards the others; (3) *cooperation*, where relationships have warmed up enough for churches to be ready to do certain specific projects together, in a real if limited partnership, such as a council of churches; (4) *commitment*, where mutual

recognition as partners within Christ’s will for his church has grown to the point that a lasting and deliberately open-ended agreement can be made to do as much as possible within a united framework; and (5) *communion*,\* where it no longer makes sense to speak of divided churches, but earlier quarrels and splits are reconciled and mutually agreeable patterns found for the appropriate wholeness and oneness of the Body of Christ in that place.

The goal of the pilgrimage remains that “all in each place who confess Christ as Lord and Saviour are brought into one fully committed fellowship” (New Delhi assembly), or as refined in the 1975 Nairobi assembly: “The one church is to be envisioned as a conciliar fellowship of local churches which are themselves truly united.” The spelling out of those compressed phrases always involves seeing the unity of Christians within and for the wider reconciliation, harmony and love of all human beings; the striving for Christian unity belongs with the age-old striving for truth, obedience and the sharing of the good news and is in no sense a counter or rival movement.

For the actual practice the vital starting point is mutual respect, growing into deeper trust and friendship among those who give leadership, so that whatever the previous experience, relative size or social standing of the churches concerned, there can be a sense that each is taken seriously and on an equal footing. As the movement develops, there must remain a concern both for respecting the actual churches and people as they presently are and for encouraging and enabling those pioneers who are “constrained by the love of God to exert pressure on the limits of our own inherited traditions, recognizing the theological necessity of what we may call ‘responsible risks’” (New Delhi). There are many traps and dangers to be avoided on the way, not least those surrounding the role of clergy (see *laity/clergy*) and other “religious professionals”. Almost all the dangers can be traced to half-heartedness and insensitivity in too many of the people, whose commitment and awareness are needed if the congregation as a whole is to be able to move ahead.

The relationships between local groups and church authorities (district synod, dioc-

san bishop, national conference, etc.) are also crucial. High-level initiatives and advances with no thought given to follow-through at the local level are hardly less disillusioning than local efforts and ideas that are blocked by people higher up. For this reason the sponsoring bodies that accompany LEPs in England have proved such a helpful feature.

The details of any specific place and time are destined to change. What matters in the striving for true Christian unity-in-mission is not the form but the particular next step, since any form or action is best designed precisely for that next step and will give way to what is appropriate for the one after. Ministers' fraternal properly give way to adequately representative local councils of churches, which in turn give way to the fuller commitment of a local covenant approved by higher church leaders, itself designed to evolve into the local embodiment of "one church renewed for mission" (1964 British F&O conference). What matters is that as those who seek to follow Jesus Christ in one specific time and place, we can do so in obedience not primarily to the traditions we inherit from earlier quarrels but to the Holy Spirit, who is preparing the coming of God's kingdom.

See also **covenanting; local church; local ecumenical partnerships; unity of "all in each place"; unity, models of; unity, ways to.**

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## LOCAL ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIPS

A LOCAL ecumenical partnership (LEP) is the sharing by congregations from different denominations, acting under the supervision of a local, ecumenical body and with the agreement of their respective church structures, of specific aspects of their worship, congregational life, mission and service. The term refers to an ecumenical form developed primarily in England and in Aotearoa New Zealand (where they are known as cooperative ventures).

LEPs in England seek to be "a local sign, symbol and foretaste of the full visible unity of the church". They have been a creative and challenging aspect of the English ecumenical scene since 1964, when the British Council of Churches (BCC) Faith and Order conference called for "areas of ecumenical experiments" to be established "at the request of local congregations, or in new towns and housing areas" to develop ecumenical group ministries, mission, and the sharing of church buildings. A second basic step was the suggestion, in a 1967 county report on "Planning an Ecumenical Parish", that "sponsoring bodies" be developed to oversee both theological and practical aspects of such ventures. The term "experiment" proved difficult, and the phrase "local ecumenical project" was introduced in 1973, the year their national coordinating body, the Consultative Committee for Local Ecumenical Projects in England (CCLEPE), was established. The term "local ecumenical projects" has now been replaced by the phrase "local ecumenical partnerships" (LEPs). They are now coordinated by the Churches Group for Local Unity (CGLU), a group of Churches Together in England (CTE). Staff support for LEPs through CGLU is given by the two field officers of Churches Together in England, with county bodies acting as sponsor bodies for the LEPs in their area.

With the failure of the Church of England-Methodist union conversations in

1972, and the covenant proposals in 1982, many felt that the initiative towards church union had passed to the local level. LEPs developed rapidly throughout the 1970s and 1980s (with 320 recorded in 1978 and 410 in 1985) and were widely regarded as the decisive point of ecumenical growth in England. As of 1990 some 550 had been registered, and in 2001 the figure had risen to 750, although the rate of increase has now slowed.

An LEP involves congregations from at least two and as many as five or more denominations. As of the last official register, the churches most active in LEPs have been Methodist (involved in 708), Church of England (in some 632), United Reformed Church (in 507), Roman Catholic (in 263) and Baptist (in about 242). LEP constituents have also included Salvation Army, Society of Friends, Independent or Community church, Shiloh, Afro-Caribbean, and Moravian congregations, as well as Friends meetings.

While LEPs vary greatly, depending on their make-up and the local situation, they are officially registered in one or more of six categories: single congregation partnerships (marked usually by shared ministry and a common purse, and seeking to integrate every aspect of their life and work); congregations in covenanted partnership (retaining distinct denominational identities, but with a commitment to joint action, expressed in a local covenant); shared building partnerships (under the sharing of church buildings act, 1969); chaplaincy partnerships (in prisons, hospitals, and universities or colleges of further, or higher, education); mission partnerships (in industrial or rural mission, or religious broadcasting); and education partnerships (in lay training, ministerial training and joint schools).

Fundamental to LEPs is their accountability both to their "parent" denominations and to the ecumenical community and vision. Internally, each LEP must be based upon a formal written agreement among its constituent congregations; these vary, depending on the extent and level of commitment, from a "sharing agreement" regulating the joint use of property; to a "declaration of intent" expressing the "essential spirit" of the project and its theo-

logical basis; to a written constitution, defining the nature and aims of the project, those involved and the specific commitments which they have made, and procedures for monitoring, evaluation, revision and termination of the project.

Externally, each LEP is responsible to its local sponsoring body, an ecumenical group charged with giving oversight, encouragement, pastoral care and practical advice to existing (and potential) LEPs in its area and serving as both "a buffer and a bridge" between LEPs and their parent denominations. As LEPs have grown, their sponsoring bodies have also grown in extent (as of 2001 there were about 55 in England) and ecumenical significance; typically the sponsoring body for a county will include the Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops, the provincial moderator of the United Reformed Church, and the Methodist district chairman; most have developed into area-wide "ecumenical councils" promoting a range of cooperative activities of ministry and witness. Each LEP is also responsible for complying with the ecumenical canons, or other relevant codes of practice, of each of its constituent denominations.

In facing a wide range of theological and practical problems LEPs have been of creative significance to the whole ecumenical movement. Much creative liturgical reflection and practice has come as LEPs have sought to honour the distinctive gifts and convictions of their various members in their common worship. This has perhaps been most significant in the field of eucharistic sharing (see **communion, intercommunion**); also important has been the development of joint confirmation\* services fulfilling the requirements of a wide range of ecclesiological positions. The questions of membership and ministry are perhaps the most enduringly difficult. "Multiple membership" (in the several constituent denominations) is now possible for those who come to the Christian faith within the context of an LEP. "Extended membership" is now being proposed, by which those who were founder members of an LEP, coming from one tradition, or those who join it by transfer, may be regarded as members of all the constituent denominations. There is increasing openness to a "representative" ministry, with clergy from

one denomination serving an LEP on behalf of all its constituents. But this often results in the pastor having to fulfill the institutional demands of several denominations at once; and the discipline of some churches, of course, precludes the sharing of certain sacramental functions (see **church discipline, church order**). Notably the experience of LEPs was instrumental in the establishment in Milton Keynes in 1991 of an “ecumenical moderator”, a figure serving as a focus for Christian unity in the city, without formal authority but representing, sharing pastoral oversight with, and presiding at meetings of, the heads of various denominations.

Despite practical difficulties, members of LEPs have strongly affirmed their value, finding through the experience of common worship, life and witness a sense of belonging to the whole Christian church rather than to one of its separated denominational parts.

The genius of LEPs has been their combining of a deep commitment to unity; an insistence upon forging new areas of common Christian experience, confession, witness and mission at the local level; a willingness to experiment; and a readiness to be accountable both to denominational and to ecumenical structures. They have, in turn, forced the denominations to face the theoretical and practical problems which the divided structures of the churches pose to Christians who seek to confess and witness to their faith together. However, the slowness of the churches to move towards greater visible unity at the national level is now causing some frustration, and some see a loss of vision in the LEPs.

The cooperative ventures in Aotearoa New Zealand arose as a complementary but independent effort to give local expression to the quest for church union which had been pursued, at national level, since 1967 through the Negotiating Churches Unity Council (NCUC, including Churches of Christ, Anglican, Congregational Union, Methodist and Presbyterian churches). By the end of the 1980s there were about 160 cooperative parishes, a number which remained constant right through the 1990s. Some 80% operate under a “common provisions agreement” whereby two or more local churches (almost always from the five named above) form one parish (in one case,

no fewer than 11 existing congregations have merged into one cooperative venture); in the remaining 20%, churches cooperate locally in specific areas of their life, mission and service according to local needs. In some places they have included a significant proportion of the membership of some denominations; strikingly, at the end of the 1980s more than 50% of Methodists in New Zealand were said to be in such ecumenical parishes.

The cooperative ventures have been shaped by their engagement with issues of white settler and Maori bi-culturalism, but more especially by the frustration of hopes for church union at the national level following the breakdown of the NCUC process from 1989 through the 1990s. In a context of declining energy for union efforts nationally, the cooperative ventures increasingly understood themselves as the bearers of the vision of church union. At times they have – and far more sharply than their English counterparts – questioned the very relevance of the traditional denominations, with their continuing divisions, for church life at the parish level. At other times, and more typically, they have emphasized their role as an example, inspiration and resource for the churches nationally, calling them to renew their earlier quest for unity.

A series of conferences, for the most part encouraged by the five NCUC churches, culminated in the inauguration in 1995 of the Forum of Cooperative Ventures (FCV), an independent body which has served to focus and coordinate the reflection and action of cooperative ventures at local and national levels. The forum has recently emphasized its commitment to work with the denominations. Its third and fourth biennial meetings, in 1999 and 2001 respectively, marked its emergence as a full-fledged partner of the NCUC churches, and a recognized and valuable expression of the search for visible unity in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The FCV seeks now to “bring the churches closer in mission and ministry, while still honouring their independence and traditions”. Through the FCV, the cooperative ventures are engaged with ecumenical bodies both nationally and internationally. Locally they are seeking first to demonstrate a united mission in their own community

while celebrating the diversity of traditions, ethos and ministry of the churches, seeing this as “a strong model for the post-modern society in New Zealand”. Thus the cooperative ventures continue to offer significant possibilities – and pose important questions – to the churches and the ecumenical movement in their country.

See also **covenanting, denominationalism, local church, local ecumenical obedience, unity of “all in each place”**.

THOMAS F. BEST and ROGER NUNN

■ J. Carpenter, *Together Locally: A Handbook for Local Churches Seeking to Work Together*, London, CTE, 1998 ■ *LEPs: Register of Local Ecumenical Partnerships and Sponsoring Bodies*, London, CTE, 1998 ■ R. Nunn, *This Growing Unity: A Handbook on Ecumenical Development in the Counties, Large Cities and New Towns of England*, London, CTE, 1998 ■ P. Tovey & J. Waller, *Worship in Local Ecumenical Partnerships*, Cambridge, Grove, 1998 ■ “Venturing Forward: Conference Statement”, Wellington, *National Review Consultation of Cooperative Ventures*, 1989 ■ E. Welch & F. Winfield, *Travelling Together: A Handbook on Local Ecumenical Partnerships*, London, CTE, 1995. See also “Survey of Church Union Negotiations”, *ER*: for 1988-91, 44, 1, 1992 (Morrison); for 1992-94, 47, 1, 1995 (Robertson); for 1994-96, 49, 2, 1997 (McKenzie); for 1996-99, 52, 1, 2000 (Robertson & Ross); for 2000-02, 54, 3, 2002 (Ross).

## LOSSKY, VLADIMIR

B.8 June 1903, Göttingen, Germany; d. 7 Feb. 1958, Paris, France. Lossky’s particular contribution to the ecumenical movement was a renewed patristic presentation of Eastern Orthodoxy\* to the Western world. His message was an invitation not to repeat or systematize the fathers but to practise their approach to theology for the present day, a theology which is not a speculative intellectual exercise but the expression of the ecclesial experience of God, with the help of the Holy Spirit, who dwells in the heart of the theologian. Expelled from Russia in 1922, he settled in Prague, where he took part in N. Kondakov’s seminars and began to read the fathers. In 1924, he started his studies at the Sorbonne in Paris, where he became a disciple of Etienne Gilson and came in close contact with Jean Daniélou, Henri de Lubac,



Yves Congar, Louis Bouyer and others. It was in response to this ecumenical challenge that he wrote most of his works, by which he became known as one of the prominent Orthodox theologians of this century. After the war he taught dogmatic theology at the Institut de théologie orthodoxe Saint Denys in Paris. He also played a prominent part in the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius\* in England. Together with Georges Florovsky he became one of the main speakers at annual summer conferences.

NICHOLAS LOSSKY

■ V. Lossky, *Essai sur la théologie mystique de l'Eglise d'Orient* (ET *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, London, Clarke, 1957) ■ *A l'image et à la ressemblance de Dieu* (ET *In the Image and Likeness of God*, Crestwood NY, St Vladimir's Seminary, 1974) ■ V. Lossky & L. Ouspensky, *Der Sinn der Ikonen* (ET *The Meaning of Icons*, Crestwood NY, St Vladimir's Seminary, 1952) ■ V. Lossky & L. Ouspensky, *Théologie négative et connaissance de Dieu chez Maître Eckhart*, Paris, Vrin, 1960 ■ V. Lossky & L. Ouspensky, *Vision de Dieu* (ET *The Vision of God*, Crestwood NY, St Vladimir's Seminary, 1983).

## LUND PRINCIPLE

ON 27 AUGUST 1952 the third world conference on Faith and Order,\* meeting at Lund,

Sweden, agreed on the text of "A Word to the Churches". It was immediately released to the press for worldwide publication. One sentence asked: "Should not our churches ask themselves whether they are showing sufficient eagerness to enter into conversation with other churches, and *whether they should not act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately?*" (italics added). The italicized final section of that sentence became known subsequently as the Lund principle. Probably this is the most quoted (and sometimes misquoted!) sentence from any F&O document. It has often been misunderstood by being taken as an exhortation rather than, as in its original context, a question to be answered. The original intention was to challenge the churches to talk together so that they could come to act together. Lund was held in the aftermath of the South India union (1947), and hopes were rising for other similar union projects.

Two interpretations of the Lund principle quickly arose which weakened its impact. It became a favourite quotation for ecumenical orators, who used it rhetorically, somewhat as a general principle to be stated. Many churches – particularly locally – took it as encouragement simply for limited spasmodic relationships and escaped the full force of the question by thinking in terms of annual celebrations connected with the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.\* The Lund drafters intended quite otherwise. It was a principle to be applied to the ongoing, day-to-day life of the churches. Answered affirmatively, the question was intended to face the churches – whether nationally or locally – with issues of permanent change. There are signs that this is, at last, beginning to happen on a significant scale, particularly in local situations with developing covenant relationships which include a determination to act on the Lund principle. It would appear, therefore, that the Lund question still remains well worth asking.

See also **covenanting; unity, ways to.**

MORRIS WEST

■ O.S. Tomkins ed., *The Third World Conference on Faith and Order*, London, SCM Press, 1953.

## LUTHERAN-METHODIST DIALOGUE

THE LUTHERAN World Federation\* and the World Methodist Council\* conducted bilateral conversations from 1977 until 1984. They concluded with the substantive proposal "that our churches take steps to declare and establish full fellowship of word and sacrament". The process which led to this conclusion was difficult, and at the same time renewing and encouraging. Participants came from every continent, and the internal differences among Lutherans and Methodists were sometimes as striking as the differences between them.

The planning session held in 1977 at St Simons Island, Georgia, USA, led to the choice of the theme "The Church: A Community of Grace". Sub-topics of special importance for discussion were biblical authority and the authenticity of the church, the gospel of grace, the Holy Spirit in the church, the sacraments of the gospel and the mission of the church in today's world.

The first regular meeting (Dresden 1979) concentrated on "The Authority of the Bible and the Authenticity of the Church", especially as this issue related to the auxiliary keys of creeds,\* confessions and historical criticism. Representatives exchanged visits in churches in the area. The first service in which bishops of the two denominations officiated together took place in the Kreuzkirche on 23 January.

At the second meeting (Bristol, England, 1980) the desired goals of mutual understanding, recognition of oneness in the Body of Christ, and providing theological support for church cooperation and unity according to local needs were all served through the discussion of Christian experience. The difficulties of denoting the meaning(s) of Christian experience and the diverse emphases found under this theme served to enrich the discussion and the inter-relationships of the two traditions. Justification\* and sanctification\* were the foci of this discussion, with agreement both that "Christians throughout their whole life are in need of God's forgiving grace" and that "Christian faith is faith that is active in love".

At the third meeting (Oslo 1981) a tentative outline for a common statement was drawn as the discussion focused on the Holy

Spirit\* and the church\* – with special reference to how particular denominational histories have shaped ecclesiology and the understanding of ministry.

The means of grace,\* the sacraments\* of baptism\* and eucharist,\* and church order\* were the main topics of discussion at the fourth meeting (Lake Junaluska, NC, USA, 1983). The hope was explicitly expressed that the final report would contribute to increased Lutheran-Methodist encounter and cooperation as well as provide theological grounds for official steps towards eucharistic sharing. The final draft constituted the centre of attention along with papers on the Lord's supper and church order.

At Bossey, Switzerland, 1984, the final meeting of the commission was held, with the express purpose of finalizing the report to the sponsoring bodies. The report witnesses to "important agreements and convergences and indicates the ways in which we express our common faith differently". While there is need for further study of certain doctrinal topics (providence, the two kingdoms, aspects of anthropology) as well as of "forms of unity", the report concludes that there is already sufficient agreement for several recommendations to be made: full fellowship of word and sacrament, common work in every place to manifest unity in witness and service, and use of the results of this theological dialogue in seeking the visible unity\* of all Christians.

The first concrete result of these consultations was the historic, joint celebration of holy communion in the Lutheran St Lorenz Church at Nuremberg on 29 September 1987 between the Evangelical Methodist Church in the Federal Republic of Germany and the Lutheran, Reformed and United churches of Germany. The text from the bilateral consultation was studied by these churches, and their own decision was to establish an official fellowship of pulpit and sacraments. After the inaugural service in Nuremberg, other services were then held throughout West Germany. In 1990 a similar relationship was established in the German Democratic Republic. Methodists and Lutherans in Austria, Sweden and Norway followed suit in 1991, 1993 and 1997 respectively.

THOMAS A. LANGFORD

■ *The Church: A Community of Grace*, final report of the LWF/WMC joint commission, 1979-84, Geneva and Lake Junaluska NC, 1984 ■ *Lutherisches Kirchenamt, Kirchenkanzlei der Evangelisch-methodistischen Kirche, Vom Dialog zur Kanzel- und Abendmahlsgemeinschaft*, Hanover & Stuttgart, 1987.

## LUTHERAN-ORTHODOX DIALOGUE

ALTHOUGH Martin Luther expressed an interest in the Orthodox church, it fell to his colleague Philipp Melancthon to seek the first contacts between Lutherans and the Eastern church. In 1559 Melancthon attempted to send a letter and a Greek copy of the Augsburg confession to the ecumenical patriarch in Constantinople. His attempt failed, and contacts ceased for 15 years. Between 1574 and 1581 Patriarch Jeremiah II and theologians at Tübingen exchanged letters, the correspondence ending when the patriarch asserted that the Germans should submit themselves to the teachings of Orthodoxy. Official contacts between the Scandinavian churches and the Russian Orthodox Church started as early as 1557. The ecclesiastical reforms of Peter the Great (1672-1725) brought with them a significant Lutheran presence in Russia. From that time until the early 20th century, however, communication between Lutheranism and Orthodoxy tended to be more personal than official.

Shortly after his consecration in 1914, Archbishop Söderblom of Sweden made direct contact with the ecumenical patriarch. Söderblom, the patriarch and other ecumenical leaders envisaged the creation of something like the present-day WCC. The archbishop played a pivotal role in the 1925 conference on Life and Work\* held in Stockholm – a meeting which brought a significant number of Orthodox to Sweden, including the patriarch of Alexandria. These early 20th-century events laid the foundation for the Lutheran-Orthodox bilateral dialogue after the second world war.

*Regional dialogue.* Reciprocal visitations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Evangelical Church of the Federal Republic of Germany began in the 1950s. These visitations set the stage for the Arnoldshain conversations, which have run from 1959 to the present day. Talks have focused on a wide range of topics, including

Tradition,\* justification,\* the Holy Spirit,\* reconciliation,\* the Bible, peace,\* baptism,\* the eucharist,\* and the Holy Spirit in the life of the church.

The Russian Orthodox Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland have been in dialogue since 1970. The conversations have dealt with the eucharist, salvation,\* justification and *theosis* (see **sanctification**). Since 1989 the dialogue has accented new hopes for the future, peace and social ethics.

After the second world war, Lutherans from the German Democratic Republic met with Russian Orthodox Church officials. From these initial exchanges emerged the Zagorsk conversations, which began in 1974. The work centred on questions relating to the kingdom of God,\* the sanctifying actions of God's grace\* and the life of the church\* in a socialist society. In 1979 dialogue commenced between the Lutheran churches in the GDR and the Orthodox church of Bulgaria.

In 1969 the Ecumenical Patriarchate began bilateral dialogue (see **dialogue, bilateral**) with the Evangelical Church of the FRG. They considered topics such as the Holy Spirit, salvation of the world, anthropology\* and the eucharist. The Evangelical Church of Germany and the Romanian Orthodox Church initiated a dialogue in 1979, addressing scripture and Tradition, sacramental theology, justification, *theosis* and synergeia.

*National dialogue.* Numerous discussions have taken place between the Lutheran and Reformed churches in Romania and the Romanian Orthodox Church. Unlike regional bilaterals, these conversations are not conducted by official church-appointed commissions, but are organized by the Orthodox theological institutes in Bucharest and Sibiu and by the United Protestant Institute, located in Sibiu (Lutheran) and Cluj (Reformed). Focuses of the dialogue have included ecumenism, church and society, the active meaning of hope,\* the ethics of solidarity, the social aspects of salvation, communion\* and intercommunion.\*

From 1967 to 1969 a first series of conversations took place between the various Orthodox churches in North America and the Lutheran member churches of the

Lutheran Council in the USA, with scripture and Tradition as topics. Lutherans were joined by the Reformed in 1973 for a three-year trilateral conversation with the Orthodox on "Christian Gospel and Social Responsibility: Biblical and Historical Aspects". A second series of Lutheran-Orthodox dialogues ran from 1984 to 1989. After considering a series of topics (ecumenical councils,\* creeds\* and confession, *imago Dei* and deification, and election and predestination), the commission produced a final report on "Christ 'in us' and Christ 'for us' in Lutheran and Orthodox Theology".

The most recent round of dialogue issued two statements, "Faith and the Holy Trinity", concerning the filioque clause of the Nicene Creed, and an endorsement of the World Council's proposal to establish a common date for the celebration of Easter\*/Pascha.

*World level.* At the first pan-Orthodox conference (Rhodes 1961), the Orthodox churches decided that dialogue with the Lutherans should be on the agenda of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox. At a similar gathering in 1976 the participants agreed that an invitation should be extended by the ecumenical patriarch on behalf of all autocephalous Orthodox churches, requesting Lutheran churches to engage in global-level dialogue through the Lutheran World Federation.\* The Lutherans accepted the invitation in 1977 and appointed Lutheran members to the commission in 1978. The two individual dialogue teams worked separately but on a common agenda from 1978 until 1981, when the first meeting of the joint commission met in Helsinki. The common agenda those years included three major topics: contacts in the 16th and 17th centuries, the regional dialogues, and the theme for the dialogue, which was agreed as "Participation in the Mystery of the Church". The goal of the dialogue was "full communion as full mutual recognition".

After the first five meetings, joint statements reflecting significant convergences of thinking on divine revelation\*, scripture and Tradition,\* and inspiration\* and canon\* were prepared for publication in 1991. A new round of work, on "Authority in and of the Church", began in Moscow in 1991 with a discussion of conciliarity. In 1998 the joint

commission approved an agreed statement on "Salvation: Grace, Justification and Synergy". Dialogue continues on the general theme of "The Mystery of the Church".

DANIEL F. MARTENSEN

■ E. Benz & L.A. Zander eds, *Evangelisches und Orthodoxes Christentum in Begegnung und Auseinandersetzung*, Hamburg, Agentur des Rauthern Hauses, 1952 ■ G. Mastrantonis, *Augsburg and Constantinople: The Correspondence between the Tübingen Theologians and Patriarch Jeremiah II*, Brookline MA, Holy Cross, 1982 ■ *The Orthodox Church and the Churches of the Reformation: A Survey of Orthodox-Protestant Dialogues*, WCC, 1975 ■ *Report of the Consultation of Lutheran/Orthodox Dialogues*, Geneva, Lutheran World Federation, 1975 ■ R. Saarinen, *Faith and Holiness: Lutheran-Orthodox Dialogue, 1959-1994*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997 ■ R. Tobias, *Heaven on Earth: A Lutheran-Orthodox Odyssey*, Dehli, American Lutheran Publ. Bureau, 1996.

## LUTHERAN-REFORMED DIALOGUE

EFFORTS to bring together the Lutheran and Reformed traditions began early in the Reformation period and continued through the centuries. While these attempts often have been frustrated, notable achievements have been recorded, especially in the 20th century.

The Marburg colloquy (1529), which included Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli and Oecolampadius, achieved agreement on a number of points, but not on the presence of Christ in the Lord's supper (see **eucharist**). Zwingli's formulation came to define the Reformed view for Lutherans, although Luther later expressed appreciation for Calvin's position; and Calvin, who was not at Marburg, stated that he favoured Luther over Zwingli. Colloquies at Maulbronn (1564) and Montbéliard (1586) failed to reconcile differences. The scholastic theology of the 17th and 18th centuries, with important exceptions, widened the gap between the two traditions.

The 19th century produced several instances of convergence. In Prussia, Lutheran and Reformed churches were joined in 1817 by the royal decree of Frederick William III. This controversial "forced marriage" created the Prussian Union, which was largely administrative except in the Rhine provinces and Westphalia, where, in 1835, the two

churches were consolidated, the new church retaining both Lutheran and Reformed confessions. In the US, Lutheran and Reformed immigrants from Germany formed a "Kirchenverein" in 1841 which almost 100 years later combined with the German Reformed church to form the Evangelical and Reformed Church, now part of the United Church of Christ (UCC). In Hungary a regional agreement between Lutherans and Reformed established pulpit and table fellowship in 1835: while the two churches remained separate, the mutual recognition of ministry,\* church\* and sacraments\* became widespread in the 19th century. In 1891 the small Lutheran and Reformed churches of Austria formed an administrative union.

The 20th century, however, has seen the greatest achievements, perhaps none more impressive than the European Leuenberg\* agreement of 1973. The way to Leuenberg was paved by a number of post-war national dialogues, each concluding that continued division is confessionally unwarranted. Reports were issued in the Netherlands (1956), the Federal Republic of Germany (1959) and France (1964), but perhaps the most significant document was the Arnoldshain theses (1957), which express the judgment of some of the most eminent exegetes of the century that the New Testament provides no justification for the eucharistic division of the traditions. Leuenberg was also preceded by European dialogues treating scripture (1957), the presence of Christ (1958), baptism (1959), the Lord's supper (1960), and the important Schauenberg talks (1964-67). The Leuenberg process began in 1969.

Article 7 of the Lutheran Augsburg confession became the critical text for Leuenberg. It states that for "the true unity of the church it is enough to agree concerning the teaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments". In the first of four sections, the Leuenberg document recalls the common heritage of the Reformation and notes the divisions of the 16th century. The second section articulates the common faith\* of the Reformation churches: the centrality of justification\* by faith for the preaching, teaching and sacramental life of the church. The third section addresses the difficult issue of the 16th-century condemnations, identifying specifically those raised

in article 10 of the Augsburg confession concerning the Lord's supper, Christology and predestination (see *anathemas*). The modern thought-world differs from that of our forebears; the condemnations should be lifted. The Leuenberg agreement concludes by offering itself as an instrument of unity.\* Churches signing it thereby declare themselves to be in full communion,\* i.e. in table and pulpit fellowship. By 2002, some 103 churches had joined the Leuenberg Church Fellowship, including some in South America and some Methodist churches.

In the US the first bilateral conversation began in 1962. Its report, *Marburg Revisited* (1966), included studies by a number of prominent Lutheran and Reformed scholars. The conferees could "find no insuperable obstacles to pulpit and altar fellowship" and recommended that the constituent churches "enter into discussions looking forward to intercommunion and the fuller recognition of one another's ministries". No action was taken by any of the sponsoring churches, and a second bilateral met 1972-74. This dialogue produced a short report which concluded that the Leuenberg agreement was not suitable for use in the US, but recommended continuing discussion.

Almost 20 years after the first Lutheran-Reformed dialogue convened, the third and most controversial began its deliberations (1981). Its report, *An Invitation to Action* (1983), built on the Leuenberg agreement and *Marburg Revisited*. Brief statements on justification, the Lord's supper and ministry were provided, along with two essays on ministry, a topic of growing ecumenical concern. The report urgently called Lutheran and Reformed churches to recognize one another's doctrines of church, ministry and the Lord's supper, establish pulpit and table fellowship, and begin a process of reception.\*

*An Invitation to Action* stirred heated controversy within the Lutheran ranks. Published shortly before three major Lutheran bodies combined in 1988 to form the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), it sparked debate on the ecumenical commitments of the new church. Strong voices in the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) questioned the Reformed understanding of the Lord's supper and ministry, fearing that Lutheran-Reformed fellowship would hinder

Roman Catholic-Lutheran convergence. The synods of the American Lutheran Church, the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, the Reformed Church in America (RCA) and the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA) adopted the report's main recommendations and thus were in fellowship until the formation of the ELCA. The LCA, however, declined fellowship, requesting that the new church initiate conversations with the Reformed.

ELCA conversations with the PCUSA, the RCA and the United Church of Christ began in 1988. Concluding in 1992, the report of the committee, *A Common Calling: The Witness of Our Reformation Churches in North America Today*, recommended that the participating churches enter into an agreement of full communion. Acknowledging the achievements of *Marburg Revisited*, *An Invitation to Action* and the Leuenberg agreement, the "if... then" logic of previous reports was replaced with a "because... therefore" rationale, i.e., because of agreement achieved on critical church-dividing issues, therefore certain consequences can be drawn. The report also offered an innovative modus operandi for churches entering full communion when it called for "mutual affirmation and admonition". On the basis of the report and its recommendations, a formula of agreement was developed which called the four churches to take actions at the highest level to establish full communion. The recommendations of the formula were adopted by the national assemblies of the participating churches in 1997.

Significant progress towards unity has been made in other parts of the world. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Netherlands anticipates moving beyond pulpit and table fellowship to formal union with the nation's two principal Reformed churches. A union has already been achieved in Ethiopia, where in 1975 the Bethel Church (Presbyterian) became a synod in the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus. In Indonesia the re-organization of the Communion of Churches in 1984 provided a framework for Lutheran and Reformed churches there to come into full mutual recognition of church, sacraments and ministry.

The first world-level Lutheran-Reformed dialogue was not convened until 1985. Its report, *Toward Church Fellowship* (1989),

finds the condemnations of the past no longer applicable, affirms the unity and diversity of the two traditions, and recommends pulpit and table fellowship and growth together in mission.

PAUL R. FRIES

■ J.E. Andrews & J.A. Burgess eds, *An Invitation to Action*, Philadelphia, Fortress, 1984 ■ P.C. Empie & J.I. McCord eds, *Marburg Revisited*, Minneapolis, Augsburg, 1966 ■ W. Hüffmeier & C. Podmore, *Leuenberg, Meissen and Porvoo: Consultation...*, Frankfurt, Lembeck, 1996 ■ W.G. Rusch & D.F. Martensen eds, *The Leuenberg Agreement and Lutheran-Reformed Relationships*, Minneapolis, Augsburg, 1989 ■ E. Schieffer, *Von Schauenburg nach Leuenberg: Entstehung und Bedeutung der Konkordie reformatorischer Kirchen in Europa*, Paderborn, Bonifatius, 1982.

## LUTHERAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUE

THREE HEADINGS best explain the situation of Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue.

### INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUES

After two years of discussions between the Vatican Secretariat (now Pontifical Council) for Promoting Christian Unity\* and the Lutheran World Federation,\* a Joint Lutheran-Roman Catholic study commission first met in 1967 with the mandate to discuss “the gospel and the church”. Its statement (1972), commonly called the Malta report, covered a wide range of topics: Tradition\* and scripture, justification,\* gospel and world, ordained ministry, papacy. The commission noted both “the progressive overcoming of doctrinal disputes” and “structural problems which are largely responsible for continuing to keep our churches divided” (para. 46). Despite lack of full agreement on the doctrine of ordained ministry, the commission called for mutual recognition of ministerial office and for official actions making possible “occasional acts of intercommunion as, for example, during ecumenical events or in the pastoral care of those involved in mixed marriages” (para. 73). Of the seven Catholic participants, however, four dissented from the call for occasional intercommunion.\*

The achievements and the limitations of the Malta report led to the creation of a sec-

ond dialogue group, which produced three pairs of documents. First, two documents were occasioned by anniversaries: “All under One Christ” (1980), on the 450th anniversary of the Augsburg confession, and “Martin Luther – Witness to Jesus Christ” (1983), on the 500th anniversary of Luther’s birth. Second, two documents examined particular doctrinal problems. “The Eucharist” (1978) opened with an extensive joint witness, structured by elements common to the liturgies of the two traditions (see *eucharist*). A following section on common tasks described extensive convergence on the presence of Christ in the supper, the latter’s relation to the sacrifice of Christ, its communal nature, eucharistic ministry and eucharistic fellowship. Certain remaining differences over presence and sacrifice were explicitly said to be no longer church-dividing. Nevertheless, agreement could not be reached on a proposed statement on “Reciprocal Admission to the Eucharist”.

In “The Ministry in the Church” (1981), the commission agreed that a special ministry is “abidingly constitutive” of the church (para. 18) and has “the essential and specific function... to assemble and build up the Christian community by proclaiming the word of God, celebrating the sacraments and presiding over the liturgical, missionary and diaconal life of the community” (para. 31). While the dialogue reached extensive agreement on the tasks of episcopal ministry, agreement on the necessity of a distinct episcopal ministry was stated in a conditional, qualified statement: “If both churches acknowledge that for faith this historical development of the one apostolic ministry into a more local and a more regional ministry has taken place with the help of the Holy Spirit and to this degree constitutes something essential for the church, then a *high degree of agreement* has been reached” (para. 49, emphasis in original). The possibility of mutual recognition of ministries again surfaced but in more modest form. The commission concluded that “it seems possible” that the defectus Catholics find in the sacrament of orders in Lutheran churches “refers to a partial lack rather than a complete absence” (paras 76-77). On this basis, there could be “a mutual recognition that the ministry in the other church exer-

cises essential functions of the ministry that Jesus Christ instituted in his church" (para. 85). Any such recognition, however, must not be "an isolated act" but part of "a process in which the churches reciprocally accept each other" (para. 82).

A third pair of documents outlined what such a process would look like. "Ways to Community" (1980) described the ecumenical goal and steps leading towards it. Both goal and path are developed in terms of communion\* (*Gemeinschaft*). Unity\* implies "a full spiritual and ecclesial fellowship" (para. 53), "an outward, visible unity which is becoming historically manifest in the life of the churches" (para. 33). "Facing Unity" (1985) described various models of unity (see **unity, models of**) advocated in ecumenical discussions and then outlined a possible process by which Lutheran and Catholic churches could grow together at the diocesan/synodical level. Central to the proposal was the collegial exercise of oversight, based on a mutual recognition that "in the other church the church of Jesus Christ is actualized" (para. 124). Through joint ordinations, a common ministry would be created. Responses to "Facing Unity" from Lutheran churches have been highly cautious. No response has been made by Catholic bishops conferences or the Vatican.

A third series of international dialogues, from 1986 to 1993, produced the longest document yet, a 145-page text on "Church and Justification" (1993). In it the dialogue seeks to test the widely perceived consensus on justification by analyzing its implications for ecclesiology. Working from the shared belief that all that is taught about the church "must be founded in the salvation-event itself and marked by justification-faith" and that all that is taught about justification "must be understood in the overall total context of statements about the church, the means of salvation and the church's ministry" (para. 2), the dialogue develops an extensive common ecclesiology but also identifies a series of detailed but not insignificant differences which centre on the church's active role in the mediation of salvation (chap. 4). While Catholics perceive a Spirit-led role for the church as, in an analogous sense, a "sacrament" of salvation (para. 122), Lutherans worry that what can only be as-

cribed to the gospel is being ascribed to human actions and institutions (para. 212). Even this difference, however, is prefaced by an extensive agreement on the inter-relation of salvation and church.

A fourth series of dialogues began in 1995 on apostolicity, eucharist and ethics.

### NATIONAL DIALOGUES

The most extensive national dialogues have been in the US. After discussions of the status of the Nicene Creed\* as dogma\* of the church (1965) and one baptism for the remission of sins (1966), the dialogue addressed more controversial matters. In "The Eucharist as Sacrifice" (1967), "growing harmony" was reported on the sacrificial character of the supper. In addition, agreement was reached on "the full reality of Christ's presence" in the eucharist, even if that presence is understood in different terms.

Although the following statement on "Eucharist and Ministry" (1970) did not claim full agreement, the Catholic participants saw "no persuasive reason to deny the possibility of the Roman Catholic Church recognizing the validity of (Lutheran) ministry... and, correspondingly, the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the eucharistic celebrations of the Lutheran churches" (para. 54). This recommendation was widely criticized in Catholic circles.

The common statement on "Papal Primacy and the Universal Church" (1973) focused on the "Petrine function", i.e. "a particular form of ministry exercised by a person, office-holder, or local church with reference to the church as a whole" (para. 4). While such a function can be exercised by various persons and institutions, its "single most notable representative... has been the bishop of Rome" (see **primacy**). Lutheran churches were asked "if they are able to acknowledge... the possibility and desirability of the papal ministry, renewed under the gospel and committed to Christian freedom, in a larger communion which would include the Lutheran churches" (para. 32). While the Catholic participants noted that the common statement "does not fully reflect everything that we believe concerning the papacy" (para. 34), they nevertheless asked whether "a distinct canonical status may be

worked out by which Lutherans could be in official communion with the church of Rome" (para. 38).

The statement on papal primacy did not address questions about infallibility,\* which was the topic of "Teaching Authority and Infallibility in the Church" (1978). Significant convergence was reported (Catholic Reflections, para. 1; Lutheran Reflections, para. 18), aided particularly by consideration of the role of reception.\*

A greater breakthrough occurred in "Justification by Faith" (1983). Both sides judged the common statement sufficient, without accompanying Lutheran and Catholic reflections. A thematic statement summarized the central agreement: "Our entire hope of justification and salvation rests on Christ Jesus and on the gospel whereby the good news of God's merciful action in Christ is made known; we do not place our ultimate trust in anything other than God's promise and saving work in Christ" (paras 44,157). The dialogue reported "convergence (though not uniformity) on justification by faith considered in and of itself, and a significant though lesser convergence on the applications of the doctrine as a criterion of authenticity for the church's proclamation and practice" (para. 152).

The following text, "The One Mediator, the Saints, and Mary" (1990), was explicitly designed to test the agreement on justification. The dialogue repeated the earlier affirmation on justification and added that "Jesus Christ is the sole Mediator in God's plan of salvation" (para. 103). While important differences on the mediation of the saints and Mary were revealed, the dialogue outlined conditions under which these differences need not be church-dividing (paras 90ff.). After a short text on "Scripture and Tradition" (1992) was produced, a pause was made to reconsider the shape and future tasks of the dialogue. A new round began in 1998, studying the theme "The Church as Koinonia of Salvation: Its Structure and Ministries".

The US dialogue also commissioned joint Catholic-Lutheran studies on "Peter in the New Testament" (1973), "Mary in the New Testament" (1978), and "Righteousness in the New Testament" (1982).

Catholic-Lutheran dialogues have also taken place on the national level in other

countries, most notably in Europe. Two statements have been produced in Norway ("Communion, the Lord's Supper", 1982; "The Ministry of the Church", 1986) and three in Sweden ("Marriage and Family in the Christian Viewpoint", 1974; "Ecumenical Convergence on Baptism and Church Membership", 1978; and "The Office of the Bishop", 1988). The last Swedish statement, published also in English, is the most far-reaching Catholic-Lutheran agreement on episcopacy.

The Lutheran-Catholic dialogue in Germany has produced two lengthy statements: "Kirchengemeinschaft in Wort und Sakrament" (1984) and "Communio Sanctorum: Die Kirche als Gemeinschaft der Heiligen" (2000). Both are developed within the framework of an ecclesiology of communion. The former focuses particularly on confession of faith, sacraments and worship, and ministerial office, while the latter takes up the church as the community of the justified, the papacy, and the saints and Mary.

#### ACTION AT WORLD LEVEL

In 1993 the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church decided to move towards an official endorsement of the results of the dialogues between them on justification. On the basis of the international and US Lutheran-Catholic dialogues and the discussion between the Roman Catholic Church and the Evangelical Church in Germany (Lutheran-United-Reformed), a "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification" was produced that affirmed a "consensus in basic truths of the doctrine of justification" and declared that the relevant condemnations from each church did not apply to their present understandings of justification. The declaration was ratified by the highest authorities of both communions and solemnly signed at Augsburg, Germany, on 31 October 1999, the 482nd anniversary of Luther's posting of his 95 theses.

MICHAEL ROOT

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## LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

ESTABLISHED in 1947 by representatives of Lutheran churches in 23 countries, in 2002 the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) numbered 133 member churches, including three associate members, in 73 countries. It represents approximately 60 million of the estimated 64 million baptized Lutherans in the world. Some churches, though not all, which are associated with the American-based Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod remain outside the LWF.

Antecedent organizations include the general council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America (1867), the General Evangelical Lutheran Conference in Germany (1868), and the Lutheran World Convention (1923). The formation of the LWF after the second world war was the extension of such movements as well as a response to post-war needs for reconciliation, relief and service.

The LWF initially regarded itself as a "free association of Lutheran churches" organized to foster united witness in the world, common theological research, the ecumenical involvement of Lutheran churches, and common response to issues of human need and social justice. In 1990 it adopted a new constitution based on a different self-under-

standing, one with strong ecclesial overtones: "... a communion of churches which confess the Triune God, agree in the proclamation of the word of God and are united in pulpit and altar fellowship". This self-understanding builds around a theology of communion\* (koinonia\*), with increased concern for confessional unity, joint mission and service, theological reflection and strong ecumenical involvement.

LWF assemblies have been held in Lund, Sweden (1947), Hanover, Germany (1952), Minneapolis, USA (1957), Helsinki, Finland (1963), Evian-les-Bains, France (1970), Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (1977), Budapest, Hungary (1984), Curitiba, Brazil (1990), and Hong Kong, People's Republic of China (1997). In 2003 the tenth assembly is to be held in Winnipeg, Canada.

The 1990 assembly adopted the present organizational structure of the LWF. The assembly, which normally meets every six years, is the highest legislative authority. The council, which meets annually, serves as the governing body: it has 48 assembly-elected members of whom 50% are from the so-called Northern churches and 50% from churches of the two-thirds world. The LWF secretariat headquarters are in the Ecumenical Centre, Geneva. The structure calls for three departments in addition to a general secretariat, with nearly 100 staff members: a general secretariat and departments on theology and studies, mission and development, and world service whose projects throughout the world employ approximately 4000 persons.

The ecumenical orientation of the LWF is best seen in its close cooperation with the WCC, of which most LWF churches are members. The LWF office for ecumenical affairs develops and maintains bilateral ecumenical relations with other Christian world communions,\* and seeks to find ways of coordinating and furthering national and regional bilateral relations. The office is responsible for the international bilateral dialogues with official representatives of the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Reformed, Methodist, Baptist and Adventist traditions.

On 31 October 1999, in Augsburg, Germany, representatives of the LWF and the Roman Catholic Church signed a joint dec-

laration of the doctrine of justification. The agreement affirms that 16th century condemnations by each tradition of the other concerning justification by grace through faith do not strike the current teachings as represented in the document, and so they are no longer in themselves church-dividing (see esp. paras 1-7, 40-42). This ecumenical breakthrough is prompting the LWF and the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity\* to pursue conversations with representatives of various Protestant traditions, in the hope of widening the declaration's applicability.

NORMAN A. HJELM

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## LUTHERANISM

THE CHURCH reform initiated by Martin Luther in 1517 at Wittenberg, Germany, developed into a movement, became established under political rulers chiefly in Central and Northern Europe, survived in Eastern Europe and elsewhere until granted civic toleration, and spread by massive emigration especially to North America but also to Australia, South Africa and Latin America. It also grew by missionary activity in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In the early 1900s Lutherans numbered about 80 million baptized persons. But at the start of the 21st century, the ravages of two world wars and the omission of the large number estimated within the membership of Germany's united churches has reduced the Lutheran total worldwide to an estimated 64 million.

Lutherans always considered themselves as part of the church\* catholic and evangelical, bound to the scriptures, and confessing the faith\* set forth in the three ecumenical creeds.\* Although Lutherans vary among themselves in ways of worship – wherein the Lord's supper is central – and although they

differ among themselves in forms of church organization – whether as national churches as in Scandinavia, or as Free churches as in most other parts of the world – Lutherans are doctrinally and legally identified by the same confession of faith which their political protectors had presented to the imperial diet at Augsburg in 1530. To whatever degree professed, the Augsburg confession (*Confessio Augustana*) and Luther's small catechism of 1529 ("the Bible of the laity") have been the chief symbols of mutual recognition among Lutherans for more than 470 years.

Yet this basic concord has been no guarantee against disunity, whether born of doctrinal debates or ethnic, linguistic, cultural or other factors. Twin developments during the 20th century, however, have fostered Lutheran unity in new ways. One has been the creation of a global confessional fellowship, first through the Lutheran World Convention (LWC, founded in 1923) and then, since 1947, through the Lutheran World Federation\* (LWF) – based in Geneva and now involving 133 member churches with approximately 60 million members in 73 countries. The other development has been Lutheran participation in the ecumenical movement, both in the World Council of Churches and in a broad range of bilateral dialogues (see **dialogue, bilateral**), especially with the Roman Catholic Church since the Second Vatican Council.\*

Lutheran teaching presupposes not only "that one holy church will remain forever" but also that "it is enough for the true unity of the church to agree concerning the teaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments" (*Augustana* 7) – baptism\* and the eucharist.\* Guideposts to such agreements have been four: faith alone (justification\*), grace\* alone (forgiveness), scripture alone (authority), and Christ alone (Saviour). Tradition and traditions\* which are not contrary to scripture have their place in the historical church. The life of the Christian – as forgiven sinner – embodies precepts of the law and promises of the gospel. The interplay of church and society (or state) generally follows Luther's teaching on the two realms – the realm on God's right, the church; and the realm on God's left, the state – both of which are accountable to God (see **church and state**).

Despite Luther's objection, the organized church of his heirs was called Lutheran and not, as he had preferred, "evangelical". By terms of the peace of Augsburg of 1555 Lutherans were tolerated alongside Roman Catholics on a territorial basis: the religion of the ruler determined the religion of his subjects, *cuius regio eius religio*. Outside Germany, in Denmark (including Norway) and Sweden (including Finland) the change to Lutheranism did not alter the churches' majority status. However, in parts of Eastern Europe, as in Poland, initial gains shrank and a Lutheran minority survived by toleration. Germany's many territories presented a patchwork of Lutheran and Roman Catholic lands. The entry of Calvinism and the appeal of the Reformed faith to ruling families and territorial princes only complicated the confessional situation (see **Reformed/Presbyterian churches**). Although the principle was that the religion of the ruler determined the religion of his subjects, when the Hohenzollern turned Reformed in 1613 the vast majority of his subjects remained Lutheran. When in 1697 the king of Saxony became a Roman Catholic in order to qualify for the Polish crown, his people continued Lutheran. When Franconia became part of Catholic Bavaria in 1803, the Franconians nevertheless remained Lutheran.

While Scandinavia and Finland remained homogeneously Lutheran, Germany's religious map of Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed territorial churches became more complicated with the addition in 1817 of united churches. In that year the administrative – but not confessional – consolidation of a large Lutheran majority and a small Reformed minority led to the formation of the Evangelical Church of the Old Prussian Union. A common liturgy\* and other hallmarks reflected a mainly Lutheran tradition. Other United churches, as in Hesse or the Palatinate, were unions of consensus\* which minimized confessional derivation. In Germany as a whole Lutherans and United were about equal in number. Yet, to safeguard their identity, the confessionally intact churches (Hanover, Saxony, Bavaria, et al.) in 1868 formed the General Evangelical Lutheran Conference (GELC) which aimed to stem an advance of the Prussian Union.

In North America the GELC counterpart, the General Evangelical Lutheran Council (1868), gathered the confessionally moderate synods of German and Swedish origin. With the older general synod (1820), the Council made confessional Lutheranism increasingly viable in the English-speaking world. What began in 1868 as a loose international linkage of confessional kin intensified, particularly in the wake of the 20th century's world wars. Continental Europe, the Nordic countries and North America provided the leaders who formed the LWC and its far stronger successor, the LWF.

The North American Lutheran scene, meanwhile, had come to reflect not only European diversity but also one created by successive stages of Americanization. On the confessional right stood the Missouri synod (now the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod) and its satellites. On the relative left stood the general synod which was deliberately open towards other Protestants – before the World's Evangelical Alliance\* (1846) and through the early years of the Federal Council of Churches (1908). As to European connections, the Missouri Lutherans treated Evangelicals of the Prussian Union, the United, as their traditional enemy; but the general synod regarded that same body as a friend – thus being charged with unionism by the Missourians. General synod representatives became active in the Faith and Order\* and Life and Work\* movements soon after the Edinburgh world missionary conference in 1910. Other Lutherans followed.

The United Lutheran Church in America (ULCA) – a merger in 1918 of the general council, general synod, and the united synod, south – continued the Faith and Order connection. With an eye towards other Lutherans, the ULCA preferred the ecclesial concerns of Faith and Order over the more social concerns of the Life and Work movement as led by Lutheran Archbishop Nathan Söderblom of Uppsala. In Germany Lutheran and United churches, however, favoured the latter; they trusted Swedish more than Anglo-Saxon leadership in matters ecumenical. Paradoxically, the Nazi authorities, who resented Life and Work's decision of 1934 to side with the Confessing Church,\* forbade German participation at both the 1937 meetings of Life and Work at

Oxford and Faith and Order at Edinburgh. In that way, Swedish theologians became the leading Lutheran ecumenical voices – Gustaf Aulén, Anders Nygren, Yngve Brilioth. At Utrecht in 1938, ULCA president Frederick Knubel proposed to the WCC planning committee, “the Committee of Fourteen”, that the new WCC provide for proportional “confessional representation” of churches collectively in the WCC’s assembly and central committee, a proposal in part acted upon favourably at the first assembly in Amsterdam (1948).

In the wake of the second world war, such confessional representation achieved a dual purpose: it helped to foster Lutheran unity internationally, and it opened the way for most Lutheran churches to join the WCC and together to become ecumenically active. The new ULCA president, Franklin Clark Fry, vice-chair of the WCC central committee, under the bishop of Chichester, G.K.A. Bell (1948-54), subsequently served as its influential chair for two terms (1954-68). Simultaneously, Fry’s leading role in the LWF – its president after Anders Nygren, bishop of Lund, and Hanns Lilje, bishop of Hanover – epitomized the creative interlinking of confessional and ecumenical realities in the movement for Christian unity.\*

In more recent years Lutherans have extended the movement for Christian unity by concrete actions resulting from intensive bilateral dialogues. Ecumenical agreements – in Europe, the Leuenberg agreement between Lutheran and Reformed; in North America, agreements for “full communion” between Lutherans and Episcopalians/Anglicans, Lutherans and Reformed, Lutherans and the Moravian church; and the joint declaration on the doctrine of justification between the churches of the LWF and the Roman Catholic Church – are solid indications of the Lutheran commitment to the quest for the visible unity of the church.

In Asia, Africa and Latin America, as earlier in Australia, Lutheran church bodies had been slowly forming since the 1920s. Some, as in Brazil, South Africa and Australia, were mainly gatherings of European immigrants, much as had occurred in the USA and Canada. Other church bodies were the result of mission efforts from Europe and North America and directed towards peo-

ples of other religions. For Lutherans, the kind of ecclesial autonomy that first had developed in the British colonies of North America much later applied in India, Japan, China, South Africa and elsewhere.

After 1947, LWF policy was to consolidate diverse enterprises and to achieve one Lutheran church in a given country, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania remaining the best such example. To be sure, the confessional-ecumenical motif has found various expressions among third-world Lutherans, and instructively so: the pressures to be ecumenical are strong, the need to share from the riches of a confessional heritage is demanding, and the fact of usually being a Christian minority amid peoples of other religions has a message for Lutherans in Europe and America. The reality of the ecumenical quest is vividly shown in the growing communion between Lutherans and Anglicans throughout Africa.

Of the perhaps 5 million immigrants who had arrived in North America as Lutherans from the Old World, an estimated 25% remained in Lutheran churches. Many, upwardly mobile, were gathered into other communions, or were lost to the church altogether. The experience of being regarded as fair game for mission from the side of English-speaking Protestants put most Lutheran church bodies on the defensive. Instances of Lutherans and non-Lutherans in occasional pulpit and altar fellowship were denounced by many conservative Lutherans as “unionism” – mainly on theological grounds, but with also sociological implications.

Doctrinal agreement, on the basis of the historic confessions (Augustana, etc.), was the prerequisite to fellowship. For some, like the “Missourians”, it remains so. Throughout their history, Lutheran churches have given prominence to theology, have regarded agreement in doctrine as basic, have emphasized Christology, and have fostered Christian education – also in missionary outreach. The self-understanding of the LWF, formalized in 1990, as “a communion of churches” has given new depth both to Lutheran unity and global ecumenical strength.

The gradual indigenization of the Lutheran church in the English-speaking world is a major development in ecclesial his-

tory. This as well as other aspects of the Lutheran legacy have contributed historical depth to the timeliness of ecumenical dialogue in recent years. An early sign in this direction was the formation of the Lutheran Foundation for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg in 1963; this institution, perhaps more than any other, has fostered the ecumenical goal of “reconciled diversity”. Increasingly, Lutherans are being drawn towards an “evangelical catholicity” which sees Lutheranism as a movement which is called to offer a concrete proposal concerning the gospel to the church catholic. In the ecumenical movement Lutherans, as others committed to Christian unity, act upon the faith “that one holy church will remain forever”.

E. THEODORE BACHMANN

■ E.T. Bachmann & M.B. Bachmann, *Lutheran Churches in the World*, Minneapolis, Augsburg, 1989 ■ *Between Vision and Reality: Lutheran Churches in Transition*, Geneva, LWF, 2001 ■ G. Gassmann & S. Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, Minneapolis, Fortress, 1996 ■ E.W. Gritsch, *Introduction to Lutheranism*, Minneapolis, Fortress, 1994 ■ E.W. Gritsch & R.W. Jenson, *Lutheranism: The Theological Movement and Its Confessional Writings*, Philadelphia, Fortress, 1976 ■ B. Lohse, *Luthers Theologie in ihrer historischen Entwicklung und in ihrem systematischen Zusammenhang* (ET *Martin Luther's Theology: Its Historical and Systematic Development*, Minneapolis, Fortress, 1999) ■ J.H. Schjørring, N.A. Hjelm & P. Kumari eds, *From Federation to Communion: The History of the Lutheran World Federation*, Minneapolis, Fortress, 1997.

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# M

## **MACKAY, JOHN ALEXANDER**

B. 7 May 1889, Inverness, Scotland; d. 9 June 1983, Princeton, NJ, USA. Chairman of commission 5 on “The Universal Church and the World of Nations” of the Oxford conference, 1937, Mackay was a member of the provisional committee of the WCC, 1946-48. At the WCC’s founding assembly in Amsterdam (1948), he chaired commission 2 on “The Church’s Witness to God’s Design”, and was elected member of the WCC central committee for the period 1948-54. Chairman of the International Missionary Council, 1947-57, he headed the joint IMC/WCC committee, 1948-54, and was president of the World Presbyterian Alliance, 1954-59. He studied at Aberdeen, Princeton and Madrid, and was for a period a missionary of the Presbyterian Church



(USA) in Peru. As religious work secretary for the South American Federation of the YMCAs, he was based first in Montevideo, later in Mexico City, 1926-32. He was secretary for Latin America and Africa, Board of Foreign Missions, Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1932-36, and then president and professor of ecumenics at Princeton Theological Seminary, 1936-59. Mackay was founder and editor of *Theology Today*, an editor of *The Westminster Study Edition of the Holy Bible*, and contributing editor to *Christianity and Crisis*.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ J.A. Mackay, *Ecumenics: The Science of the Church Universal*, Englewood Cliffs NJ, Prentice ■ *The Other Spanish Christ*, London, SCM Press, 1932 ■ E.J. Jurji ed., *The Ecumenical Era in Church and Society: A Symposium in Honor of John A. Mackay*, New York, Macmillan, 1959.

## MAGISTERIUM

“MAGISTERIUM” is the term used for the teaching authority\* in Roman Catholicism. In the RC church, teaching authority is exercised by the bishops (see **episcopacy**) and by other appointed teachers. Personal and functional tensions may occur between the “hierarchical” magisterium and the “scholarly” magisterium. In extraordinary cases the episcopal or pastoral magisterium can be exercised by an ecumenical council,\* or even by the pope alone.

See **infallibility, primacy, teaching authority**.

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT

■ A. Dulles, *A Church to Believe In*, New York, Crossroad, 1982, chs 7-8 ■ R.R. Gaillardetz, *Teaching with Authority: A Theology of the Magisterium in the Church*, Collegeville MN, Liturgical Press, 1997.

## MAGNIFICAT

THE MAGNIFICAT, the song of Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, was highly acclaimed by Luther. Today it serves as a fundamental text in the renovation of Catholic Marian theology (Paul VI, *Marialis Cultus*, n.37; John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*, nn.35-37) and as a privileged point of focus among

Christians, above all in the third world, and especially in Latin America, where the influence of Mary has always been very strong. This “new woman”, servant of God resembling the suffering servant (Isa. 42-53; Phil. 2:7), expresses the spirituality of liberation.

The Magnificat forms a literary unit with the annunciation and visitation (Luke 1:26-56), and its texture is woven with reminiscences of psalms and prophets. The song of Mary, in the mystery of the incarnation\* of the Word, is also the song of all the children of God. It is made up of (1) praise and acclamation, at the beginning and end (vv.46-50,54-55); and (2) prophetic announcement, in the central part (vv.51-53).

Current exegesis\* views Mary as a disciple of Jesus, a prophetess through the power of the Spirit (Luke 1:35) whose message condemns relationships of domination and oppression and announces a new order of justice\* and peace,\* a new creation. Mary, daughter of Zion, symbolizing the poor\* among the children of Israel, sets in motion a “revolution” which will bring about a change of heart (v.51).

Luke, ever insistent on the mercy of God, points out that it is God, Lord and Saviour, all-powerful and holy (vv.46-49), who manifests divine pity by exalting the poor, the weak and the humble and by emptying (and thus disposing them to accept grace\*) the rich, the powerful and the arrogant, thus fulfilling the promise made to Abraham.

See also **Mary in the ecumenical movement**.

MARIA TERESA PORCILE SANTISO

## MAR THOMA CHURCH

THE MAR THOMA Syrian Church of Malabar, with a membership of around 875,000, is an independent reformed Eastern church. (“Mar Thoma” means St Thomas. Much of what is today the Kerala state in India used to be known as Malabar. Christians there were for centuries under the rule of bishops from Syria, and the liturgical language was Syriac; hence the rather misleading epithet “Syrian”.) The two other major Syrian churches in India are the Malankara Jacobite Syrian Church, which is under the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, and

the autocephalous Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. A large section of the old St Thomas Church is today part of the Roman Catholic Church, and a much smaller number who joined the Anglican Church are now in the Church of South India (CSI). Up to the 16th century all of them belonged to a single church with one common tradition that traced its origins to the work of the apostle Thomas.

According to that tradition, Thomas landed at the port of Cranganur on the Malabar coast in A.D. 52, established churches in seven places in Kerala, and in 72 died a martyr's death near Madras. No unambiguous historical evidence either supports or refutes this tradition, which is an integral part of the self-understanding of the Syrian Christian community. The evidence clearly supports the presence of a thriving Christian community in this part of India from the 4th century onwards. Of how the church was organized and how it lived and witnessed within the Hindu milieu, little is known.

When the Portuguese arrived in India early in the 17th century, they were welcomed by the Christian community. Largely unaware of the divisions that had crept into the Christian church outside Kerala, the St Thomas Christians allowed themselves to be brought under Roman rule by the end of the century. But disaffection soon set in, both with the Portuguese and with the Roman Catholicism they represented. In 1653 a large number broke away from Rome, reaffirming their centuries-old heritage. The church, however, was now divided and would be further divided in the years to come.

The Mar Thoma Church (MTC) traces its immediate history to a reform movement within the old St Thomas Church. The impetus for reform came from the work of British missionaries representing Anglican evangelicalism. That work, begun in the early years of the 18th century, had led to the translation of the Bible into the local language, Malayalam. Chief among the architects of reform was Abraham Malpan, a parish priest who translated the liturgy into Malayalam, making changes in it to remove what were perceived as Roman accretions. The reformers were "inspired by the vision of an Eastern evangelical church seeking to

comprehend the evangelical faith and experience within the framework of the corporate life and liturgical devotion" of the Eastern tradition. They affirmed the central place of the Bible and encouraged its "open use" in family worship and church services, and they stressed the importance of the sermon in Sunday worship. All this resulted in a search for new standards of conduct and a lived piety and, in course of time, in a recognition of the church's missionary vocation. The Mar Thoma Evangelistic Association was formed in 1889, and it has been active in evangelistic work in and outside Kerala. The week-long annual convention it holds at a place called Maramon attracts over 100,000 people, including preachers belonging to a wide variety of church traditions from many parts of the world.

The ecumenical character of the Maramon convention reflects the ecumenical openness of the MTC. The preamble to its constitution affirms that the church, "believed to be founded by St Thomas, one of the apostles of Christ, and called by that name, is part of the one apostolic and catholic church". For decades it has been in communion\* with the Anglican church. It maintains special relations with the Episcopal Church. It is a member of the national council of churches in India and the Christian Conference of Asia. It has been a member of the WCC from the beginning: Metropolitan Juhanon Mar Thoma was a WCC president from 1954 to 1961; M.M. Thomas, a Mar Thoma layman, was moderator of the WCC central committee between 1968 and 1975.

Formed in 1978, the joint council of the Church of North India, the CSI and the MTC is "the visible organ of the common action by the three churches, which recognize themselves as belonging to the one church of Jesus Christ in India even while remaining as autonomous churches, each having its own identity of traditions and organizational structures". The joint council has two objectives: to "serve as the common organ of the three churches for working towards a visible manifestation of the unity of these churches and of the whole church of Jesus Christ in India", and to "help the churches to fulfill the mission of evangelization of the people of India and of witnessing

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to the righteousness of God revealed in the gospel of Jesus Christ by striving for a just society”.

Often described as a bridge church, the MTC is ecumenically significant. In its liturgy and in the social life of its community, it retains much of the Eastern tradition, while its theology has clear affinities with the Western churches of the Reformation. The intrachurch ecumenical dialogue the church embodies displays certain tensions and conflicts, but that dialogue is part of the day-to-day life of its members and obtains within a passionate loyalty to the church. In the main the dialogue within the church is about two questions: Did the reform go too far? Did it go far enough? The questions represent distinct ecclesiological and theological stances, but the dialogue itself involves a range of positions between the “high” and “low” emphases. In so far as that ongoing dialogue demonstrates the creative possibilities of ecumenism – such as a new social consciousness, a search for democratic structures for the church, and a new interest in relating issues of faith to questions of life and work – and in so far as the life of the church demonstrates the risks and perils such dialogue entails, the Mar Thoma Church is of importance for the wider interchurch ecumenism.

T.K. THOMAS

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## MARRIAGE

LOVE BETWEEN man and woman is the only real marriage, which takes place when they discover each other, delight in each other and cleave to each other, as we read in Gen. 2:23-25 and as Jesus confirms in the gospel (Mark 10:6-9 and par.). Love is what makes marriage, and not the other way round. Love is not legitimized and made to last through formal religious marriage.

The churches eventually became increasingly concerned with preserving marriage, maintaining the civil status of married couples and, through marriage, keeping a hold over private life, emotions and the confession, to which the children would later belong. Ecumenism exists because of the relations between the various historic churches with their individual theologies and liturgies. Very often it is precisely when a marriage takes place that a genuine, loyal and respectful ecumenism turns out to be most difficult to put into practice – hence the significance of both the marvel of human love and the hindrances the various churches can create when it is made official.

While the Bible includes a great many prescriptions for worshipping God and running one's life, neither the Old Testament nor the New contains any rules for the marriage ceremony. In the remote age of the patriarchs, for example, marriage included polygamy. In a similar way the NT also accepts the manners of its day, when women were subordinate to men and men were responsible for women's honour and happiness. Christians had civil marriages in line with the customs of the civilization and city to which they belonged; there was no specifically Christian marriage during the first three centuries.

The great novelty, however, was that believers practised different customs in the Lord. The God of the people of Israel and of the church of Jesus Christ is in fact a God who joins with humanity in a fervent, patient, strong and elective divine covenant\* of love. And it is indeed in human love in marriage that the prophets and apostles of God found the most striking and enduring parable to illustrate the bond God has with us, which is neither a yoke nor a link that lacks warmth but a live exchange. Now at last human marriage for its part stops being an arrangement or a custom and becomes a sharing of everything between two beings who, however, remain quite distinct individuals. They are covenanted in love, one for the other.

## MARRIAGE AS A CHURCH SACRAMENT

By “sacrament”\* here we must understand the loving covenant of God with human beings and the church ceremony which

alone validates and binds and is therefore as indissoluble as, for example, God's link with us in Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Jesus Christ. Through the sacrament marriage establishes an unchangeable state which is strong enough to combat our estrangements, instabilities and infidelities. But marriage as a sacrament also runs the risk of looking like a prison with the church holding the key.

Much interest was devoted to the initial conditions for a valid marriage (the free consent of the partners, the fulfilment of the due conjugal obligations of sex) – more than in the development of the partners' lives, whereas the whole Bible is simply the story of the high points in the covenant between God and his people. The sacrament becomes the central act, with its conditions and the possibilities for its annulment by a court of the church.

For Roman Catholicism, marriage, clearly defined by the council of Trent,\* is one of seven sacraments provided by the church for the salvation of souls, which was evolved in the 13th century in the period of the great cathedrals and scholastic theology. It sanctifies and provides a framework for the subsequent periods of one's life. Marriage is undoubtedly a sacrament in a category of its own. Its biblical roots lie in the Latin translation of the Greek words behind Eph. 5:32 (a profound "mystery"). But does this phrase apply to marriage or to the incarnation of Jesus Christ, who leaves his Father in heaven to cleave to his bride on earth, the church?

It is the married partners who give each other the sacrament. But since Trent the sacrament has to be presided over by a priest, and most frequently the nuptial mass is referred to and the eucharist is celebrated.

"Sacrament" is a strong word. Like baptism, it is not something renewable. But is this word really appropriate theologically, since it is not related here directly to the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ as in baptism and the eucharist? When situations of spiritual and psychological difficulty and distress subsequently arise, should people remain sacramentally married, even if they have separated and have no common life? And why should divorce\* – the failure of marriage – remain the only unforgivable sin?

Anglicans have kept the word "sacrament" for marriage but do not have the seven medieval sacraments. The Protestant churches speak of a "ceremony of blessing" when two partners declare before the whole congregation that they have decided to be joined together in the presence of God and when they make their gratitude public and pray the God of the covenant to go with them and bless them in their future commitments. The word "ceremony" seems more correct theologically than "sacrament" – more firmly rooted in the biblical vocabulary and in the practice of the ancient church. It also makes it possible to invoke again God's blessing on those who, having failed, contract a new union. Nevertheless, a strong word is needed here too, involving complete commitment, as God entered into a commitment with his people and Jesus Christ did with his church.

#### HESITATION ABOUT MARRIAGE: THE DECISION TO LOVE

All the churches are faced today with a crisis in marriage. Frequently people are hesitant about marrying, for there are so many divorces. Life in partnership has become considerably longer. Can there be a certainty of getting along well together for so long with truly felt happiness, and not simply because of a vow to be faithful? Also, civil society has come to terms with the fact of unmarried couples and their children, who are by no means looked down on. So whether marriage is called a sacrament or a blessing, what does the part played by the churches add or guarantee here?

The ecumenical movement, with its diminishing differences and developing convergences, is in contrast with the past history of our churches. It is the most united possible proclamation of the active goodness of God today. Likewise, marriage means deciding to live for each other as God decided to live for us in Abraham, David and Jesus Christ, and we in turn decide to live for him. An irrevocable love which is always hesitant inevitably becomes weak and gradually disappears. Marriage is the opportunity to decide in love and also to say so in front of witnesses, to make them happy and strengthen us.

For this reason the churches certainly do not compel people to marry but rejoice with

those who have decided to marry. The happiness of human love on earth makes God happy in heaven. That is what the churches have to say on marriage – and it is a word rather more spiritual than moral, psychological or sociological in these days when many are hesitant about making up their minds.

ANDRÉ DUMAS

In most parts of the world today, marriage is a voluntary joining of two lives intended to last for the life-time of the couple. The understanding of marriage has changed dramatically over the centuries from patterns of relationship based on control and subordination to those characterized by mutuality and equality. The transition towards a more personal approach to marriage has not been easy throughout the centuries, but over the last decades the pace of change has tended to increase dramatically.

In every culture there are *laws* which clearly mark the beginning (and the end) of marriage, *rituals* that involve the community (to assure the adequate social transition), and *customs* (norms and rules) for support and encouragement. Thus, the voluntary relationship established between husband and wife is unique to them and to those around them, and it is clearly differentiated from the relationship to other relatives, the community and the society at large. In most societies marriages are one of the most important public events in common life.

Marriage has been defined in various ways: as a mystery, a sacrament, a contract, a vocation, a communion, an institution, etc. Each definition corresponds to a specific historical moment and cultural context.

In the West until recently, couples, families and households were part of a whole; to deal with one of them was to deal with them all. In many parts of the world this is still the custom. W.J. Everett affirms: “When a prelate blessed a marriage he also was blessing a family (*matrimonium*) and a household (*patrimonium*). He was also legitimizing the formation of an enterprise central to the economic, social and governmental welfare of the people as a whole... It is little wonder that today we have such trouble sorting out what the church’s concern really was when it got involved with marriage.”

The shift from agricultural to industrial economies has had a profound effect on marriage, the family and households all over the world. Economic, cultural and scientific changes deeply affect the understanding of marriage, its nature and goals. Women and men today tend to feel less hesitant about remaining single, and those who choose to marry expect happiness, self-fulfilment, “instant therapy” from the marriage relationship. Procreation is considered an option rather than the inevitable outcome of the marriage union. Married couples share a greater commitment to interpersonal intimacy and are increasingly aware of the equal rights of both sexes. Longevity and birth control\* have provided couples with the possibility of looking forward to the time when the marriage will develop into a long-term friendship, independent of procreation and raising children.

Commissions have been appointed in almost every mainline Protestant church to reflect on marriage and to reformulate a Christian approach to it. The Orthodox church is looking afresh into its liturgies of marriage to find theological and pastoral elements to meet new demands. Vatican II developed a new paradigm to describe Roman Catholic marriages, described by David Thomas as a shift “from viewing marriage primarily as a biological and juridical union to one which is more interpersonal, spiritual and existential”.

## MARRIAGE IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

The Bible nowhere records the requirement of a religious ceremony, and in the early church marriage was not a religious matter. Most weddings during the first four centuries were presided over by the father, who joined the hands of the couple. Occasionally bishops were invited to officiate. Late in the 4th century Christian wedding ceremonies acquired sacred character by having a priest or bishop bless the couple or, more commonly, the bride (for fertility). In the 9th century Charlemagne in the Western church (802) and Emperor Leo the Wise in the Eastern church (895) tried to impose the rule that a priest must officiate at weddings and the church accord its blessings.

In southern Europe the Roman tradition had long held that the consent (*consensus*) of

either the couple or their parents was required, since arranged marriages were universally practised among all social strata. The Germanic and Frankish traditions of northern Europe, however, insisted that the key element was consummation (*copula*) after the marriage consent. Since then, these two positions have been part of the church's discussion of marriage, divorce and annulment.

In the 9th century marriages began to be held in the church. This practice was gradually given liturgical form, and by the 12th century, marriage was validly and legitimately contracted in a marriage liturgy, into which the "civil" ceremonies had been assimilated. At the same time, theologians began to discuss the sacramental nature of marriage, though it was not until the council of Trent (1545-63) that official status was given to marriage as a sacrament.

Facing the proliferation of clandestine marriages, the church used the theology of the *sacramentum*, a sacral sign, to defend the Christian marriage, though no saving power was explicitly accorded to marriage. Edward Schillebeeckx asserts: "The idea that sacraments in the strict sense were those of importance for Christian life contributed directly to the inclusion of marriage among the seven, despite the fact that marriage was not regarded at this time as having a power of grace, but only as being a sign of more sublime mystery."

With the Protestant Reformation, sacraments\* were questioned. The Reformed churches agreed that marriage as a sacrament and obligatory celibacy were not in accordance with scripture or with the original Christian tradition. Marriage was seen by the reformers as a purely ethical matter to be controlled by the government, rather than a symbolic matter under church jurisdiction. Other concepts were used to characterize marriage, such as "vocation", "covenant" and "communion". In modern Protestantism the covenant\* model is very widespread as a protest against the individualistic connotations of contract or the overly naturalistic approaches in hierarchical sacrament models. However, says Georges Crespy, "there is no, in the strict sense of the term, Reformed doctrine of marriage which has been expressed and proposed to Protestant

people as a demand or requisite of faith". This does not mean that there is no Protestant theological reflection on the subject or that marriage has necessarily been secularized. In the Protestant countries marriage still remains within the province of the Christian communities.

Besides re-affirming the sacramental nature of marriage and the church's right to regulate, annul or dissolve it, the council of Trent resolved that the only valid contract of marriage for baptized Christians was one made in the presence of a priest and two witnesses (though not necessarily liturgically or in church). Marriage, which had always been a secular reality experienced "in the Lord", now seemed to have become an exclusively ecclesiastical affair. Today, despite the above-mentioned new emphasis of Vatican II, the Roman Catholic doctrine and practice of marriage seems frozen in the 16th century.

#### POINTS OF CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE

A controversial issue in the Christian understanding of marriage is its ends or purposes. The Roman Catholic point of view has focused primarily on procreation and rearing children and secondarily, as *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (1976) says, "the mutual aid, both material and spiritual, and the overcoming of sexual concupiscence in a legitimate manner".

Most Protestant churches tend to start the list of the purposes of marriage with companionship, without denying the natural effect of sexual intercourse: procreation. Relationship is explained as required for the sake of offspring. The fecundity resulting from the marriage union is a byproduct of the union between man and woman, which is valuable for its own sake. "To give relationship priority in importance is not 20th century perversity," says Helen Oppenheimer. "It picks out a strand in our tradition that has always been there (cf. 1 Sam.1:8), though no doubt reliable contraception makes the strand easier to find."

Another point of controversy is related to divorce.\* The Roman Catholic Church does not accept divorce, while Protestant and Orthodox churches generally do. Rome, however, holds the "right of the key" to annul a marriage, but it excommunicates those

who divorce (see **excommunication**). The Orthodox church does not exclude the divorced from communion and in certain cases determines that marriage does not exist, going so far as to bless subsequent marriages when they are entered into with a spirit of repentance. Olivier Clément comments: "The indissolubility of the bond does not promote love. The question of divorce arises when nothing is left to save; the bond declared indissoluble at the beginning is already broken, and the law has nothing that can replace grace. The law can neither heal nor restore to life, nor can it say 'Arise, and walk.'"

Most Christians, however, agree on certain characteristics of marriage that claim to be Christian: it is monogamous, holy, based on fidelity and companionship, and intended to last until death. All hold high views of its importance as a divine space, established by God at creation\* as a foundation of human society and a blessing for humankind.

Among Eastern churches, the Pauline idea of the church as the bride of Christ exerted an earlier and greater influence. Their liturgies of marriage were inspired in the communion of Christ with the church. More emphasis also has been placed on the mystical meaning of marriage and its spirituality. Furthermore, theologians of the Eastern churches had a less pessimistic view of sex and sexuality than the Western church, church fathers and scholars. Marriage, then, is regarded by the church as a miniature where unity (uniqueness, monogamous character, fidelity), sanctity, catholicity and apostolicity (moving towards others) are present.

## CONCLUSION

Theological reflection on marriage, forged throughout centuries to transform a civil contract into a liturgical event, has helped canonists and church jurists to define their field in juridical abstractions, but it has been of scarcely any help in pastoral matters or in the treatment of marriage as an anthropological fact.

A great deal of effort has been invested in defining marriage in its initial stage, the wedding ceremony: how to enter in it, who presides and legitimates, which liturgy is the most appropriate, etc. Proportionately less

attention has been accorded the study of marriage as a life-spanning process, comprising stages of growth, dilemmas and pains, crises and challenges. Oppenheimer declares: "In the very ordinairiness of the immense claims they make upon each other – the give-and-take of everyday life – married people have a humanly valid mystery which is able to be a model of the grace of God." Never before in the history of humankind has married life been led back in such a remarkable way to its original, authentic shape and form as it has today. It is time to look afresh at marriage from this perspective after crossing the threshold of a new millennium. In doing so, new and creative pastoral understandings and tools may become available to the church, couples and families of today.

See also **ethics, sexual; family; marriage, interfaith; marriage, mixed**.

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## MARRIAGE, INTERFAITH

WE CONFRONT the issue of interfaith or mixed-faith marriage in both the Old and the New Testaments. Joseph, Moses, David and Solomon, for example, married non-Israelite women, and the Bible celebrates the marriage of Ruth the Moabite to Boaz. On the whole, however, mixed-faith marriages are not favoured in the OT, for fear that faith in the God of Israel would be compromised by the foreign practices introduced by the partner of another faith (Ezra 9-10; Neh. 13:23-29; Mal. 2:11). The clear prohibition and the reason for it are given in Deut. 7:3-4: "Do not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their

daughters for your sons, for that would turn away your children from following me, to serve other gods.”

In the NT Paul was confronted with the issue in Corinth. Writing on the question of re-marriage where one of the partners had died, Paul allows re-marriage, but “only in the Lord” (1 Cor. 7:39), which is traditionally understood to mean that Paul advocated marriage only among Christians. In the case of a convert whose partner remained in another faith, Paul advised against divorce, unless the partner desired it (vv.12-16).

In the early history of the church there were no uniform practices, although marriage between persons of the same faith was favoured. The first piece of legislation about interfaith marriages came from the synod of Elvira in Spain at the beginning of the 4th century. It rejected marriage to a person of another faith as “spiritual adultery”. In A.D. 314 the synod of Arles repeated the prohibition, adding for the first time the penalty of deprivation of communion for a period.

The ecumenical council of Chalcedon\* in 451 first issued the injunction that Christians will be permitted to marry a person of another faith, provided the person converted to Christianity and the children are baptized. These stipulations were eventually integrated into the 1918 code of canon law of the Roman Catholic Church, which delineated the basic policy of marriage to a person of another faith. Where dispensation is given, it is done on the condition that the Catholic partner would continue his or her Catholic practice and would have the children baptized and brought up as Catholics. The marriage had to be celebrated by a Catholic priest according to Catholic rites. Any other religious celebration was forbidden.

Such strict regulations produced insurmountable difficulties for interfaith marriages, particularly where the church was in a minority. Often the non-Catholic party in marriage, although willing to be married in church and to allow the Catholic partner to maintain his or her faith, refused to give the written assurance with regard to the upbringing of the children. In other cases, after the marriage was entered into, the promise was not kept, or considerable strain in the marriage occurred because of this require-

ment. Other religious traditions also questioned the unequal treatment of the religious tradition involved and challenged the right of the Catholic side to set the terms.

The Second Vatican Council\* took up the question and made a thorough evaluation of the situation in different parts of the world. As a result, a number of changes were made in the new legislation on interfaith marriages. In the first instance, the intention, as far as possible, to baptize and bring up children in the Catholic faith was required only of the Catholic partner. Even though the marriage would take the Catholic form, local bishops were given the authority to allow another suitable form where appropriate and necessary. The penalty of excommunication would no longer be imposed.

The Orthodox tradition, which also holds marriage as a sacrament, insists that it can be undertaken only by two baptized persons.

Protestant churches have also generally rejected interfaith marriages as contrary to the churches’ theology and practice. Often the churches would have nothing to do with interfaith marriages, thus forcing the partners to have a civil ceremony or a ceremony according to the other faith tradition involved. It has also been the practice among some Protestant churches to take disciplinary action against persons who enter such marriages. Often the Protestant churches have demanded that the other party be baptized before a church wedding would be permitted.

In more recent years church discipline\* has been tempered with pastoral considerations. Some churches provide for a service of blessing in the home if the other partner intends to continue in his or her religion but is willing to go through with a Christian ceremony. In a number of Western countries a church wedding is conducted where one partner is a Christian and the other has no objection to the Christian religious rite after a period of instruction on the meaning of marriage.

The question of interfaith marriages has also been an issue in other faith traditions. Within the Jewish community, especially in countries such as the USA and Britain, anxiety over interfaith marriages has to do primarily with the depletion of the commu-

nity. In Britain, 30% of Jews are believed to marry outside their faith tradition. Even though Jewish identity is considered to be transmitted through the Jewish mother, most Jews feel that interfaith marriages in minority situations lead to the loss of the member to the community. The same fear is shared also by the church leadership in Asian countries, where interfaith marriages of Christians with persons of other faiths would eventually lead to the absorption of the church into the larger community.

Traditionally, Islam has permitted the marriage of a Muslim male to a woman of Jewish or Christian faith. There is no obligation for the woman partner from the other faith to embrace Islam, but in actual practice social pressures result in most such women becoming Muslim. It is forbidden for Muslim women to marry outside the faith. In some Islamic countries such marriages are invalid in law, and where a Muslim partner converted to another faith, the marriage could be automatically dissolved.

Hindus and Buddhists have been more open to interfaith marriages, but there is considerable resistance to the Christian and Muslim insistence on conversion,\* the use of the Christian or Muslim religious rites for the ceremony, and the insistence on bringing up children in the Christian or Islamic faith. Buddhists and Hindus have criticized this requirement as a mark of disrespect for other faiths and as an instance of Christian and Muslim intolerance.

With interfaith marriages becoming more and more common, churches in a number of countries have begun to study the issues involved. One of the most significant studies was done in Sri Lanka, where an ecumenical consultation was held on Christian-Buddhist marriages. The official teachings and proposals were considered in the presence of interfaith-marriage couples, who shared their own experiences. The discussions were published in the periodical *Dialogue*, issued from Colombo. Guidelines have also been suggested in Britain, France, the USA, Canada and elsewhere, but so far the theological questions remain largely unresolved.

In 1997 the Office on Inter-religious Relations of the WCC and the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue produced *Re-*

*flections on Inter-religious Marriage: A Joint Study Document*. The study was based on an extensive survey among those who had worked on this question, the teachings of the churches and the experience of interfaith-marriage couples. The guidelines developed, which would have been shared with the parishes of the Roman Catholic Church and the constituency of the WCC, identify some of the major issues that need to be addressed in all pastoral concerns.

The first cluster of issues deals with the understanding of marriage itself in the different religious traditions. A related matter is the use of religious rites in weddings and the question of whether marriage should be regarded as a sacrament, which would make it impossible for persons outside of the faith perspective to participate. Significantly, although religious rites are employed, both Judaism and Buddhism tend to treat marriage as a secular institution.

The second area involves sociological issues, especially the question of polygamy. Interfaith marriages where one partner comes from a society or religion that insists on monogamy and the other from societies or religions that accept polygamy have presented problems. The whole issue of monogamy, polygamy, divorce and re-marriage calls for in-depth multifaith, multicultural discussion. Laws of inheritance and the legal rights of partners in marriage and in divorce, which vary a great deal between communities, is yet another area for study.

The religious education and upbringing of children has always been a difficult issue in interfaith marriages. In some cases, some of the children are brought up in the faith of the mother, while the others follow that of the father. Where one of the partners is indifferent and the other committed, children grow up in the faith of the believing partner. In some situations children are exposed to both traditions in the hope that they will be able to choose a faith when they are adults. In many cases the children grow up without any specific religious commitment. Very often the biggest strain in interfaith marriages relates to the bringing up of the children, often not fully anticipated at the time of marriage. Faith differences are often compounded by cultural differences.

Yet another area of concern is the often-heard accusation that some traditions use marriage as a method of conversion. Since Islam officially allows Muslim men to marry women of other faiths on the understanding that the wives would embrace Islam, and since it also tolerates polygamy, both in Africa and in Asia the criticism has arisen, not always with justification, that Islam uses marriage as an instrument of conversion. The Christian insistence that the partner should convert and that children should be brought up in the Christian faith has also come under similar criticism.

Increasingly, however, the churches have begun to concentrate on the pastoral dimensions of interfaith marriages. With greater population movements and increasing urbanization, young people from different religious traditions will be brought together more and more, doubtless leading to more interfaith marriages. There is greater need than ever to explore more fully the pastoral dimensions of the issue. Since this concern touches all religious traditions, there is an urgent need for dialogue on the issues involved and on the impact of each religion's attitudes and practices on interfaith couples. Such dialogue and the removal of mutual suspicion are beginning to help partners in interfaith marriages to deal with the guilt complex that often underlies crises that arise in these marriages.

See also **marriage, mixed**.

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## MARRIAGE, MIXED

THE TERM "mixed marriage" refers to marriages between Christians who belong to different denominations, confessions or churches. In English this term is widely employed, while "ecumenical marriage" or, better still, "interchurch marriage" is used where both partners are committed Christians who are fully aware of their differences and who wish to maintain links with their churches. In German, *konfessionsver-*

*bindende Ehe* (marriage uniting [two] confessions) is current, as well as similar formulas which are in themselves already an interpretation. In French, *mariage œcuménique* is little used, still less *mariage interconfessionnel*. The term commonly used for any such marriage,\* regardless of the level of ecclesial and ecumenical awareness of the partners, is *mariage mixte* – mixed marriage.

The 1983 code of canon law\* of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) retains "mixed marriage" for "two baptized persons, one of whom was baptized in the Catholic church or received into it after baptism and has not defected from it by a formal act, the other of whom belongs to a church or ecclesial community not in full communion with the Catholic church" (canon 1124).

Besides "mixed marriage", English uses "interfaith marriage"\* for marriages between Christians and people of other faiths. The RC code calls them technically "disparity of cult" marriages.

## HISTORY

The position of confessionally mixed households has gradually changed since the middle of the 20th century. Until then, those who contracted a mixed marriage usually brought on themselves the disapproval of their families and almost always of their churches. As a result, one or both the partners would typically break off links with the church.

The progress made in ecumenism has altered the situation – to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the countries. The discipline of the Reformation churches became more flexible, followed after Vatican II\* by that of the RCC (governed by canons 1124-29) and the pastoral aspects in the 1993 *Directory*.\* Pending the holding of a pan-Orthodox council, the Orthodox churches have not modified their rules, but practice has become more flexible because of what the Orthodox call the principle of economy.\*

A mixed marriage is no longer considered shameful. It has become quite common – even very common in some regions, such as Switzerland, where the confessional groups are numerically equal, or in southeastern USA, where RCs are a small minority, over 85% of whom are married to other Chris-

tians. A mixed marriage exists only where the couple and the churches are determined to respect the confessional allegiance of both partners – precluding any kind of disingenuous proselytism\* and any attempts to convert one partner to the other confession.

### PROGRESS

Genuine cooperation between the two communities and the two ministers in the pastoral preparation of the couple for a mixed marriage is recommended in church documents (at worldwide, regional and local levels) and is fairly widely practised. The details concerning the celebration of the ceremony are set out in these documents, in particular the respective roles of the two ministers. Local difficulties are ironed out with the help of specialists – the people responsible for ecumenical relations or ecumenical centres. The RCC recognizes mixed marriages celebrated in the Orthodox church and, provided dispensation from the canonical form has been obtained, those celebrated in a Protestant church. In most cases the Orthodox recognize the validity of marriages celebrated outside their church. Nevertheless, the Orthodox church's insistence that the marriage should be celebrated according to its discipline and liturgy tends to draw the couple and their children towards that church. Couples who are Roman Catholic and Protestant or Anglican are freer to decide which direction they follow.

There are *groups* which provide spiritual support and sometimes a “church home” for couples who are isolated or who feel ill at ease in their parishes. These groups, generally comprising six to ten couples, are run by the couples themselves with the help of ministers of both churches. They organize monthly meetings, weekends and conferences. In the French-speaking countries these groups are linked by the review *Foyers mixtes* (Mixed households, published in France since 1968); in Britain, the US and elsewhere they have formed associations of interchurch families (see *Association of Interchurch Families*).

Publications in various languages exist for engaged couples, married couples and ministers. These range from one-page pamphlets to whole volumes. There are also var-

ious periodicals, of which *Foyers mixtes* and *Interchurch Families* are typical.

### DIFFICULTIES

According to the 1983 code of canon law, the RC partner must “do all in his or her power in order that all the children be baptized and brought up in the Catholic church” (1125.1). Such a pledge is often a difficulty, regardless of whether the promise is made orally or in writing. It requires less than the previous formulation of 1917, which obliged a RC parent to “promise to have the children baptized”, although this important change is very often neglected. Some episcopates have tried to explain that the fulfilment of this promise means taking account of the actual situation, respect for the partner's conscience, no one-sided demands, concern for the harmony of the couple. There is a widely expressed desire that this promise should be suppressed and perhaps replaced by the RC minister's certifying that he has reminded the RC partner of his or her obligations (a suggestion made by the 1975 report of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission on the Theology of Marriage, no. 71).

Many Protestants want a marriage celebrated in a Protestant church to be automatically recognized by the RCC. The latter maintains the requirement of the canonical form for purposes of pastoral control, given its doubts about the doctrine of marriage in some Protestant churches.

Many mixed couples wish the baptism\* of their children to demonstrate their ecumenical commitment, with the two churches taking an active part. Ecumenical celebrations of baptism, in line with ecumenical celebrations of marriage, have been taking place since the 1970s. In France in 1975, a Catholic-Lutheran-Reformed committee drew up a framework for the preparation and celebration of such baptisms (with the possibility for the child to be registered on the baptismal roll of both churches, as in the case of a mixed marriage). This advance is based on the mutual recognition of baptism, and its ecumenical dimension does not mean some mythical “third church” or a kind of ecclesial no-man's-land, although it does leave open the question of the ultimate church affiliation of the baptized. The proposal has only the authority of this commit-

tee. In practice the proposal is more often simply ignored than questioned. Outside of France and parts of Switzerland, there has been no move in this direction, and more often than not the question does not arise.

Ecumenical celebrations of baptism have led to some experiments with common catechesis.\* This form of religious instruction may also be imposed by the state, as in certain African countries. Any catechesis, even that of a single confession, should be ecumenical in spirit and include a fair presentation of the other churches, a description of the ecumenical movement, an awakening of the desire for unity.\* A further step is taken when common instructional material is used or the catechumens work together or the children affiliated with different churches receive common instruction.

Experiments – whether in parishes or outside, in schools or ad hoc groups, but always in relation with church authorities – have so far been confined to a small number of Catholic and Protestant (but not Orthodox) children and young adolescents, not all of them children of a mixed marriage. Generally this teaching involves an introduction to the Bible (for children under 12). In rare cases, older adolescents have received some more doctrinal instruction with, e.g., an explanation of the Apostles' Creed,\* and have even progressed to common celebration of confirmations\* or professions of faith (renewal of the promises of baptism).

At the RC bishops synod of 1977, Cardinal Willebrands said that common catechesis was “possible, sometimes inevitable, and limited”. In his 1979 *Catechesi Tradendae*, John Paul II echoed Cardinal Willebrands's thinking and stressed the need for a RC catechesis in addition to the common one (n.33).

Interconfessional catechetical groups are rare. More common is for the children of mixed households to receive dual instruction, either in parallel or, more often, consecutively. The frequently expressed fear that this experience could be unsettling for the children or cause confusion has proved in practice to be generally unfounded.

Ecumenical celebrations of baptism and common catechesis are an indication that the children of mixed couples experience a situation very similar to that of their parents: what is often incorrectly called dual mem-

bership (of two churches) and which would be better described as dual participation in the life of two churches. The second term does nothing to solve the doctrinal and canonical problems that persist, especially the difficulty concerning the two partners' participation in the eucharist.\*

Common participation in the eucharist remains the most serious difficulty for mixed couples and their children. It is not possible when one of the partners is Orthodox. RC doctrine leads to a restrictive discipline, even though, in certain places, the extending of “eucharistic hospitality” in some cases is tolerated rather than fully accepted (see **intercommunion**). In France a memorandum from the episcopal commission on unity (1983) defines and governs these exceptions. The Swiss bishops conference published a considerably more restrictive memorandum (1986). Although practice is sometimes more generous than the legislation, many mixed couples find this situation frustrating and hard to bear. For them it is at the very least a painful trial of conscience.\*

## PROSPECTS

Despite these difficulties, some mixed couples do continue to follow their own path within the churches. Having acquired a spiritual place thanks to the relaxing of disciplines and the pastoral effort made on their behalf, they are aware of the ecumenical requirement at the very heart of their situation. In their eyes God has turned their necessity into a vocation: being themselves under the spiritual obligation to practise Christian reconciliation\* in their lives as a couple and with their children, they want to share their convictions and discoveries with the other members of the communities in which they want to be actively involved.

The majority of mixed couples, at least in the northern hemisphere, are indifferent to religion, but no more so than couples of the same confession. However, the minority of mixed couples who are believers often demonstrate a particularly lively faith and a very active Christian practice as a result of the reflection required in preparation for marriage and the “spiritual emulation” in the couple's life together and with their children. They do not simply practise their faith in a routine manner but seek to anchor it in

the essential, which ecumenical dialogue enables them to distinguish from the merely peripheral. Far from falling back on a lowest common Christian denominator, the most thoughtful couples dig down to the very roots and, in so doing, spontaneously practise Vatican II's "hierarchy of truths".\*

Etymology says it all: far from being *fratres sejuncti* (disjoined, or "separated brethren"), they are *conjuncti* (conjoined, conjugal partners). In them and through them, what is elsewhere disjoined is once again joined together. They conjoin the values of two Christian traditions and are able to assimilate the best of each. For this reason they have a vocation to bring the Christian communities closer together, to be the bridge over-arching the divisions, the connective tissue drawing together the wound.

Unfortunately this vocation is not sufficiently recognized. Local parishes often do not know how to treat these couples. Churches rarely dare to entrust them with responsibilities in line with their enthusiasm and competence. Sometimes they may be members of interconfessional committees, or in rare cases they may participate as a couple in parish or diocesan councils. Nevertheless, in many places, mixed couples or, more often, groups of mixed couples are the driving force of ecumenism. They organize the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity,\* help bring together two communities and launch and support interconfessional social and charitable work, ecumenical publications, etc.

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## MARTYRDOM

ANY DISCUSSION of the ecumenical significance of martyrdom must begin with Jesus Christ.\* The root meaning of "martyr" in the New Testament is "witness" or "one who gives testimony" (Matt. 18:16; 2 Cor. 13:1). Consecrated by God\* and empowered by the Holy Spirit,\* Jesus is the ultimate witness to the Father; at his trial before Pilate (see 1 Tim. 6:13), he confesses that he has come into the world to bear testimony to the truth of his Father's kingdom (John 18:37). Jesus' witness to God is liberating for all creation. He heals the sick, forgives sinners and raises the dead. In his ministry, Jesus testifies to the power of his Father to unite the world in love, the same love that he and his Father share in unity with the Holy Spirit (John 17:11).

It was inevitable that Jesus' mission would bring him into conflict with the powers of sin\* and evil that enslave and divide humanity. Jesus' witness to the Father took him to the cross, the supreme sacrifice of a life completely dedicated to God and to humanity. Yet, the outcome of Jesus' death was new life for the world (Rom. 5:12-21). For Jesus Christ, "the faithful witness", is also "the first-born of the dead" (Rev. 1:5). In his death and resurrection\* Christ has triumphed over the powers that separate humanity from God and divide God's people (Eph. 2:11-22). His martyrdom is thus ecumenical in the profoundest sense: he dies for the whole of humanity so that all humanity may be united with God (Eph. 1:9-10; Col. 1:19-20). He suffers death from the divisive forces of the world so that God's creation may be one.

Having ascended to the glory of his Father, Christ draws all people to himself (see John 12:32). He sends the Holy Spirit to his disciples, who are to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). Christ is present through the Holy Spirit in the church\* to transform its members into witnesses like him of his Father's reconciling love. In baptism,\* believers are united with Christ in his death and resurrection; they share sacramentally in his martyrdom (Rom. 6:3-8). In the eucharist,\* the church proclaims the Lord's martyrdom until his final advent in victory (1 Cor. 11:26) and feeds on his spiritual presence here and now. Christ himself is the pattern (Mark 8:34-35) and the power (John 15:5) of all Christian witness.

Christ warned his disciples that their witness to him would evoke fierce and violent opposition, yet he also promised them that the Holy Spirit would inspire their testimony before hostile authorities (Mark 13:9-13). Under the providence\* of God, circumstances will sometimes demand that the Christian witness to God take the strongest possible form and become a witness unto death, as was Christ's own witness. The martyrs are those who have resisted sin "to the point of shedding [their] blood" (Heb. 12:4). Only in the period after the NT did the term "martyr" come to refer exclusively to those who had died for the faith, with the title "confessor" honouring those who had been persecuted for their witness but who had survived. Yet, already in the NT there is a close association between witnessing for Christ and sealing this witness with one's death (Acts 22:20; Rev. 2:13, 17:6).

In martyrdom, conformity to Christ is complete. The martyrs are said to have joined Christ in a baptism like his, a "baptism of blood" (cf. Mark 10:38). Ignatius of Antioch anticipates that his martyrdom will "grind" him into one bread with Christ. United to Christ, the martyr becomes transparent to him. "In the martyr, the church discerns Christ himself, the very heart of its faith, beyond all interpretation and division," declares the WCC Faith and Order text "Witness unto Death" (Bangalore 1978), one of the most substantial statements in recent years on the ecumenical significance of martyrdom. The martyr's act of total obedience points the divided churches to Christ their common Lord, in whom alone their unity\* lies. Claiming the martyrs of the early church and certain great Christian witnesses of later history as "the common property of all Christians", the statement notes that many churches are already involved in the process of a mutual recognition of the martyrs and calls for an ecumenical anthology of both early and modern accounts of martyrdom. At a regional level, Theo Aerts chronicled in *The Martyrs of Papua New Guinea* the lives and deaths of 333 missionaries and locals, from seven different churches, killed during the second world war.

While the martyr is a most potent witness to Christian unity, there is no more

vivid and painful reminder of the seriousness of Christian disunity than the "confessional martyr", Eberhard Bethge's apt term for the victims of the bloody disputes of the Reformation and its aftermath, when Protestants and Catholics killed each other (and Protestants killed Protestants), in contrast to the so-called classic martyrdom of the early Christians, who died at the hands of non-Christians in imperial Rome. Those killed in the course of confessional disputes are a source of both judgment and grace, and a mutual remembrance of them can play a major role in reconciling the churches, argues the Anglican theologian Rowan Williams. "The whole church needs for its wholeness the memory both of its capacity for violence and of the great witnesses to the risen Christ who have appeared in the midst of it." If the memory of the confessional martyr is not to fuel further hostility and division between Christians, two things are required, says Williams: "that the martyr's community celebrate the martyr's memory in such a way that he or she offers grace and hope to those outside; and that the persecuting body remember the martyr in penitence and thanksgiving".

The Anglican and Catholic martyrs of the English Reformation in the 16th century illustrate well how martyrdom becomes an ecumenical issue. At the canonization of the Forty (Catholic) Martyrs of England and Wales in 1970, aware that some had feared this act would create ill-feeling between the two churches, Pope Paul VI prayed that the memory of these martyrs might rather restore unity between them: "Is it not one – these martyrs say to us – the church founded by Christ?" In a reconciling move, the Anglican church now includes the Catholic martyr Thomas More in its liturgical calendar. One might recall here the forgiveness Christian martyrs through the centuries have extended to their persecutors, following the example of Christ on the cross (Luke 23:34) and of Stephen, the first martyr (Acts 7:60).

Ecumenical recognition of the martyrs does not mean re-writing history or disavowing the disagreements. Quite the contrary: that many martyrs have died for an article of faith restricted more or less to their own ecclesial community shows the gravity of specifically doctrinal disputes between the

churches and the necessity of resolving them; there can be no doctrinal indifferentism in ecumenical work. The confessional martyr (indeed, any Christian martyr) points to the truth of Christianity as a whole, though his or her witness was bound by certain historical, cultural and ecclesiological factors. Beyond these particularities, says the F&O statement on martyrdom, it is possible to recognize “the absoluteness of the Christ to whom [the martyrs] desired to bear witness”. Indeed, the Christian witness of non-Catholic martyrs was one of the factors which moved the Roman Catholic Church, in the historic ecumenical overtures of Vatican II, to recognize the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit in non-Catholic communities of faith and to affirm, despite serious differences, a genuine bond between them and itself (*Lumen Gentium* 15).

Precisely how to recognize the martyrs and saints\* has itself been disputed by the churches and remains a major theological issue on the ecumenical agenda. As early as the 2nd century, the martyrs began to receive veneration. Places of worship were built over their graves, and their relics were used to sanctify altars. Intercessory prayers were made to them. The cult of the martyrs and saints grew to excess and abuse in the middle ages and became a main target of the Protestant Reformation (though there had been criticism of it all along). Prayer to the saints was judged by the reformers to be a denial of Christ as the sole mediator between God and humanity. Feast days for the saints were virtually eliminated (though the Anglican church retained biblical figures in its calendar), and emphasis was placed on observing the salvation events of scripture. Protestants thus rejected much of the cultic apparatus associated with the martyrs but did not completely disavow the traditional admiration of them.

According to the Augsburg confession (1530), the most influential of all Lutheran confessional writings, saints “should be kept in remembrance so that our faith may be strengthened when we see what grace they received and how they were sustained by faith” (art. 21). The Second Helvetic confession (1566), a widely accepted Reformed text, calls for the saints to be remembered in sermons. Protestant hymns also extol mar-

tyrdom. Ecumenical convergence in worship has encouraged some Protestant eucharistic liturgies to renew the ancient practice of commemorating the saints and martyrs as members of the heavenly congregation, whom we join in praise to God, and to pray that we be made like them (see the ecumenical *Lima liturgy*). However, most Protestants still reject prayer to the saints, even though the Orthodox and Roman Catholics have maintained in ecumenical discussions that such prayer is entirely dependent upon Jesus Christ alone and is a proper expression of the communion of saints.\*

Some have argued that the classic concept of martyrdom (death as a direct result of an explicit confession of Christ) needs to be expanded to include those killed as the consequence of taking a prophetic Christian stance against oppression for the sake of peace and justice. Martyrdom as a model of non-violent resistance to social evil was affirmed by a 1978 world conference of Mennonites (Wichita, KS), who remembered that many of their predecessors were martyred during the radical Reformation. The contemporary martyr, humbly identifying with and dying for the poor,\* may well be anonymous. Such a witness now crosses denominational lines to form a truly ecumenical partnership in martyrdom. Visible evidence of such partnership is the martyrs’ chapel in Canterbury cathedral, England, which commemorates 12 modern martyrs – Anglican, Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant – including Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King, Jr and Oscar Romero.

The massive suffering of the Orthodox in the East – 1 million Armenians alone were killed or exiled by the Turks during the first world war – led Bishop Stefan of the Serbian Orthodox Church to speak of the Orthodox martyrs as “a precious gift that the church contributes to the universal Christian treasury” (Eastern European consultation on ecumenical sharing of resources, Sofia, 1982). Like the Orthodox, many of the churches have suffered “collective martyrdom” in this century of mass murder. The churches’ complicity in such destruction, as in the Jewish holocaust, and their role in fostering and perpetuating repression must also be considered in any account of martyrdom today. The contemporary martyr may well witness

against the failure of the churches, yet for the sake of their greater faithfulness. In the words of the F&O statement, the martyrs “bring us all back to the centre of faith, the source of hope, and example of love for God and fellow human beings”.

The phrase *ecclesia martyrum* (church of the martyrs) expresses the true nature of the church. The martyr’s self-emptying love reminds the church that its mission\* in the world is to offer God’s reconciling love in Jesus Christ (see **reconciliation**). The witness of the church and the unity of the church are inseparable; together they arise from and point to the Lord’s own witness, his own martyrdom, which united God and humanity. Torn asunder by hatred and destruction, the world should be able to see in the unity of the church a sign of its own unity restored in Jesus Christ. This is the testimony of the martyrs. As Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I of Constantinople said to Pope Paul VI, when the two met in Rome in 1967 to discuss reconciliation between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches: “We hear... the cry of the blood of the apostles Peter and Paul, and the voice of the church of the catacombs and of the martyrs of the Coliseum, inviting us to use every possible means to bring to completion the work we have begun – that of the perfect healing of Christ’s divided church – not only that the will of the Lord should be accomplished, but that the world may see shining forth what is, according to our creed, the primary property of the church – its unity.”

In his apostolic letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (1994), Pope John Paul II recognized that “at the end of the second millennium, the church has once again become a church of martyrs”, and that “the witness to Christ borne even to the shedding of blood has become a common inheritance of Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans and Protestants” (sec. 37). As part of the celebrations of the year 2000 the pope recommended that “the local churches should do everything possible to ensure that the memory of those who have suffered martyrdom should be safeguarded” – such a “gesture cannot fail to have an ecumenical character and expression” (*ibid.*). John Paul himself presided at such an ecumenical celebration in the Roman Coliseum in May 2000.

See also **common confession, common witness, witness**.

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## MARXIST-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

DIALOGUE between Christians and Marxists, which began in the 1950s and flourished in the 1960s, resulted from a relaxation in the East-West tensions of the cold war. The de-Stalinization campaign in the Soviet Union, the changes in the Roman Catholic Church following the Second Vatican Council,\* and the growth of the ecumenical movement all contributed to bringing Marxists and Christians together for serious conversations about critical issues. A large output of literature on the subject appeared in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish. Prominent participants from the Marxist side included R. Garaudy, V. Gardavsky, M. Machovec and E. Bloch; and such Christian theologians as J. Hromádka, A. Dumas, G. Girardi, K. Rahner and J.M. González-Ruiz were involved at one time or another. The Paulus-Gesellschaft, under the leadership of Erich Kellner, sponsored a number of international symposia during the 1960s in the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria, bringing together Marxist and Christian thinkers.

After the Warsaw Pact forces moved into Czechoslovakia in 1968 to suppress the liberation movement led by Alexander Dubcek, the Marxist-Christian dialogue declined swiftly. Although it did not disappear entirely, encounters during the 1970s were less publicized and more widely diffused than

earlier ones. In the US, H. Cox, C. West, P. Lehmann, T. Ogletree, J.L. Adams and others took interest in the dialogue. P. Mojzes chaired a task force on the Christian-Marxist Encounter of Christians Associated for Relationships with Eastern Europe, which sponsored annual dialogues on the continent.

From the beginning a variety of issues were on the agenda of many encounters – atheism,\* transcendence, death, alienation, the individual and the community, Marxist and Christian eschatology,\* the search for the meaning of life, standards of morality. The conversations succeeded in eliminating a considerable number of prejudices, misunderstandings and false interpretations of each other's positions.

Marxists openly admitted that religion\* was not always the "opiate of the people" and that Christianity in particular had sometimes been and could still be a protest against injustice, oppression and exploitation. Christians pointed out that Marx and Ludwig Feuerbach, in stressing that God\* is an erroneous idea of humanity, ignored the fact that God is a necessary idea, deeply rooted in all human beings. They expressed their conviction that human efforts at social improvement can never make the gospel superfluous, and even in the most advanced and ideal communist society there would be fundamental questions that would not find answers from within the system. The Christian faith provides elements to produce meaning in the context of such disillusionments and perplexities.

Although the results of the dialogue should not be underestimated, the fact remains that the fundamental Marxist attitude towards Christianity prevailed up to the beginning of the 1990s. Faith in a personal God who reveals himself has been rejected as an atavism that undermines human autonomy.

Clearly the primary interest of Christians in any continuing dialogue with Marxists should be not the mere fact of talking to each other but the higher goal of enhancing human dignity, freedom, creativity and wholeness. For example, in Latin America and other areas of the third world, the concerns for social change in the criticism and overcoming of oppressive governments and unjust social structures have provided a platform for common action and reflection between many Christians and Marxists. A

deeper dialogue developed on the basis of the questions emerging from the common praxis that has led some Marxist intellectuals to re-open the interpretation of religion and to question some dogmatic Marxist theses concerning the intrinsically reactionary character of the Christian faith. A conversation between Fidel Castro and Frei Betto witnessed to the fact that, while fundamental philosophical differences remained, there was basis for common action and serious dialogue.

The collapse since the end of the 1980s of states governed by communist regimes created a new situation. The contradiction between liberal capitalism and communism lost strength, and the relation between Christians and Marxists became also less tense. Marxism started to be freed from its tendency to be dogmatic, and Christians did not continue to see in Marxism a major ideological threat. In the new context it has therefore become possible to develop the dialogue on a new basis. Marxists continue to challenge Christians to be faithful to the spirit of social renewal found in the gospel of Jesus of Nazareth, and Christians call Marxists to liberate themselves from the burden of many concepts of modernity (e.g., the absolute character of human freedom, the belief in infinite progress, the inexorable destiny of human history, etc.) which have limited the Marxist interpretation of social reality.

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## MARY IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

MARY THE MOTHER of Jesus Christ is mentioned in all four gospels and Acts and is alluded to by Paul (Gal. 4:4). She is uniquely involved in the life of the Lord. Present at important times in his private and public

life, she is with the apostles at the coming of the Holy Spirit.\* The New Testament tells the story of Jesus and the good news of salvation,\* but there is very little about Mary. She was the Saviour's mother, she was filled with grace and faith, she witnessed her Son's work. This is the foundation of all thought about Mary.

The complex Mariology of the Roman Catholic Church contrasts sharply with the virtual absence of Mary in Protestant evangelical thought. The gulf seemed so wide that Karl Barth wrote: "In the doctrine and worship of Mary there is disclosed the one heresy of the Roman Catholic Church which explains all the rest."

What, then, is the place of Mary in the ecumenical movement today? Ecumenical discussion is necessary precisely because of the bitterness of past arguments, if unity\* is to be a real prospect. Rarely the main topic in interchurch discussion, mention of Mary nevertheless brings to the surface a number of controversial issues.

The early church honoured Mary as mother of Jesus Christ. In the patristic period theologians pondered the questions of Mary's freedom from sin\* (her own immaculate conception) and the virgin birth in relation to the true nature of her Son. The council of Ephesus (431) declared Mary *theotokos* – God-bearer, more usually translated "Mother of God". This declaration affirmed the nature of Jesus as true God and true Man. The doctrine of the divine motherhood is entirely Christocentric. John of Damascus wrote: "This name – *theotokos* – contains the whole mystery of the incarnation."

Wonder led to devotion and to the celebration of Marian feasts in all branches of the church. Liturgy celebrated Mary's relation to God, to her Son and to the children of God in the church. Mary was the subject of art and popular devotion. The second council of Nicea (787) approved the veneration of images of Mary. The middle ages saw an increase in belief in Mary's maternal influence and powers of intercession with her divine Son on behalf of sinners. Theological controversy continued with varied contributions from Bernard, Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus and others. But extravagant devotional practices and distur-

tions led to scandal and revulsion, culminating in the need for reform. Late medieval abuses appeared to the Protestant reformers to concentrate too much on Mary, thus detracting from the Saviour's redemption of humanity. Protestantism rejected development of the Marian doctrine beyond *theotokos* as unscriptural and unnecessary. Luther wrote: "Without doubt Mary is the mother of God... and in this word is contained every honour which can be given to her." Further elaboration was deemed unnecessary, and expression of Marian devotion became unusual in Reformed and Evangelical churches. Partly in reaction to this reaction, but also continuing the work of the fathers, Counter-Reformation theologians and Catholic and Orthodox tradition continued to develop Marian theology, spirituality and devotion. Doctrines of the immaculate conception (1854) and the assumption (1950) were defined for Roman Catholics in papal statements.

The Second Vatican Council, in *Lumen Gentium* (1964), restated the Christocentric nature of Marian devotion and its scriptural foundation. It also drew attention to the need to avoid exaggeration and misunderstanding. Mary was placed firmly in the mainstream of theology and recognized as a proper subject for ecumenical consideration. The movement to find what is common to all in the scriptures and in the patristic period has brought increasing trust and willingness among Christians to examine together problems which had long seemed insoluble.

Emphasis in Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant traditions on the meaning of *theotokos* and its centrality to the mystery of the incarnation\* has enabled historical suspicions of mariolatry to be dispelled. Many of the visible indications of Marian devotion – like statues, icons, processions and shrines – have been perceived as obscuring its essentially Christocentric direction. The use of language – notably in the titles given to Mary – has too often provoked dissent rather than understanding. Yet, since Vatican II, there is readiness to examine Mary in the context of ecumenism. Christians whose traditions have paid little attention to Mary recognize the antiquity and richness of Catholic and Orthodox liturgies and medita-

tions. At the same time, there is growing realization that some of the disagreements are more than disputes over images, poetry and pious practices. There are significantly different religious perceptions involved.

The underlying theological problems have been the substance of Marian thought since the patristic period, through the Reformation, right up to the definitions of 1854 and 1950. They concern the nature and action of grace\* and the nature of revelation\* in the church.

Scripture says that Mary had found favour with God and was chosen to be the mother of his Son (Luke 1:30-31). The annunciation scene stresses both her acceptability to God and her consent to her role in incarnation. Mary is "a model... in the matter of faith, charity and perfect union with Christ" (LG 63). The problem is, how can a human being be worthy of God if all humanity is marred by sin? What is the meaning of "full of grace"? Humankind was redeemed only by Christ's sacrifice; Mary could not have achieved a state of grace by her own human action. In Protestant eyes, to call Mary free from sin is to exempt her from the need for salvation, which not only exalts her above other creatures but also belittles Christ's universal saving action. The doctrine of the immaculate conception – the Roman Catholic solution to this problem – teaches that "the most Blessed Virgin Mary in the first moment of her conception was, by the unique grace and privilege of God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ the Saviour of the human race, preserved intact from all stain of original sin" (*Ineffabilis Deus*, 1854).

In Mary, the Christian recognizes a human person who offers no resistance to the power of God. The use of the word "cooperate" in connection with Mary has led to accusations of elevation of a creature to equality with the Creator. Cooperate can only mean work with, not originate. Grace is God's free gift, but the individual can choose to resist or reject it or, like Mary, choose to be open to it. Since the consequence of Mary's personal acceptance of God's grace was to bring the Saviour into the world, where he would free all humankind from sin, she can be considered the channel of grace for all. Some Christians believe that

faith alone justifies; others that faith increases as believers struggle to express the action of grace in their lives. In Mary, faith and work were one. She is the human perfected by the Spirit, which is the meaning of both Marian declarations. The assumption maintains that, by the action of God, Mary did not suffer corruption but was united body and soul with God. She was the first to be saved by the Redeemer and has gone before us. Prayers are addressed to her, not in worship, but in celebration of the efficacy of grace in one of us. The supplicant prays for encouragement to follow Mary's example. But even when understanding can be reached that Mariology does not contradict other Christian beliefs, many Christians doubt the necessity of this doctrine.

Discussion between Christians can lead to shared insights. Mary is a useful catalyst in ecumenical encounter. Mutual fears have been calmed and common ground identified. But alongside sympathy and toleration, there is refusal to accept dogmatic definitions as essential to faith.

Neither the immaculate conception nor the assumption is mentioned in the NT. Objections can be summed up in Adolf von Harnack's questions "Wann? Wem?" When were these truths revealed, and to whom? This approach provokes arguments about revelation and authority. Some hold that only what is written in the Bible is authentic revelation; others believe that revelation is continued by the Holy Spirit in tradition, in explication and even in each individual's experience of the Spirit.

There is evidence of patristic development of Marian doctrine. Saving grace and the resurrection\* of the body are articles of faith and are in the creeds.\* But only the RCC has claimed the authority and seen the need to make declarations and definitions in Marian matters which are binding on the faithful. The Orthodox church, with its strong Marian tradition but having been unaffected by Western disputes provoked by the Reformation, stops short of dogmatic statement. The difficulties these late definitions present to modern ecumenism are therefore wider than their Marian content because they call into question authentic revelation and papal authority. The RCC does not doubt them and cannot retract formal

definitions; non-Catholic Christians cannot accept that belief in them is necessary for salvation. Thus Mary becomes a crucial test of how far unity can be achieved in the ecumenical movement.

Mary also surfaces in new areas which increasingly come into ecumenical discussion – liberation theology\* and feminist theology.\* Devotion to Mary is noticeably strong among poorer or oppressed peoples all over the world. The story of the mother rejected by innkeepers, fleeing from violence, quietly raising her Son to manhood, then witnessing his persecution and suffering, yet seeing and sharing in his triumph, offers hope to many. Her song, the Magnificat,\* was recognized by Martin Luther for its reversal of the world's values. It is increasingly providing inspiration for Christians. Feminism, too, finds encouragement in Mary as representative of the powerless and as a model of human behaviour.

Yet a new criticism of the Marian tradition has begun to emerge. Some see a contradiction between the role of Mary in the incarnation, with honour given to her because of it, and the exclusion of women from certain ministries in the church. Reflection on Mary again widens out into discussion about the feminine in the divine and about women in the community. While Mary has always been understood by many to affirm both of these issues, new accusations have been made that honour of the Virgin Mary and insistence on her perpetual virginity damage the sexuality of all other women (and perhaps men too). Mary invites thought about mothering, about our relations with each other as children of God, and about Mary, mother of the church.

So is Mary a cause for division or an opportunity for reconciliation? She was certainly the mother of the Saviour and is therefore, at least physically, at the centre of Christianity. Thought about this relationship raises important questions. The Groupe des Dombes\* has completed a study precisely devoted to Mariology, one of the most difficult issues between Roman Catholics and Protestants. The first volume of its report has thrown much light on the Christological character of the *theotokos*, overcoming much misunderstanding. Mary was the point at which God and the human were united. Her

advice to the servants at Cana was to do as her Son told them. John Paul II has written: "Christians know that their unity will be truly rediscovered only if it is based on the unity of their faith" (*Redemptoris Mater*, 1987). Mary, example of faith and unity, can be the hope of all Christians.

RITA CROWLEY TURNER

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## MATTHEWS, ZACHARIAH KEODIRELANG

B. 20 Oct. 1901, Cape Colony, South Africa; d. May 1968, Washington DC, USA. "Z.K." was Africa secretary of WCC's Division of Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service in the early 1960s, in which capacity he tackled refugee situations created by Christian-Muslim conflict in the Sudan, and the Congo crisis of 1962-63. His report *Africa Survey* opened the eyes of the United Nations to the extent and gravity of the refugee situation. During this period he was associated with the All Africa Conference of Churches, and was chairperson of the constitutional committee at its founding in 1963.

Z.K. was educated at Lovedale Missionary Institute (the only high school open to Africans at that time) and University College of Fort Hare (1918-24). He studied law by correspondence, and later anthropology, first at Yale, then at the London School of



Economics under Bronislaw Malinowski. He taught at Adams High School in Natal, and for 24 years at Fort Hare, acting twice as principal. A respected educationist, he served on several committees, including the royal commission to investigate higher education for Africans in the territories of Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika and Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, a signal honour then for an African.

Z.K. was involved with the council of Europeans and Africans for inter-racial harmony in Durban and with the native Bantu teachers' union, and he developed close contacts with future African political leaders such as Albert Luthuli and Alphaeus Zulu. He joined the African National Congress (ANC) in 1940. As president and treasurer of the ANC in the Cape, he addressed the Craddock Congress of the ANC in 1953, at which he proposed "a national convention (of all races), a congress of the people, representing all the people of this country, irrespective of race or colour, to draw up a freedom charter for the democratic South Africa of the future". He followed this with a memorandum on the congress of the people and a draft of the freedom charter, which was adopted in part by the congress of the people in 1955 and also by the ANC as part of its policy from 1956. For this activity he was charged with high treason, but finally acquitted. He participated in the Cottesloe\* consultation of 1960.

In 1953 while he was Henry Luce visiting professor at Union Theological Seminary, New York, he was invited to serve on the programme planning committee for the WCC's Evanston assembly (1954). Resigning from the WCC in 1966, he became Botswana's ambassador to Washington and permanent representative at the UN.

JOHN S. POBEE

## MEDELLÍN

THE FIRST general conference of Latin American bishops, meeting in Rio de Janeiro in 1955, created a permanent body, the Latin American Council of Bishops (CELAM), mainly with a consultative function, for the purpose of "studying the problems of the church in Latin America, coordinating its activities and preparing assemblies of the episcopate". The next conference took place in Medellín, Colombia, in August 1968. In the interim, several important things had happened.

First, CELAM held yearly meetings (with the exception of the years of the Second Vatican Council\*), organized commissions to deal with central aspects of the life and mission of the church (catechesis, education, family, social issues), and set up a programme of research on social, economic and religious conditions in the sub-continent with a view to reaching a coordinated "pastoral de conjunto" (an integrated approach to the task of the church). Second, through these activities the Catholic church became more clearly aware of the social conditions (extreme poverty, economic oppression and lack of political participation) of large sectors of the Latin American people as well as of the general inadequacy of the religious instruction and pastoral care it was able to provide. Latin America began to be seen by the Catholic church as a field for mission. Third, by different roads Latin American Catholicism came into contact with the renewal movement in European Catholicism, including the biblical and liturgical renewal, the new theological trends and various forms of social action and concern. Finally, and perhaps most important, Vatican II was a decisive experience for most Latin American bishops. There they had a unique chance to meet frequently, gathering in groups for-

mally and informally and discussing their common concerns over a prolonged period of time; they came in contact with the universal episcopate and profited from the experience of the church in other areas of the third world. At the doctrinal and canonical level, the Council gave a strong impulse to the "regional church" and an organic place to "episcopal conferences". The collegial exercise of the episcopal function served as a corrective to the individualist approach and an exclusive relation to the Vatican.

The careful preparation of the Medellín conference revealed that it could not merely adapt the Council's documents but had to start from a consideration of the Latin American situation; the purpose of the meeting was thus defined as that of considering "the church in the present transformation of Latin America in the light of the Council". The method therefore had to follow the well-known (Jesuit) pattern: to see, to judge, to act. All the documents produced at Medellín followed this pattern, giving an assessment of the facts, doctrinal reflection on the Christian understanding of and response to these facts, and a pastoral direction and specific proposals. There was no unanimity on these issues, and a minority clung to the purely conservative position that nothing should be changed. The direction, scope and depth of the transformation which most desired for church and society were at the heart of the debate. A close study of the documents discloses different and at times divergent directions.

In spite of such differences, the main thrust of the conference as a whole and of the impact it had on Latin American Christianity – within and outside the Roman Catholic Church – can be characterized by some key expressions of the "Message to the Peoples of Latin America" issued at the end of the conference. First, the church understands itself as an integral part of the people and commits itself to it: "As Latin Americans, we share the history of our people." Such commitment demands "conversion", "to purify ourselves in the spirit of the gospel, all the persons and institutions of the Catholic church", "to live a biblical poverty that finds expression in authentic manifestations, clear signs for our people". Second, Latin America, in spite of its plurality, must

be seen in the unity of "a geographic reality", a common history and "similar problems". The main problem is the continent's intolerable state of underdevelopment, which prevents any possibility of human realization for the large majority of people. Such conditions – which the documents analyze in detail – are called "a situation of sin".

Finally, the church's response is an effort to "discern the signs of the times", to "discover God's plan" and to offer the church that "which is our most peculiar contribution: a global vision of man and humanity and an integral vision of the Latin American man in development". Later in the documents some concrete objectives are mentioned: "to inspire, stimulate and urge a new order of justice", to "dynamize education", "to promote professional organizations of workers" which are "decisive elements for socio-economic transformation", to "encourage a new evangelization and an intensive catechesis", "to renew and to create new structures in the church" in order to promote dialogue, participation and cooperation, and "to cooperate with other Christian confessions and with all men of good will committed to authentic peace, rooted in justice and love". The 16 documents of the conference elaborate these affirmations and purposes.

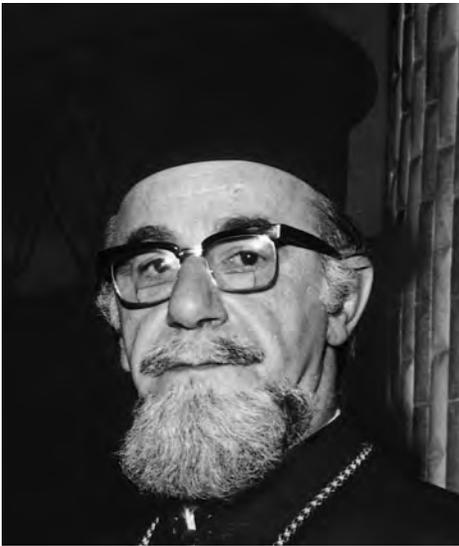
From an ecumenical and Latin American point of view, Medellín occupies a decisive place in our recent history. Although there is no specific document on ecumenism, the conference had a clearly ecumenical attitude: observers from different churches had full access and were invited to participate, and were even offered eucharistic hospitality. There was a clear "preferential option for the poor", which became the heart of the self-understanding, task and reflection of the church for many Latin American Christians. Medellín has stimulated intense pastoral action and theological reflection and, above all, the extraordinary growth of church base communities\* across the continent. Although the two following conferences (Puebla 1978 and Santo Domingo 1989) nuanced and at points qualified certain ecclesiological and social formulations of Medellín, they have confirmed the basic concerns for social justice, ecclesial participation and the preferential option for the poor.

JOSÉ MÍGUEZ BONINO

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## MELITON (Hacis)

B. 24 Sept. 1913, Constantinople; d. 27 Dec. 1989, Istanbul. Meliton, metropolitan of Chalcedon, was a member of the WCC central committee, 1961-68, its vice-president, 1968-75, and a member of the committee on



Church and Society. As representative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate at the WCC assemblies and the principal collaborator of Athenagoras I and Dimitrios I, he promoted the activities of the Council, was deeply engaged in the pan-Orthodox conferences of Rhodes and Chambésy, and helped with the rapprochement between the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church. He was instrumental in lifting the anathema between Rome and Constantinople in 1965. Meliton studied theology at Halki; in 1938 he was under-secretary of the holy synod, and in 1943 in charge of the Greek parishes in Manchester and Liverpool, England, afterwards continuing his studies in Scotland. On the islands of Imbros and Tenedos he promoted religious, cultural and social education and

established several schools, a hospital and other institutions of public service.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

## MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE

MENNONITE, Brethren in Christ, and related churches form the MWC. More than 90 conferences in 52 nations are members. They appoint delegates to the general council, which meets triennially and elects the executive committee. A global assembly convenes regularly; the 13th met in Calcutta (1997). The MWC permanent secretariat is in Strasbourg, France. The Conference promotes unity and Christian discipleship among member churches by providing fellowship, communication, cooperation and interchurch dialogue. Formal conversations have been held with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches,\* the Baptist World Alliance\* and, annually since 1998, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

LARRY MILLER

## MENNONITES

THE MENNONITES are the closest descendants of 16th-century Anabaptists who espoused non-violence. They take their name from the Netherlands reformer and early influential leader Menno Simons (c.1496-1561).

The Anabaptist-Mennonite movement began in the first half of the 16th century in the southern and northern regions of Germanic Europe. One focal point was Switzerland, where Konrad Grebel and others, who initially followed the Swiss reformer Zwingli, began to practise believer's baptism\* in 1525. Another was Holland, where Menno Simons left the priesthood in 1536 and where the Anabaptists became the first organized Reformation movement. Persecution and death followed for many Anabaptists, but dozens of small congregations soon came into existence throughout Germanic Europe.

Migration, due initially to persecution, and mission spread the movement. Migrations of Swiss and South German Mennonites within Europe continued into the 18th century, while those to North America began in the late 17th century. Dispersion of Dutch

and North German Mennonites along the Baltic coast began in 1530 and continued from Prussia to Russia between 1789 and 1870. Other migrations followed, notably within the USSR, and from there to the Americas and, since 1970, to the Federal Republic of Germany. European Mennonites sent missionaries to Asia (1851) and later to Africa (1901). North American Mennonite-related mission, beginning in Asia and Africa at the end of the 19th century, now reaches every continent. Churches in Africa, Asia and South America began to send out missionaries about 1970.

Although Mennonites are non-credal, they have written numerous confessions throughout their history. In spite of significant and perhaps growing diversity, Mennonite confessions continue to reflect a common theological core. At the centre of Anabaptist-Mennonite faith stands Jesus Christ\* as Saviour, Lord, and model of life. The church as the Body of Christ continues Christ's life and ministry in the world.

At least three features define the church\* in Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition. The church is a *community of believers* who together seek to follow in daily life the teaching and example of Jesus Christ. Believers who voluntarily confess the lordship of Christ receive baptism as the sign of the new covenant\* and of their commitment to a life of discipleship. Believer's baptism means also membership in the local community and responsibility for its welfare. The Lord's supper – a memorial to the death and resurrection\* of Christ as well as a foretaste of the great messianic banquet – represents solidarity within the community and readiness to live the way of the cross in the world.

Autonomous from the state, the church lives under the *authority of the word of God\** as set forth in the Bible, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.\* The Old Testament is promise, the New Testament fulfilment. Where the NT gives a new commandment, the old is superseded. Furthermore, the text is best understood in the context of the community of disciples inspired by the Spirit (see *hermeneutics*).

In the Mennonite perspective, both social and personal ethics in a *life of discipleship* is part of the gospel. The disciple of Jesus Christ lives in the world in order to serve hu-

mankind through action and proclamation. This goal involves a readiness to suffer wrong and injustice rather than to bring harm to others. Love of enemies and rejection of violence are understood as NT absolutes, and they may be the most distinctive ethical emphases of the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition. Rejection of seeking wealth in favour of economic sharing is frequently emphasized.

By the end of 1996, world membership for Mennonite and related churches surpassed 1 million in 60 countries. During the last two decades the most rapid church growth has occurred in Africa, Central and South America, and Asia.

Although Mennonites profess and live a radical congregationalism, most feel unity with all believers who confess Jesus Christ and who seek to live the way of discipleship. Many are open to cooperation with other Christian groups, especially in witness to peace and non-violence or in mission. Occasionally, cooperation is more general, as in the theological conversations with the Baptist and Reformed in the Netherlands (1975-78) or with the Lutherans in France (1981-84). The Mennonite World Conference\* has held formal dialogue with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches\* and the Baptist World Alliance.\* A few Mennonite churches are members of national or world communions of churches. Two North American Mennonite conferences have joined the National Association of Evangelicals. The Dutch and North German conferences, as well as the Church of Christ in Congo – Mennonite Community, are members of the WCC.

See also *historic peace churches*.

LARRY MILLER

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## METHODISM

"METHODIST" originated as a pejorative designation by critics of the members of the

Holy Club in Oxford, but John Wesley (1703-91), its Anglican leader from 1729 and himself converted to serious Christian living in 1725, used it to mean a methodical pursuit of biblical holiness.\*

Methodism, one of Protestantism's most influential evangelistic renewal movements, has become a worldwide communion. The current (2000) edition of the *World Methodist Council Handbook* states that worldwide Methodist membership now numbers about 38 million persons, whilst the Methodist world community, comprising both members and all those who come within the sphere of influence of the Methodist churches, now stands at over 75 million. Although the national churches have their own statements on doctrinal standards and church order, Methodism possesses a real unity\* derived from the spiritual heritage which its principal founder, John Wesley, by his missionary preaching, and his brother Charles (1707-88), by his colossal output of hymns and religious poetry, bequeathed to it.

John Wesley's missionary experience in the English colony of Georgia (1736-37) was in many ways a failure, but it did provide him with the setting for shaping his concept of the small *class* under an appointed leader as the basic grouping for Bible-centred Christian nurture, vital to the harmonious growth of the Methodist movement. With an increase of dependable collaborators, Wesley later constituted the itinerant pastorate in correlation with local Methodist societies, each composed of several classes. The itinerant pastorate bound these societies together in a form of living communion which avoided both the danger of fragmentation inherent in congregational church polity and the tendency towards static centralization in the Presbyterian churches (see **church order**).

Returning to England from Georgia, Wesley experienced a second conversion on 24 May 1738. He received the grace to forsake reliance on his own efforts to attain perfection and to surrender himself totally, in loving trust, to the work of God's grace within him. Wesley thus became the instrument of divine power, which alone accounts for the stupendous missionary and pastoral achievement of his remaining 50 years as undisputed head of Methodism.

The priority Wesley resolutely gave, in the face of bitter opposition from the Church of England's establishment, to the materially and socially underprivileged coincided with the beginning of the industrial revolution and the springing up, in England, of huge industrial cities (still major centres of Methodism). A century before Karl Marx became a public name, Wesley had brought the gospel and concomitant social and cultural betterment to the first working class in the world.

Against Anglican-Calvinists who believed in predestination, Wesley taught that the redemptive love of Jesus excludes no person; God calls each freely to respond to that love. Against Protestants who held a narrow understanding of "faith alone", he insisted that free response entails not only an initial conversion but also continued cooperation with the Holy Spirit, who sanctifies and leads one ultimately to the perfection of love – the ability to triumph over sinful desires and selfish motives (see **sanctification**). Moreover, the trusting, loving self-surrender to the Father brought about by God's Spirit gives one the assurance that the blood of Jesus is victorious over personal sin (Rom. 8:14-16, 38-39). The only requirement for admission into a Methodist class (10-12 members) was a desire to seek inner holiness and to live a life of prayer and discipline in the fellowship of the Spirit. In thus focusing all his teaching on the doctrine of grace, Wesley made Anglican credal orthodoxy incandescent with the love of Jesus in the Spirit. Herein lies the heart of the Wesleyan spiritual heritage.

By inheriting, too, the Wesleyan insistence on the unity between worship and service, Methodism improved social relationships wherever it took root. The Wesleyan vision of Christian personhood has enabled modern Methodist missionaries in recent contact with Latin American liberation theology\* to embrace its rightful aspirations, while avoiding theological deviations.

Wesley never intended his renewal movement to separate from the Church of England, yet a separation was inevitable. Entering the movement were large numbers of unchurched people who had no contact with the state-established church and wanted none. For such people Wesley created minis-

terial structures for their pastoral care, and they could not but exercise an authority parallel with legitimate Anglican authority, rather than be subordinate to it.

Since the American Methodists had been deprived of episcopally ordained preachers by the war of independence (1775-83), pastoral necessity drove Wesley to ordain his fellow presbyter Thomas Coke (1747-1814) as “superintendent” over “the brethren in America”. Wesley sent Coke to the new United States in 1784 with the authority to establish an independent church, which took the name “Methodist Episcopal Church”. The title “superintendent” was changed to “bishop” in 1787.

Wesley’s Anglican loyalties made him more circumspect in his dealings with British Methodists. No formal acts of separation from the Church of England were made during his life-time, but the company of 100 preachers, whom he had made his legal successors by a deed of declaration (1784), inevitably became the governing body of an autonomous church after his death seven years later. British Methodism remains non-episcopal in church order.

The seeds of future dissension were already sown. The plan of pacification (1795) reversed Wesley’s conscientious refusal to allow itinerant preachers who were not episcopally ordained to administer communion, but the plan retained his policy of concentrating pastoral initiative in the preachers’ hands, to the eventual detriment of lay participation. Resulting protests gave rise to new denominations in the first half of the 19th century, either by secession or by separate foundation. More significant for Methodism’s present ecumenical role, bitter controversy with the Anglican Tractarian movement hastened the decline of British Methodism from the high theology and practice of the Lord’s supper shared by the Wesley brothers, hardened its non-sacramental understanding of the ordained ministry and pushed it definitively into the non-conformist camp.

Several schisms\* also racked American Methodism – over church polity, required “unworldly” discipline and public social issues, especially racism and slavery. Already in 1816 and 1820 two black churches were founded – the African Methodist Episcopal

and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion. In 2001 these two, along with the black Christian Methodist Episcopal (1870), numbered 5.3 million members in over 15,000 congregations. In 1844 the Methodist Episcopal Church itself divided over the slavery question into two separate churches.

These alarming divisions, however, did not prevent either the growth of the family of Methodist churches or their missionary outreach. In Great Britain the “connexions” totalled 800,000 members by 1900. In 1813 the Wesleyan Missionary Society was founded, and in the wake of British colonial expansion, large Methodist churches grew up in Canada, Australia and South Africa, where the church had a large black following, and in other parts of Africa and in Asia. In the USA the largely white Methodist denominations grew from 2 million in 1900 to 10 million in 1960. Fully integrated into American society, they poured personnel and money into the evangelization of India and China and had a pervasive influence on American Protestantism as a whole.

The Ecumenical Methodist Conference of 1881 brought to London delegates from 30 Methodist bodies in 20 countries. It was a turning point in the healing of Methodist divisions at national levels. In Great Britain, by a series of mergers beginning in 1907, the various Methodist bodies united, until by 1932 almost all had become the one British Methodist Church. In the US the northern and southern branches of the Methodist Episcopal Church re-united in 1939, a union joined also by the Methodist Protestant Church, created by secession in 1828. In 1968 a merger of this largely white, unified Methodist church with the Evangelical United Brethren formed the United Methodist Church, with over 11 million members. The successful outcome of Churches Uniting in Christ (see **Consultation on Church Union, covenanting**) in which United Methodism, along with other denominations, is in dialogue with the three large black Methodist churches, would help to heal the most serious rift in the family.

This earnest seeking for a form of unity which is the necessary visible expression of invisible communion in love has taken the Methodist family beyond intraconfessional dialogue. For more than half a century

Methodist churches have participated in church unions which transcend confessional barriers. In some of these, Anglican participation has made it possible to overcome the fundamental divide between episcopal and non-episcopal church order (notably in the Church of South India and the Church of North India). But some negotiations involving Methodists have failed. In 1969 and in 1972 a plan for organic union\* between the Church of England and the British Methodist Church was defeated. The chief problem lay in how Methodism was to acquire the historic episcopacy.\* The rejection has been detrimental to Methodism's ecumenical endeavours. Those efforts, however, have found concrete expression, at the world level, in bilateral dialogue with Lutherans, Reformed, Roman Catholics and (finally) Anglicans, made possible by the World Methodist Council\* (WMC), formerly the Ecumenical Methodist Council.

Through the WMC's participation in the conference of secretaries of Christian World Communions,\* world Methodism was able to play its part in ecumenical initiatives for the new millennium. The book *2000 Years since Bethlehem*, published by Methodism's Upper Room Movement, brought together brief passages from the spiritual writings of all Christian traditions throughout the centuries.

In the ecumenical movement, Methodists such as John R. Mott (1865-1955) and G. Bromley Oxnam (1891-1963) played key roles in the founding of the WCC at its first assembly in 1948. In 2001 there were 37 national Methodist churches in the WCC. Of the five WCC general secretaries, two have been Methodists – Philip Potter (1972-84) and Emilio Castro (1985-92).

The first WMC conference (1951) echoed Wesley's original intention not to found a church but to inspire and organize a movement for church renewal. The WMC rejoiced to see Methodist churches give up separate confessional existence to find new life in the wider community of transconfessional unions. As recent experience shows, however, such unions can remain imprisoned within cultural and national boundaries. Could the WMC, therefore, enable Methodism, without becoming entrenched in a confessional exclusiveness Wesley never intended, to witness to a love which, by be-

ing rooted in self-forgetfulness, transcends all human-devised barriers?

FRANCIS FROST

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## METHODIST-ORTHODOX RELATIONS

AT DUBLIN in 1976 and at Nairobi in 1986, the World Methodist Council\* expressed the desire to explore bilateral relationships between Methodism and Orthodoxy, and in 1990 the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople agreed to set up a small joint group of theologians to explore themes for an eventual dialogue. One promising factor in the situation is the historical influence on Methodism of the theological and spiritual insights which the Wesleys drew from the patristic church, particularly that of the East. At the pastoral level, there exist Orthodox and Methodist diaspora communities in regions where the other body is stronger.

In 1995 the preparatory commission published *Orthodox and Methodists*, a booklet to help the faithful of each community gain a basic acquaintance with the other. The commission proposed to its principals the "fundamental question" of "how salvation is understood in our two communions" as the topic of a more formal dialogue.

The charges of proselytism\* which the Moscow patriarchate has levelled against Methodists entering Russian territory since the end of the Soviet empire underline the urgent need for dialogue.

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT

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## METHODIST-REFORMED DIALOGUE

AFTER TWO intensive "international consultations" in 1985 and 1987, theologians appointed respectively by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches\* and the World Methodist Council\* composed a report, "Together in God's Grace", which was immediately welcomed by the executive committees of the sponsoring bodies and transmitted to their member churches for discussion and action. Concluding that "the classical doctrinal issues" on which there has historically been tension between the two traditions "ought not to be seen as obstacles to unity between Methodists and Reformed", the document recommended that Methodist and Reformed churches ask themselves and one another about possibilities for cooperation at local, national, regional and international levels in worship, study, doctrinal commissions, evangelistic outreach and social service; and whether indeed there are more places "in which Reformed-Methodist union negotiations might be initiated". Recognition of "a common gospel" and of "authentic forms of obedience and faithful discipleship" in the partner, such as the theologians believe to be the case, means that "in all places churches in our two traditions are already in a position mutually to recognize membership and ministry", which at the very least entails mutual sensitivity and respect in majority/minority situations and amid differences in relationships to the state and to society at large.

The two traditions have different origins and have never undergone an active separation. Both "regard the scriptures as the primary authority in faith and practice and confess the shared faith of the universal church expressed in ecumenical creeds and by witnesses to it through the centuries". Specifically, "both testify to the priority of God's grace, the sufficiency of faith, the call to holy living, and the imperative to mission". Yet different secondary authorities obtain in the two traditions; and as between the Reformed confessions of the 16th and

17th centuries and the Wesleyan "standards" of Methodism, there are undoubtedly "differing accounts of the appropriation of saving grace, emphasizing, on the one hand, God's sovereignty in election and, on the other, the freedom of human response".

Wesley stated in his own words his agreement with Calvin on several fundamental matters: "(1) in ascribing all good to the free grace of God; (2) in denying natural free will, and all power antecedent to grace; (3) in excluding all merit from man, even for what he has or does by the grace of God". The 1987 report notes that it is only on this common basis that "the conflicting stances identified as Calvinist and Wesleyan were adopted". Wesley saw as the universal inheritance of Christ's atoning work a prevenient grace\* which restores to humankind the lost freedom of choice, while not guaranteeing salvation\* to all; Calvinists object that this impugns the divine sovereignty, since it claims that human freedom to deny is greater than God's will to save. When Methodists ask how a predestinarian approach avoids understanding God's freedom as anything more than arbitrariness, and human freedom as anything other than illusion, the Calvinist answer is that since God as Creator is the author of justice\* and since God's ways are not our ways, it is a fundamental category mistake to judge God at the bar of human and limited reason. The present report judges that each stance can find scriptural support, but that "both traditions have gone wrong when they have claimed to know too much about [the underlying] mystery of God's electing grace and of human freedom", instead of simply recognizing, receiving and celebrating the mystery.

On the consequent matter of sanctification,\* the report again recognizes what Methodists and Reformed hold in common: both "affirm the real change which God by the Spirit works in the minds and hearts and lives of believers. By the sanctifying grace of God, penitent believers are being restored to God's image and renewed in God's likeness... In the two traditions we are taught to strive and pray for entire sanctification." The differences in emphasis are expressed thus: "The Reformed stress on election and perseverance gives believers the confidence that God will keep them to the end. The

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Methodist preaching of perfection affirms that we may set no limit to the present power of God to make sinners into saints."

In many places, Methodists and Reformed have already entered into close relationships, including both federal and organic unions (see **union, organic**). Examples of unions according to varying models, sometimes including other traditions also, would be Canada (1925), Church of South India (1947), Zambia (1965), Belgium (1969), Church of North India (1970), Zaire (1970), Australia (1977), and Italy (1979). Recognizing that such unions were enacted only "after due doctrinal discussions", the 1987 report "affirms that there is sufficient agreement in doctrine and practice between our two positions to justify such answers to the Lord's call to unity for the sake of mission and our common praise of God". Further rapprochements may therefore responsibly be encouraged: "Our complementary ways of Christian thought and life are built upon a foundation in God's grace, in covenant existence, and in the goal of perfect salvation."

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT

- I.H. Marshall, *Kept by the Power of God: A Study of Perseverance and Falling Away*, London, Epworth, 1969
- A. Sell, *The Great Debate: Calvinism, Arminianism and Salvation*, Grand Rapids MI, Baker, 1983
- "Together in God's Grace", *Reformed World*, Dec. 1987, and *GinA-II*
- G. Wainwright, *On Wesley and Calvin: Sources for Theology, Liturgy and Spirituality*, Melbourne, Uniting Church, 1987
- G. Wainwright, "Perfect Salvation in the Teaching of Wesley and Calvin", *Reformed World*, June 1988.

## METHODIST-ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUE

FOLLOWING the presence of Methodist observers at Vatican II,\* the Vatican Secretariat (now Pontifical Council) for Promoting Christian Unity\* and the World Methodist Council\* (WMC) made provision for an international dialogue to start in 1967. The joint commission between the WMC and the Roman Catholic Church has arranged its work in five-year periods so that its successive reports could be presented to its Methodist principals at the quinquennial gatherings of the WMC. While being simultaneously presented to the

Vatican, they have informally become known by the place and date of the Methodist assembly: Denver 1971, Dublin 1976, Honolulu 1981, Nairobi 1986, Singapore 1991, Rio de Janeiro 1996, Brighton 2001.

Aimed at "growth in understanding", the first two reports ranged rather widely over the areas of mission\* and evangelism,\* social concern, moral and ecclesiastical discipline, and (particularly characteristic of this bilateral dialogue\*) spirituality: Denver 1971 notes "the central place held in both traditions by the ideal of personal sanctification, growth in holiness through daily life in Christ". The most precisely treated topics were the eucharist\* and ministry,\* which were contemporaneously occupying also the Anglican-RC and Lutheran-RC dialogues as well as Faith and Order\* in the approach to "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry".\* Catholics and Methodists agree that "a distinctive mode of the presence of Christ is mediated through the sacred elements of bread and wine, which within the eucharist are efficacious signs of the body and blood of Christ"; and yet a chief point of difference remains over the "change" which Catholics designate transubstantiation. Each party accepts an apostolic ministry of the ordained within the ministry of the whole church, yet "we differ in the account we give of apostolic succession": "Methodists are not in principle opposed to the ministry's being in the threefold form or in the historical succession; but they do not consider either of these to be necessary for the church or for the ministry."

A more concentrated thematization occurred with the third and fourth reports. Honolulu 1981 was entitled "Towards an Agreed Statement on the Holy Spirit". The commission was able to agree on the Trinitarian place of the Holy Spirit\* and on the work of the Spirit in justification,\* regeneration and sanctification,\* recognizing "the Spirit's special office to maintain the divine initiative that precedes all human action and reaction". Perceiving that "the doctrine of the Holy Spirit underlies much of the ecumenical agenda", the commission developed the ecclesiological dimensions of the doctrine. In particular, it was here that the recurrent question of authority\* was located: "The papal authority, no less than any other

within the church, is a manifestation of the continuing presence of the Spirit of love in the church or it is nothing.”

Nairobi 1986 was entitled “Towards a Statement on the Church”. The notion of *koinonia*\* (both communion and community) governs: “Because God so loved the world, he sent his Son and the Holy Spirit to draw us into communion with himself. This sharing in God’s life, which resulted from the mission of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, found expression in a visible *koinonia* of Christ’s disciples, the church.” Catholics and Methodists “are committed to a vision that includes the goal of full communion in faith, mission and sacramental life”. Recognizing that “an ecclesiology shaped in a time of division” cannot be entirely satisfactory, the report draws eclectically on various possible “ways of being one church” in the search for “a model of organic unity”. Differences remain over “structures of ministry”, particularly over whether a threefold form and a historic succession is necessary – and most particularly of all over a “Petrine office” of primacy,\* jurisdiction and authoritative teaching as claimed by Rome. But “Catholics and Methodists are agreed on the need for an authoritative way of being sure, beyond doubt, concerning God’s action in so far as it is crucial for our salvation”.

Approaches to the ecclesiological questions of pastoral and doctrinal authority varied, it was realized, according to the more general theological framework in which they were set; and so the next two rounds in the dialogue were devoted to seeking common perspectives on “The Apostolic Tradition” (Singapore 1991) and, more basically yet, revelation and faith (Rio de Janeiro 1996, under the title “The Word of Life”). In these serene and comprehensive statements, the self-communication of God, its fruitful human reception, and its ecclesial transmission are all viewed according to a strongly Trinitarian pattern. Scripture is affirmed as the “permanent norm” of “the living Tradition” in which the Lord continues to visit his people through word and action (Singapore, 7-21). Special pastoral and prophetic functions are recognized within the community of “all those who, by their response to revelation and their inspiration through the creative love of God, participate in the active tradi-

tion of the gospel and compassionate discernment of the will of God for his church and the world” (Rio, 53-72). The Rio report concludes by suggesting that the directions have thereby been set for revisiting the themes of “the offices of oversight in the church and succession in them, and the offer made by Rome of a Petrine ministry in the service of unity and communion” (132).

During the next quinquennium the joint commission in fact concentrated on the theme of teaching authority.\* For its report “Speaking the Truth in Love” (2001), the commission found in Ephesians 4 not only a title which “captures both the spirit in which the dialogue has proceeded and the result that is hoped for from it” but also the lineaments of a living organism of beliefs (vv.4-6), an indication of the diversity of compatible gifts and functions within the common vocation of the church (vv.7-11), a statement of the purpose of the teaching offices as the promotion of certainty and stability with respect to matters of belief (vv.12-14), and a hint (v.3) towards resumption of the pneumatological emphasis of the 1981 report. The 2001 report registered a wide measure of agreement in the substance of doctrine and even detected certain analogies between the procedures of each party for recognizing, discerning and responding to the truth of the gospel. Nevertheless, there were questions each side wished to put to the other for further exploration. Thus “Methodists ask Catholics why laypeople could not be more formally involved in decision-making bodies, even when authoritative discernment and teaching is concerned, sharing responsibility in some way with the bishops who nevertheless retain their special ministry of authoritative teaching” (79), and “Catholics ask Methodists why, in their understanding and practice of the conference, they do not more formally distinguish the role of ordained ministers, especially bishops and superintendents, particularly where authoritative discernment and teaching are concerned” (80).

When Methodists and Roman Catholics try to characterize their mutual discovery in this international dialogue as well as in national and local dialogues that are taking place at least in Britain (e.g., “Mary, Mother of the Lord, Sign of Grace, Faith and Holiness: Towards a Shared Understanding”,

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1995), the USA and New Zealand, they often point to the fact that while they find themselves apart, they have never known the bitterness of a direct schism.\* Catholics testify to a distinct Methodist “identity”. It seems that the two parties come closest when the Wesleyan character of Methodism is sharply profiled, for it is there that a scriptural and credal faith\* comes to expression in sacramental life, in the search for personal and social holiness, and in an evangelistic and charitable concern for all humankind. The increased knowledge that each party has acquired of the other over recent decades will lead, it is hoped, to an increasingly satisfactory outcome concerning “the understanding that we both have of ourselves and of our partners in respect to the one church of Jesus Christ and the communion which belongs to the body of Christ” (Rio, 132; cf. Singapore, 99-101).

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT

- M. Hurley ed., *John Wesley's Letter to a Roman Catholic*, London, Chapman, 1968
- M.S. Massa, “The Catholic Wesley: A Revisionist Prolegomenon”, *Methodist History*, 22, 1983-84
- H. Meyer & L. Vischer eds, *Growth in Agreement*, WCC, 1984 (for Denver, Dublin and Honolulu reports)
- OC, 22, 1986 (for the Nairobi report); 28, 1992 (for the Singapore report); 32, 1996 (for the Rio de Janeiro report), 37, 2002 (for the Brighton report)
- UMC, *United States Catholic Conference Methodist-Catholic Dialogues: Thirty Years of Mission and Witness*, Washington DC, US Catholic Conference, 2001
- G. Wainwright, *Methodists in Dialogue*, Nashville, Abingdon/Kingswood, 1995, chs 1-4.

## MEYENDORFF, JOHN B.

B. 17. Feb. 1926, Neuilly-sur-Seine, France; d. 22 July 1992, Montreal, Canada. An outstanding Russian Orthodox theologian, church historian, patristic and Byzantine scholar, Meyendorff made a significant contribution to the ecumenical movement. He studied at St Sergius Orthodox Institute and the Sorbonne in Paris, where he defended his doctoral thesis on Gregory Palamas in 1958. Ordained in 1959, he left Europe for New York to teach patristics\* and church history in the faculty of St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary. He became a member of the senior fellows' committee of Dumbarton Oaks (Harvard's Byzantine research centre) and taught Byzantine history at Ford-



ham University, and in 1984 took up the post of dean of St Vladimir's, following two other prominent figures from St Sergius in that capacity: Georges Florovsky and Alexander Schmemmann. He retired only three weeks before his untimely death.

His ecumenical activity was exercised both within the Orthodox church and in the Christian world at large, thanks to his international reputation as a scholar and writer and his tireless commitment, engaging personality and exceptional intellectual honesty. He devoted much time and energy to the task of reconciling the Orthodox and, together with Florovsky and Schmemmann, took a prominent part in achieving the establishment of the autocephalous Orthodox Church in America in 1970. However, he never ceased to work for pan-Orthodox unity, travelling to Constantinople as well as to Russia (when that became possible in the last years of his life). He became a trusted friend of Patriarch Alexis II.

After retirement he intended to adapt his many books and his teaching to the dire needs of the Russian Orthodox Church. He was also active on the ecumenical scene, and received honorary doctorates from Notre Dame University, the General Theological Seminary in New York, and the Theological Academy of St Petersburg. He was moderator of the WCC's commission on Faith and Order\* (1971-75) and a member of the

WCC's central committee. His most important contribution to the ecumenical movement was to be found in the open manner in which, in his countless books, lectures and articles and in his personal contacts, he witnessed to an Orthodoxy\* at once traditional, in the noblest sense of the word, and attentive to the needs of today, understood as a constant distinction between what is fundamental and what is secondary under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.\*

NICHOLAS LOSSKY

■ D. Obolensky, "John Meyendorff (1926-92)", *Sobornost incorporating Eastern Churches Review*, 15, 2, 1993.

## MIDDLE AXIOMS

THE EXPRESSION "middle axioms" was introduced by J.H. Oldham in the preparatory material for the 1937 Oxford conference of Life and Work,\* as "an attempt to define the directions in which, in a particular state or society, Christian faith must express itself". The effort was to provide Christians and churches with an orientation for their participation in the life of society, concrete enough to give direction in specific situations without becoming a rigid law or ecclesiastical casuistry.

Theologically, the quest for such criteria originates, on the one hand, in the crisis of both the natural law\* and the "creation orders" foundations for social ethics and, on the other hand, in the crisis of the idealism of the social gospel and the kingdom of God. Oldham locates this criterion in his distinction between an ethics of "ends" and an ethics of "inspiration" which struggles to discern God's marching orders for God's people at particular points in history. Siding with this second line, he tries to combine a strong Christological orientation to the lordship of Christ – closely bound to the biblical revelation\* – and an understanding of the present conditions of society. In this double context he speaks of the church's "discerning the signs of the time and in each crisis of history fulfilling its appointed task". The Oxford conference received these criteria as "intermediate between the ultimate basis of Christian action in community [the law of love] which is too general to give much concrete guidance for action – and the unguided

intuition of the individual conscience". Oxford did not elaborate or extensively exemplify this notion. It seems to be used implicitly in the critical assessment of the conditions of the time in relation to the state and the political realm (and to a lesser degree the economic and racial question). Some fundamental dialectics of freedom\*/order\* or freedom\*/justice\* seem to serve as guide for the discernment of these middle axioms.

Middle axioms (or "concrete utopia", as others preferred to characterize such criteria) found more definite formulations in the context of the responsible society,\* developed after Amsterdam 1948. In a significant analogy, they have been compared with anchors and compasses "required for successful navigation. Compasses help those at sea to get their bearings and anchors help to minimize drift in troubled waters." Although there is little reference to these axioms in recent ecumenical discussions, the question which this category addresses is still present, and the distinction and relation which liberation theology establishes between the terms "utopia", "historical project" and "political programme" point, in a different theological context, to an analogous question.

See also **ethics, society**.

JOSE MÍGUEZ BONINO

■ C.-H. Grenholm, *Christian Social Ethics in a Revolutionary Age*, Uppsala, Verbum, 1973 ■ W.A. Visser 't Hooft & J.H. Oldham eds, *The Church and Its Function in Society*, vol. 1, London, Allen & Unwin, 1937.

## MIDDLE EAST

IN A DESIGNATION derived from the modern geopolitical language, Christians of the Arab world, Cyprus, Iran and Turkey are referred to as Middle Eastern. Only a few among the 10 million who continue to live in the region call themselves as they are often called in the Western world. They prefer their historical names, whether reflecting a salient ethnic and cultural particularity (Armenian, Assyrian etc.) or meant to specify primarily a linguistic, liturgical and ecclesial tradition (Copts, Syrians etc.). They are Orthodox, not always disclosing whether they are Chalcedonian, non-Chalcedonian or Catholic but, with the exception of the

“Latins”, making clear that they are not “Roman” or Protestant.

Most Christians in the region ally their ecclesial affiliation with their nationality. But this association is not entirely free from ambiguity, except in the cases of the Copts in Egypt and the Maronites in Lebanon. Unlike the others, their historical territory coincides largely with that of their modern nations.

Christians in the Arab world often present themselves, and are portrayed, as “Arab Christians”. Notwithstanding its ambiguity, this inclusive name has fewer disadvantages than “Christian Arabs” or “Christians of the East”. Depicting oneself as a Christian Arab highlights an identity shared with Muslims but antecedent to Islam. This appellation proposes to transcend religious differences through a return to the origins but risks falling into a narrow and exclusive nationalism. For all the Christians are not the descendants of Arab tribes Christianized before Islam. A large number of Christians of diverse origins went, until the 13th century, through a process of arabization.

The “Christians of the East” denomination is claimed by many as a sign of authenticity and specificity in relation to Western Christianity. But this general label fails to avoid the inevitable problem of delineating the frontiers, whether geographical, cultural or political. Moreover, the reference to the “Christian East” (in a way similar to the “East” of the Orientalists) could be an invitation to visit the past, ignoring the present. Dead Christians sometimes seem to have a more interesting story to tell than that of the living, who may be seen as vestiges, archaic witnesses or symbols, unworthy descendants of their illustrious ancestors.

The history of Christianity in the Middle East is, since the 1st century, a history of diversity manifested in the course of evangelization originating in Jerusalem, the spiritual pole of three continents: Asia, Africa and Europe. Christian Arabs, Arameans, Copts, Hellenes or Hellenized were split, as of the 5th century and through the interplay of doctrinal divergences, cultural particularisms and political conflicts, into three distinct confessions. The Arab Christian tradition, as well as Islamic historiography, refers to Nestorians, Melkites and Jacobites. While cultural and religious identities of the

three communities shaped by rivalries and opposition drove them apart, their progressive cultural arabization favoured exchange and interaction. In spite of their theological differences, the common language of their elites, beyond being a medium of communication, played a role of unification comparable, *mutatis mutandis*, to Greek in earlier Christianity and Latin in later Western Christianity.

### CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

In the eyes of the Muslims, Christianity in the “Abode of Islam” was one community, yet this perception was often overshadowed by an image of competing and conflicting sects. Christians saw, and still see, themselves torn between their confessional self-understanding, rooted in pre-Islamic history, and a Christian identity largely conditioned by the encounter with Islam.

The *Nestorians*, as they were called, or more properly the *Assyrian Church of the East*, were absent at the council of Ephesus (431). A Christian community of Persia caught in the conflict between the Byzantines and the Sassanides, they chose to project a “national” image. Their cultural identity largely favoured their adhesion in 484 to Nestorianism. Not being suspected of sympathy towards Byzantium, they were also perceived by the Islamic Abbasid state, more than two centuries later, as bearers of a Christology closer to Islam than that of other Christians. They played a remarkable role in the formative period of Arab-Islamic civilization. Having also known a formidable missionary expansion in central Asia and the Indian sub-continent in the 8th and 9th centuries, they suffered losses, after a short-lived favourable situation, following the Mongol invasion. Because the Nestorians were weakened by internal dissensions, the Catholic missionaries succeeded in establishing a Chaldean church united with Rome (1553). They were weakened further by the Protestant missions since 1831. Most cruel, however, was the 20th century, when they lost almost two-thirds of their faithful in a series of massacres. Many of them were condemned to dispersion and exile following unkept Russian and British promises of a national homeland and accumulated hatred against them by their Arab-Muslim neigh-

bours, who saw them as local instruments of foreign powers.

The *Rum-Orthodox* or *Greek Orthodox*, identified in ecumenical circles as *Eastern Orthodox*, did not retain the name "Melkite". Only the Greek-Catholic (Uniate) church continues to use the attribute, whose original meaning in Syriac is "royalist", given to those who were faithful to the emperor (*melek*), who convened the council of Chalcedon (451). Grouped in three patriarchates – Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem – they corresponded, in the 5th century, to the relatively more Hellenized faction of Christianity. But in Syria and Palestine they were equally anchored in the Arab ethnicity. In spite of their religious and cultural links with Byzantium, they were able to adapt to the new Arab-Islamic order and made a significant contribution to the nascent state. Their arabization was subsequently accelerated at the expense of Greek and Syriac. The Ottoman conquest associated them intimately with other Orthodox churches. They became part of the Rum millet (i.e. nation), whose head is the patriarch of Constantinople. Latin missionaries were able to divide them, creating a Greek-Catholic patriarchate in 1724. In their attempt to resist Catholic, and subsequently Protestant, pressures, they counted on Greek and, later, Russian support. They regained their full independence and engaged actively in the modern movement of Arab revival (*Nahda*).

The *Oriental Orthodox*, or non-Chalcedonian Orthodox churches, constitute one ecclesial family, although each member has its own personality and liturgical language.

After a period of Byzantine persecutions, the *Syrians*, formerly labelled as *Jacobites* by their Chalcedonian opponents, experienced a remarkable development in the early 7th century following the Sassanide conquest of eastern Byzantine provinces. They were able, later and under Islamic rule, to contribute significantly to a cultural growth crucial to Arab-Islamic civilization. The decline of their influence started, however, during the second half of the 9th century. With the exception of an improvement during the aftermath of the Mongol invasion, the deterioration of their conditions continued. Under the Ottomans, they did not constitute a millet of their own but had to relate to the state

through the Armenian patriarch of Constantinople. Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, they were weakened by internal dissensions, provoked and exploited by Ottoman interventions and Western missionary activity. In 1656 a Syrian-Catholic church was constituted. In the 19th century they suffered from the backlash of the Russian advance into Ottoman territory and the emancipation movements in the Balkans. The treaty of Lausanne (1923) establishing the frontiers of today's Turkey did not count the Syrian community among recognized minorities. A number of Syrian Orthodox of Turkey joined their co-religionists in Syria and Lebanon. But a movement of emigration to Australia, the USA and Scandinavia reduced more substantially their numbers in Turkey and, to a lesser extent, in Syria and Lebanon.

The *Copts* are by far the largest Christian community in the Arab world. The links between their culture and that of ancient Egypt go beyond mere ethnic continuity. Egyptian Christianity, whose history goes back to Mark the evangelist, flourished in the 3rd century. Towards the end of the century, Copts suffered strong persecution, with monasticism developing soon after. Both martyrdom and desert spirituality shaped the Coptic religious consciousness. After 451 the non-Chalcedonian faith manifested itself as a sort of national religion. A Coptic particularism, nurtured by anti-Byzantine feelings, explains an attitude towards the Islamic conquest varying from passivity to welcome. The conditions of the Copts deteriorated, and their numbers decreased from the second half of the 9th century until the early 19th century. With the modernizing policy of Muhammad Ali (viceroy of Egypt, 1805-48), they regained a significant role in the life of the Egyptian nation. But the 19th century also witnessed the expansion of Catholic and Protestant missions. A Coptic Catholic church was created in 1899, and in 1926 a Coptic Protestant church achieved independence from Presbyterian missions. Following the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, the Coptic involvement in what became the national movement gained great momentum.

The *Armenians* have been in the Arab world since the massacres of 1915 that

drove them away from their ancestral lands in Cilicia. Although partially arabized, they integrated fully into the life of the various countries in the region. An Armenian Catholic Church, constituted in 1740, and an Armenian Evangelical Union, established in 1846, grew out of missionary activity both in historical Armenia and in the diaspora.

The *Catholic communities*, whose history goes back to the early phases of missionary activity in the Ottoman empire, are often pejoratively called *Uniates*. With the exception of the Chaldean church, they are less important numerically than their "mother churches", although their influence outweighs their numbers. They strive to see themselves, and be seen, as deeply rooted in the East and firmly united with Rome. Having been held up as a model for unity between East and West, they see their legitimacy under serious question in the Catholic church itself, let alone in its dialogue with Orthodoxy. Often perceived by the Orthodox as an obstacle towards rapprochement, many among them affirm, but without much success so far, a role as bridge-builders.

In addition to the five united communities (Chaldean, Syrian-Catholic, Greek-Catholic, Armenian-Catholic and Coptic-Catholic), there are two Catholic communities whose history diverts from the above described pattern.

The *Maronites* trace their history to the figure of the great monk Maro (d. 407), and their nuclear group to a monastic community in the patriarchate of Antioch. Although Syriac-speaking, they chose the camp of Chalcedon but subsequently followed Emperor Heracles in his attempt to reunify Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians through the monothelite compromise. Having thus become a distinct community, they elected their own patriarch of Antioch in the early 8th century. Their contact with the crusaders is decisive in their history. In 1182 they came under the jurisdiction of Rome. They played a major role in the formation of modern Lebanon.

The *Latin community* comprises primarily Palestinian Arabs. Its history goes back to the crusades,\* when the Franks appointed a Latin patriarch to replace the Byzantine. In 1291 the last Latin patriarch was drowned

when Acre was retaken from the crusaders. But the Latin presence was maintained through the Franciscan custody of the holy land, and in 1847 the Latin patriarchate was re-established to safeguard the Catholic rights in the holy land. Its main objective was not to constitute a community of faithful, but such a community was formed through the patriarchate and its institutions.

The influence of the various *Protestant churches*, established in the 19th century by American and European missionaries, cannot be measured only by their (small) numerical size. Their numerous social and educational institutions played, and continue to play, a role beyond the borders of their communities. Their denominational distinctives, often unrecognized in the eyes of other Christians, were increasingly relativized in favour of a more inclusive Protestant ("Evangelical") identity. But many Middle East Protestants are aware that their self-assertion as Protestants perpetuates their alienation from the original communities to which they belonged. Encouraged by their partner churches in the West, they have contributed significantly to the genesis and development of ecumenism.

## THE ECUMENICAL SITUATION

The emergence and growth of the ecumenical movement in the 20th century and the dilemmas it faces at the beginning of the new century invite a critical examination in the light of three changing realities.

The first concerns the increasing interactions and exchanges between Christians. Borderlines between Christian communities are not always clearly delineated. A greater social intercourse, leading in some countries to a significant rise in mixed marriages (esp. in Lebanon), favours a popular and impatient ecumenism. Seen by a significant number of laypeople as primarily an encounter between persons and local communities or groups, such ecumenism de-emphasizes doctrine and ecclesiology while advocating unrestricted cooperation as well as intercommunion. Concomitantly, however, the confessional and ecclesial identities continue to shape global community relations. In many instances, a re-awakened self-consciousness, religious or cultural-social-political, vies with the enthusiastic pursuit of Christian

solidarity and the search for a common witness. Ecumenical thinking, initiative-taking and activities are thus torn between a practical, non-doctrinal imperative and that of a heightened ecclesial consciousness.

The second reality pertains to the effects of worldwide ecumenical relations on the regional or national scene. Since its inception, the ecumenical movement has been at the convergence of an internal dynamic of renewal in the churches and an external stimulation. Renewal movements within the various churches were the primary ecumenical forces, but the churches as a whole would not have engaged in the pursuit of ecumenism had they not been encouraged by the spirit and policies of rapprochement between Christians which prevailed throughout the world in the 1960s and the 1970s, which provided the institutional support they needed to set in place the instruments for ecumenical work. Such external impetuses may be ending, in so far as international tensions set limits to what can be achieved ecumenically between local churches in the nations or regions of the Middle East. These churches take seriously their communion with their mother and sister churches.

The third reality touches on the relations of Christians to their Muslim fellow citizens and neighbours. The ecumenical commitment, in its early phase, was marked by a concern for Christian witness in society. Christians affirmed their loyalty to their nations and upheld their great causes. They strove to express their solidarity with the victims of injustice beyond the confines of the Christian community and sought to strengthen the bonds that united them, in a dialogue of life, with their Muslim neighbours. This commitment, however, could not by itself totally remove the historically determined attitudes of fear, self-isolation and concern for survival felt in some Muslim communities. Subsequent political developments have seemed to reverse the situation. No one can ignore the present disquiet of many Christians caused by the multiplying effect of an increasingly unfavourable demography, the political and economic failures of national states and movements, and the fear of intolerance and fanaticism associated with the mounting Islamic radicalism.

In this context, ecumenism could be overcome by a preoccupation with Christian survival. An alarmist and exaggerated self-centred preoccupation, far from dissipating unease, might accelerate the realization of what Christians fear, leading to the disastrous alternatives of ghetto or emigration.

While the ecumenical movement cannot ignore its obligation to preserve and strengthen a visible Christian presence in the Middle East, it equally must not lose sight of the meaning of a church presence. Such a presence, to paraphrase Antiochian Orthodox Patriarch Ignatius IV, implies patience but also courage, not in reacting or asserting ethnic and linguistic particularism in a conservatism of survival, but searching for the Christian identity in rediscovering the church's vocation.

See also **Middle East Council of Churches.**

TAREK MITRI

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## MIDDLE EAST COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

THE ECUMENICAL movement was a reality among the churches of the Middle East\* long before the emergence of the word "ecumenism" in this century. This was because of the attempts they made to recover their unity that had been damaged by the divisions in the Middle East during the first centuries of Christianity. Some 12 million Christians live in the region, despite divisions and external challenges, and witness on behalf of world Christianity, linking it historically with its origin.

An important milestone in the history of the ecumenical movement in the Middle East was the establishment of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) in 1974 as the successor to the largely Protestant and Episcopal Near East Council of Churches, formed ten years earlier. In 1990, the seven Roman Catholic churches of the region became the fourth church family to join the membership of MECC, thus making it the ecumenical representative of the great majority of Christians of the region.

The continuity of Christian presence in the Middle East is secured by Middle East Christians in the land where our Lord was born and lived, a land that was sanctified by the blood of apostles, saints and martyrs (see **martyrdom**). For this reason, the MECC is committed to promoting spiritual renewal and dialogue between the churches of the region, and aims at helping them strengthen their unity and common witness. It also calls upon churches all over the world to support and enable Middle East Christians and churches to live in their lands in freedom and actively to participate with other religious communities in developing their nations and societies towards a just peace.

The MECC is organized along the lines of “families” of churches rather than on the basis of individual church membership. Three families – Oriental Orthodox, Eastern Orthodox and Protestant/Episcopal – were founding members. In 1988, the seven Catholic churches of the region (from different ethnic and cultural origins) decided to join and in 1990 they were unanimously received into the MECC membership as the fourth family of churches. Virtually all Middle Eastern Christians are now represented in the MECC. The membership now includes the following “families” of churches: (a) the Oriental Orthodox: the Coptic, Armenian of Cilicia and Syrian of Antioch, (b) the Eastern (Greek) Orthodox: the patriarchates of Antioch, Alexandria, Jerusalem and the archbishopric of Cyprus, (c) the Catholic: the Maronite of Antioch, the Syrian of Antioch, the Coptic, the Armenian of Cilicia, the Latin of Jerusalem, the Chaldean of Babylon, the Greek Catholic of Antioch (Melchite), and (d) the Evangelical (Protestant) and Episcopal: the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon, the Na-

tional Evangelical Church of Beirut, the Coptic Evangelical Church Synod of the Nile, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Iran, the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, the Evangelical Church in Sudan, the Presbyterian Church in Sudan, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordan, the Episcopal Church of Jerusalem and the Middle East, the Episcopal Church in Sudan

The overarching goal of the MECC is Christian unity – unity in diversity. The programme priorities of the MECC reflect the collective concerns of Middle Eastern churches as well as a conscious response to the challenges of the region.

*Christian presence* in the Middle East is the historical and geographical continuation of the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ as that is incarnated in this region. It provides the region’s people and people throughout the world with a model for how to live a life of dialogue in an environment which is highly pluralistic. This model is built upon the example and testimony of those who first preached the Christian gospel and bore their unique witness in the world. Christians in the Middle East are heirs to a unique Christian heritage that has been shaped through long experience of interacting with many significant ancient cultures – Aramaean, Hebraic, Egyptian, Hellenic, Roman, Persian, Armenian, Turkish and Arabic. As we enter the third millennium, Middle Eastern Christians continue to contribute cultural and spiritual richness to their region. By focusing on ecumenical formation and spirituality, and providing alternatives to emigration, the MECC is committed to a Christian presence that is qualitatively valuable, meaningful and necessary.

When the church addresses issues of human worth, *human dignity*, meaning and value it begins with the human being as a spiritual being with spiritual aspirations and needs. These directly relate to all areas of human existence – economic, political, technological, educational, social, aesthetic and vocational. Justice, peace and human rights are key concerns of the Council. On the basis of the Christian faithfulness to the gospel, the MECC has always tried to avoid passiveness on issues where justice and truth must be expressed. It has always been guided by its con-

cern for human beings and the defence of their rights and obligations. Member churches have diligently voiced their position that “justice presupposes dignity for all and is itself contingent on the eradication of violence, extremism, fanaticism and intellectual or physical terrorism. We call on and seek to strengthen the spirit of understanding, mutual respect and trust for peace among or between all communities, people or nations.”

Faith motivates the MECC and the churches of the Middle East to participate in cultivating an open *civil society*. The MECC itself mirrors civil society\* in that it is the product of a dialogue among the churches in the Middle East, a dialogue that does not exclude their friends in the West. Faced with the choice of limiting their activity only to a sacramental ministry that shapes an inward-turning, isolationist frame of mind, or of engaging in the wider dimensions of civil society, the churches have chosen the latter. Churches and church-related organizations in the Middle East have a worthy and sustained record of service to the whole community. This has led to a healthy engagement with other religious communities, with NGOs and with the society at large. In the process of this engagement, many church-related organizations are becoming more open, accepting input from people outside the specific community that initially launched the group. The Council helps different groups to network and pool resources, and will continue its work on dialogue, citizenship, equality and freedom particularly through its charter membership in the Arab working group on Muslim-Christian dialogue embodied in “Christian and Muslims Together – a Charter for a Dialogue of Life and Common Action”, adopted in 2001.

The Council is sharply aware of the *globalization* of economy and its dramatic effects on the labour market. Whole networks – from labour procurers to local placement agencies – are now fully developed, and are all too often tied in with the same networks that handle the “flesh trade” in illegal asylum-seekers and refugees. Migrant workers and labourers are now a standard feature in virtually all Middle Eastern countries, even some of the poorest. Globalization is also manifested in political vio-

lence and wars exceeding the bounds of governments and local societies. The global war on terrorism has blurred the lines between legitimate resistance to occupation and gratuitous violence – a glaring example of which is the situation in Palestine. Within its units and programmes, the Council gives priority to and lays greater stress upon understanding and challenging globalization in its various aspects. Serious concern has been expressed for how to sustain the integrity of indigenous culture and the heritage of the churches at a time when cultures are undergoing creative (or disruptive) change. In the spirit of diakonia, the MECC is committed to serving the poor, the oppressed, the marginalized, the refugee, the displaced and the migrant, regardless of identity, colour, creed or ideological orientation.

Of particular concern to the MECC in recent years has been the increased activity in the region of Western Evangelical and fundamentalist Christians. The MECC undertook a number of initiatives seeking to explain the misunderstandings caused by the actions of these groups, and in doing so it has received significant response from Western Christians collectively and cooperatively to address these issues.

In order for spiritual renewal and ecumenical understanding and cooperation to reach churches, both the leadership and the parish members, the MECC lends great importance to *communication*. It publishes and distributes a number of bulletins and magazines (in Arabic, English and French) that promote understanding of the image and role of the Council among the public, in the region and globally. Furthermore, the MECC has set up a website with detailed information, reports and contact details for the Council.

The general assembly, executive committee and programme commissions/committees are composed of the same number of delegates from the four families of member churches. The general secretary and associates from the families of churches often act as directors of programme units and coordinate them. Four heads of churches from the four member church families are presidents of the MECC. The head office is in Beirut, Lebanon. Liaison offices are located in Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Jerusalem and Cyprus. Seven general

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assemblies have been held since its founding.

LEOPOLDO NILIUS and RIAD JARJOUR

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## MIGRANT CHURCHES

THE MULTIPLICATION of migrant churches is a new development in the history of European Christianity and deeply changes its constituency. Whereas the first waves of immigrants after the second world war were mostly adherents of well-known world religions such as Islam and Hinduism, today the majority of immigrants from the Caribbean, Africa and Asia to Europe are Christians. There is a growing "black Christianity" affirmed as such on a previously "white" continent. This new balance of immigrants reflects exponential church growth in the countries of origin during the past decades, whereas the urge to emigrate in general arises from the collapse of social, economic and political systems. It is strengthened by the hope of finding better living conditions in Europe.

Integration of Christian immigrants from the South in European historical churches occurs in many ways, but there is a general preference for the creation of independent prayer cells and local congregations, for several reasons: the initiative of migrant leaders who cannot meet the Western canons of church ministry or who simply claim to have received a special calling; ethnic and linguistic affinities; loyalty to a modern Christian denomination (mainly with Pentecostal or Evangelical leanings); and, most significantly, love for a specific inculturation of Christianity dearly obtained in the original African, Caribbean or Asian context. Another incentive is the example of and competition with non-Christian networks and organizations of immigrants accepted by the civil society and sometimes recognized by the state. Christian immigrants do not want to be left behind.

Some observers explain the creation of migrant churches as a reaction to white European racism. As a matter of fact, black Christian foreigners are not always welcome in European congregations, despite official exhortations or motions by synods against racism (Netherlands Reformed Church, gen-

eral synod 1992: "Racism Is Sin"; Reformed Church of France, national synod 1998: "Welcoming Foreigners"). However, the frustrating experience of racism does not in itself provide believers with strong enough institutional incentives. To found a church requires a definite church model, for instance congregationalism, which is sustained by a high cultural self-consciousness.

Many ecumenical problems arise from the multiplication of migrant churches in Europe. Mainline churches accustomed to ecumenical dialogue with well-known partners will be forced to open new consultations with unknown church bodies belonging to other Christian traditions, often imbued with high missionary principles. The Roman Catholic episcopates have set up a pastoral network for migrants, whereas Protestant churches tend to accept migrant churches as new organizations in their own right (Evangelical Church in Germany, pastoral note on ecumenical cooperation with congregations of foreign origin or language, 1996; Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy, Being the Church Together project, 1990-98). On their part, migrant churches have created national and international networks in order to foster cooperation, organize ministerial formation, and strengthen their identity (SKIN in the Netherlands; European meetings of the African Christian diaspora\*).

MARC SPINDLER

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## MIGRATION

WHETHER they leave their country for reasons of economic survival or to escape persecution, migrants are "uprooted" people. After the wrench of parting from their country, they experience the pain of its loss. In most cases they try, singly or in groups, to maintain their identity – so indispensable for fac-

ing the future, whether adapting themselves to the new society, becoming integrated in it, or perhaps preparing for an eventual return. In 2000 the number of migrants worldwide was estimated at 150 million, of whom 15 million were recognized as refugees.\*

Migration affects all continents, with a particular concentration in certain regions, such as Brazil, Central America/USA, Haiti, Mozambique, the Middle East, Philippines and the Mediterranean basin. The main routes for migrant workers, however, run from South to North, from the poor countries to the industrialized countries.

A differentiation must be made between refugees and migrants. Refugees are migrants who, for security reasons, cannot return home. They are thus entitled to an appropriate legal status. Migrants are those who have left their countries in search of economic survival and a viable future for themselves and their children. The purpose of migration is no longer to people "empty" territories, as during the first half of the 20th century. Both refugees and migrants, however, always experience a deterioration of rights, civil and political, economic and social, or even national (e.g. of minorities\*).

In theory, economic migrants are moved to migrate for personal reasons. Their departure is said to be a voluntary choice. In reality, most economic migration is due to two main factors: (1) the need for a labour force, a demand and sometimes even a search organized more or less clandestinely by the industrial or the industrializing countries; (2) under-development in countries which are "pools of labour" but which do not offer survival or prospects, or the decent and full life to which every human being can aspire. The contrast between wealth and poverty and the combination of the "push-pull" effect naturally results in the creation of migratory currents. It is difficult, therefore, to argue that migrant workers are acting freely. Rather, they are often forced by economic conditions to leave their countries.

The economic crises of the 1970s and 1990s, the effects of the subsequent restructuring of enterprises and the use of new technologies have led governments to impose severe restrictions on immigration. Yet the need for a compliant, flexible and cheap labour force remains; it engenders an "irreg-

ular" or "illegal" migration and the existence of masses of workers without rights who are often exploited. As governments make it more difficult for people to enter their territories legally, migrants are increasingly forced to turn to traffickers to smuggle them across borders. Trafficking in human beings – and particularly trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation – has become big business, now surpassing even the illicit trade in narcotic drugs. For the migrant, using the services of traffickers is often seen as the only way to escape poverty and move to a country where it is possible to find employment. But stories abound of the abuse of migrants at the hands of traffickers. In addition, the presence and inevitable integration of migrants who have put down roots provokes xenophobic and racist reactions in many places. Racial and xenophobic violence directed at foreigners is increasing dramatically, not only in Europe but also in countries such as Indonesia, Lebanon and South Africa. The deliberate achievement of multi-cultural societies is still difficult.

Whether we like it or not, foreigners constitute a mirror in which societies and churches can see their own reflections. Our behaviour towards them, individually and collectively, shows clearly how we measure up to principles of equality, justice\* and respect for the human person in practice and not simply in theory. Their presence constitutes a call to solidarity, justice and respect for human rights within a profoundly unjust world. They are a challenge to civilization and culture.\*

Diakonia\* is thus called to recognize a new dimension of service. If it is to be more than mere rhetoric, it must tackle the causes of injustice and exploitation, demanding the universal application of legal and social protection to all people without exception. These dimensions affect the economy, collective behaviour and even the political field, for which many Christian communities find themselves poorly prepared.

Some churches and movements, however, have not remained indifferent. The Christian Conference of Asia has called in particular for a struggle against the exploitation of women and support for migrant organizations; the National Christian Council of Japan has supported the defence of Kore-

ans against racial discrimination; in Lesotho the churches have made concerted efforts in favour of the defence and education of exploited mine workers in South Africa; in the USA, the “undocumented” workers who have crossed the Mexican border are given special legal and social support by certain churches. In Europe there is a fairly developed conscience within the churches, and efforts are concentrated on three main fronts: legal protection, the struggle against discrimination and pastoral care. A particular emphasis from 2000 onwards has been to put demands for migrants’ rights in the context of the broader struggle against racism.

The study of the WCC’s responsibility in the area of migration was recommended by the central committee in 1956. The third assembly (New Delhi 1961) and the Church and Society conference (Geneva 1966) each called for special campaigns. This call led to the creation of the secretariat for migration within the WCC’s Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service, which, among other activities, published *Migration Today*. In 1999, as a result of WCC re-structuring, the work of the migration secretariat was incorporated into the International Relations team. In Europe the Churches Commission on Migrants in Europe (CCME) was created to encourage greater church engagement with migrants and to advocate on their behalf. In recent years CCME’s mandate has expanded to include refugees and displaced people as well as those uprooted in Central and Eastern Europe.

In 1995 the central committee “challenged member churches to protect and promote respect for all uprooted people: refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants... to take action to address the root causes of forced displacement... and to accompany uprooted people, by providing diaconal services, support and solidarity without discrimination”. The churches were also called to mark 1997 as a year of churches in solidarity with uprooted people; many churches throughout the world responded with special initiatives to raise awareness about the needs of migrants, refugees and displaced persons.

See **migrant churches**.

ANDRÉ JACQUES and ELIZABETH G. FERRIS

## MILITARISM/MILITARIZATION

THE TERM “militarism” usually refers to a stockpiling of armaments, a growing role of the military in national and international affairs, the use of force as an instrument of political power, and a dominant influence of the military in civilian affairs. International relations (see **international order**) are increasingly viewed as power relations to be determined militarily, and the influence of the military and the use of force have become more common internally. “Militarism” is used with different connotations in different parts of the world and is too often applied in political and ideological discourse without precise definition. Historically the term has been used to describe well-known phenomena such as Bonapartism, the rise of German imperial strength, the ascendancy of Japan or some fascist variants of expansionist regimes. These models are inadequate for a deeper understanding and analysis of contemporary militarism, both in the third world and in the developed countries, capitalist and socialist.

The fifth assembly of the WCC (Nairobi 1975) called upon the churches and the WCC to “raise consciousness about the dangers of militarism and search for creative ways of educating for peace”. The consultation on militarism organized by the WCC’s Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (Glion, Switzerland, 1977), the first ecumenical consultation specifically on the theme, said: “Militarization should be understood as the process whereby military values, ideology and patterns of behaviour achieve a dominating influence on the political, social and economic affairs of the state and as a consequence the structural, ideological and behavioural patterns of both the society and government are militarized. Militarism should be seen as one of the more perturbing results of this process.”

While militarism is in no way confined to the third world, the major ecumenical concerns have centred on the spread of militarism there. A number of third-world countries are ruled by military regimes; many others display a process of militarization. Contributing factors to militarism in third-world countries have included super-power competition, the creation and maintenance

of spheres of influence, the use of the army as the primary agent for modernization, and the failure of democratic governments to provide order\* and justice.\* A disquieting trend of militarism in many third-world countries has been para-militarization, which is an intensive and systematic use of civilians for repression.

The statement on "Peace and Justice" by the sixth assembly of the WCC (Vancouver 1983) said: "Through the Council's work on militarism since the fifth assembly we have come to understand more fully the dire consequences for justice of the increasing reliance of the nations on armed forces as the cornerstone of their foreign – and often domestic – policies. Justice is often sacrificed on the altar of narrowly perceived national security interests."

On the national level, militarization leads to the concentration of power, the weakening of democratic governments, the violation of human rights and the institution of authoritarian rule. Militarily it promotes armaments, including the development, acquisition and deployment of new weapon systems. Economically it tends to give preference to military expenditures, thus impeding efforts for development.

In countries where military leaders hold the reins of political power, their control is routinely associated with violations of basic human and political rights, including torture, brutality, disappearances and political killing.

In countries where the armed forces once enjoyed a dominant and organized political position, true demilitarization is often difficult, for the armed forces frequently attempt to influence the successor government. And the possibility of re-intervention is always present. However, in some Latin American countries the failure of the military regimes, the constraints of the adjustment programmes and the armies' experience of their own internal corruption in the exercise of government have reduced the danger of military intervention and led to a search for a new role for the armies. A new danger of corruption and intervention exists, however, in the attempt, stimulated by the USA, to give a role to the armies in the so-called war against drugs.

There are several problems in the transition from military regimes to civilian gov-

ernments. Constitutional guarantees and civil rights may be re-established in an effort to maintain the new, fragile government, yet repressive laws of the former regime have often been retained. Human rights\* advocates, including the churches, often find themselves in a dilemma because too much pressure on the government may bring back the military. This possibility exists because of uncertainty about the role of the military in the new context, as well as the desire of the military not to be punished for its misdeeds during the previous regime.

An important factor to be taken into account is a new self-understanding of the role of the military. Even in countries where democratic transformation has taken place, the influence of the military is considerable and often a continuing threat. Military involvement in civilian areas of life is often not easy to reverse.

Advances in military technology and violent ethno-nationalist conflicts (see **ethnic conflicts**), some of them leading to genocide and so-called ethnic cleansing, have added new dimensions to militarism. Perhaps more significant are the implications of the Gulf war. The tendency to absolutize the enemy with the insistence on total victory as the only acceptable outcome, the susceptibility of the UN to militarist diplomacy and the legitimization of war as a means of politics – all have given new meaning to militarism.

NINAN KOSHY

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## MILLENNIALISM

IN CHRISTIAN eschatology\* "millennialism" refers to belief in a millennium (Latin), a thousand years of "the last days" on earth before the final judgment. The conviction is

based on biblical prophecies interpreted as predictions, e.g. Dan. 2 and, with the only explicit mention of the number 1000, Rev. 20:1-6.

## TERMS

The questions are perennial, but today virtually only Protestant Evangelicals\* and Pentecostals,\* especially fundamentalists,\* highlight them and dispute over the answers: In the relation between historical time and God's eternal realm, how does a Christian read God's plan according to God's calendar? When and where will be Christ's second coming, the parousia? What will be the condition then of the world and the human community? What is the nature of "the thousand years" and the reign of Christ with his saints?

The prefixes to the word "millennium" indicate general responses in church history. In the post-millennial view, Christ returns *after* the historical thousand years; for pre-millennialists, Christ returns *before*, to introduce the earthly millennium. Advocates study world events and trends, reacting either in benevolent optimism (post-millennialists) or in dire pessimism (pre-millennialists) to the fulfilments each sees of biblical predictions. A third position is "inaugurated eschatology", non- or, most used, a-millennialism. It disclaims the earthly thousand years, and believes the reign of God is here in an already/not yet tension until the Son's second coming. When? Nobody knows except the Father (Mark 13:32). God reveals no clues.

## HISTORY

With strong roots in Jewish apocalyptic ideas, images and movements, the early church, according to many scholars, "derived its initial élan from radical millennialism" (Y. Talmon). The second and third generations of Christians had to face the non-appearance of the parousia, a crisis already faced by Paul (1 Thess. 4:13-5:11) and by Peter (2 Pet. 3:3-4). Keeping alive millennial hopes of earthly crisis or judgment or vindication were writers such as Samaria-born Justin Martyr (d.165), Irenaeus of Lyons (d.202), Hippolytus of Rome (d.235), Tertullian of Carthage (d.230) and Lactantius (d.320?). Pre-millennialism in extreme practice and piety first appeared in Asia Minor.

In the 170s the Montanist "New Prophecy" group believed Christ's return so imminent that they structured their personal and communal life in bizarre, ecstatic ways. Although local Eastern synods and Pope Zephyrinus (199-217) condemned the movement, Montanism continued to move across the East and in North Africa, until severe legislation by Emperor Justinian (ruled 527-67) all but destroyed it.

Influenced by the favoured status of the church in the Roman empire, the a-millennialist position then became prevalent. Augustine of Hippo (d. 430) was its leading authority. In his *City of God*, he gives only allegorical or spiritual interpretations to the relevant biblical texts. The thousand years symbolize the entire finite period between Christ's birth and his return – the age of the church.

Augustine's prevailing position could not quiet sporadic millennialistic expectations. Many local gatherings expected the millennium in 1000 (looking back at the incarnation) and then in 1033 (looking at the passion). In the middle ages persistent demands arose for church reforms, especially of the papacy. Abbot Joachim of Fiore (d.1202) introduced the attractive theme of consecutive Trinitarian eras of history. In the third era, that of the Spirit, God intervenes through the Angelic Pope, who thoroughly reforms the church, and transfers the holy see to Jerusalem, where he holds several councils for the conversion of the world. The church witnesses a Pentecost-like outpouring of the Spirit, who spiritually illumines the believers everywhere.

In a Europe troubled by locals wars and plagues and by Muslim Turk encroachments, apocalyptic prophets were rife. Girolamo Savonarola (d.1498) tapped the gloom and hope in Florence with his accusatory prophecies, as did the Taborites, a group of Hussites in Bohemia. With Bible in hand, they had become militant revolutionaries against the established church and Catholic imperial armies, before they gathered in five divinely chosen cities to await the day of wrath and the coming of Christ during February 1420.

The magisterial Reformers opted for a-millennialism, as evidenced in the Lutheran Augsburg confession of 1530 (art. 17), the Church of England's Thirty-nine Articles of 1571 (art. 4), the Calvinist Belgic Confession

of 1619 (art. 37) and the Westminster confession of 1647 (chs 32-33). Nevertheless, the Reformation did introduce shifts which would condition the revivals of post- and pre-millennialism: a dominant literal reading of biblical texts, the viability of schisms within the church of the West and designations of the antichrist,\* e.g. the popes or any religious or political leader(s) of territorial Protestantism who tried to suppress more radical reforming impulses.

Post-millennialism became articulate in the 1800s, in pietistic awakenings, which gave rise to European and American Protestant mission activities at home and in foreign lands (see **missionary societies**). The optimistic signs of the times indicated that the papacy was at its last gasp, and other peoples were more open than ever to receive the good news of their salvation. God's kingdom would reach fruition by preaching that good news to everyone everywhere, through the consequent global expansion of the true church of true believers, and by civilizing all peoples based on gospel principles enfolded in societies and personal behaviour. For Alexander Campbell, a founder of the American Disciples of Christ (1832), Christians coming together in unity is indispensable to the millennial dawning. With sin and evil brought to a minimum, the church will triumph for a thousand years (some use the number symbolically). This preparation closes with Christ's return, the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment.

This vision fuelled the manifest destiny of nations with global intents, namely, Britain, Protestant Europe and the USA. For example, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (1819) judged America "the new Eden", "God's agent to usher in the last days".

Pre-millennialism would have its comeback, with differences in the sub-plots, today propagated by articulate evangelists who skilfully use radio and television. These proponents highlight biblically identified signs of the times which forewarn of Christ's return. These signs include the great apostasy of secularists and the resurgence of Islam, the increase of local wars, famines, earthquakes, floods and global warming. Some see on the near horizon the nuclear holocaust. Hal Lindsey, in his *Late Great Planet Earth* (1973) and

later updated books (which have sold over 30 million copies), designates in his life-time over 500 fulfilled prophecies which "begin the countdown". Soon the antichrist will appear, deceive the nations and persecute the saints. Finally, when the nations gather for the great battle of Armageddon, Christ returns to rescue his saints, crush his enemies and bind Satan. Then with his living and resurrected saints, Christ reigns in Jerusalem for a thousand years of righteousness and prosperity on earth, freed from the prior curse upon it. At the close, Christ briefly unleashes Satan and destroys him, before all will be judged and the eternal states of heaven and hell established.

A species of this apocalyptic pre-millennialism is dispensationalism. It was popularized by Plymouth Brethren John Nelson Darby (1800-92) and by the still best-selling *Scofield Reference Bible* (1909, rev. 1969), widely used in fundamentalist schools and seminaries. It argues that God has divided history into seven consecutive "dispensations". The sixth, the present "church age", will soon end, when Christ comes *for* his saints by the "rapture" or invisibly taking them from the earth, before the final tribulation, and *with* his saints after it. In Israel's Jerusalem, for a thousand years Christ reigns as the priest, law-giver and judge.

In such calendar-fixing, problems constantly arise as predictions of precise time and/or place turn out to be mistaken, and the sincere believers, who had been expecting Christ's imminent return and earthly rewards, return to day-to-day life. In 1534 militant Anabaptists flocked to their captured city of Münster, "the new Jerusalem", expelled or executed its Catholics and Lutherans, and waited for the rest of the world to perish in the upcoming parousia. In April 1689 the Huguenot Camisards gathered to experience Christ's coming in the Cévennes (Languedoc France). The "English prophets" expected the end on 25 March and their final resurrection on 25 May 1707. More recently, some prophets announced that the Y2K computer bug would devastate the world at midnight, 1 January 2000.

### THE CHURCHES TODAY

Groups either fade or discover faults in their calculations, as did the adventist Millerites after the "great disappointment" of

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1843 and 1844 (22 Oct.). Learning from that embarrassment, the now worldwide pre-millennialist Seventh-day Adventist Church\* adjusted by extending the time of the final events.

The fundamentalist Jehovah Witnesses, founded in the 1870s, have a unique premillennial teaching. Christ returned “spiritually” in 1914 and is now overthrowing Satan’s projects. After the Armageddon battle he will set up a theocratic kingdom of resurrected true believers, with his more select 140,000 ruling with him in heaven.

Churches which continue the pre-millennial heritage of the European pietists and Anabaptists include the Church of the Brethren,\* the Mennonites,\* and the Hutterites. Baptist churches virtually ignore the subject in their confessions of faith. Individual Baptists may be pre-millennial, post-millennial or a-millennial, with the last probably the most common among the rank-and-file.

Pre-millennialist Pentecostals, one of the fastest-growing group, view the present outpouring of the Spirit as the “latter rain” from heaven, which profusely restores the spiritual gifts and the fruits of the Spirit (as in the Pauline lists). The outpouring is itself a fulfilment of end-time prophecy. But Pentecostal leaders repeatedly warn against setting dates for Christ’s return, a condition for which is the fulfilment of his prophetic command that the gospel be preached and new disciples ingathered to the end of the earth (Matt. 24:24, 28:19-20).

Such churches form but a visible crest on the wide wave of a current “millennial mood or sensibility” (H. Cox). Varieties are in almost every church whose members are uneasy about the assumptions and conduct of our times, as confirmed by secular commentators who foresee history ending in a spiral of ever-increasing suffering and violence, with environmental and starvation disasters. These Christians are attracted to a blue-printed hope which promises the earthly alternative of a future heaven-like city to replace the present one, too damaged and worn out to be repaired.

The Roman Catholic stance is clearly a-millennial. The official *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1993) judges that “the antichrist’s deception” is the claim “to realize within history [a] messianic hope”; “the

church has rejected even modified forms of this falsification of the kingdom to come under the name of millenarianism” (para. 676). Yet thousands of Catholics who pay serious attention to pre-millennialist media evangelists absorb their general contents into eclectic types of a vague Catholic apocalypticism which foresees the approaching chastisement of the entire world. Aberrations are severely condemned, especially when Mary becomes “the Vengeful Virgin” who, through a prophet-leader, imparts to her holy elites detailed messages of world catastrophe, punishment and damnation, and of excommunication of those church authorities who dare ignore them.

The early church experience of the anti-hierarchical Montanists who believed in the Spirit’s direct guidance in biblical prophecy helped to feed the Eastern bishops with questions about the apostolic authorship of Revelation; and longer than in the West, bishops excluded the book from canonical lists. Although the Greek Orthodox church accepts the book in the canon,\* it continues to omit Revelation in liturgical lectionaries; pastorally, the “unveiling yet concealing and puzzling” book is too dangerous. Perhaps for the same reason, the Oriental Chaldean and Syrian churches never accepted Revelation (see **Oriental Orthodox churches**). This long tradition may explain the absence in the Eastern churches today of serious public pre-millennialist exponents or movements.

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## MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH

MINISTRY in the church has been a focal point of discussion since the origins of the ecu-

menical movement. The inability of some communions to recognize the ministerial orders of others has been a principal obstacle in the effort to achieve visible unity.\* Dialogue has also raised questions about the structure and practice of ministry in a changing world. Prophetic initiatives and new charisms\* have challenged the churches, as has a growing understanding of baptism\* as entry into ministry for the whole people of God.\* Inquiry concerning ministry, whether lay or ordained, cannot be separated from inquiry into the nature and mission of the church\* as such.

Conversations *within confessions or communions* may be ecumenically relevant as they respond to new realities, clarify old positions, or set the stage for wider dialogue. Vatican II,\* for example, brought about changes in the Roman Catholic conception of priestly ministry largely through symbolic, but very real, changes in the celebration of the mass. These changes enhance the people's role and thus act out an apparently new conception of the sources and exercise of ministerial authority. Ecumenically significant as well have been conversations on "calling" in the Reformed tradition, debates on *Amt* (office) in German-speaking Lutheranism, and discussions on "episcopacy" and "succession" in Anglicanism.

Ministry has been a central issue in at least eight *bilateral dialogues*\* at the world level. The aspects considered naturally vary with the history of relationships between the bodies concerned. Texts relevant to the question of ministry may be consulted in *Growth in Agreement I* as follows: Anglican-Lutheran (24-27), Anglican-Orthodox (52-53), Anglican-Roman Catholic (78-87,93,102-05), Baptist-Reformed (147-49), Lutheran-Roman Catholic (179-84, 208-09, 248-74), Methodist-Roman Catholic (328-30,356-62; also *Growth in Agreement II*, 608-16), Old Catholic-Orthodox (417-18), Reformed-Roman Catholic (456- 61).

*Multilateral dialogue*\* on ministry has centred in the Faith and Order\* movement. A generation of collaborative work culminated in 1982 in the ministry part of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*.\* Originally intended as a weaving together of the results of previous ecumenical conversations, this document be-

came a substantially new work in which Roman Catholic and Orthodox participation was added to the original Protestant discussion. The historic threefold ministry\* of bishop, presbyter and deacon is re-affirmed, in the context of a strong affirmation of "the calling of the whole people of God". Within the body's multiplicity of gifts, some people are "responsible for pointing to its fundamental dependence on Jesus Christ". Scarcely addressing the question of the validity of orders, the document acknowledges that the New Testament offers no single pattern of ordained ministry and shows that the development of the threefold pattern has been complex, marked by crises and the indispensable appearance of prophets and charismatic leaders. The threefold ordering is offered as "an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it" (M22). Succession in ministry from the apostles onward is only one of the elements in the apostolicity\* of the church but is not, as thought in some communions, the primary vehicle of apostolicity. Ordination\* is a "sacramental sign", embodying many of the elements which have led some communions to interpret it as a sacrament\* in the full sense. The apostolic reality is seen not only in the churches which have bishops but in all those which express apostolicity in different ways. The BEM ministry document may be read as picturing the whole liturgical assembly, with the presbyters gathered around the bishop as a "focus of unity", not in terms of higher or lower ranks but on a horizontal plane (M8,20-27,29-30; cf. Vatican II, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, para. 41).

In *union negotiations*, the issue of ministry seems most seriously joined when churches of the "catholic" tradition are involved, raising the problem of mutual recognition and reconciliation of ministerial orders. Liturgical acts have been designed, with varying success, to bring about effective unifications of ministry, notwithstanding remaining and acknowledged differences of conception. Many of the more successful unions have been outside Europe and North America, e.g. the South India and North India plans and the negotiation bringing about the Uniting Church in Australia. Several negotiations have so far not borne fruit, notably in Africa and in Great Britain. The salient (but not the only) issue in church union negotia-

tions has been to see to it that all ministers are received and recognized in a way satisfactory to the uniting bodies. Most often this recognition is achieved through a uniting service which includes a mutual laying on of hands seen not as re-ordination but as an act of reconciliation\* and of the giving and receiving of a historic sign of apostolicity. A 1988 proposal by the Consultation on Church Union (COCU)\* in the US would have reconciled ministries in “councils of oversight” composed of persons exercising episcopal functions, whether or not designated as bishops, within their own communions; but the proposal ran into trouble among Presbyterians and Episcopalians, and the member churches were instead challenged by COCU in 1999 to find other ways to achieve a mutual recognition of ministries by 2002 and a full reconciliation of ministries by 2007.

In these arenas of dialogue a range of issues has emerged which together constitute the current “state of the question”. First, what is the distinction, and the relationship, between the ministry of the ordained and other ministries of the church? In what way are the ordained over against the community, and in what way in the community? A gift to the community, or the community’s own choice of leadership? The Canterbury statement of 1973 (Anglican-Roman Catholic) says of the ordained ministry that although they share in the priesthood of the whole people of God and represent the whole church in fulfilment of priestly vocation,\* “their ministry is not an extension of the common Christian priesthood but belongs to another realm of the gifts of the Spirit”.

The theological statement of COCU, speaking of the ordained, says: “Their ordination marks them as persons who represent to the church its own identity and mission in Jesus Christ.” The notion of representation appears to break through the classic alternative between seeing the ordained as different from others in kind or in degree. “Precisely as *representatives* of Christ and his church the ordained ministers are *distinct*, but *what* they represent is not *other* than the character and mission of the whole church” (G. Wainwright).

Second, what is the relation between episcopacy\* and other ordained ministries? Is the distinction between the episcopate and

the presbyterate\* mainly one of jurisdiction among those holding the same order, or is the episcopal order a distinctive and essential one? What ecclesiastical memory predominates: that of the election of a bishop from among the presbyters, or the appointment of local episcopoi by the itinerating apostles?

Third, is “apostolic succession” the sole possession of those who receive it in a “tactile” chain of ordinations claiming to reach back to the earliest times, or does this notion embrace a wider stream of the church’s historic life? The Anglican-Lutheran bilateral stated in 1972: “In confessing the apostolic faith as a community, all baptized and believing Christians are the apostolic church and stand in the succession of apostolic faith” (*Growth in Agreement I*, 24). Is succession in ministry only one of the elements in the apostolic nature of the church, or is it the first and fundamental element?

Fourth, what is the status of the ordination of women? Many Protestant bodies, particularly in the North Atlantic world, now ordain women, but the Anglican communion is split, while Orthodox and Roman Catholic are firmly against it. In some cases, a decision permitting women’s ordination in principle has not been implemented on grounds of conscientious objection by the bishop with jurisdiction or for fear of schism\* in the church. In bodies which have ordained women for some time, there is generally little controversy over the principle, with efforts to achieve greater justice for ordained women in placement and promotion claiming the centre of attention. In other churches, notably the Orthodox, the question of women’s ordination has only just begun to be faced (Rhodes consultation, 1988). Unrest on the subject exists in Roman Catholicism, but there are no signs of official reconsideration.

The Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue has sought to isolate the question from gains achieved on a broader front. Women’s ordination is a “grave obstacle to the reconciliation of our communions”, but the “principles upon which this doctrinal agreement rests are not affected by such ordinations; for it was concerned with the origin and nature of the ordained ministry, not with the question who can or cannot be ordained”.

Important ecumenical consultations on this subject have been held in Klingenthal (1979) and Sheffield (1981). A statement by F&O may be found in the 1975 document "Baptism, Eucharist and a Mutually Recognized Ministry" (Accra 1974, Nairobi 1975). The BEM document (Lima text, 1982) radically abbreviates this treatment. It recognizes differences among the churches, acknowledges that these differences create obstacles to mutual recognition of ministries, counsels mutual openness and encourages facing, rather than avoiding, the fundamental question.

Fifth, what is the relation between traditional orderings of ministry and the many new, contextually responsive ministries and forms of ministerial practice? This question appears in many guises, e.g. with reference to the Latin American church base communities.\* In the face of a general shortage of priests, can the unordained persons who often lead these communities be made eligible to preside at the eucharist? Are these persons, as Leonardo Boff suggests, not unlike the community-chosen "protestant" pastors at the time of the Reformation? What of those who find ministerial callings in settings not involving sacramental and pastoral leadership of a traditional congregation? What of ministry which is essentially participatory enablement of the people of God in their prophetic tasks?

Finally, what should be the impact of new conceptions of church and ministry on theological education? The WCC Programme on Theological Education kept in touch with numerous attempts around the world to find fresh ways to prepare ministers for their callings. Many of these efforts involve departures from the traditional Western connection between seminary education and the culture of the university, turning instead to "theological education by extension", i.e. contextually based, inductive, experiential programmes conducted in the midst of the people and related to problems of faith and witness where they live.

Clear gains include general agreement that NT patterns in themselves do not settle today's issues, agreement that apostolic succession involves more than continuity of tactile ordination by bishops, awareness that the social context counts and that the meanings of words and practices depend on the culture

and usage involved, agreement that actual practices are important and may not always correspond to traditional patterns, agreement that the whole people have a ministry based on their baptism, discovery of the importance of liturgical practice and convergence in the liturgical expression of ordination, movement towards more popular and less restrictive patterns of practice and governance.

One cannot foresee whether these trends will continue, or whether indeed they will prove to have been the important ones for the future of the church. It is difficult to discern, as well, whether local contextuality will triumph over universal convergence or the reverse, or whether possibly a new accommodation between these values will eventually emerge.

See also **church order; diaconate; laity/clergy; priesthood.**

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## MINISTRY, THREEFOLD

THE THREEFOLD ministerial pattern of bishops, presbyters and deacons has been and remains a central theme in ecumenical discussion on the nature of the church\* and its

ministry. Convictions about the necessity or optionality of such a pattern are bound up with different readings of Christian history and with different theologies of ministry and church.

The plurality of church orders in the New Testament communities means that few would now see the NT as warranting exclusively the threefold ministry, especially in its developed form. However, while it is easy in retrospect to over-emphasize the formality and coherence of early Christian institutional life, the threefold order emerges in the 2nd and 3rd centuries as the dominant pattern, largely as a means of securing the church's unity\* and continuity. It is also important to bear in mind the influence of secular patterns of social organization on the church as it moves away from local, occasional patterns to more uniform structures.

The content of the threefold form varies considerably. Earlier accounts, as already in Ignatius of Antioch, see the bishop as the president of the local assembly, assisted by presbyters, with deacons as community servants; later, as bishops become regional authorities, deacons' duties are assumed by presbyters, who become the local presiding ministers. The picture is further complicated by the place of the minor orders (lectors, acolytes etc.) and of the sub-diaconate, sometimes regarded as a minor order and sometimes as the lowest of the major orders. While the Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican traditions have retained the threefold ministry, the churches of the Reformation have generally adopted a single pastoral ministry of word and sacrament, though sometimes with a form of regional authority.

The centrality of the issue in ecumenical debate in the 20th century was in part ensured by heavy Anglican presence in the nascent ecumenical movement. Anglican conscience on the point derived partly from the 16th-century Anglican ordinals which enshrined the normative status of the threefold order, and partly from the fact that, historically, Anglican identity has frequently been bound up with claims about the validity of Anglican orders and their fidelity to what was construed as the threefold apostolic pattern. Thus the 1927 Lausanne Faith and Order conference recognized dialogue on "the nature of the ministry (whether consisting of

one or several orders)" as central to ecumenical advance. The mature fruit of such dialogue is the document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*.<sup>\*</sup> BEM affirms the threefold pattern as an instrument of continuity and order, making modest claims that this ministry "may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it" (M22). It further asserts that such an order has strong claims to be accepted by churches which have not retained the form, while acknowledging the need for reform of the pattern, especially in the areas of ministerial collegiality and of the profile of deacons.

Churches like the Roman Catholic Church, which regard the threefold order as of the essence of the church, are unlikely to find BEM a sufficiently strong affirmation of its normative status as a prime instrument of unity, catholicity\* and apostolicity,\* while churches in the Reformation tradition which have only one basic ministry of word and sacrament may fear that the validity of their patterns of ministry is being undermined if the threefold order is proposed as the generally accepted pattern. A number of other issues also need to be resolved. It remains unclear exactly what the threefold ministry consists of, given the great variety of descriptions of content both of each office and of their inter-relation. The relation of the episcopate (see **episcopacy**) to the presbyterate\* has been a matter of debate since the early and medieval periods. Is the episcopate an extension of the presbyterate, or does the presbyterate exist by devolution from the episcopate? How is the distribution between these two orders of functions such as confirmation\* or ordination\* to be arranged? The recovery of the diaconate\* as more than a stepping stone to the presbyterate is a further pressing issue to be worked on both theologically and practically if the threefold order is to be properly threefold.

The necessity of clarification and reform in these areas shows that a renewed threefold pattern will of necessity be very different from a re-affirmed medieval pattern of regional episcopate, vestigial diaconate, and presbyterate as the basic local expression of ministry. A further complication is the increasing need to find ways of affirming full-time ministries which have traditionally fallen

outside the threefold pattern (teachers, evangelists, or men and women of prayer). As it stands at present, the threefold ministry offers little guidance as to how such ministries can be affirmed as genuinely apostolic, permanent characteristics of ministry in the assembly. Work on these issues is most fruitfully undertaken by setting questions of ecclesiastical office in the larger theological context of Christ, Spirit and the people of God,\* a context which has so far proved to be immensely fruitful in ecumenical reconciliation.\*

See also **church order, ministry in the church.**

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## MINORITIES

WITH THE CREATION of nation states (see **state**) as political entities during the last two centuries, many natural ethnic borderlines have been disregarded. Power arrangements have led to the drawing of new boundaries, entailing forced division, forced unity, forced assimilation and marginalization of peoples and groups. Often prompted by political and economic motives, this contributed to the emergence of ethnic, national, racial, religious and linguistic minorities.

No definition of "minority" has been formally adopted, but the working definition developed by a special rapporteur of the United Nations sub-commission on prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities has been widely accepted: "a group numerically inferior to the rest of the population of a state, in a non-dominant position, whose members – being nationals of the state – possess ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics differing from those of the rest of the population and show, if only implicitly, a sense of solidarity, directed towards preserving their culture, traditions, religion or language" (Capotorti).

While in the period between the two world wars a system of protection of minorities was established in the framework of the League of Nations, the members of the UN showed little willingness to continue that largely unsuccessful experiment. Many feared that recognition of minorities would constitute a serious threat to the unity and integrity of fragile state structures, and the assumption prevailed that the best solution to the problem of minorities would be to encourage respect for individual human rights. Consequently, efforts by Denmark, Yugoslavia and the USSR to have a provision on minority rights included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) failed. However, at a later stage a provision on the rights of minorities, albeit very limited in scope, was accepted as article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), reading: "In those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language."

It appears that the reluctance of the UN to recognize minority rights had a bearing on ecumenical thinking. The first three assemblies of the WCC were silent on this matter, and only the fourth assembly in Uppsala (1968) produced a substantive statement on majorities and minorities (paras 23-26). This statement underlines the need for protection of minorities and the special responsibility of the church but draws attention also to risks of over-stressing minority issues. The Uppsala statement reads in part: "Most nations have ethnic, cultural or religious minorities. These minorities have the right to choose for themselves their own way of life in so far as this choice does not deny the same choice to other groups. Majorities can be insensitive and tyrannical, and minorities may need protection. This is a special responsibility of the church of him who is the champion of the oppressed... But if pressed too far, the rights of minorities can destroy justice and threaten the stability or the existence of the nation. The frustration of a majority by a minority is as incompatible with justice as the persecution of a minority by a majority".

The tension between minority rights and their misuse which characterizes the Uppsala statement is touched upon in a statement on "Unity and Human Rights in Africa Today" adopted by the WCC central committee in January 1971. It notes, "Unity is not an end in itself. National unity must include a recognition of legitimate human rights which also safeguard the basic rights of ethnic minorities."

The ecumenical movement has been particularly supportive of the process which took shape to give concrete expression to the Helsinki Final Act (1975) and has referred in that context to the rights of cultural, linguistic, religious, ideological or ethnic minorities. Thus, Nairobi 1975 defended the rights of minorities in the context of the Helsinki process. Later ecumenical statements, notably also by the WCC central committee in 1989, expressed the same commitment. The Harare assembly (1998) strongly re-affirmed the rights of minorities, especially of indigenous peoples who are particularly threatened by the negative impact of globalization.

THEO VAN BOVEN

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## MISSIO DEI

THE EXPRESSION *missio Dei* (mission of God), usually retained in its Latin form, appeared in the 1950s in the development of a theological basis for missionary activity, especially in Anglican-Protestant circles within the International Missionary Council\* (IMC). The concept had been highly refined in Western medieval theology to describe the activities within the Trinity itself (*ad in-*

*tra*) which are expressed in God's "outside" mission (*ad extra*): the Father sends the Son; the Father and the Son send the Spirit for the redemption of humanity. Already in the 2nd century Irenaeus wrote of the unfolding of God's inner life in the history of salvation,\* and Tertullian refers to "God's own self-distribution" within the saving history, this "economy... which distributes the unity into trinity" – the first known use of the term *trinitas* (*Against Praxeas*, written after 213).

Ever since the Edinburgh world missionary conference of 1910, church\* and mission\* struggled to discover each other. And by the time of the IMC Tambaram conference (1938), largely because of the dominant presence of mission societies\* and councils not directly related to a church or intentionally not a church, the question of Hendrik Kramer to the participants was critical: "The church and all Christians... are confronted with the question, what is the essential nature of the church, and what is its obligation to the world?" If Tambaram was the beginning of an emphasis on the unity and inseparability of church and mission, the theology to support it was not worked out, and it had to be developed in order to satisfy the variety of IMC constituents and to give them a new orientation to the missionary enterprise.

At the Whitby IMC conference (1947), mission representatives proclaimed that "we have entered as never before into the reality and the meaning of the worldwide church", and for the next conference in Willingen (1952), "the missionary obligation of the church" was chosen for the principal theme. The very foundations of the whole missionary movement were in need of re-examination; some even were hearing the death gasps of missions in the traditional sense. Mission and church had met, a new theological understanding of missions was urgent and it must involve a new understanding of the very nature of the church.

But several preparatory papers for Willingen, especially that of the Dutch missiologist J.C. Hoekendijk, as well as conference participants, vigorously criticized the *church-centred* orientation of the missionary enterprise, for missions could easily become narrow in horizon and scope, and the missionary would be defining "the whole surrounding world in

ecclesiological categories... The world has almost ceased to be the world and is now conceived as a sort of ecclesiastical training-ground" (Hoekendijk).

The church is not the true centre of gravity towards which one should direct missionary thinking; rather, it should be the self-revelation of the Triune God (see **Trinity**) in Jesus Christ\* – the *missio Dei* is indeed revealed in the mission of the church but not only in and through the church. The source of the missionary activity is ultimately the Triune God: "Out of the depths of his love for us, the Father has sent forth his own beloved Son to reconcile all things to himself, that we and all men might, through the Holy Spirit, be made one in him with the Father in that perfect love which is the very nature of God" (Willingen report).

Thus in *missio Dei* thinking, however closely mission and church go together, so that "the church lives by mission as a fire exists by burning" (Emil Brunner), still "God is, and remains until the last day, the One who alone carries on the missionary enterprise" (William Anderson). In the strict sense, the sending God alone, through the Sent-God, is the sending authority. No church – and even more so, no missionary society with a measure of independence from the church – dare claim "sending authority" for itself.

Roman Catholics and especially the Orthodox welcomed the *missio Dei* expression, in so far as the Trinitarian approach could offset what they judged to be almost Christomonism in much Protestant mission thinking and piety. But the RC and Orthodox understanding of church as sacrament precludes any sharp either-or of God-sending versus church-sending. Furthermore, while the term *missio Dei* should not be confined to missionary activity but refers to everything God does for the communication of salvation and, in a narrower sense, to everything the church itself is sent to be and do, the classic terms "missionary activity", "evangelism" and "witness" are becoming overloaded, beginning to burst and dissipate, so that by meaning too much they end up meaning too little and doing too little.

TOM STRANSKY

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## MISSIOLOGY

THE TERM "missiology" is used in two related senses: (1) for theological reflection on Christian mission (equivalent to theology of mission, theology of the apostolate or sometimes theory of mission); and (2) more broadly, for the systematic study of all aspects of mission (an English equivalent for the German *Missionswissenschaft*). There is a difference of opinion as to whether the term in this latter sense stands for a distinct academic discipline or whether it simply represents the application of the biblical, dogmatic, historical, sociological and other disciplines to a particular body of subject matter. Those who take the latter view often prefer the term "mission studies". The two senses frequently overlap; the comprehensive account by the Dutch missiologist Jan Jongeneel is divided into "science of mission" (*Zendingswetenschap*) and theology of mission.

*Background and content.* The development of the term is closely related to the developing significance of the term "mission".\* This word took on a new dimension in the 16th century with its application to attempts by Christians from Western Europe to introduce peoples of Asia, the Americas and Africa to the Christian faith, and especially the establishment of bodies of "missionaries" for this task. The encounter of the missionaries with other faiths and other cultures involved considerable re-adjustment. Over several centuries Europe had emerged as the Christian territory par excellence, and Christianity had developed in a highly Europeanized form. Attempts to transmit the faith in settings where it was not already the profession of the community, and to people whose cultural assumptions were quite different, raised issues not covered in traditional theological discourse as well as urgent

questions of method and practice. Systematic study of these issues developed during the 19th century. Initially its principal focus was the propagation of the Christian faith in the non-Western and non-Christian world, and the agencies of its transmission called, by both Catholics and Protestants, "missions". In the 20th century the increasing significance of the churches of Asia and Africa led missiology to consider also "ecumenical" questions, especially those related to the fullness of the church. By mid-century the theological focus had shifted from the mission of the church to the mission of God ("the source of the missionary movement is the Triune God himself", declared the Willingen meeting of the International Missionary Council in 1952). The new focus broadened the scope of missiology to the whole saving activity of God in the world. The acknowledgment of the Trinitarian character of that activity extended the scope of missiology still further, to issues of the environment, society and culture, and later of gender, as well as the long-standing issues of the spread of the gospel, the diversified fullness of the church and relations with other faiths. In a significant shift, the *International Review of Missions*, founded in 1911, changed the last word of its title to *Mission* in 1969.

*History.* The emergence of missiology as an academic discipline can be variously dated; the best claim for a designated post is Alexander Duff's chair at New College, Edinburgh, in 1867. The subject, however, never flourished in Britain, and European missiology owes much to Gustav Warneck, and especially to his professorship at Halle from 1896. Warneck established the first missiological journal in 1874, the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*. Chairs of mission science followed in other German theological faculties (including the first in a Catholic faculty, that of J. Schmidlin at Münster in 1910) and in the Netherlands and Scandinavia. A separate development produced professorships of missions in the USA, where K.S. Latourette introduced a missiological dimension into church history with his teaching at Yale and his monumental *History of the Expansion of Christianity* (1937-45).

The world missionary conference of 1910 gave impetus to the development of

missiology, including the initiation of journals such as the *International Review of Missions*, with its comprehensive bibliography, and the *Moslem* (later *Muslim*) *World*, and the increasing sophistication of worldwide surveys such as the *Statistical Atlas of Christian Missions* (1911). The relevance of scholarship to mission, represented in such figures as J.N. Farquhar, became more widely recognized. Bases for missiological scholarship appeared, such as the Pontifical Urban University in Rome and the Selly Oak Colleges in Birmingham. Specialist libraries developed: the Day Missions Library at Yale, the Missionary Research Library in New York. In the 1960s institutes for cooperative missiological study were established, including the Scottish Institute of Missionary Studies (1967), later related to the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World at Edinburgh University, and the Interuniversity Institute for Missiology and Ecumenics in the Netherlands (1969).

The oldest major learned society in the field is the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Missionswissenschaft. There are other national societies; among them the American Society for Missiology and the South African Missiological Society produce notable journals. In 1947 O.G. Myklebust of Norway published a plan for an international organization of missiological scholars. After a consultation of European missiologists (Birmingham 1968), the International Association for Mission Studies\* came into being in Oslo in 1970, with Myklebust as secretary and H.W. Gensichen as president. It is now fully international in composition, sponsors major conferences, promotes cooperation in research and publishes the journal *Mission Studies*.

The development of Western missiology has been affected since the 1970s by the decline in overseas activity on the part of the mainline churches and by a general shrinking of horizons. In contrast, the movement of the Christian centre of gravity to the non-Western world has given the subject, in both shades of the meaning, of missiology, new impetus and life.

See also *missio Dei*, *missionary societies*.

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## MISSION

WE MAY consider the 20th century in four segments for the purposes of reviewing the understanding of mission in the modern ecumenical movement.

### 1900-21

In the 20th century, mission truly became an ecumenical priority. The century began with two significant events. The first was a meeting of the South India missionary conference at Madras, India, in January 1900. The topics discussed included the native church, its self-support, self-government and self-propagation; and comity of missions and cooperation in mission work. Two convictions about mission were taking shape. The church\* is, by its very nature as the Body of Christ, called to propagate the gospel, which it believes and tries to live; and those coming from afar who attempt to propagate the gospel in any given place must act together, or at least they must not act against each other, for Christ is not divided (see 1 Cor. 1:13).

The second event was an ecumenical missionary conference held in New York four months later, with 2500 participants and an attendance of between 170,000 and 200,000. The conference used "ecumenical" in its title "because the plan of campaign which it proposes covers the whole area of the inhabited globe" – in conformity with the literal meaning of the Greek word "oikoumene". But some participants understood "ecumenical" in the sense of Matt. 24:14: "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world (oikoumene), as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come." Mission was not

just a campaign from Western Christendom to the rest of the world but the gospel of God's kingly rule over *all* nations, to be revealed in God's own time of final judgment. At this conference there was a detailed survey of the areas of mission both existing and to be occupied, and the deliberations expressed the need for some international body to coordinate and promote the mission to the world beyond Europe and North America.

Ten years later, this vision began to find concrete expression in the world missionary conference held at Edinburgh (June 1910), rightly regarded as the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement. The 1200 delegates placed at the centre of their work the obligation to make Christ known to the millions who had not heard the gospel. A sense of urgency was generated, expressed by its chairman, John R. Mott, as "the decisive hour of Christian mission" and "the evangelization of the world in this generation": everything must be done so that all who lived at that time should have an opportunity to hear the gospel and decide for or against Christ. The climax of the meeting was the agreement to appoint an international continuation committee which would, in Mott's words, be "looking steadily at the world as a whole, confronting the world as a unity by the Christian church as a unit".

The first joint effort was the launching in 1912 of the *International Review of Missions*, which quickly became an effective ecumenical forum for reflections on the continuing mission of God. The shattering experience of the 1914-18 world war severely tested the churches of Europe and North America, which had assumed the main burden of carrying out the world mission. It became even more evident that a permanent world body should be established for cooperative consultation and action, and the International Missionary Council\* (IMC) was founded at Lake Mohonk, New York, in October 1921.

The formation of the IMC was above all the work and achievement of a dedicated international band of men and women who had their apprenticeship in the ecumenical youth and student lay movements – the World Alliance of YMCAs\* (1855), the World YWCA\* (1894) and the World Stu-

dent Christian Federation\* (1895). They learned to think, pray and study the Bible in an interdisciplinary way and to do so across national, denominational and racial barriers. Thus in their formative years they acquired an insight and conviction that mission was appropriate both at home and abroad and was concerned with the whole of human life and of the life of nations. The Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship\* (1910) has also nurtured many soundly committed Christians who have played a significant role in an ecumenical understanding of mission.

### 1921-61

Two issues were immediately raised for the IMC. The first was clearly stated already in Edinburgh 1910 and now put in the IMC constitution: no statement should be made “on any matter involving an ecclesiastical or doctrinal question, on which members of the council or bodies constituting the council may differ among themselves”. In other words, divided churches were carrying out the mission. They were proclaiming the gospel in different and even competing ways and thereby transplanting their divisions in other lands. And yet, Christians fervently believed the prayer of Christ “that they may all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:21). Episcopalian bishop Charles Brent had been convinced since Edinburgh that Christians had to face this contradiction of the one gospel’s being proclaimed by the dismembered yet one Body of Christ. His efforts from 1911 were crowned with the formation of the Faith and Order\* movement in 1927, concerned with the faith and order of the church and with working for the unity\* of the church for a more credible mission to the world.

The other issue for IMC was stated in one of its functions: “to help unite the Christian forces of the world in seeking justice in international and inter-racial relations”. This drew attention to the character and scope of mission, which continues to be debated. The missionary movement from Europe and North America to other continents and islands has been carried out in a context of economic, political and military domination and racist attitudes, and some of these

attitudes and behaviour were infecting missionary societies and personnel, in spite of the devoted work they were doing in education, and training in skills, medical and social work, and even advocacy for the rights of the people. The IMC therefore requested its secretary, J.H. Oldham, who had been secretary of the Edinburgh conference, to do a careful study of racism.\* In 1924 Oldham produced a pioneering book, *Christianity and the Race Problem*, in which he stated: “As Christ was sent by the Father, so he sends his disciples to set up in the world the kingdom of God. His coming was a declaration of war – a war to the death against the powers of darkness. He was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. Hence when Christians find in the world a state of things that is not in accord with the truth which they have learned from Christ, their concern is not that it should be explained but that it should be ended. In that temper we must approach everything in the relations between races that cannot be reconciled with the Christian ideal.”

Mission was thus conceived in the spirit of Ps. 24:1: “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world (oikoumene) and those who dwell therein.” Since all persons and all things in the oikoumene belong to the Lord, the task of mission is to manifest the fact that in Christ all peoples are called to be renewed in the image of God, to become what Oldham described, in the words of the American philosopher Josiah Royce, “the universal community of the loyal”.

Another ecumenical leader who had a similar vision of God’s mission in Christ to the whole oikoumene was the Lutheran bishop in Sweden, Nathan Söderblom. He had consulted Oldham during the early stages of his preparation for the 1925 launching of the universal Christian conference on Life and Work\* (Stockholm), which focused on the issues of social and international justice in Europe and North America and beyond. The good news of Jesus Christ embraced the whole of life.

The first world conference of the IMC was held in Jerusalem around Easter 1928, ten years after the first world war. This representative gathering discussed as missiological concerns the Christian life and message in relation to non-Christian systems of life

and thought, including secularism as a worldwide phenomenon; the ecclesiological question of the relation of “younger” and “older” churches; the Christian mission and race relations, industrialization and rural problems. The heart and centre of mission was expressed in the final message, which was itself influenced by the statements of the 1925 Life and Work conference and the 1927 Faith and Order conference: “Our message is Jesus Christ. He is the revelation of what God is and of what man through him may become. In him we come face to face with the ultimate reality of the universe; he makes known to us God our Father, perfect and infinite in love and in righteousness; for in him we find God incarnate, the final, yet ever unfolding revelation of the God in whom we live and move and have our being... Christ is our motive and Christ is our end. We must give nothing less, and we can give nothing more.”

The world was soon caught in turmoil, with economic and monetary depression in 1929; the spread of the monstrous ideologies of fascism\* and communism, which made total claims on peoples in the 1920s and 1930s; the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and of Shanghai in 1937; the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1934-35. In this context two world ecumenical conferences were held in 1937: “Church, Community and State” in Oxford, and Faith and Order in Edinburgh.

All these events affected the next world missionary conference, in Madras, India (1938), whose report is notably entitled *The World Mission of the Church*. In response to the world situation and the unfinished evangelistic task, the conference affirmed: “This is the task primarily of the whole church for the whole world... Nothing in the present world situation in any way invalidates the gospel... World peace will never be achieved without world evangelization.” The delegates therefore issued a call: “We summon the churches to unite in the supreme work of world evangelization until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord.” The church (from *kyriake*, belonging to the Lord) is the sent of God in Christ through the Spirit. Its true existence is to be the bearer of God’s mission to the world in all the dimensions of the world’s life. While

the Jerusalem conference put the centre of mission in Christ, the Madras conference took the logical step of calling on the whole church, as the Body of Christ, to be through all its members the bearer of the gospel in every place.

The darkness of the second world war, which was a more devastating continuation of the first world war, put a great strain on mission as the message of Christ, the Light and Peace of the world. But at the end of the war it was discovered that many churches in Asia and Africa had grown, without the benefit of foreign missionaries and resources. These churches had been responding to the call of the Madras conference. So the IMC meeting at Whitby, Canada (1947), summed up its deliberations in the phrase “One world, one Christ.” It defined the Christian witness in a revolutionary world: “Evangelism means the proclamation of the cross to a world which is baffled by the tragedy of apparently meaningless suffering; it means the proclamation of Christ’s risen life to a world which, athirst for life, seems to be sinking down into death without hope.” For this worldwide missionary task, “the first need is the renewal of the inner life of the church by a return to the message of the Bible and to the Lord of the Bible... Total evangelism demands the cooperation of every single Christian.” And this cooperation must be a “partnership in obedience” in united action and a sharing of resources in a spirit of “expectant evangelism”.

The following year, 1948, the WCC was inaugurated. While the Life and Work and Faith and Order movements combined to create the WCC, the IMC was able at that time only to be “in association with” it. However, the first assembly surveyed the situation of the world and of the churches and declared: “The evident demand of God in this situation is that the whole church should set itself to the total task of winning the whole world for Christ.” Three years later, the WCC central committee made a similar statement and posed a question: “It is clear in the New Testament that the church is called at the same time to proclaim the gospel to the whole world and to manifest in and to that world the fellowship and unity which is in Christ. These two aspects of the calling of the church are interdependent...”

Can we articulate clearly how these two are related to each other; and can we express in the life of our congregations, our churches, and our ecumenical movements this fundamental unity?"

The IMC continued to promote many aspects of the churches' mission to the world, especially in the development of national and regional councils, such as the East Asia Christian Conference in 1957. It also devoted much reflection on the nature and scope of the Christian mission in a rapidly changing world, and on the relation of mission and unity as constituting the nature and calling of the church. It was a question not of "Why mission?" but of "What is mission?" The 1952 IMC conference in Willingen, Federal Republic of Germany, wrestled with the missionary obligation of the church at a time of East-West and North-South conflicts. With its theme "Mission under the Cross", the conference pointed to the source of mission as the self-revelation of the Triune God (see *Trinity*): "Out of the depths of his love for us, the Father sent forth his own beloved Son to reconcile all things to himself, that we and all people might, through the Spirit, be made one in him with the Father in that perfect love which is the very nature of God."

At the next meeting of the IMC, in Ghana (Dec. 1957-Jan. 1958), the word that came through most powerfully was "the Christian world mission is Christ's, not ours". In that spirit the IMC decided to merge with the WCC, leading to the creation of its Division on World Mission and Evangelism (DWME). The integration took place appropriately at the 1961 New Delhi general assembly of the WCC, with its theme "Jesus Christ, the Light of the World". The assembly urged the churches "to seek together in each place the help of the Holy Spirit in order that they may receive power to be together Christ's obedient witnesses to their neighbours and to the nations".

### 1961-90

The new DWME brought much to the WCC as its contribution to the common calling of all the member churches to mission and unity in the name of the Triune God. Its Theological Education Fund, already set up in 1958, helped ecumenically to

promote theological education for mission among the third-world churches. This later became the Programme on Theological Education, which served all the churches around the world. DWME had a programme on Christian literature and was involved in broadcasting (including television and sound radio) through the World Association of Christian Broadcasters. In 1958 the association united with another group of Christian broadcasters to form the World Association for Christian Communication.\*

The DWME also initiated a process of joint action for mission, an effort by churches in any place who were willing together to survey the mission needs and opportunities and the total material and human resources available to meet them, leading to consultation aimed at securing real and effective deployment of the resources in the light of agreed goals. This concept of joint action for mission has focused the continuing difficult discussion between rich churches, with their traditional mission boards or societies, and the churches which emerged from their missionary activities. Attempts at promoting the ecumenical sharing of resources have so far produced meagre results. All this is complicated by the emergence of church-related funding service agencies which operate within restricted mandates, and also by the activities of certain world confessional bodies. The "implementation of partnership in obedience" is still hardly a reality.

The DWME further launched a series of studies on churches in mission around the world, which have produced valuable volumes for study and action. It was also involved in the studies and reflections on the missionary structure of the congregation,\* which produced two books, *Planning for Mission* and *The Church for Others*.

These and other concerns were reviewed at the first meeting of the DWME in Mexico City (1963), with the theme "Mission in Six Continents". The mission is in each place and calls for persons to cross national and confessional frontiers in obedience to Christ and in fellowship with the churches concerned. Of great importance was the presence for the first time of Eastern Orthodox delegates and Roman Catholic observer-participants. This presence had been facili-

tated by the strong statement of the New Delhi assembly on religious liberty\* and proselytism.\* This was the period of the Second Vatican Council\* of the Roman Catholic Church, which produced decrees on ecumenism, religious liberty, the apostolate of the laity, and the church's missionary activity.

The WCC fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968) was a watershed for the churches' understanding of the many-sided mission of the Triune God in a bustling, broken world. It declared that mobilizing the people of God\* for mission today necessitated "a continuing re-examination of the structures of church life at all levels, i.e. the local parish, the denominational synods and conferences, and their agencies, the councils of churches at national, regional and world levels. All these must ask, not 'Have we the right structures for mission?', but 'Are we totally structured for mission?'" The assembly also proposed the following criteria in evaluating priorities for mission: (1) Do they place the church alongside the poor,\* the defenceless, the abused, the forgotten, the bored? (2) Do they allow Christians to enter the concerns of others, to accept their issues and their structures as vehicles of involvement? (3) Are they the best situations for discerning with others the signs of the times, and for moving with history towards the coming of the new humanity? These criteria have guided ecumenical approaches to mission in these decades.

In 1968 the DWME created the Christian Medical Commission, which grew out of one of the major missionary activities over the centuries – healing and health as expressions of Christ's ministry of salvation. It promoted community health care, with emphasis on the church becoming a healing, caring community, and made a strong theological output on "Health, Healing and Wholeness".

The IMC concern about race discrimination and oppression had been taken up at the WCC second assembly in 1954 by a study on racial and ethnic tensions, culminating in 1969 in the Programme to Combat Racism\* and its special fund, which received ready support by the DWME and its constituent members. Similar support was given by the DWME to enable the early function-

ing of the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development in 1970. Indeed, DWME itself had a vigorous programme on urban and industrial mission which later became urban and rural mission. In the 1971 re-structuring of the WCC, the DWME became a commission (CWME).

Of great significance in this period was the setting up of a secretariat on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths; in 1971 it became a separate sub-unit of the WCC (see **dialogue, interfaith**). This was a new beginning of a 60-year-old central ecumenical missionary concern. The motivation behind this new beginning was that witnessing the Christian faith can be authentic only when we recognize people of living faiths as made in God's image, for whom Christ died, and among whom the Spirit is at work. Our attitude must be one of mutual respect and openness, and the sharing of life with life in the depths of our different faiths. Such an approach calls for a life of constant renewal by the Spirit through the word of God and waiting, interceding prayer. Indeed, a deeper spirituality for witness and service has become today's watchword of the ecumenical movement. This is due, on the one hand, to the wider ecumenical fellowship of Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans, Protestants, Pentecostals, etc., as evidenced for example in the WCC-Roman Catholic Joint Working Group document on "Common Witness" (1980, following an earlier document in 1970), and, on the other hand, to Christians being renewed through mission to the poor and the oppressed, and in dialogue with people of other faiths.

The world mission conference at Bangkok (1973) is well-known for proposing a moratorium\* on personnel and finance in mission relations, but its major contribution lay in its holistic understanding of salvation\* and its call for contextual theologies. God's saving work in history was seen in the struggle for economic justice against exploitation, for human dignity against political oppression, for solidarity against alienation between persons, and for hope against anxiety and resignation. At Bangkok, the strong resistance of third-world Christians and churches to the dominant cultural influence of Western missionaries led to the affirmation of the right of

Christians and churches to organize their lives on the basis of their own cultural identity rather than follow foreign models.

At the same time, the Paris Missionary Society ceased to exist and the Evangelical Community for Apostolic Action (CEVAA) was formed. Through pooling of resources and sharing of power, mission became a common endeavour between churches in the South and churches in the North, on an equal footing. A few years later, the London Missionary Society took a similar step when it became the Council for World Mission. Several other missionary societies followed, modifying the structures and rules of sharing of resources and thus pointing to an alternative life in an unjust world.

In 1974, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association held a world congress in Lausanne, Switzerland, to mark its opposition to ecumenical missiology, and the Lausanne Covenant\* became the reference document for most Evangelicals. While emphasizing their opposition to the WCC on several points, the participants also re-affirmed social action as an integral part of Christian witness. The congress marked the culmination of opposition between “evangelicals” and “ecumenicals” in mission, but also showed the first signs of a possible rapprochement.

The mid-1970s was a period of re-orientation in mission thinking for other churches also. In 1975, Pope Paul VI published the encyclical *Evangelization in the Modern World*, which defines mission holistically (the term used is “evangelization”) from a Roman Catholic point of view, and the WCC’s Nairobi assembly moved towards a more balanced ecumenical missiology by clearly affirming the importance of both witness and solidarity.

It was not until 1982 that the WCC produced a convergence and synthetic document on mission, adopted by the central committee. *Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation* (EA) still remains the official WCC text on mission. It combines insights from ecumenical experiences, in particular those of Latin American base communities, the Orthodox churches, Roman Catholic missionary orders and evangelical mission movements. There are two movements, says the text: the church shows

forth the love of God to the world but, in its identification with those who suffer, it also presents to God their prayers, their cries, their hopes and their joys. Any imbalance between the two seriously hinders Christian witness.\* More than other WCC texts, the EA has an evangelistic flavour in insisting on personal conversion to Christ, acceptance of his forgiveness, and the willingness to follow him in a life of service.

The inheritance of the Melbourne conference can be seen in the EA when it emphasizes God’s preferential option for the poor in mission. It is a tragic coincidence that most of the individuals and peoples who have never heard of Christ are also the poorest and the victims of the international social and economic system. Taking up the concept of *missio Dei*,\* influential in ecumenical missiology since Willingen (1952), the Melbourne conference defined its theological entry-point into the world: God acts by and through the poor, the victims and the excluded, for their liberation and a change of relations in the world that would also free the rich and powerful. The poor and their fate thus have become the yardstick for judging all human activities.

Melbourne had criticized the use of power in missionary endeavours on the basis of Christ’s own vulnerability, and the EA coined the expression of “mission in Christ’s way”. The world mission conference seven years later in San Antonio, USA, developed this and other themes of the 1982 affirmation. The conference became famous because it was able to formulate a kind of consensus on the most controversial question in ecumenical missiology, the relation between Christianity and other religions: We cannot point to any other way of salvation than Jesus Christ. At the same time we cannot set limits to the saving power of God. Finally we acknowledge that there is a tension between these two statements which we are not in a position to resolve. Mission and dialogue are complementary and not mutually exclusive. This “consensus” has been re-affirmed on several occasions since 1989.

San Antonio opened up new ground also through its appreciation of popular religiosity. In search of a less cerebral and Westernized Christian spirituality, the conference commented positively on experiences of reli-

gious communities who have a strong communal identity, use symbolic religious language and attach importance to themes such as the earth and fertility, the body and sexuality, work and festive celebrations. Several of these insights were to bear on the future study process on gospel and cultures, and influence the increasingly necessary dialogue with Pentecostals.

Also in 1989 the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization\* called its second world congress in Manila, Philippines. The Manila Manifesto re-affirms and develops the Lausanne Covenant. On questions such as good news to the poor, the role of the local church and cooperation in mission, the language approaches that used in WCC mission circles. However, Manila insists more than ecumenical missiologists on the priority of evangelism in mission and retains an exclusivist position on salvation. Manila was the first time such an evangelical meeting included major participation by Pentecostal and charismatic missionaries and theologians.

In 1990 Pope John Paul II issued the encyclical letter *Redemptoris Missio* on the permanent validity of the church's missionary mandate. Within a holistic interpretation of mission, the pope insisted on the specific task of bringing the gospel to those who do not know it (the mission *ad gentes*) as distinguished from witness in places where there are lively churches and where masses of people have lost a living sense of faith and are in need of "new evangelization". The document formulates a position on the relation to other religions, which has a certain similarity to the perspective which the WCC reached at San Antonio.

### 1991-

After the fall of the Berlin wall, the missionary movement found itself for the first time since Edinburgh 1910 again facing the challenge of one world under a single economic system. Since then, missiology has struggled to define Christian witness in the face of globalization, with its economic, political and cultural challenges. A year-long study process on the relation of gospel and cultures preceded the world mission conference in Salvador de Bahía, Brazil, in 1996. In the changed world context and increasing misuse of ethnicity and cultural identity to

justify conflict and violence, Salvador revisited the results of the Bangkok conference. The principle of inculturation was strongly re-affirmed as a necessary basis for ecumenical missiology, as was the acknowledgment of the variety of cultures, a gift full of richness from the Creator. Each culture carries values and traditions that foster solidarity, peace and reconciliation, but also elements of violence, contempt and exclusion. In inculturation processes, some traditions may be affirmed, whereas others must be challenged. Churches linked to the WCC would in principle agree that there is no one position from which inculturation\* can be judged. To do missiology in an ecumenical way is to offer space for dialogue following the principles of intercultural hermeneutics.

Three years after the Salvador conference, the World Evangelical Fellowship\* called an international missiological conference in Iguazu, Brazil, which updated evangelical missiology in a remarkable way. The Iguazu declaration re-affirms basic evangelical principles, calls in a new way for a serious struggle with ecclesiology in mission, and does indeed question managerial approaches to mission.

Following Salvador and the WCC's Harare assembly (1998), the new Commission on World Mission and Evangelism adopted in 2000 a study document entitled *Mission and Evangelism in Unity Today*. It is based on the following use of terminology: "Mission" carries a holistic understanding: the proclamation and sharing of the good news of the gospel by word (*kerygma*), deed (*diakonia*), prayer and worship (*leiturgia*) and the everyday witness of the Christian life (*martyria*); teaching as building up and strengthening people in their relationship with God and each other; and healing as wholeness and reconciliation into *koinonia* – communion with God, communion with people, and communion with creation as a whole. "Evangelism", while not excluding the different dimensions of mission, focuses on explicit and intentional voicing of the gospel, including the invitation to personal conversion to a new life in Christ and to discipleship.

The next world mission conference will be held on the theme "Called in Christ To Be Reconciling and Healing Communities". It will need to address the new challenges of in-

creasing violence and exclusion, the risk of ever more misuse of religion in conflicts, the important cultural changes brought about by secularization and post-modernity, and the questions raised by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Ecumenical mission needs in particular to enter into serious dialogue with Pentecostals and must fully integrate the healing mandate in its understanding and practice of mission.

See also **evangelism**.

PHILIP A. POTTER and JACQUES MATTHEY

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## MISSIONARY SOCIETIES

MOST CHURCH historians consider the 19th century "the Great Century" of Protestant and Catholic "foreign missions". In world history this period is also pre-eminently the

European century, for Europe at that time was able to impose much of its will, ideas and power on a large portion of the inhabited world. The economic and imperial upsurge of Europe joined an unexpected Christian pietistic revival, which affected almost every denomination or church in every Western country.

Until that point, the USA itself had been a mission field rather than the source of overseas missionaries. But with its 19th-century religious revivals, or awakenings, the energy and optimism of a "Christian America", wedded to the nation's increasing international prestige, created a climate and image of America as world power and world saviour.

## PROTESTANT ORIGINS

By 1914 this revival among Protestants in both Europe and North America had given rise to a proliferation of home and foreign missionary societies.

The motivation and understanding of mission\* for the members and supporters of these societies were complex, even as they were being modified from decade to decade. No one prominent motif in theology was all-determinative except that all held that a person who did not believe explicitly in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour of every person, everywhere, was in a position of eternal damnation, or at least was living very precariously with God. The pietist influence, in trying to recover the "first love" experiences of the early Christians (see Rev. 2:4-5), emphasized personal conversion,\* purity of life and lay initiative. Dominant motives for foreign missions ranged from a strong eschatology\* that viewed the evangelization of the peoples as a condition for the second and final return of Jesus the Messiah (see **millennialism**) to a simple, loving obedience to Jesus' command to disciple all the nations (see Matt. 28:19-20).

The societies had differing immediate aims: a specific *area* on the non-Christian map (e.g. India, China, interior Africa); a specific *religious group* (e.g. Hindus, Muslims, Jews, Roman Catholics, Orthodox; tribal religions were simply called pagan); a specific *service* (e.g. medical, agricultural development, education, Bible translation/distribution; or all of these).

The European Protestant churches, especially if legally tied to the state, were often unable or unwilling to initiate, administer or support foreign missions. So the new mission societies were largely voluntary ones, depending on the initiative of highly motivated individuals (far more laity than clergy, and during the last three decades half were women and half of them unmarried), and relying for financial support on the voluntary gifts of interested Christians. Some societies were explicitly denominational, others were interdenominational or non-denominational, usually agreeing to a fundamental credal statement.

Such societies included Baptist Missionary Society (London, 1792), London Missionary Society (1795), Church Missionary Society (1795), Dutch Mission (1799), British and Foreign Bible Society (1804), London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews (1809), American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (1810), Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society (1814), American Baptist Missionary Board (1814), Basel Mission (1815), American Bible Society (1816) and Berlin Society (1824) – the list becomes very long, so that by 1914 every European country, the USA and Canada had such societies. The more successful their work, the more the churches themselves began to collect money for the independent societies; eventually many of the churches began their own, directly controlled mission agencies. By 1914 the total personnel of both Protestant types was around 45,000 overseas missionaries.

In the early 20th century the mission churches, after achieving a measure of stability and self-consciousness, also developed indigenous missionary societies, at first for their own regions. Examples are the National Missionary Society of India (1907) and the Anglican Society in China (1936).

Gradually there developed both “home-based” and “foreign” mission councils or federations of these societies, such as the committee of German Protestant Missions (1885); the Foreign Missions Conference of North America (1893); the Conference of Missionary Societies in Great Britain and Ireland (1913), and in the Netherlands (1915), Finland (1918), Sweden (1920), Norway (1920), Australia (1920), New

Zealand (1926) and Switzerland (1944). After the second world war most of these councils became departments of overseas ministries within national councils of churches.

In the “mission fields” before the 1910 Edinburgh world missionary conference, there were a few national field organs, most concerned with comity (the mutual division of areas into spheres of work by mission societies, and non-interference in one another’s affairs; see **common witness**), e.g. in India (1902), Korea (1905), Japan (1910). The trend increased after Edinburgh, also in Africa, the Middle East and, with much more difficulty, Latin America.

In the 1920s and 1930s the development of indigenous leadership and a sense of independent church responsibility prompted these agencies and “younger churches” to form national Christian councils, e.g. in India (1922), China (1922), Japan (1923), Korea (1924), Congo (1924). The major councils became members of the International Missionary Council\* (IMC, 1921), which originally was composed primarily of councils of missionaries, then increasingly also of local and national councils of churches.\*

### ROMAN CATHOLIC MISSIONS

Overseas mission work by European Roman Catholics, almost exclusively undertaken by religious communities,\* had almost collapsed by the 1800s. Rome’s suppression of the Jesuits (1773), the paralysis caused by the French revolution, Napoleon’s forced removal of the pope from Rome, and the political secularization\* and dissolution of religious communities in most of Europe combined to paint a most gloomy picture. In the mid-1810s the scene began to change, and a revival of missions eventually became a priority church concern and the focus of large-scale activity under Gregory XVI (pope 1831-46). The old communities re-organized themselves, such as the restored Jesuits (1814), the Benedictines, Dominicans, Franciscans, Capuchins, Holy Spirit Fathers, Paris Society for Foreign Missions, and Lazarists. And an unexpected number of over 50 new male and 200 female communities arose, specially for mission work, such as the Oblates (1816), Marists (1817), Salesians (1859), Franciscan Missionary Sisters

(1859), Scheut (1862), White Fathers and Sisters (1868-69), Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (1896), the last named being the largest women's community in 1990, with over 9000 members.

Unlike the Protestant structures, these RC societies were composed of clergy, of religious brothers and sisters – all unmarried; assisting them was only a very small percentage of laypeople, married or unmarried. And unlike most Protestant societies, these RC mission groups were not independent of any direct church control. Although most were not dependent on any one diocese, almost all were directly under Rome's Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. Rome had divided up the whole non-Christian world in mission districts and then assigned the groups to serve specific missionary communities, e.g. the Picpus Fathers to Oceania, the Sisters of St Joseph to the Middle East, the Italian Holy Ghost Fathers and Sisters to East Africa. Since several of the communities were international in membership, one community might have several nationalities serving a single district.

Protestant policies of comity did not involve RCs. In fact, often the motivation for sending a new group to an area was to offset the work of the other; e.g. the Church Missionary Society and the White Fathers in East Africa, the Sudan United Missions and Italian Comboni priests and sisters in Sudan, the Presbyterians and Jesuits in Lebanon and Syria, the Methodists and Sacred Heart Fathers in Oceania.

The USA, where Protestantism in the latter part of the 19th century produced hundreds of overseas missionaries, was regarded by the RCC as a primary mission field for European societies to labour in. These RC societies sent priests, nuns and other church workers and were generous with money, so that the young, unstable American RC church, bulging with the flood of immigrants, could survive. By 1900 there were fewer than 80 American Catholic foreign missionaries overseas, mostly in the Caribbean and Mexico. In 1907 Propaganda Fide removed most of the USA from the list of mission territories, and the number of US Catholic overseas missionaries, spurred by the first society founded in the US – the

Maryknoll Fathers (1911) and Sisters (1912) – reached a peak of over 9300 in 1966.

### ORTHODOX MISSIONS

In the Orthodox church organized missionary activity, understood as the extension of the church by the conversion of previously unreached peoples, was confined almost exclusively to Russian initiatives. The "great captivity" of the ancient churches of the Middle East under the Islamic rule of the Ottoman empire made evangelism\* impossible. In Russia the tradition of evangelization by "colonist-monks" (Eugène Smirnov) was stifled by strict imperial control from Peter the Great (ruled 1682-1725) to Catherine II (ruled 1762-96). While not comparable to the Protestant and Catholic missions in the 19th century, the Orthodox saw the revivalistic beginnings of new missionary work, primarily through monastic communities of men and of women.

In 1828 the holy synod in Moscow called for missionaries to reverse the trend of apostasy to Islam among the eastern Russians. Macarius Gloukharev (1792-1847), somewhat marked by German pietism, introduced new mission methods in central Asia on the model of the London Missionary Society. John Veniaminov (1797-1879), after an extraordinary missionary life with fellow monks in the Aleutian Islands and mainland Alaska, later in Yakutsk and Siberia, became metropolitan in Moscow, and in 1870 he founded the Orthodox Missionary Society. The society collected funds for the support of the missionaries and the construction and maintenance of charitable and educational institutions (although it had no administrative functions, as do the Western mission societies). It was first led by Nicolai Kasatkin (1836-1912), who later returned to Japan to leave behind him a vigorous church with indigenous clergy. The 1917 Russian revolution ended the society's and the missionaries' work.

The world federation of Orthodox youth, *Syndesmos*,\* founded in 1953, places foreign mission work high on its agenda. It has provided recruits for the international Orthodox Missionary Centre in Athens, founded by Anastasios Yannoulatos in 1971, with activity directed primarily to Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya and Sudan. In 1982 Yan-

noulatos (who also served as moderator of the WCC’s Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, 1983-91) became metropolitan for the East Africa diocese.

**ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVES**

By the 1960s the large number of Protestant boards and agencies, accustomed to independence and flexibility, hesitated in integrating the IMC into the WCC. Despite the positive fruits of integration, there is a vacuum left by the disappearance of the IMC, which had provided a wide forum for voluntary missionary associations, including conservative Evangelical, whether denominational or interdenominational, whether Western or based in the third world – all focused on direct evangelism, “cross-cultural outreach” at home and abroad.

In the last three decades the vacuum has become more noticeable, since the number of such missionaries of old and new societies or voluntary agencies has greatly increased, while the number of WCC-member church mission boards has decreased. The vacuum has become partially filled by a variety of Protestant Evangelical structures, such as the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization,\* the Great Commission Roundtable (1999), non-WCC-related indigenous African and Asian societies (“third-world missionaries”) and ad hoc Christian leadership mission assemblies.

Since the mid-1960s, the RCC has seen a drastic reduction of male and female vocations to religious communities in Western Europe and North America, but in Africa, Asia and Latin America a steady increase of new members in older communities and new indigenous ones. For example, there are now very few German Benedictine nuns in Korea, but the communities they founded now have over 300 Koreans, and many of them are serving elsewhere (e.g. in Tanzanian hospitals and schools).

The sea change in ecumenical understandings in the RCC owing to Vatican Council II\* has led to close cooperation and common witness between large segments of Christian missionaries, exemplified on the world level by the cooperation between Rome’s SEDOS\* and the WCC’s commission on world mission and evangelism and by RC full membership in the CWME. And

despite the anti-RCC stance of many within conservative Evangelical agencies, from 1977 to 1984 the Vatican Secretariat (now Pontifical Council) for Promoting Christian Unity co-sponsored a series of meetings with Evangelicals on mission (see *Evangelical-Roman Catholic relations*).

See also *Evangelical missions*.

TOM STRANSKY

**“MISSIONARY STRUCTURE OF THE CONGREGATION”**

IN 1961 THE WCC assembly at New Delhi instructed the Department on Studies in Evangelism to carry out a study entitled “Missionary Structure of the Congregation” (see sec. on “Witness”, paras 28-37, also pp.189-90). The MSC was the most important WCC study in the theology of mission in the years between New Delhi and Uppsala (1968), and it is the most fundamental WCC study to date on the renewal of the local congregation (see *local church*).

The question to be raised was, What changes in the external structure and self-understanding of the local congregation are needed for it to be able to witness credibly to the message of the kingdom of God\* in a secular world of rapid social change? From the outset the study embraced the expectation that only a departure from a church-centred view of mission could lead to the beginning of a new responsibility of the church for the world, as well as the conviction that the traditional forms of church life and the inherited principle of territorial parish organization of the church are a hindrance to its missionary presence in all spheres of life.

The context of the study included several elements: the external integration of the WCC and the International Missionary Council\* (1961), along with the internal integration of church and mission\* (see L. Newbigin, “The Missionary Dimension of the Ecumenical Movement”, *ER*, 1961); efforts to renew the theology of missionary evangelism, which were already beginning in the 1950s (Willingen 1952: “The Missionary Obligation of the Church”; central committee, Rhodes 1959: “A Theological Reflection on the Work of Evangelism”; Jo-

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hannes Blauw, *The Missionary Nature of the Church*, 1962; D.T. Niles, *Upon the Earth*, 1962); emphasis on the missionary responsibility of the laity (Evanston 1954, secs 2 and 6; Hendrik Kraemer, *A Theology of the Laity*, 1958; A.A. van Ruler, *Theologie des Apostolats*, 1954); and re-discovery of the significance of the local congregation ("the fully committed fellowship" in "each place") for ecumenical unity and missionary witness: "The place where the development of the common life in Christ is most clearly tested is in the local situation, where believers live and work. There the achievements and the frustrations are most deeply felt: but there too the challenge is most often avoided" (New Delhi 1961, sec. 3, p.122).

### DEVELOPMENTS AND RESULTS

The MSC, begun under the leadership of Hans Jochen Margull in 1962, provoked an astonishingly wide interest, especially in North Atlantic countries. Task forces in Western Europe, North America and the German Democratic Republic published in 1966-67 independent final reports (in *The Church for Others and the Church for the World*). Individual groups also participated in the study of the context in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The most important results of the MSC, documented also in the statement of the committee on studies in evangelism to the central committee in Enugu in 1965 ("Structures for Missionary Congregations") and in the collection of working documents (Margull, *Mission als Strukturprinzip* [Mission as a structural principle], 1965) are the following:

*Mission* originates in *God*, not the church. The church is not an end in itself but participates in God's missionary action (*missio Dei*\*), which is valid for the whole world and embraces both church and society (see Willigen 1952, Karl Hartenstein, Georg Vicedom). Instead of the "God-church-world" perspective, we must have "God-world-church" (J.C. Hoekendijk). The church does not *have* a mission, it *is* itself mission. The structure and aim of its missions are legitimate only in so far as they serve God's mission.

*The aim of mission* is not primarily the quantitative growth of the church but

shalom for the world. "Realization of the full potentialities of all creation and its ultimate reconciliation and unity in Christ" is the aim of *missio Dei*. As a witness and pointer to shalom and the messianic gifts of justice, truth, fellowship and peace, the church is essentially a "church for others" (Dietrich Bonhoeffer). The purpose of the church's missionary existence is a credible, symbolic and renewing presence in the world, which makes the presence of God among human beings visible.

*The context of the missio Dei* is not only the individual or the soul but history, the "world in transformation". The process of secularization\* can be understood positively as a "fruit of the gospel" and can be distinguished from its elevation to an absolute value in secularism (Friedrich Gogarten). Mission is therefore not to be understood as winning back lost church territory or as the restoration of the corpus Christianum; it is not a counter-attack on secularization but participation in the process of liberation and humanization in society in the name of God, who is at work in the world.

*The agents of mission* are not first and foremost the ministers or missionaries but, rather, the laity\* (as members of the *laos*, the people of God\*). A missionary church is a church at the base. As a congregation from below, it requires training for the laity and for adults and participation on every level.

*The structures of mission* are not unchangeable but must be so "flexible, differentiated and coherent" that people in all the many spheres of life (family, profession, leisure, politics) can always be addressed afresh. Clinging to the parish system as a preferred structure of the church can lead to a "morphological fundamentalism". An effective presence in the various spheres of life calls for a variety of small serving groups, functional arrangements and church ministries which are related to "zonal structures" (i.e. a district in a town, a large-scale concern, a regional structure) – all are church structures with equal validity.

*On the way to a "church for others"*, fundamental importance attaches to the serious interest in the "otherness" of the others, a precise (sociological, ecclesiastical and political) analysis of the context of the local congregation, involving congregational

questionnaires, the creation of independent committees to review the congregational structures and a radically renewed practice of worship (ecumenical, with dialogue, fellowship and participation).

**EFFECTS**

The MSC study expressed the re-direction of missionary focus back to the traditional “missionary churches” in the North Atlantic area, a direct result of the slogan “mission in six continents” (Mexico City 1963). It contributed decisively to keeping the churches in the Western societies from isolating themselves and withdrawing from responsibility for diakonia\* in a social context. It stimulated the emergence and development of adult education, urban industrial mission, urban training centres, pastoral work for leisure time and other special forms of church ministry. It substantially influenced the discussion of church reform in both East and West Germany in the 1960s. Through the medium of Uppsala the idea of the *missio Dei* and historical theology continued to have an effect in the contextual theologies of Asia and Latin America. The study “Life-style of the Congregation in Mission”, initiated in 1976 by the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME), extended the concerns of the MSC by calling for initiative groups such as those formed in the churches in the mid-1970s and 1980s for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.\*

The MSC has faced criticism, for the stronger presence of the church in the world has frequently been seen as only a professionalizing of services or an expansion of the institutional churches. In the 1960s the optimistic view of the Western process of secularization temporarily made it difficult to see the profound ambivalences in modernism, with its consumer society, isolation and exploitation. The emphasis has been on structures, to the detriment of the meaning of worship and spirituality for the renewal of congregational life. The pressing problems of congregations in the non-Western context (poverty, relegation to minority status, inter-faith dialogue) have largely remained unaddressed. The lack of Orthodox and Roman Catholic participation has so far made it impossible to link up the dominant tradition

which sees the church in terms of history\* and eschatology\* with that which views it sacramentally.

The MSC, however, is of lasting significance both because of the basic question it asks – What kind of connection is there between evangelism and modes of existence (mission and structure) for a local missionary congregation which seeks to be “the salt of the earth”? – and because of the fundamental conviction that even the external structure of a church is a factor in evangelism and must serve the *missio Dei*. The missionary renewal of the church begins where people locally do something about the “the world’s agenda” in the light of the *missio Dei* and try to be a sign of the kingdom of God in fellowship, service and worship. If the stimuli for renewal from the ecumenical movement are to have their full impact on the local congregation, the unanswered question as to the missionary structure of the congregation must also enjoy high priority in the work of the WCC in the future. The theme of the MSC was taken up again in, among other things, the joint study project of the Conference of European Churches\* and the CWME on “Missionary Congregations in a Secularized Europe”, adopted in Stirling in 1986 and supported also in San Antonio in 1989. The task for the future is to deliver Christian congregations from consumerism, individualism and apathy, freeing them to exercise a prophetic non-conformity in their social context. In the 1990s this task was taken up by the project on ecumenical renewal of congregational life in the European churches.

DIETRICH WERNER

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## MOELLER, CHARLES

B. 18 Jan. 1912, Brussels, Belgium; d. 3 April 1986, Brussels. Ordained Catholic priest in 1937 and then pursuing doctoral studies in the Christological and Trinitarian controversies of the 5th and 6th centuries, Moeller taught poetry at the Institut Saint-Pierre in Jette, Belgium (1941-54), then became professor of literature and theology at the University of Louvain. His insatiable curiosity had no limits: from Russian poetry and Spanish novels to the ancient Syrian writers; from a theology of grace and ecumenism to Charlie Chaplin films; from Luther to Jean-Paul Sartre; from Buddhist statuary to Picasso. But bookish he was not; he enjoyed the company of others, all sorts, and was ever a gentle listener. He was secure enough in the Catholic faith to go easily with others to the edges of belief and unbelief, and the poet could rest in ambiguities: "One cannot keep hold of the truth without tension." Friend of Lambert Beauduin and the Russian monk Clement Lialin, he participated in the annual interconfessional theological conversations at Chevetogne.\* As an "official expert" (*peritus*) at Vatican II\* (1962-65), Moeller was one of the main drafters of the Pastoral Constitution on the

Church in the Modern World, in particular its two chapters on the human person and on culture. After Vatican II, Paul VI tried to reform the critical Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and he enlisted Moeller to be its under-secretary (1966-73). The post over-confined him. He welcomed the transfer to become secretary of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity for his last active ten years (to 1983). He frequently left the desk for ecumenical travels. He did not complain when this involved several days a month in Jerusalem, where he was also the rector in the initial years of the Tantur Ecumenical Institute\* for advanced theological research.

TOM STRANSKY

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## MORAL REARMAMENT (INITIATIVES OF CHANGE)

THE MRA is a spiritual movement, originally the Oxford Group, initiated by American Lutheran Pastor Frank Buchman (1878-1961). Following the horrors of the first world war, Buchman called for a "first-century Christianity" that would focus on the application of absolute moral standards and the search for God's guidance. It offered a global vision and by the 1930s had become a large interdenominational Protestant movement in approximately 20 countries. In 1938 Alcoholics Anonymous spun off, and the Oxford Group began a campaign for moral and spiritual rearmament, leading to its new name.

By 1946 centres were established in the USA, London, and Caux, Switzerland, where, in the immediate post-war years, thousands came from France and Germany, leading to a significant contribution to post-war reconciliation. MRA expanded around the world as a lay renewal movement, focusing mainly on industrial and international reconciliation. It became more inclusive of other faiths, with centres opening in Japan



and India in the 1960s. However, the movement also often expressed itself in anti-communist terms in this period, and the tensions this produced, along with Buchman's death in 1961, lead to schism and some decline.

The 1980s, however, saw the movement in a process of renewal and working more with other organizations. Recent partnerships in the US, for example, have included the Mennonite Central Committee and the International Centre for Religion and Diplomacy. Roman Catholics began participating in larger numbers, as did many Slavic peoples, often adherents of their respective Orthodox churches, following the collapse of communism. The growing interfaith nature continued and was formalized in 1993.

Challenges to decision-making in and coordination of this diverse movement have been met in the following ways, starting in the early 1990s: (1) annual global consultations; (2) the emergence of functional divisions; e.g. Hope in the Cities for inner city and race relations work; Foundations for Freedom training younger people in the moral and spiritual underpinnings of a free society; and Agenda for Reconciliation drawing together MRA's international reconciliation work around the world; (3) an international council of nine leaders, with term limits; (4) the creation in 2002 of an international association of national bodies, headquartered in Switzerland. Meanwhile, in 2001, MRA changed its name to Initiatives of Change.

BRYAN HAMLIN

■ *For a Change*, MRA magazine ■ D. Johnston & C. Sampson eds, *Religion, the Missing Dimension of Statecraft*, New York, Oxford UP, 1994 ■ G. Lean, *Frank Buchman: A Life*, London, Constable, 1985.

## MORATORIUM

"MORATORIUM" was the name given in the ecumenical movement to a proposal in the early 1970s for a cessation of sending and receiving money and missionary personnel for a period, to allow time for review of the best use of persons and money in response to God's mission and the churches' search for selfhood (see *missio Dei*, mission).

John Gatu, then general secretary of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, first issued the call for a moratorium in 1971. He argued "that the time has come for the withdrawal of foreign missionaries from many parts of the third world, that the churches of the third world must be allowed to find their own identity, and that the continuation of the present missionary movement is a hindrance to this selfhood of the church". Gatu proposed that the problems of third-world churches "can only be solved if all missionaries are withdrawn in order to allow a period of not less than five years for each side to re-think and formulate what is going to be their future relationship". Also in 1971 Emerito Nacpil of the United Methodist Church in the Philippines said: "The present structure of modern missions is dead. We ought to eulogize it and then bury it... The most *missionary* service a missionary under the present system can do today in Asia is to go home."

In 1972 the WCC committee on Ecumenical Sharing of Personnel (ESP) claimed in a working paper that behind the moratorium call lies "the conviction that in their attempt to respond to God's mission, both sending and receiving churches find themselves caught in a pattern which inhibits rather than serves mission". Later, in 1974 and 1975, ESP recommended principles and procedures for mutual responsibility and relations in sharing personnel and resources, while commending a moratorium "for serious consideration when and where it is appropriate", as "self-discipline, not rejection... for the selfhood and discipline of the churches".

The 1973 CWME conference (Bangkok) recognized that "'partnership in mission' remains an empty slogan" and called for "a mature relationship between churches". It described a moratorium as one of the "more radical solutions" that would "enable the receiving church to find its identity, set its own priorities and discover within its own fellowship the resources to carry out its authentic mission. It would also enable the sending church to re-discover its identity in the context of the contemporary situation." While not endorsing moratorium, Bangkok received the report of section 3 that said: "In some situations the moratorium proposal,

painful though it may be for both sides, may be the best means of resolving a present dilemma and advancing the mission of Christ.”

In 1974 the third assembly of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) called for “a moratorium on the receiving of money and personnel... coming from [the churches’] foreign relationships” as being “the most viable means of giving the African church the power to perform its mission in the African context, as well as lead our governments and peoples in finding solutions to economic and social dependency”. This assembly also rejected WCC-ESP proposals for ecumenical sharing of personnel and resources as inadequate.

Numerous African churches, however, soon disassociated themselves from the AACC resolution. Discussion of moratorium reached a high point at the WCC fifth assembly (Nairobi 1975). While allowing that “there may be situations of dependence between churches where, for the sake of the integrity of a church’s witness in its own culture, there should be a temporary moratorium on existing dependencies in order to prepare for a more mature independence”, the report of section 2 recommended steps “towards a greater degree of joint action and witness”.

The outcome of the moratorium debate was greater recognition that the sending and receiving of personnel and funds are joint responsibilities, and that traditional relationships, structures and attitudes which perpetuate dependency had to change for the sake of mission\* and the selfhood of the churches.

GERALD H. ANDERSON

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## MORAVIANS

THE HERITAGE of the Moravian Church is in the so-called first Reformation of the 15th

century and in 18th-century German pietism. Its origin can be traced to the Unity of the Brethren (*Unitas Fratrum*), one of the several groups of followers of the Czech reformer Jan Hus (burned as a heretic in 1415). In 1467 they established their own ministry; a visiting Waldensian clergyman ordained the first priests. Although many of the Brethren were assimilated into Lutheran and Reformed churches in Germany, Switzerland, Bohemia and Poland in the course of the 16th and 17th centuries, clandestine groups remained in Bohemia and Moravia. In 1722 some of them, who were in contact with a German pietist convert from Catholicism, were introduced to the Saxon nobleman Count Nicholas von Zinzendorf. During the following years a large number of Brethren immigrated to his domain, where they formed the Herrnhut settlement. The count took an increasing interest in the group, and in 1727 he drafted a legal contract setting forth their relationship to him and binding them to “walk according to the apostolic rule”. This formal revival of the Unity was as an *ecclesiola in ecclesia* within the established Lutheran Church of Saxony. In 1745 the Moravian church re-instituted the ministry of presbyter and deacon alongside its ancient episcopacy.\*

Zeal for evangelism\* characterized the revived Brethren, and the church spread not only in Europe but also to Greenland, Africa, the Middle East, India, the Caribbean and North and South America. In 2000 the church had about 700,000 members in 19 autonomous provinces around the world. Four provinces in Tanzania account for about half of the denomination’s members. Some of the provinces, especially in Central America (Nicaragua) and Southern Africa, have lived in the context of ethnic and civil conflict, which has helped to break down the resistance to social and political engagement from the church’s pietistic tradition.

Deliberately avoiding the development of its own unique system of doctrine, the church understands itself as a fellowship within the universal church of Christ and accepts the historic creeds and various Reformation confessions as “the thankful acclaim of the Body of Christ”, helpful for Christians in formulating their thought but not binding

on believers. Moravians thus have a firm ecumenical commitment, rooted in Zinzendorf's doctrine of the "ways" (*Tropen*) in which God teaches – which places the various Christian confessions on an equal footing in relation to each other. Scripture\* is understood as the sole source and guide for faith, teaching and life. Ten provinces are members of the WCC; in 1988 the Moravian Unity Synod (which meets every seven years) urged provinces which are not members to consider joining, while encouraging all the provinces to promote WCC programmes.

MARLIN VANELDEREN

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## MOTT, JOHN R.

B. 25 May 1865, Purvis, NY, USA; d. 31 Jan. 1955, Evanston, IL. If any one individual could be said to personify the modern ecumenical movement, it would be John R. Mott. In him converged uniquely the varied strands of which the ecumenical movement is woven.

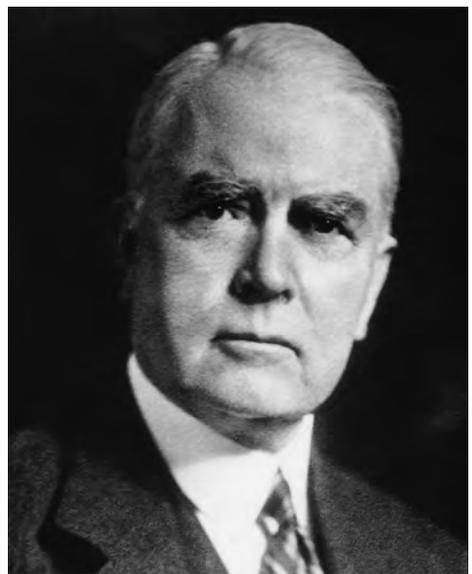
A plausible legend has it that when the young John Mott played with toy trains in the nursery, it was not just with single engines and tracks, but he laid out the toy lines to form a continental railroad system. As a student at Cornell University, Mott passed from agnosticism to faith\* and went through the experience of evangelical conversion\* after hearing an address by C.T. Studd, one of the famous "Cambridge Seven" – English undergraduate sportsmen who dedicated their lives to foreign missionary service. Shortly after, Mott signed the Student Volunteer Declaration, though his first job was as a travelling secretary of the student YMCA.\* In 1895 he participated in the gathering at Vadstena, Sweden, out of which the World's Student Christian Federation\* (WSCF) was born.

Students were the lever by which Mott sought to move the world towards God, and the WSCF was perhaps the area in which his most effective work for Christ's kingdom

was done. He served it, as general secretary from 1895 and as chairman from 1920, for 33 years, and all his other achievements have their roots in the concerns which the WSCF fostered.

Mott's own missionary vocation found expression in the work leading up to the world missionary conference of 1910, of which he was the chairman. Edinburgh created a follow-up committee (which later became the International Missionary Council\*) and Mott was closely associated with the IMC for the rest of his life.

In the cause of world evangelization, Mott was as tireless and as urgent as the apostle Paul – and as careful to follow up initial visits by continuing contact. He travelled repeatedly to Asia and Africa long before air travel made such journeying commonplace. Indeed, there were great advantages in the slower modes of ship and train, for Mott was highly disciplined in the use he made of travelling time. He prepared himself with detailed briefings about the area he was to visit and wrote voluminous notes on what he had seen and done before he plunged into the next encounter. He often travelled with a heavy trunk with iron bands, stuffed with history books, government reports, biographies and much else relating to his destination, and armed with introductions, carefully sought well in advance, to key people in church and state and other walks of life who



could be harnessed, willingly or unwillingly, to the cause of Christ in their own land.

Mott was an exemplar of his own dictum about arranging a visit or a conference: "Plan as if there were no such thing as prayer. Pray as if there were no such thing as planning." Speaking easily no language but his own, he rehearsed with his interpreter (always chosen on careful advice) every important utterance until he was satisfied that every turn of phrase, every illustration, was fully grasped so that it could be accurately translated, while local guidance was sought to make sure there were no gaffes in sensitive political or theological areas. All this, of course, made great demands and grew beyond even his unaided resources.

Mott was not at first particularly a champion of Christian unity,\* but his passion for evangelism\* made him one. Like Charles Brent, he realized that Edinburgh 1910 implied more than cooperation. His most far-reaching decision arose from his encounter in the WSCF with the Eastern Orthodox churches. There he met Christian student movements which were solidly confessional in character, differing greatly from the often pietistic assumptions of many Western Protestant students. When, at a WSCF meeting at Nyborg in 1925, it was decided that confessional student movements could be corporate members of the federation, the vital distinction between *interdenominational* and *denominational* became part of ecumenism. Mott was fully at home, and played a large part, in the first two world conferences on Faith and Order (Lausanne 1927, Edinburgh 1937).

Equally inevitably, when his friend Nathan Söderblom, archbishop of Uppsala, took the lead in arranging the first world conference on Life and Work\* (Stockholm 1925), Mott was among those who saw the value of international Christian witness in issues of peace and social justice. It was not surprising that he should have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1946, in recognition of his many contributions to the concord of nations.

At the 1937 Oxford conference of Life and Work (as at the Faith and Order conference in Edinburgh a few weeks later) he was among those who spoke forcefully in favour of the proposal to establish a world council

of churches. He was, inevitably, a member of the committee charged with planning the structure of the emergent WCC.

Some ten years later, when the WCC held its inaugural assembly at Amsterdam, Mott, then in his 83rd year, preached at the opening service. "We have entered", he said, "the most exacting period in the history of the church. It will take all the statesmanship, all the churchmanship, all the self-forgetfulness of all of us. But to those who believe in the adequacy of Christ no doors are closed and boundless opportunities are open." At its close the assembly elected him to the unique office of honorary president – a token, at least, of the debt owed to him by the whole ecumenical movement.

OLIVER TOMKINS

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## MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

EVER SINCE the dawn of Islam there have been relations between Muslims and Christians, with roots springing from the deep soil of Abrahamic tradition. A group of early Muslim refugees found asylum in Christian Ethiopia, while numerous Qur'anic texts provided the bases for a range of attitudes which Muslims could assume with regard to their Christian neighbours. Some verses referred to non-Muslims generally, but others pointed specifically to the followers of Jesus. The latter include both warnings and commendations, leaving successive generations the duty of deciding their own policies and actions according to changing circumstances. In one passage, the Qur'an does refer to Christians as "nearest in affection" to Islam. The status of non-Muslims in the Islamic state included a blend of inferiority, freedom of religion and official protection. In its formative years, Arab-Islamic civilization was characterized by a remarkable ability to invite and integrate the various contributions that Christians were eager and able to offer.

Christians had no equivalent guidance from biblical texts and early Christian tradition. Thus they were free to see Islam in a kaleidoscope of impressions, from regarding it as a heresy\* requiring suppression to seeing it as an estimable rival challenging them to compete with Muslims in good works, so that each faith might be judged by its fruit.

Mainly in the centuries before the crusades\* and the *Reconquista* – which hardened the attitudes of both traditions – there was considerable co-existence and interpenetration. But Muslim-Christian contact can also be seen as a dreary series of military campaigns (some of which featured egregious acts of barbarity utterly inconsistent with submission to a merciful God or service to a loving Saviour) and an obstinate theological impasse exacerbated by the sublime triumphalism of both parties. Yet in the last few decades there has been real movement within the two communities towards constructive exchange on doctrinal questions as well as productive collaboration on common interests of a more practical character.

After a preliminary period of intramural reflection, the World Council of Churches, principally through its Sub-unit on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths, sponsored bilateral meetings between Muslims and Christians on a variety of themes. “Issues in Christian-Muslim Relations: Ecumenical Considerations” was received by the WCC central committee and sent to the churches in 1992, and “Striving Together in Dialogue: A Muslim-Christian Call to Reflection and Action”, drafted by a group comprised of Muslims and Christians, followed in 2001.

Roman Catholic institutions, particularly the Secretariat for Non-Christians (since 1988 called the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue), also developed dialogue programmes in the years following the Second Vatican Council.\* There was, for instance, one major meeting of Christians and Muslims in Tripoli, Libya, in 1976, and a consultation involving Muslims and Christians from around the Mediterranean at Assisi in 1988. However, the Vatican has invested most of its efforts in establishing the principle of dialogue among its own faithful through workshops with local bishops conferences, academic teaching and research and, especially, topical addresses by Pope

John Paul II; the most famous of these was his talk to several thousand young people at Casablanca in 1981. Religious orders like the Franciscans and the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) have fostered sustained intercommunal contacts in several parts of the world, as have a great many regional, national and local ecumenical organizations and several individual churches or confessional federations. The Muslim-Christian research group (GRIC), which has been working since 1977 with branches in half a dozen centres to develop serious theological reflection in a carefully balanced context, consists of Muslim and Christian theologians and other intellectuals from half a dozen branches of their faiths in six countries; they have developed a serious process of theological reflection on timely issues, some of which are thought to be quite divisive.

Dialogic initiatives have not been exclusively of Christian inspiration. In several instances, Muslim organizations have been the hosts of international dialogues, such as those held in Amman and elsewhere under the auspices of the (Jordanian) Royal Academy of Research on Islamic Affairs or those arranged by the Centre for Economic and Social Research at the University of Tunis. Representatives of the Muslim World Congress, the World Muslim League and the World Islamic Call Society have been meeting regularly with representatives from the Vatican and the WCC to exchange information, encouragement and advice.

The recent creation of Christian-Muslim fora for dialogue and cooperation is significant. An important case in point is the Arab Group on Christian-Muslim dialogue, founded in 1995 and supported by the Middle East Council of Churches\* and the WCC.

In the early stages, most discussions elaborated the theme of dialogue itself, with a few pioneer spirits re-assuring one another that constructive interaction was the worthiest witness to each faith tradition and the surest means to the pluralistic harmony essential to enduring peace. The principal objective of any gathering was the very fact of meeting, although the ancillary benefits of a better awareness and understanding of each other’s beliefs, concerns and hopes made

each conversation a new advance in the tentative search for trust. More substantive topics, like mission and *da'wah* (Chambésy 1976), or ethics and development (Beirut 1977), emerged as confidence matured. Also, the circle of enthusiasts gradually widened to embrace a fuller range of theological and social perspectives, affirming the importance of sound relations to both communities and bringing fresh spiritual insights to Muslims and Christians alike. The themes which recurred, for example, in the 1991-96 WCC-sponsored regional colloquia on religion, law and society led participants to a stronger commitment to common values and an enhanced respect for each other's particularities. Wider engagement has also spawned a proliferation of continuing associations in national and local settings, addressing specific questions of more direct focus; each of these contributes to the general impetus towards tolerance and exchange.

This tendency for more openness and the increasing numbers of participants in dialogue are not universally accepted among Christians and Muslims. In many places, communal suspicions are so ingrained that tension and armed conflict persist, in spite of the efforts of a valiant few. Many people still hold to narrow missiologies which view interfaith conversations simply as a means of changing the allegiance of their interlocutors, while others have adopted a spiritual isolationism of toleration without communication. Since a series of military actions and undeclared wars has been initiated by the leading Western power, considered by many as a Christian nation, and since leaders of this power have spoken of a "crusade" to defend Western values (whose Christian character can in any case be questioned), and since on the Muslim side violence has been introduced which is in contradiction with the Islamic tradition of legal self-defence, positions have again hardened.

Nevertheless, where dialogue was once a daring risk, it is now the preferred form of inter-religious discourse, and Muslims and Christians in every corner of the world are daily building mutual confidence even as they engage in more vital and varied agendas (e.g. ecology, theology and justice, trilateral talks with Jews). Whether we cite examples like the churches' support of the Project for

Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (Procure, Nairobi) or concerns once expressed by the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs (Jidda), today's trend unquestionably is also towards wider involvement and deeper commitment.

As the experience of Christian-Muslim dialogue and cooperation grows and spreads, it begins to offer a prospect of counteracting processes which tend to globalize conflicts that involve Christians and Muslims. Enmities in one part of the world spill over to situations of tension in other regions. An act of violence in one place is used to confirm stereotypes of the "enemy" in another place or even provoke revenge attacks elsewhere in the world. There are many Muslims and Christians who refuse to be drawn into others' conflicts on the basis of uncritical responses to calls for confessional solidarity; instead, they uphold common principles of justice and reconciliation.

The recent work in Christian-Muslim dialogue has given priority to issues of identity, majority/minority relations and co-citizenship. In many countries, Muslim and Christian communities share the same language and often the same culture. Often, their members are said to be granted by law equal civil and political rights. But discriminatory practices exacerbate distrust and division. The intermingling of state policies and confessional identities rooted in communal traditions may lead communities to look at each other as a threat. This is particularly true in times of change and uncertainty.

In this context, the relevance of Muslim-Christian dialogue initiatives depends largely on their intentional and concentrated effort to dispel fears and suspicions between those who are seen to represent religious communities. Dialogue is seen as an opportunity for strengthening cross-confessional loyalties. Such dialogue is careful ever to uphold, in discussion and joint action, the centrality of the common good as well as inclusive political participation.

STUART E. BROWN

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**MYSTICISM**

THE TERM “mysticism” is linked through its Greek root with the idea of the perception of what is kept secret and protected by silence, the invisible reality. For Paul “mystery” signifies the hidden wisdom and depths of God, the things that no eye has seen and no ear has heard, things beyond the human mind, which can be known only by the Spirit of God (see 1 Cor. 2:6-16). For him the incarnation\* of the Word of God was “the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed” (Col. 1:26).

In a real sense mysticism defies definition, partly because it refers to a very personal experience of God as the transcendent reality, which cannot be formulated in descriptive language or credal formulations. There are many mystical schools, most of them of monastic origin, with a variety of emphases. Mysticism is best described overall as the theory and practice of contemplative life. It is a second kind of faith – contemplation – which deepens the first faith. It has three stages: purification, illumination and perfection, which complement each other.

In the East, mysticism was introduced by Origen of Alexandria (c.185-c.254) in terms of the “mystical” interpretation of the biblical message, which goes far beyond the written text, words and symbols to the unveiled face of the Word of God as person. The most influential mystical writer was Dionysius the Areopagite (c.500), who wrote *The Mystical Theology*. His writings, translated by John Scotus Erigena and circulated in the West in the middle ages, stress the epistemological dimension of mysticism and speak about

“apophatic theology”, the negative method of knowledge of the nameless God. For Symeon the New Theologian (949-1022), the only way to praise the ineffable grace of God is through *The Hymns of Divine Love*. Hesychasm, a spiritual stream that originated in Mount Athos (13th-14th centuries), concentrates on the continual invocation of the name of Christ (an echo of which we find in *The Way of a Pilgrim*, the story of a Russian pilgrim from the mid-19th century who practises the Jesus prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me”).

In the West, the influence of Dionysius the Areopagite’s theory about “divine darkness” is seen in *The Cloud of Unknowing*, a mystical treatise of the 14th century. Meister Eckhart (c.1260-1327), a German mystical writer, developed the idea of the mystical direct vision of God, in a union like light to light. Another German mystical writer, Jacob Boehme (1575-1624), is the author of *The Way to Christ*. Julian of Norwich (c.1342-1413) and William Law (1686-1761) are among the best-known English mystical writers.

Western spirituality has been enriched by mystics such as St Thomas (“new state of grace”), Ignatius of Loyola (*Spiritual Exercises*), Francis of Assisi, Theresa of Avila and John of the Cross, Francis Xavier and Catherine of Siena. Cistercian and Cluniac reforms and the Franciscan movement, to take only two examples, owe a great deal to the impact of mysticism.

Two inter-related streams in the mystical tradition may be identified. The first emphasizes *spirituality* as a quality of life and aims at attaining purity of heart through a spiritual pilgrimage towards the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13), waging a perpetual “unseen war” against all destructive passions through a radical ascetic discipline (e.g. John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*). The second stream stresses the attainment of divine knowledge, or *gnosis* (Eva-grius of Pontus, 346-99). Here the goal is the illumination of the mind, expressed in an existential “negative” language which is beyond names and symbols. The gnosis experience takes the heart to a reality beyond faith, to God himself, to the depth of divine love changing the life of those who receive it: “All of us, with unveiled faces, seeing [or

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reflecting] the glory of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18).

The various Christian mystical traditions display more similarities than differences. When it refers to the nature of the light we see and receive in mystical union, the Eastern Orthodox tradition speaks of the divine uncreated energies of God (e.g. Gregory Palamas of Salonika, 1296-1359), while the West uses the term "created grace". Deification, the transfiguration of persons (*theosis*), is thus given a different content and intensity. But the goal is the same – to reach out to the ultimate likeness of God: We "are being transformed into the same image" (2 Cor. 3:18). "All human beings are made in God's image; but to be in his likeness is granted only to those who through great love have brought their own freedom into subjection of God" (Diadochos of Photiki, 404-86, *On Spiritual Knowledge*).

Mysticism can have a great significance for the spirituality of our times, especially for personal spiritual growth and renewal movements. It can aid the process of contemplation, even of the created world around us. It can develop the human possibilities in our religious relationships with God (i.e. the anthropological and psychological dimensions of the image of God) and can rid us of illusions and speculations that so often cluster around human natural perfections.

Mysticism is by no means confined to Christianity, and in recent years Christians have been discovering the riches of the spiritualities of other faiths, often steeped in mysticism. A WCC meeting on "Spirituality in Interfaith Dialogue" (Kyoto 1987) explored some aspects of such spirituality and their significance for interfaith relations.

See also **spirituality in the ecumenical movement.**

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# N

## NATION

THE WORD “nation”, from which derive concepts such as nationalism and national security,\* refers to a people with a consciousness of being a people\* distinct from all others. A nation differs from groupings such as family or tribe in that the feeling of identification with others is rooted not simply in kinship or biology but also in geography, a shared history and a common material civilization.

One may speak of nations without reference to actual political units. For example, Eritreans, Hungarians and Macedonians identified themselves as nations even before the break-up of the Ethiopian, Hapsburg and Ottoman empires led to the creation of modern sovereign nation states. Long before the creation in 1948 of the state of Israel, Jews identified with

other Jews as a people with a sense of solidarity and a well-defined attachment to the land of Israel. Even now, at a time when nationhood as a political structure is a common understanding, there are peoples who consider themselves as nations apart from the states which exercise authority over them. Thus, the Indian and Aboriginal peoples of Canada and Australia think of themselves as first nations of the sovereign states in which they live, while Palestinians living under Israeli rule regard themselves as a sovereign nation state in the making.

The nation, although originally viewed more generally, now universally is a political structure of the communal life of peoples. This more political concept of the nation emerged in modern history under the idea of nationalism. Today most peoples

of the world are organized in nation states, political units claiming legitimacy through the self-determination of the people forming the unit, with the United Nations\* an international body composed of representatives of nation states. The UN also grants special status to groups such as the Palestinians, who claim the right to call themselves nations.

Many scholars believe that "the rise of Protestantism coincided with the rise of modern nations" in Europe (Bennett, 93). Along with the Protestant Reformation, the Enlightenment and modern nationalism contributed to the break-up of European Christendom, which had been based on the Constantinian ideal of uniting church and empire. The result was the emergence of the sovereign nation state. Though the churches maintained confessional relations across national lines, they were organized nationally and, formally or informally, became subject to national governments. These European national churches were thus also inevitably involved in the expansion of national power in Asia and Africa, and eventually in the conflicts among European nations competing for imperial territories.

This imperialistic rivalry led to the first world war, which allowed the churches to see that nations had become a law unto themselves and that the supranational character of the church had been lost. The peace appeals addressed to the churches during and after the war by Swedish Archbishop Söderblom, the 1920 Lambeth (Anglican) appeal to Christian people and the actions of the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches\* all presupposed a close relation between international peace\* and the unity\* of the churches; this growing ecumenical movement thus posed the challenge of peace to modern sovereign nations. As Wilfred Monod argued, a spiritual league of churches must become the soul of a moral league of peoples and a political league of nations (*A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, I, 579).

By the 1930s a type of nationalism had emerged in Germany under Hitler which repudiated all spiritual connections with ecumenical Christianity or Christian val-

ues. The Oxford conference on "Church, Community and State" met in 1937 in the context of the struggle of the German Confessing Church\* with Nazi paganism, a movement which deified the German *Volk* (nation) as rooted in blood and soil and the will-to-power over other peoples. The 1937 Oxford report on the universal church and the world of nations called upon the churches to maintain their supranational character and provided an ecumenical answer to totalitarian nationalism and its institutionalized idolatry.

During the second world war, the WCC in process of formation worked constantly on post-war peace aims and supported plans to establish the UN. In 1946 the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs was formed to aid the churches in assuming their responsibilities in working for peace and justice between nations.

In the International Missionary Council\* (IMC) and later in the WCC study of "The Common Christian Responsibility towards Areas of Rapid Social Change", the ecumenical movement dealt with the growth of nationalism in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. In these lands the nationalist movement had its roots in the revolt of the peoples against Western colonial domination and in their awakening to freedom, equality and other values to which Christian missions themselves had made a substantial contribution through their educational and religious work and their critique of traditional societies. The IMC was positively inclined to the demand of the younger churches for greater autonomy from mission control, for assuming primary responsibility for the evangelization of their nations, and for building indigenous national churches transcending Western denominationalism in order to make a united witness to awakening nations. Bishop V.S. Azariah of India had made this plea at the Tambaram meeting of the IMC in 1938, emphasizing that the churches of Asia and Africa were already organized in national Christian councils within the framework of the IMC. Generally speaking, it may be said that after Tambaram the idea of a united indigenous

church for the nation-in-the-making was regarded as practically a theological principle in IMC circles.

In the period after the second world war the WCC's study of rapid social change made an attempt to understand and interpret theologically the politics of nationalism and of nation-building as they emerged in the third world. This became one of the principal points of discussion in the Salonika conference of 1958, which emphasized the danger involved in interpreting nationalism only on the basis of the Western experience. The meeting accepted the need to evaluate positively third-world nationalism, especially in the stage when it expressed the awakening of people to the dignity of their selfhood. Consequently, the report of Salonika called on the ecumenical movement to recognize the moral and spiritual justification of nation-building movements, which are means for the emancipation of dependent peoples: "Such emancipation is to be welcomed and encouraged by the Christian church. The concept of the 'responsible society' implies that people are called to accept responsibility to God and their fellowmen and women for the choices and decisions on which the life of their societies is based; and responsible participation in social and political life can only be achieved where each national group or unit can express itself in freedom. Therefore these nationalisms should not be equated with that aggressive nationalism which seeks to dominate other peoples or an isolationist nationalism which denies responsibility for other peoples. Nevertheless it is necessary to stress the fact that even a legitimate movement of nationalism expressing the urge for political freedom or for nation-making has in it the seeds of perversion" (*Dilemmas*, 57).

In a chapter entitled "The Church and the Conflict of Nationalism and Colonialism", in his book summarizing the rapid social change study, Paul Abrecht gives an overview of the theological debate on this issue. It is evident that many European Christians were not happy with the resurgence of nationalism in third-world countries. Though some, like the German the-

ologian Heinz-Dietrich Wendland, wrote favourably about the "constructive nationalism" of the third world, the general trend was what Abrecht calls Christian anti-nationalism. Europeans considered it their duty to warn non-Europeans of the dangers of unreasonable outbursts of "exaggerated nationalism". They regretted that the newly formed governments in Asia and Africa "seemed to repeat the mistakes which Europe made in the past" (Abrecht, 97-98).

This warning was in fact absorbed into the Salonika report when it recognized the seeds of corruption in the emerging nationalism in Asia and Africa. In effect, Salonika emphasized only one phase of the historical phenomenon. But it was also convinced that no self-awakened people in today's world of nations could bypass the stage of nationalism and internationalism, with all their ambiguities, as they struggled towards other and higher expressions of community and selfhood.

Indeed in its assemblies in Bangkok (1968) and Singapore (1973), the East Asia Christian Conference (now the Christian Conference of Asia [CCA]) noted that "nationalism as an ethos" had become inadequate to bring social justice to the peoples of Asia. The Bangkok assembly said that nationalism had become confined to the elite sections of society, an ideology which justified their search for power and affluence. A positive nationalism should motivate the people to make sacrifices as they commit themselves to the development of their country. "But this nationalism can live only from the sense of equality and oneness created by an equal sharing of power by the people" (Thomas, 199-200). Furthermore, nationalism with its emphasis on national security, unity and stability was in many countries giving rise to "an ethos for preserving the existing structures against change and to justify the suppression of democratic rights and mass action for change" (204). In its later thinking on social action for justice, the CCA emphasized the ethos of the "people" rather than that of the "nation". In the 1970s in many third-world countries the emphasis shifted from national development to people's liberation, as the ideo-

logical dynamic among Christian people concerned with justice.

Theologically, contemporary Christians are dealing with at least three broad issues concerning the concept of nation. The first has to do with the continued struggle of peoples for self-determination. The process of decolonization, an achievement to which the WCC contributed through initiatives such as the Programme to Combat Racism,\* is not complete. In October 1945 there were 51 member nations of the UN. At the end of 2000, that number had increased to 189 member nations. However, the struggle for national self-determination continues in Palestine, Tibet and elsewhere.

Second, the burden of debt in the poorer world, freer trade between nations and technological innovations in the flow of funds and ideas are factors which have raised questions about the role of powerful multinational corporations and trans-governmental bodies such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Structural adjustment programmes imposed by these institutions contribute to a widening gap between the world's poor and rich, with women and children bearing a disproportionate share of the burden. The ideology of the free market, now virtually unopposed, gave rise to an accelerated process of globalization of the world's economy, culture and means of communication. Its proponents argue that the nation state is an outmoded concept and that the idea of national sovereignty must inevitably give way to a single global market without borders.

Finally, the collapse of several federal states and empires in the 1980s, notably the break-up of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Ethiopia and the end of military rule in many countries, has not yet resulted in the creation of civil society\* in many of the new sovereign nations. The persistence of ancient national identities, rivalry for power, and competition for scarce resources have resulted in a number of regional conflicts. The colossal tragedy of war in Bosnia, Liberia, Rwanda and elsewhere has led Christians to exercise a role of mediating an end to these conflicts, encouraging steps towards reconciliation

and healing the wounds of war. However, the violent character of many of these struggles raised the question of identification between some churches and other religious groups and the ethnic group or "nation" with which they have deep historical roots. The idea of the pluri-ethnic nation state is thus called into question through processes of "ethnic cleansing" sometimes related to religion.

At the start of the third millennium, we are witnesses to two counter tendencies: continuation of a process by which peoples equate national identity with sovereign nation states, and globalization. As people throughout the world struggle to move beyond the negative consequences of nationalism, the Christian church as a supranational worldwide reality has a role to serve as a counter-weight to the transnational institutions of exploitation and to be an agent of reconciliation, enhancing the human dignity and freedom of all.

See also **international order, national security, responsible society.**

M.M. THOMAS and PAUL DEKAR

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## NATIONAL SECURITY

THE HOBBSIAN view that society\* appears as a means of self-protection in the "war

of all against all” is elevated by the doctrine of national security to a universal and all-embracing ideology\* and a principle for the state and political life. For Hobbes, such conflict is the natural condition of humanity; the state is a contract through which human beings surrender their authority to a sovereign in return for protection from others.

The immediate origin of national security as a doctrine was the organization of national security by the USA after the second world war (e.g. through the US’s national security act, National Security Council, CIA and National War College created in 1947-48). But the idea goes back to romantic ideas of pan-Germanism, e.g. from Rudolf Kjellen, who held that “the state can survive only if it practises power politics” because “all civilized life finally rests on power”. Nazism made this ideology its own, and after the second world war several Latin American generals developed a geopolitical theory built on those assumptions (Golbery in Brazil, Villegas in Argentina, Pinochet in Chile). The amalgam of the “security” idea of the cold war\* and the geopolitical dream inspired in a number of third-world countries the creation of national security totalitarian states.

The doctrine can be summarized in the three words “power”, “state”, “security”, and in three strategies – constant growth (expansion), permanent war (internal or external) and total control (totalitarianism). Power is “the ability of the state to make its own will reality”; strategy is the organization of domestic affairs and foreign relations so that power may operate most efficiently in achieving the interests of the state. Total war is a permanent condition on all levels: military, ideological, economic, political. A strong, committed elite must hold total power and be able to command all resources.

The total war in the period of the cold war, for example, was against international communism; the enemy was both external and internal (involving infiltration, ideological indoctrination, terrorism and revolution); the military were the only elite capable of facing this challenge. National security was built into an interna-

tional issue, integrating national security states into the “security system of the West” led by the USA and into the world capitalist economy in its new “world market integration”.

In some countries (particularly in the Americas) this doctrine was given a religious formulation as a war against materialistic atheism\* and for the sake of Christianity (witness the New Right in the USA). In Latin America it sometimes revived the old ultramontane ideology of writers like Joseph de Maistre, who said that “war is the normal state of humankind” and that the concentration of authority\* was a necessary means for waging such war, since “when the human soul has lost its vigour due to laziness, unbelief... vices... it can only be tempered again by blood”. Such bizarre ideas have been used to justify arbitrary repression, human rights violations and genocide in many countries throughout the third world.

The doctrine of national security was denounced and condemned by church authorities in Europe, North America and the third world. The arguments can be summarized in a statement from the third conference of the Latin American Council of Bishops (Puebla 1979): “It places the individual at the unlimited service of the total war against the cultural, social, political and economic conflicts and, with them, against the threat of communism. Facing this real or possible permanent danger, all individual freedoms are, as in all emergency situations, limited, and the will of the state is substituted for the will of the people. Economic development and war potential take precedence over the needs of the abandoned masses... It even tries to justify itself... as a doctrine defending Western Christian civilization.” The WCC addressed the inherent dangers of this doctrine in its studies on militarism/militarization,\* human rights,\* political ethics and the conditions for genuine global security. “The only security worthy of the name”, said the general secretary in 1979, “lies in enabling people to participate fully in the life of their nation and to establish relations of trust between peoples of different nations.”

See also **nation, civil society.**

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## NATURAL LAW

IN AN EARLY study entitled *The Social Thought of the World Council of Churches* (1956), Edward Duff pointed to two theological traditions: one he called *catholic* (mainly represented in the WCC by Anglicans), characterized as an ethic of ends and based on an optimistic anthropology (all human beings have the ability to distinguish good from evil by means of reason); the other he termed *protestant*, an ethic of inspiration, supported by a pessimistic anthropology (sin has darkened reason, which is now unable to see the good by itself) and therefore seeing a sharp discontinuity between reason and revelation\*. For the first of these two streams the concept of natural law is essential. Several years later C.-H. Grenholm would still see these main trends but would also speak of a “mixed theological ethics” which would build bridges between the two. The question remains: How is the notion of natural law to be understood, and what place should it occupy in our approach to questions of ethics\* (involving the individual and society) and of law\* (involving rights and international law)?

## NATURAL LAW IN HISTORY

The notion of natural law has a long and complex history. The early fathers, who received it mainly from the Stoic tradition (esp. from Seneca and Cicero), conceived it as the order of the universe, perceived by human reason, which participates in the logos that penetrates all of reality. It is objective and universal. In the effort to relate such law to concrete ethical questions, some were inclined to relate it to biological data, referring to animal life

or to “the natural function proper to an organism”. Others, such as Irenaeus and, more systematically, Augustine, established a distinction between a primary and absolute right (preceding the fall) and a secondary and derived one (under the conditions of sin\*).

Thomas Aquinas, drawing also from Aristotle and the Roman jurists of the empire, developed a more systematic and flexible concept of natural law, which has remained the basis of Roman Catholic ethics.

Simplifying, we can summarize Thomas’s view under three headings: (1) The human person is a psycho-physical unity directed towards a transcendent fulfilment; we thus exclude all crass objectivism and introduce a teleological dimension into all ethical questions. (2) One must distinguish between the *primary precepts* of natural law, which Thomas basically identifies in formal terms (“one should do good and avoid evil” or “one should act according to reason”), with some derivations which are attached to it (e.g. self-preservation, conjugal union as necessary for procreation, sociality and the recognition of God), and *secondary precepts*, which are derived from the primary but involve the mediation of circumstantial knowledge and reflection (e.g. things related to property or to political decisions). (3) Despite the classical metaphysical conception of human nature, the idea of natural law manifests a certain changeability and historicity because of the fallibility of instrumental human reason and the multiplicity and variety of relevant factors.

In spite of the criticisms of the Aquinas definition (e.g. by Ockham), it was not until the Reformation that his conception of natural law was seriously challenged. Although the reformers do recognize the value of human reason in discerning the good in everyday human life, they tend to undermine the whole edifice of natural law by their emphasis on the break introduced in human existence through sin and humanity’s consequent and absolute dependence on God’s self-revelation for knowing God’s will. Since such a break could not dispense with the question of

how to make personal and social ethical decisions, Protestantism has sometimes re-introduced a variation of natural law in the notion of the orders, sometimes radically separated a spiritual and a secular realm, sometimes tried to apply biblical laws and sometimes looked for a more comprehensive Christological principle.

### CRISIS AND THE VALIDITY OF THE CONCEPT OF NATURAL LAW

Since the last century the notion of natural law has undergone a shattering criticism from three quarters. Philosophically, positivism and existentialism have rejected the idea of an essential and immutable human nature, or even simply of human nature as such, thus undercutting the possibility of speaking of a universal law rooted in it. Second, anthropology and sociology have corroborated such criticisms by showing that nothing can be called universal in moral precepts, considering the laws and customs of human societies across time and cultures. If we would speak of a "universal moral principle", it would have to be so general ("do the good and don't do evil") that it would have no practical significance. Furthermore, modern science has "historicized" even biological human reality (see **bioethics**). Third, Protestant theologians have forcefully opposed the idea of natural law, calling it "human self-justification" (Hans Dombois) or "arrogance before God" (Heinz-Horst Schrey), on the basis that "it overlooks God's revelation in Christ" (Karl Barth), it is "a total interpenetration of creation and sin" (Helmut Thielicke), or it has an implicitly deist view of a creation which "God, so to say, would have abandoned" (Regin Prenter).

Under such combined criticisms, many have dismissed the notion of natural law. However, some of the questions which this concept answered have not disappeared. "Juridical positivism" (Hans Kelsen etc.) has proved insufficient as a foundation of law. There seems to be an ineradicable human sense of right which protests an unjust law, even when it has been "positively legislated". There is a rebellion against es-

tablished patterns in the name of some superior justice attributed to the gods, to reason or to human conscience. We can, usually *ex post facto*, find social and economic reasons that explain the objective conditions underlying such appeals. But it would hardly seem intellectually honest to ignore this sense of transcendent good and justice.

The Christian community living in the world, however, cannot escape its responsibility to participate in the human effort to distinguish good from evil, to define moral values, to make moral judgments and to establish laws. In so doing, how should one relate the specific vision rooted in God's revelation, attested in scripture and experienced in the church, to the ethical insights (whatever their origin) of the human community? If we hold to the Christian doctrine of creation,\* to the universality of the work of Christ, to the eschatological hope of God's kingdom,\* are we not forced to establish some relation between God's creative, redemptive and fulfilling activity and the questions raised by human (personal, social, political) life in the world? In the context of these issues we find some theological attempts to re-interpret "natural law" or to find another theological key to give a response to such questions. Some of these attempts have been significant in the ecumenical conversation.

Some thinkers attempt to discover *an anthropological structure* which, avoiding the pitfalls of objectivism, can provide a basis for a joint reflection on ethics by Christians and non-Christians. Emil Brunner has done so by defining the human in terms of an I-Thou relationship which undergirds the basic category of "responsibility" as fundamental ethical structure. Building on that foundation, Brunner reinterprets the classic doctrine of "the orders" and develops a critical and constructive dialogue with secular ethical thinking. In a different line, Paul Tillich builds a system of correlation on the basis of the human openness to the transcendent as an "ultimate concern". This expression of being under the conditions of existence (of which Jesus as the Christ is the symbol) makes it possible to discuss

ethical issues in their historical form without destroying their transcendent dimension (see Tillich's *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3). Although through a different line of reasoning, this approach is analogous to Karl Rahner's anthropological method, which Johann Metz has continued and transformed as basis for a "political theology" and a theology of praxis. On the Anglo-Saxon scene, and more directly related to WCC definitions, ethicists like John Bennett, John Macquarrie and J.H. Oldham have looked for "middle" ethical formulations (see **middle axioms**) on which Christians and non-Christians can cooperate and which, although not claiming to derive from some universal and unchangeable natural law, do represent a certain ethical sense or some common "awareness of the desirable good". Concrete utopias like the idea of the responsible society\* or, in more recent times, the just, participatory and sustainable society\* or justice, peace and the integrity of creation\* belong to this category.

A reading of recent *Roman Catholic ethical pronouncements* suggests that, while natural law continues to be a significant element, biblical and theological considerations tend to occupy a privileged place as the basis for ethical definitions, mediated by an analysis of social, economic and scientific conditions. Vatican II's pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes* seems to point to a method which D. Lanfranchi (see his article "Ley Natural" in *Diccionario Teológico Interdisciplinar*) summarizes in three points: (1) the style is that of dialogue between the church and the world; both must give and receive, which means a dialogue with human sciences, cultures and religions; (2) the dialogue engages not only the magisterium but the whole church, laypeople as well as the clergy, therefore "every Christian who thinks and reflects on himself and on the meaning of his own life and activity contributes to the discovery and formulation of the natural law"; (3) in this dialogue the church offers, but does not impose, "its vision of man and of the natural law, taken from a higher light: revelation". While the document exhorts a person to enter into his or

her own heart, there discerning one's "proper destiny beneath the eyes of God" (a typical Thomist view), there is a strong emphasis on "the dignity of the moral conscience" as the voice of God, "a law written by God" in the heart. The chapter on anthropology culminates in a Christological section in which Christ is seen as the key to the understanding and destiny of the human.

This Christological approach, which in principle would seem to be the direct opposite of natural-law theology, can, however, be seen as offering a fruitful approach to the questions mentioned above. Strongly affirming the unique and universal meaning of Christ's redemption for all humankind, Barth can re-instate a form of humanism in which the dignity of the human person\* becomes a fundamental point of departure for ethics, while, by way of analogy, the kingdom of God which is revealed and enacted in Christ offers a parable for thinking about the civil community. The Christological approach has been carried through in Bonhoeffer's tantalizingly incomplete but enormously fruitful *Ethics*, in which human life is fully honoured in its autonomy, while Christ is seen as the ultimate being for all reality and ethics as "con-formity", with Christ "taking shape" in it.

The version of natural law as a universal, immutable law, knowable to all through reason and able to be formulated in specific terms in relation to almost every possible question (as certain rationalists claimed in the 17th century) is certainly impossible. Even classic theorists of natural law (Thomas Aquinas in the first place) qualified and corrected that view. But it is also clear that an ecumenical ethics cannot avoid today a dialogue with the re-interpretations of natural law in recent Catholic and non-Catholic ethics, not only because it is a dialogue within the Christian family, but because it relates to issues of fundamental importance for a Christian ethics that intends to be relevant to human reality.

See also **anthropology, theological; grace.**

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## NATURE

THE ENGLISH word "nature" (Latin *natura*, Greek *physis*) is used in at least three senses: (1) the constitutive nature of an entity (e.g. "a wolf is by nature cruel"); (2) natural phenomena untouched by humans (e.g. "nature and culture are two distinct but related realms"); and (3) the whole of reality (e.g. "nature has endowed human beings with a very complex brain structure"). The New Testament uses the word often in the first sense ("Jews by birth", Gal. 2:15; "by nature children of wrath", Eph. 2:3; "natural branches", Rom. 11:21,24), i.e. as the structure and constitution with which someone or something is born (see also James 3:6-7; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 Cor. 11:14; Gal. 4:8). But there is no Hebrew equivalent for this Greek word *physis*.

The second and third senses of *physis* are not in the New Testament or the Old Testament, except in the Hellenistic, apocryphal 4 Macc. 5:5-8 (LXX), where the pagan Antiochus Epiphanes recommends swine's flesh to Eleazar the high priest as a gracious "gift of nature" and says it is wrong to reject "nature's favours".

Etienne Gilson thinks with Malebranche that "nature is par excellence an anti-Christian idea, a remnant from pagan philosophy which has been accepted by imprudent theologians". Aristotle and the Stoics used the word *physis* to denote more or less the whole universe with all its creative and regulative powers as a self-existent and self-sustaining whole.

In current usage one finds both the inclusive and the exclusive senses of the word "nature", i.e. including humanity or excluding it. Nature has often been opposed to culture or civilization, especially since Rousseau. One of the several meanings of the word as given by the Oxford English Dictionary (1908 ed.) is "the material world, or its collective objects and phenomena, especially those with which man is most directly in contact; frequently, the features and products of the earth itself, as contrasted with those of human civilization".

Theologians often speak of a process of "historicization of nature" in Israel when the three "nature-feasts" of unleavened bread, first-fruits and booths (Ex. 23:14-17; Deut. 16:1-17) were related to acts of God in history. But the Hebrew OT does not make the distinction between nature and history,\* for the Hebrew language does not have words for these concepts as such. The great redemptive act of the exodus was as much an event in "nature" as in "history" (e.g. the burning bush, the ten plagues, the drying up of the sea, the land flowing with milk and honey, the thunder and lightning at the appearance of Yahweh).

The dichotomy between nature and many other entities, like grace, the supernatural, history, humankind, culture, etc., seems peculiar to the Western tradition. The 9th-century European Christian conception of *natura* included God. John Scotus Erigena (c.810-c.877) gave the four-fold classification of nature: (1) nature, creating and not created, i.e. God; (2) nature created and creating, i.e. the Platonic *kosmos noētos*, or world of archetypal or universal ideas generating particular existents; (3) nature created and not creating, in which category Erigena puts humanity, which cannot create *ex nihilo*; and (4) nature uncreated and not creating, a medieval conception of the final *apokatastasis*, or restoration, when all creativity will stop in a static perfection wherein God is all in all.

But medieval thought never conceived a "natural order" which was independent of the "supernatural order". "Nature" in our sense was a dynamic, *contingent*,

caused entity. It had its own “natural laws”, but God was not subject to these natural laws and could interfere with them and annul them when needed, e.g. in the miracles. God is not bound by nature; nature is bound by God. God can also unbind the laws of nature.

This law-bound nature is active. Nature is an agent. All that happens in the world is caused exclusively by three agents: God, nature and humanity. Everything is an act of God, an act of nature or an act of humanity. When God acts, it is a supernatural act, as distinguished from the last two.

This way of thinking was strange to the Eastern fathers. They spoke about acting according to nature or contrary to nature (*kata physin* or *para physin*), but they also never spoke about anything *hyperphysikos* (supernatural), except in a poetic sense.

For the Eastern fathers, as for the biblical witness, the act of creation\* is the opening phase of God’s redeeming work (see **redemption**). Both the book of Genesis and the gospel of John begin with an account of this opening phase. In the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah we find that the framework of God’s redeeming activity is his original act of creation (Isa. 40:21-28, 42:5-9, 44:24-28, 45:12-25, 51:9-16, etc.). Part of God’s redeeming act is the restoring of creation (Isa. 41:17-20).

In the debate between the inclusive versus exclusive view of nature, Christians must be careful not to fall into the trap of including just two entities – humanity and nature. The package has always three “poles” – God, humanity and the world. Neither the second nor the third could exist apart from or independently of the first.

It is important to note here the fundamental tension between certain Eastern religions and the West Asian tradition of semitic religions. The latter prefer to put an almost unbridgeable gap between the world and the transcendent God. In contrast, Hinduism and Taoism generally have the same ethos as Stoicism in the West, where the world is God and God is the world. Only Buddhism steers clear of this semitic versus South Asian debate.

By refusing to raise the question of God\* altogether and by positing the world and humanity as two inter-related and interacting entities, everything being dependent on everything else and everything in a process of dynamic change, the Buddhist doctrines of causality and dependent origination of phenomena at least avoid the cleavage of transcendence and keep everything together.

In the Indian tradition, the earliest strand, *samkhya*, is dualistic. *Prakrti* (nature) is contrasted with *purusha* (person). This is a non-inclusive view of nature, seeing it as devoid of its own consciousness or purpose, composed of various qualities (*gunas*) in mutual interaction. In opposition to this position, Sankara developed the monistic view in which what we call nature, including humanity, is Brahman, or the Absolute itself, wrongly perceived as separate from the Absolute. In the Chinese tradition of Tao, the two opposing but complementary principles of yin and yang together constitute all reality, including God, world and humanity.

The Christian teaching prefers the word *ktisis* (creation) to *physis* (nature) to refer to the whole world. The three classic passages in the NT are John 1:1-18, Col. 1:15-20, and Heb. 11:3. In speaking of the created order, the NT always insists that it is held together in and by the second person of the Trinity,\* without whom it would be nothing. The biblical tradition not only insists that the created order has its beginning in God but also affirms that without God the world has neither present nor future. The Eastern fathers of the church continued this tradition. The classic patristic writing is Basil’s nine homilies on the Six Days of Creation (*Hexaemeron*). Most of the key doctrines whose origin is wrongly attributed to Augustine in the Western tradition can be found in Basil and Gregory of Nyssa two generations earlier. The world does not begin in time, but in God’s will and word (*Hexaemeron* 1.5ff.). The six days of creation are not 24-hour days (caused by the sun, created only on the fourth day) but long epochs. There is no “three-storey universe” as we see in Rudolf Bultmann’s caricature of patristic teaching. The created order is unfinished,

dynamic, moving towards its fulfilment. Heaven is not a place but an order of many-dimensional reality closed to our senses.

Gregory of Nyssa (c.330-c.395) was more philosophical in his discussion of the created order. Spatio-temporal extension and incessant change are the characteristics of the created as distinct from the Creator. There is both continuity by participation and discontinuity by transcendence or standing apart, extension between God and world. The created order is a space-time process, or rather a procession, orderly and sequential, journeying through life from something to something. Life is an important aspect of that procession from origin to perfection; it is through the evolution of life that the procession moves forward. Human activity is the key for progress. Human aspiration for the greater good and humanity's free creativity of the good are the factors that make the world meaningful.

In the Byzantine tradition, Maximus the Confessor (580-662) uses the word "nature" only in the first sense, i.e. the constitutive nature of a group or class of entities. For "nature" in the inclusive sense he uses *ktisis* (creation). Its original unity comes by virtue of its common origin both in non-being and in the creative energy of the logos which holds it together. It has also a destined or eschatological unity, achieved by and in Jesus Christ, God-Man, body-soul, who took his body in the ascension to the heavens, or eternal realms. Creation is thus inseparable from redemption.

In modern science, nature was often thought of as an objectively existing entity, independent of the Creator and the observing human mind. Today the objective existence of a world can no longer be assumed in science. The world of phenomena can be seen as something emerging in human consciousness and experience, known to be ultimately composed of energy waves operating both in the mind and in the world.

Science persists in the hope that these phenomena can be explained without reference to any Creator outside of it. In science itself there is no basis for the con-

cept of something called nature independent of God and humanity.

The concept of nature as a generic term for reality, whether inclusive or exclusive of humanity, is thus misleading. Christians know only a dynamic created order with a beginning and a destiny as well as a course or path to be traversed from beginning to fulfilment. This created order, which comes out of non-being, has the creative word of God as its original constitutive power and its present sustaining force. Its fulfilled unity is eschatological, to come at the end. This unity is achieved by the God-Man, body-soul Jesus Christ, who united in himself all things and reconciles them to God as a single offering.

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A theology of nature is not the same as a doctrine of creation. They are related, but they have different starting points and serve different purposes.

Belief in God as Creator declares that all existence has its origin in God, is dependent on him at every instant, stands secure in him and, despite much that is wrong, is to be affirmed as an expression of his loving purpose. In the Bible the doctrine takes shape, not in speculation about the nature of the world, but in the working out of the implications of the sovereignty and power of God, who has called and saved his people. The Lord of history\* is Lord too of the powers of the world and provides his people with an orderly and stable environment in which they are to live by his laws. The first chapter of Genesis is a declaration of faith in such an environment, all the more remarkable for being made in a world where much was threatening, painful and mysterious.

Deeper insight into the doctrine shows its ultimate basis in God's grace,\* an out-

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pouring of love constrained by nothing beyond itself, and finally validated by the revelation\* in Jesus Christ.\* As God's agent in creation (Col. 1:16-17), Christ sets his seal on its character and points forward to the new creation, in which all will be gathered up in himself. Meanwhile the operation of grace entails a certain distancing between God and his handiwork, the creation of a degree of "space" to allow creatures to be themselves and thus to respond freely to the love which is offered them.

Creation includes heaven as well as earth. Here the concept diverges most sharply from that of nature. Whatever is meant by "heaven" in this context – and interpretations have been many and various – it is clear that earth is not the sole sphere of God's concern and creative activity. Creation, in other words, is an inclusive term describing all that is not God in its relation to God, and disclosing a goodness and a purposiveness in things which, because they are gifts of grace, are not to be taken for granted. Such a belief is in theory compatible with very different cosmologies and histories of the universe, and in philosophical terms is directed, not towards detailed scientific explanations, but to the fundamental questions why anything should exist at all, and to what purpose.

By contrast, a theology of nature cannot avoid taking account of the way things are. The term "nature" itself is used in a variety of senses, sometimes referring to the essence of whatever is being described ("human nature"), sometimes to the particular characteristics of a person or thing ("a cruel nature"), sometimes to the world apart from human interference (land\* which has "returned to nature"), and sometimes it is simply used as a word for everything, human beings included, as in the phrase "the natural world". These confusions are further increased by the two senses of "natural law".\* The first sense, the scientific, refers to the way in which entities and processes of the observable world relate to and interact with one another. The second sense, the moral, refers to the ways in which human beings ought to behave if they had a fully rational

insight into their true end as given by God. The common thread in all these meanings is the belief that things are what they are, and that this reality can in some measure be discerned and described. From a theological perspective the givenness in the ordering of things is seen as deriving from the creative activity of God. If this order is further seen as the outworking of a rational and intelligible divine plan, the way is open for the development of natural science, and as a matter of history it was in fact such a Christian belief in creation which made science intellectually possible.

However, such a simple identification between the divine plan and the world as studied by natural science does not do justice to the actual complexities inherent in the concept of nature. Some theologians, for example, would want to emphasize the extent to which the whole natural world is somehow entailed in the fallenness of humanity (Rom. 8:19-21) and thus expresses God's intention only in terms of what it is moving towards, rather than in terms of what it now is. There are doubts too about the extent of human rationality and thus about the ability of the human mind to discern the true nature of things unaided by revelation.

From an opposite perspective, some would bring scientific criticism to bear on theology, questioning whether in an evolving world the belief that there is a fixed nature of things can really be sustained. If everything is in process of change and development, then perhaps it is only the basic laws of nature, rather than any particular forms within it, which represent the orderliness of God's creative activity. The so-called harmony of nature, on this view, results from the complex interaction of many conflicting forces and is not necessarily stable or permanent. The recently developed chaos theory underlines the unpredictability of a great many familiar physical processes and points to a universe with very many more degrees of freedom than it has been customary to suppose since the rise of mechanistic physics. In such a fluid and open universe, our human ability to manipulate the natural world for our own ends assumes an even greater sig-

nificance and places a heavy burden of responsibility on us as possessors of these powers.

Much contemporary discussion of nature centres on the extent to which the natural world is to be seen as resource to be exploited, a God-given reality to be respected and treasured for its own sake, or as a process in which human beings are themselves inextricably involved and in which they have no privileged place. Environmental concerns are leading to the re-discovery of neglected theological emphases, of which the most fruitful is still probably the idea of the responsible stewardship of nature. But other emphases, rooted in incarnational theology, stress the potentiality of the natural world for bearing the image of the divine and hence provide a theological basis for regarding it as having its own intrinsic worth. A theocentric understanding of nature, derived from the Christian doctrine of creation, might similarly underline the significance of all created things as having their own value in God's sight and therefore as being worthy of respect and protection.

Such thinking represents a radical departure from those Christian traditions in which the natural world was treated as a mere backcloth to human activity, and in which persons were treated as the sole bearers of moral value. It is possible that the reaction against this view may go too far in downgrading the unique significance of the personal. It also needs to be remembered that there is no way in which humanity can survive the current unsustainable levels of consumption and population increase without massive interference in the natural ordering of things. However, just as in theology grace is said not to destroy nature but to perfect it, ecological wisdom usually lies in learning how to work with the grain of nature rather than against it.

It will be obvious, even from this brief survey of some of the ways in which the concept "nature" is used, that such an ill-defined word can easily generate confusion unless its meaning is carefully specified in particular contexts.

JOHN HABGOOD

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## NAUDÉ, CHRISTIAAN FREDERICK BEYERS

B. 10 May 1915, Roodepoort, Transvaal, South Africa. Naudé, first editor of the ecumenical newspaper *Pro Veritate*, has been a strong promoter of the ecumenical movement in South Africa. On accepting the directorship of the Christian Institute, he was discharged from ministry in the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in 1963. The institute, which he had helped to establish, worked with Christians of all races on issues of church and society in South Africa and was the most outspoken anti-apartheid body in the country. Naudé served the institute for 14 years, till the paper he edited and the institute were both banned by the government in 1977. A banning order for seven years severely curtailed his freedom of movement. Serving as general secretary of the South African Council of Churches, 1985-87, he continued to oppose the policy of apartheid and to counsel various organizations in South Africa which assist disadvantaged people in educational and other spheres. Naudé studied at the University of Stellenbosch, 1932-39, and served the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, 1940-63, working in seven congregations.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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- C. Villa-Vicencio & J.W. Gruchy eds, *Resistance and Hope: South African Essays in Honour of Beyers Naudé*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1985. See also *Hope for Faith*, by Naudé and Dorothee Sölle (WCC, 1985) for a moving account of his conversion to Christ and involvement in anti-apartheid struggles.

## NEILL, STEPHEN CHARLES

B. 31 Dec. 1900, Edinburgh, Scotland; d. 20 July 1984, Oxford. A missionary, church historian, teacher and ecumenical theologian, Neill was associate general secretary of the WCC, responsible for its study programme, 1948-50. He served as principal of a theological college before becoming bishop of the Anglican diocese of Tinnevely, South India, in 1939. He took a leading part in the movement for church union which later led to the for-



mation of the Church of South India. He was a delegate to the world conference of the International Missionary Council at Tambaram (1938). He was professor of mission and ecumenics at the University of Hamburg, 1962-69, and professor of philosophy at the Department of Religious Studies, University of Nairobi, 1970-73. For over a decade he was general editor of World Christian Books, a series of short books designed for translation into many languages.

MARTIN CONWAY

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## NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

THE TERM "new religious movement" (NRM) usually refers to a movement that (1) has become visible in its present form since the second world war, and (2) offers a religious or philosophical world-view or techniques for reaching some higher goal, such as spiritual enlightenment. "Non-conventional religion", "alternative religion" or (often with pejorative overtones) "cult" and "sect" are terms describing roughly the same miscellany.

Several NRMs provide a distinctive interpretation of the Bible, but NRMs have emerged from all the major religious traditions; some incorporate several traditions. Paganism and occult groups, the "new age" and "the human potential" movement, offering self-development through, for example, yoga, meditation, or holistic psychology, are also labelled NRMs - as are some movements that consider themselves part of a mainline tradition but are judged to exhibit certain "cultic" characteristics.

Members of the better-known NRMs in the more developed societies tend, disproportionately, to be materially advantaged young adults; most display high levels of enthusiasm and commitment. But the enormous diversity of beliefs and practices to be found within and between the NRMs cannot be overstressed.

Throughout history, established religions have been suspicious of NRMs, especially when a charismatic leader proclaims a new revelation within their own tradition. Since the early 1970s a number of organizations, some run by ordained ministers and a few supported by mainstream churches, have concentrated on exposing evils allegedly perpetrated by "destructive cults" and on demonstrating that NRMs are not "really" religious or "really" Christian. Although it does not happen so frequently in the 21st century, some members of such organizations have advocated the illegal practice of "deprogramming" to rescue adults from NRMs.

In 1980 the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization\* tried to come to grips with the problem of distinguishing, with reference to NRMs, between "that which is truly of the Spirit of God and that

which is satanic". In 1986 a consultation organized by the WCC and the Lutheran World Federation\* (whose member churches had requested guidelines for appropriate responses to NRMs) produced several recommendations, including one that an ecumenical effort should be made to understand and interact with NRMs. The British Council of Churches also organized a consultation in 1986, which resulted in the Church of England setting up a nationwide, interdenominational network of advisers in collaboration with INFORM (Information Network Focus on Religious Movements), a charity supported by the British government and mainstream churches and committed to disseminating objective and balanced information about NRMs.

While generally chary of their beliefs and practices, several churches have forcefully condemned proposals to curtail the activities of NRMs. In Europe, the Dutch council of churches, for example, expressed disquiet over the apparent violation of religious freedom and the effect on human rights of a European Parliament motion "concerning the influence of new religious movements in the European Community", adding that it should not be possible to impose obligations on NRMs without a similar imposition on existing churches. In North America, Canadian churches have expressed similar sentiments; and, while it found Unification theology incompatible with traditional Christian doctrine, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA has, with other religious bodies such as the American Baptist Churches, filed *amicus curiae* briefs in cases involving the Unification Church and other NRMs, on the ground that arguments presented to the US courts have threatened fundamental principles of religious freedom. In 1986 the Vatican published a preliminary report which, while displaying awareness of various problems, accepted NRMs as a positive challenge to stimulate the church's "own renewal for a greater pastoral efficacy".

As for the NRMs themselves, several embrace an ecumenical mission and have sponsored conferences promoting dialogue between themselves and other (Christian and non-Christian) religions. The NRMs'

ecumenical ventures are, however, usually confined to dialogue with the more established religions; spasmodic attempts to unite (usually over issues of religious liberty) tend to disintegrate, largely because few NRMs wish to be identified with other NRMs. Some NRMs see ecumenism as irrelevant, insisting that one can practise, say, transcendental meditation while being a Methodist or a Roman Catholic. Yet others, such as the International Churches of Christ, consider that ecumenism undermines scriptural purity.

EILEEN BARKER

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## NEW TESTAMENT AND CHRISTIAN UNITY

"THERE IS one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all." With this imposing summation, Ephesians (4:4-6) sets forth the unity\* of Christian faith\* and community, grounding it ultimately in the one God.\* The logic is entirely straightforward: the oneness of God, Jesus Christ,\* Christian confession, liturgy,\* and eschatology\* plainly implies the oneness of the body, the church.\* In an apparent allusion to 1 Cor. 12, Ephesians refers to the church as one body (see also Eph. 1:22-23, where body and church are explicitly equated).

"Church" (ecclesia) quickly became the generic term for the individual Christian congregation, as well as the congregations as a whole, and so it has remained. Nevertheless, the New Testament has different ways of referring to the Christian community. It is not only the Body of

Christ but the people of God (1 Pet. 2:9-10), God's building (1 Cor. 3:9), the family of faith (Gal. 6:10; cf. Eph. 2:19), God's temple (1 Cor. 3:16-17), the elect lady (2 John 1), etc., so that one may legitimately speak of images of the church\* in the NT (Minear). Although these images reflect a healthy variety in the ways the church is conceived in the NT, most of them also convey a sense of its unity.

The emphasis of Ephesians on church unity accurately represents the bearing of the NT as a whole, even if comparable statements are seldom found elsewhere. This emphasis on unity did not, however, exclude diversity, as the wealth of images already suggests. In fact, Paul defends the legitimacy of diverse gifts and functions within the church as the work of the one Spirit (1 Cor. 12); they are necessary, moreover, for the church's well-being.

Paul regards his own ministry as being "in the priestly service of the gospel of God" (Rom. 15:16), which he relates on the one hand to his collection among the gentile churches of an offering for the Jerusalem church (vv.22-29) and on the other to the praise of God by both Jew and gentile (vv.9-13). In either case, Paul has in view the unity of the church as God's people (see **people of God**); in the one case in doxology, in the other in a quite concrete act of generosity and helpfulness which had engaged him for some time (see Gal. 2:10; 1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 8-9). In its own way, Ephesians reflects the successful culmination of Paul's ministry in its emphasis upon the accomplishment of union between Jew and gentile as the very essence of the work of Christ and consequently of the gospel Paul preached (Eph. 2:11-3:6).

Paul's earlier controversy with the so-called Judaizers was a concrete expression of his own sense that the unity of the church is essential to the appropriation of the gospel. Thus the approval of the pillar apostles was of crucial importance to him (Gal. 2:6-10). But the behaviour of Peter at Antioch (vv.11-16) Paul found intolerable, not only because it implied a defective soteriology (vv.17-21), but because it involved a concession to the circumcision

party (v.12) that threatened the unity of the church, and therefore the gospel. While Paul did not in principle object to circumcision and observance of food laws among Jewish believers, he insisted upon the unity of the church in its table fellowship and eucharist,\* and thus he ran afoul of those who gave such practices priority. The apostolic decree of Acts (15:19-21,23-29) looks like an effort to resolve such problems by laying down minimal food restrictions which all Christians should observe, but whether it was actually published in the time of Paul or at what stage in his ministry is a point of continued dispute among exegetes. In any event, both the controversy of Paul and the apostolic decree were efforts to protect the unity of Christians not only in theory but in practice and particularly in worship.

The gospels, representing for the most part the generation after Paul, presume the unity of the Christian community but for the most part do not deal directly with this issue because they are concerned with presenting the earthly Jesus, albeit in light of his death and resurrection.\* Yet Mark announces the end of all food restrictions (7:19), and Luke proclaims the universal scope of the gospel (24:47), as does Matthew (28:19). But it is the gospel of John in particular that emphasizes the unity of Christians in one community. In his high priestly prayer, Jesus prays that his followers may be one so that the world may believe and know that he has been sent from God (John 17:21-23). Thus the unity of the church is the basis for mission,\* and the work of Jesus Christ can be described as the gathering into one of the scattered people of God (11:51-52), "so there will be one flock, one shepherd" (10:16).

The fourth gospel's emphasis on unity is continued in 1 John, which speaks of fellowship with the Father and Son and among Christians (1:3). "Fellowship" (*koinonia*\*) also means participation and communion\* and connotes a close and intimate relationship. Therefore, one is not surprised at the author's abhorrence of schism\* (2:18-19). Yet communion must be based on full and right confession; one cannot have fellowship with those who

represent the spirit of error or false teaching (1 John 4:1-3; 2 John 9-10). There is one true Spirit, and those who teach what is obviously false cannot lay claim to any valid spiritual authority. The book of Revelation, genuinely if more remotely related to the other Johannine writings, in its graphic portrayal of the new heaven and new earth also presupposes the unity of the people of God in the end time (21:3,22-27). Here is expressed in typically apocalyptic terms the eschatological culmination anticipated in the gospel of John as well (cf. 14:2-3, 17:24).

Belief in the unity of confession, liturgy, community and eschatology, grounded in the one God and one Lord (Eph. 4:4-6), thus finds wide representation in the NT. The question of the nature of that unity was debated in NT times, as it is today. Obviously, the earliest churches manifested diversity and discord as well as unity, but while diversity was celebrated, discord and division were not. The NT attests to a primal sense of unity among Christians that is an ingredient of the revelation\* of God in Jesus Christ. The living unity of all Christians, like the unity of Christian faith and confession, remains both a presupposition and a goal in the NT. The contradiction or obstruction of such unity is regarded as intolerable, and its attainment and visible, palpable manifestation as obligatory (see **Old Testament and Christian unity**).

D. MOODY SMITH

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## NEWBIGIN, (JAMES EDWARD) LESSLIE

B. 8 Dec. 1909, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK; d. 30 Jan. 1998, London. In the fields of missiology and apologetics, Newbigin was an outstanding teacher, and in the practice of church unity an example of total commitment. He began his training for the ministry in the Presbyterian church in Cambridge, England, at Westminster College. He was ordained in 1936 and appointed by the Church of Scotland for missionary service in the Madras area of India, where he quickly gained a deep knowledge of Tamil. During the period of the second world war the foundations were being laid for the union of churches in South India, and Newbigin took a major part in the negotiations which led to the establishment of the Church of South India (CSI). At the inauguration of the CSI in 1947, he was appointed bishop in Madurai and Ramnad. As a participant in the inaugural assembly of the WCC in 1948 and in many ecumenical gatherings subsequently, Newbigin had become known to a wide circle as an able apolo-



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gist for the new united churches and a person with great theological insight. In 1959 he was called to become general secretary of the International Missionary Council,\* based in London. He led that council to the point of integration in the WCC which was completed at the New Delhi assembly. He served as associate general secretary of the WCC and director of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism till 1965. Invited back to India, he was the CSI bishop in Madras until he retired in 1974.

From 1974 to 1979 Newbigin was on the staff of the Selly Oak Colleges in Birmingham, lecturing there and in many other places on mission theology. In 1978 he became moderator of the United Reformed Church general assembly and from 1980 to 1988 served as minister of a small local church in the inner city. Continuing his writing and speaking ministry, he emphasized the missionary calling in the context of the abandonment by modern secular culture of the truth claims of faith. In this last phase of his service, Newbigin focused on the challenge of the liberal legacy, and this is the theme of several of his books which have had worldwide influence. But there is a unifying focus to all the output over the years, the calling of God to witness to the saving grace we see in Christ, and to do this as a wholly committed member of the Body of Christ, one body in all the world. There is a strongly Trinitarian thrust to all his writing. Three of his last books dealt with the confrontation between the claims of Christ and the modern Western culture.

Newbigin was a senior statesman of the ecumenical movement. He saw the WCC develop from its beginnings, and was within that circle of the Student Christian Movement which provided so many pioneers. His passion for the missionary engagement made him a critic of the more liberal theologies which have been influential in recent decades. Yet there was no anti-intellectual conservatism here. Rather, we saw a re-statement of classic evangelicalism, built on first-hand missionary experience, questioning all easy compromise with secularism. Newbigin's long ministry thus held to-

gether two primary ecumenical emphases – on mission and on unity – too often held apart.

BERNARD THOROGOOD

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## NICEA

THE FIRST ecumenical council of Nicea (modern Turkish Iznik) was summoned by the Roman emperor Constantine the Great (288-337) to deal with the heresy\* of Arius and other church matters. Though he originally intended the council to take place at Ancyra (present-day Ankara), Constantine sent letters to all the bishops of the catholic church inviting them to meet in council at Nicea and promising to pay travel expenses. Opening on 19 June 325, the council included Constantine himself. There are different views as to its duration, proceedings and the precise number of participants. The official one is that it was attended by 318 fathers (so Athanasius, Hilary, Epiphanius and also later ecumenical councils\*); other estimates speak of more than 250 (Eusebius) or about 270 (Eustathius) or 320 (Sozomen), mainly Easterners, with only five delegates coming from the West. The bishop of Rome was represented by two priests.

The acts of the council have not survived, except the creed, the council's letter and 20 canons, but several ancient ecclesiastical authors, historians and theologians mention it. The consensus is that the views of Arius and his supporters, in effect denying the true godhead of Christ, were condemned. And a creed was accepted as the norm of the Christian faith

which confessed the godhead of Christ by proclaiming the Son of God to be fully and truly God, born “from the being of God the Father”, and to be “consubstantial” (*homoousios*, i.e. “co-existing” or “one in being”) with him. This creed included four anathemas\* repudiating Arius’s main theses. It seems that the creed was based on that used by the church of Jerusalem at the reception of converts to Christian catechism and baptism.\* The council rejected a creed by Eusebius of Nicomedia and approved one by Eusebius of Caesarea, though without adopting it for universal use.

The council also resolved other ecclesiastical matters of dispute, including the schisms of Novatianism, Samosatianism and Melitianism and the dispute over the date of the celebration of Easter (see **church calendar**). Canon 8 deals with the return of the Novatianists to the church, and canon 19 with the return of the Paulinianists (the followers of the previously condemned heretic Paul of Samosata), specifying that they should be re-baptized and re-ordained. The schismatic Melitius, bishop of Lycopolis in Egypt, and his followers were dealt with more leniently, as one reads in the council’s letter, which has been preserved in Theodoret of Cyrus’s *Ecclesiastical History*. Easter was to be celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon of the spring equinox. The precise formula of the actual decision has not survived, though there are several reliable sources for it, including the letter of the council and the letter of Constantine to the churches after the council, which is preserved in Eusebius of Caesarea’s *Life of Constantine*.

The 20 canons issued by the council fathers deal with six areas of church concern: the qualifications and conduct of clergy; the precise rights of bishops and presbyters, including the introduction of the metropolitan system (both in canons 6 and 7); schismatic bishops and clergy (canon 8); penalties for, and restoration of, lapsed Christians (canons 11,12,14); the re-admission of Paulinianist heretics to the church (canon 19), and several procedural matters. Finally, as we gather from Gelasius’s *Ecclesiastical History*, the fa-

thers accepted Paphnutius’s views in rejecting a proposal that would have required celibacy of bishops and presbyters. See also **Nicene Creed**.

#### GENNADIOS LIMOURIS

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## NICENE CREED

THE NICENE-Constantinopolitan Creed (381), or simply Nicene Creed (as it is referred to in this dictionary), as its name indicates, is traditionally regarded as an expansion of the original creed of Nicea\* (325) and represents the work of the 150 fathers who assembled in Constantinople\* in 381 to re-affirm the faith of Nicea. These expansions were necessitated by the various heresies which emerged since Nicea and which included the heresy\* of the Pneumatomachians (Spirit-fighters), who denied the full or true godhead of the Holy Spirit;\* and the heresies of Apollinaris of Laodicea (denied the integrity of the incarnation\*), Sabellius of Ptolemais (denied the Trinity\* by putting forth a unitarian theology), Marcellus of Ancyra and Photinus of Sirmium (denied the eternal generation of the Son and the permanence of the incarnation), Eunomius of Cyzicus (extreme Arianizer who held a tritheist point of view) and Eudoxius of Constantinople (Arianizer who denied the Holy Spirit). All these heresies were condemned by the first canon of the council of Constantinople I (381).

A comparison of the texts of the original Nicene Creed (325) and of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed reveals that the latter consists of the seven clauses of the former, with two slight omissions, and five new clauses which implicitly repudiate the

above-mentioned heresies. The most important additions are “maker of heaven and earth”, directed against Marcionites, Manichaeans and especially Hermogenes, all of whom accepted the Greek philosophical view of the eternity of matter and, implicitly, of the world; “before all ages”, directed against Sabellius, Marcellus of Ancyra, Photinus of Sirmium and Eunomius; “from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary”, directed against the Apollinarians; “and seated at the right hand of the Father... whose kingdom shall have no end”, directed against Marcellus and his disciple Photinus; and finally, almost the entire eighth article on the Holy Spirit, directed against the various shades of the denial of the godhead of the Spirit and based on 2 Cor. 3:17-18 (“the Lord”), John 6:63, Rom. 8:2 and 2 Cor. 3:6 (the “Giver of life”), John 15:26 combined with 1 Cor. 2:12 (the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father) and 2 Pet. 1:21 (“who spoke through the prophets”). The phrase “who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified” is an oblique way of confessing the *homoousion* of the Holy Spirit, an accommodation to the point of view of traditionalist bishops who queried the use of non-biblical terms in the creed. The two omissions are connected with the phrases “from the substance (being) of the Father” and “God of God”; the former was probably dropped because, according to certain accredited fathers (Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and Gregory of Nyssa), it was contained in the term *homoousios* and could be misleading as having been wrongly used by Sabellians, whereas the latter was redundant, given the phrase “true God of true God”.

That this Nicene Creed of Constantinople is in fact an expansion of the original creed of Nicea, or that the faith of Constantinople as summed up in its creed is the faith of Nicea in an expanded form, is stressed in the letter which the 150 fathers addressed to Emperor Theodosius when they completed their deliberations, and in the conciliar letter which was sent by a similar council summoned in Constantinople in 382. The same point is stressed by many other witnesses, includ-

ing the 4th-century Pseudo-Athanasian writing *Dialogue between an Orthodox and a Macedonian*, Neilus Ancyranus, alias Sinaita (d. 430), Nestorius of Constantinople, Flavian of Constantinople and, above all, the fourth ecumenical council of Chalcedon,\* which explicitly joins together the two creeds in speaking of the one faith of Nicea, as all subsequent ecumenical councils do.

This view has been questioned in more recent times by German and British scholars who have propounded various scholarly hypotheses concerning the precise origins of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, none of which has been universally accepted. These hypotheses have primarily concentrated on the assumption that the Constantinopolitan Creed is not an expansion of the original creed of Nicea but a new creed, taken either from Jerusalem or from Constantinople, or newly constructed. Some of these have also argued (again, without wide acceptance) that there are differences of theological content, especially concerning the understanding of the crucial term *homoousios*, between the creeds of Nicea and Constantinople.

The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed without the filioque\* addition, which was introduced into the eighth article by the Western church much later, still enjoys the greatest universal acclaim among Christians. This is best illustrated in the major study programme of the WCC commission on Faith and Order “Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today”, which has made this creed its starting point. The result of this study has been published in book form as *Confessing the One Faith*. At the fifth world conference on Faith and Order (Santiago de Compostela 1993) many expressed a strong desire that the study should continue in order to help other ongoing Faith and Order studies (esp. in ecclesiology and hermeneutics) to move towards the point at which the actual common confession of the apostolic faith will enable Christians to restore full visible unity.

GENNADIOS LIMOURIS

■ T.H. Bindley, *The Ecumenical Documents of the Faith*, 4th ed. rev. by F.W. Green, London,

Methuen, 1950 ■ *Confessing the One Faith: An Ecumenical Explication of the Apostolic Faith as It Is Confessed in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed*, WCC, 1991 ■ A. Hahn, *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der alten Kirche*, Breslau, Morgenstern, 1897 ■ B. Hebblethwaite, *The Essence of Christianity: A Fresh Look at the Nicene Creed*, London, SPCK, 1996 ■ J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 3rd ed., London, Longmans, 1972 ■ I. Ortiz de Urbina, *Histoire des conciles œcuméniques*, vol. 1: *Nicée et Constantinople*, Paris, Orante, 1963 ■ A. Ritter, *Das Konzil von Konstantinopel und sein Symbol*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965.

### NICODIM (Boris Georgivich Rotov)

B. 14 Oct. 1929, Frolovo, USSR; d. 5 Sept. 1978, Rome. Metropolitan of Leningrad and Novgorod, Nicodim was the driving spirit behind the Moscow patriarchate's decision to join the WCC at the New Delhi assembly in 1961. He led the Russian Orthodox delegation to that assembly and thereafter was an active member of the WCC central and executive committees and, after Nairobi 1975, a president of the WCC. As assistant to Metropolitan Nicolai, head of the department of foreign relations of the Moscow patriarchate, Nicodim accompanied W.A. Visser 't Hooft and his staff team on an extensive visit of the Soviet Union. Head of this department, 1960-72, Nicodim became

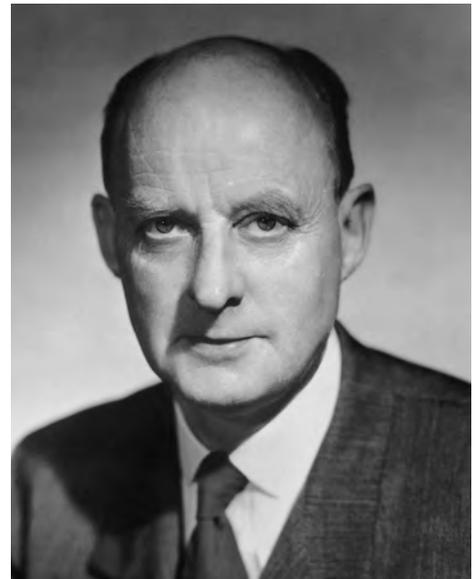


bishop of Jaroslavl in 1960, archbishop of the same diocese in 1961, and metropolitan of Minsk and of Leningrad in 1963. He consistently promoted better relationships with the Roman Catholic Church and greatly admired Pope John XXIII. Nicodim died suddenly during an audience with Pope John Paul I. Not afraid to face the frequent fierce and bitter attacks against his nation, his church and himself, he was a loyal supporter of the WCC and tireless in promoting the unity of the churches, as evidenced by the many consultations he organized or attended.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

### NIEBUHR, REINHOLD

B. 21 June 1892, Wright City, MO, USA; d. 1 June 1971, Stockbridge, MA. The older brother of H. Richard Niebuhr,



Reinhold was influential at Oxford 1937, at Amsterdam 1948, and also at the world Christian youth conferences in Amsterdam (1939) and Oslo (1947). In many ways he shaped ecumenical social thought both in the US and in the wider Western world. Although influenced by Karl Barth and Emil Brunner, he differed sharply from them in believing that Christianity has a direct prophetic vocation in relation

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to culture. Stressing the egoism, the pride and the hypocrisy of nations and classes, he argued for a "Christian realism" and supported political policies that carefully delineated the limits of power. A one-time pacifist, he actively persuaded Christians to support the war against Hitler, and after the second world war had considerable influence in the US state department. He regarded as an error attempts to impose US solutions on the new nations that emerged from 1945 onwards, and always attacked American claims to special virtue.

Ordained to the ministry in the Evangelical synod in 1915, he was a pastor in Detroit, 1915-28, where his exposure to the problems of American industrialism, before labour was protected by unions and legislation, led him to advocate socialism. He broke with the Socialist party in the 1930s. He was professor of applied Christianity at Union Theological Seminary in New York, 1928-60, and one of the most popular preachers in university chapels.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ R. Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, New York, Scribner, 1932 ■ *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, 2 vols, London, Nisbet, 1943-44 ■ *Pious and Secular America*, New York, Scribner, 1958 ■ K. Durkin, *Reinhold Niebuhr*, London, Chapman, 1989 ■ G. Harland, *The Thought of Reinhold Niebuhr*, New York, Oxford UP, 1960 ■ R. Harries ed., *Reinhold Niebuhr and the Issues of Our Time*, London, Oxford UP, 1986 ■ C.W. Kegley & R.W. Bretall eds, *Reinhold Niebuhr: His Religious, Social and Political Thought*, New York, Macmillan, 1956.

## NIEMÖLLER, MARTIN

B. 14 Jan. 1892, Lippstadt, Germany; d. 6 March 1984, Wiesbaden. Member of the provisional committee of the WCC, 1946-48, Niemöller was a member of the central and executive committees, 1948-61, and a president of the WCC, 1961-68. His anti-Nazi religious activities and support of the Confessing Church\* led to his arrest in 1937 and confinement in the concentration camps of Sachsenhausen and Dachau, most of the time as a "personal prisoner"



of Hitler. He was freed by Allied troops shortly before he was scheduled to be executed. He took a leading part in the Stuttgart declaration\* of guilt, 1945, and then was head of the foreign relations department of the Evangelical Church in Germany, 1945-56, and president of the territorial church of Hesse and Nassau, 1947-64. A submarine commander during the first world war, he argued after the second world war against German rearmament and for German neutrality. He opposed the creation of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949, and was also against any crusade against communism and a vigorous opponent of US involvement in Vietnam. His visits to the Soviet Union did much to bring the churches there into the ecumenical movement. Ordained in 1924 a minister of the Protestant Church in Westphalia, in 1931 Niemöller was appointed pastor at Berlin-Dahlem.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ M. Niemöller, *Reden, 1945-1954, 1955-1957*, Darmstadt, Stimme der Gemeinde, 1957-58 ■ *Reden, Predigten, Aufsätze, 1937 bis 1980*, Berlin, Union, 1980 ■ J. Bentley, *Martin Niemöller*, Oxford, Oxford UP, 1984 ■ H. Kloppenburg ed., *Martin Niemöller: Festschrift zum 90. Geburtstag*, Cologne, Pahl-Rugenstein, 1982.

**NILES, DANIEL THAMBYRAJAH**

B. 4 May 1908, Ceylon; d. 17 July 1970, Vellore, India. D.T. Niles (always affectionately known as "D.T.") was active in the ecumenical movement for four decades and for the last three of these was one of its best-known leaders. He was the son of a distinguished lawyer and the grandson of a much-loved pastor and poet. After school and college in his native Jaffna, he studied theology in Bangalore from 1929 to 1933. Already deeply involved with the Student Christian Movement, from 1933 he was its national secretary and took part in the meeting of the general committee of the World Student Christian Federation\* in Sofia. During this period he also served for a time with the WSCF staff in Geneva. In 1936 he was ordained to the ministry of the Methodist church and served for three years as district evangelist. He took a prominent part in the International Missionary Council\* Tambaram conference of 1938 as a speaker and as secretary of the section on "The Authority of the Faith". Following Tambaram he went to Europe as part of a team bringing the message of Tambaram to the British churches, and then for a year (1939-40) he was in Geneva as evangelism secretary of the World's YMCA.\*



Returning to Ceylon, he served from 1941 to 1945 as general secretary of the National Christian Council, the first full-time holder of that office. This introduced him to the arts of interchurch relations, in which he was to become such a master. From 1942 he organized annual theological conferences, which for the first time included Roman Catholics. He was chosen as one of the initial members of the negotiating committee for church union when it was set up in 1945. He was also involved in interfaith dialogue,\* having been much influenced by his work at Tambaram with Hendrik Kraemer, "who made me see how essential it was for a Christian to think Christianly of other faiths". In his autobiographical memoir Niles speaks of "the many heart-searching conversations" he had with a Hindu friend as he tried to work out his beliefs on the relation of the gospel to other faiths.

In 1946 Niles was appointed to his first pastoral charge, which he was to hold for five years, at Point Pedro. During this period he was again to be in Europe for the WCC assembly at Amsterdam, where, with John R. Mott, he preached at the opening service. From 1948 to 1952 he was chairman of the WCC's Youth department and from 1953 to 1959 he was executive secretary of its Department of Evangelism. Meanwhile in 1950 the Methodist church had transferred him to the Maradana pastorate, and he was also director of the YMCA Bible Study Institute in Colombo. Niles strongly held that those involved in ecumenical work should keep firm roots in the local church,\* and while he held the evangelism portfolio in Geneva, he was at the same time superintending minister of St Peter's church and principal of Jaffna Central College. It is not surprising that even Niles refers to this as "a heavy period".

From 1953 he was chairman of the WSCF and, along with Philippe Maury, planned and carried through an ambitious programme on "The Life and Mission of the Church", with the Strasbourg conference of 1960 as its centre-piece. Meanwhile from 1954 to 1964 he was also chairman of the northern district of the Methodist church while continuing to be

heavily involved in the work of the WCC, including the assemblies at Evanston and New Delhi. From 1959 to 1960 he was also Henry Emerson Fosdick professor at Union Theological Seminary, New York.

Meanwhile in 1957 Niles embarked upon what was to be the major work of the last decade of his life. In that year, at Prapat in Sumatra, the decision was taken to establish an East Asia conference of churches, with Niles as its first general secretary. This, the forerunner of other regional bodies, was largely Niles's brain-child, and he was its unquestioned leader. It embodied his conviction about the local rooting of ecumenical work, with a dispersed staff all carrying responsibilities in their churches. Niles's deep commitment to local unity also caused him to be wary of powerful denominational bodies acting on a world scale. This led him, from 1961 onwards, to take an active part in the work of the World Methodist Council,\* and he was responsible for the "Niles plan" for a world committee on missionary affairs to guide the council.

In August 1968, he took over the leadership of the Methodist Church in Sri Lanka as the president of the Methodist conference. In the same year he resigned from his position as general secretary of the East Asia Christian Conference and was made its chairman. His report of the ten years of the EACC under his guidance entitled "Ideas and Services" coupled reporting with envisioning the future of the EACC. It later became the basis for re-organizing the work of the EACC at the Singapore assembly in 1973, when it was renamed the Christian Conference of Asia. He was again asked to preach the opening sermon at a WCC assembly, this time at the fourth (Uppsala 1968). At this assembly he was also elected to the WCC presidium. In 1970 he went to the Christian Medical Hospital in Vellore, India, for treatment and later an operation for cancer, where he died.

Along with this astonishing range of public responsibilities, there was an almost ceaseless succession of journeys to all the six continents to preach, lecture and conduct university missions. Of his writings, perhaps the one which will be

longest in use is the *EACC Hymnal*, for which he wrote a large number of English verse translations of Asian hymns. He was not, and did not pretend to be, a great theologian, but he had immensely fruitful theological and personal friendships with most of the leading theological thinkers of the time, and these enriched his writing and speaking. He was a great preacher, evangelist and pastor. Above all, he was an expositor of the Bible. His friend Bishop Kulendran has said of him: "He went to the Bible not to pick up a verse but to think with the biblical writers." He was also an ecumenical statesman, a strategist whose long-term planning did much to influence ecumenical development, and also a skilful tactician who could change a situation with a brilliant and unexpected move. He could outwit his opponents, but he did not make enemies. Central to his whole life was the giving and receiving of friendship. Typical of the man are these words from one of the last sermons he preached: "When I am dead, many things will be said about me – that I held this and that position and did this and that thing. For me, all these are irrelevant. The only important thing that I can say about myself is that I, too, am one whom Jesus Christ loved and for whom he died" (Gal. 2:20). Next to his love of God was the devotion which bound him to his wife, Dulcie, whom he married in 1935. A few months after his death, she followed him.

LESSLIE NEWBIGIN

■ D.T. Niles, *A Testament of Faith*, London, Epworth, 1972 ■ *That They May Have Life*, London, Lutterworth, 1952 ■ *Upon the Earth*, London, Lutterworth, 1962 ■ C. Furtado, *The Contribution of D.T. Niles to the Church Universal and Local*, Madras, CLS, 1978 ■ S.C. Neill, *Brothers of the Faith*, New York, Abingdon, 1960.

## NISSIOTIS, NIKOS ANGELOS

B. 21 May 1925, Athens, Greece; d. 17 Aug. 1986, Athens. Nissiotis was a Greek Orthodox philosopher-theologian who built bridges over chasms of estrangement between the churches of the West (Roman Catholic and Protestant) and of the East,



who lessened awkward suspicions of modern philosophy and other sciences towards theology, and who prompted reluctant fellow Orthodox to take as also their own the ecumenical movement and the WCC.

As a graduate student, Nissiotis digested European trends of thought after second world war. In Switzerland he studied Protestant dialectical theology with Karl Barth in Basel and Emil Brunner in Zurich, psychoanalysis under Carl Jung in Zurich, and existentialist philosophy with Karl Jaspers in Basel. At Louvain university (Belgium) he obtained a postgraduate diploma in Catholic neo-scholastic and historical philosophy, and then his doctorate in theology at Athens (thesis: "Existentialism and Christian Faith").

On the staff of the WCC ecumenical institute at Bossey\* beginning in 1958, and its director 1966-74, he gave increased visibility to Orthodox theology, spirituality and liturgical practices, and he stressed interdisciplinary research and debate between theology and other sciences. The WCC delegated him as an observer to Vatican II\* (1962-65) and appointed him a member of the RCC/WCC Joint Working Group.\* As moderator of the commission on Faith and Order\* (1976-83), he helped design the primary strategy and methodology for ecumenical theology, culminating in the 1982 text on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*.\*

The ecumenical community respected Nissiotis for his dialectical mind (which felt ill at ease if it was at ease) and for his heart, which beat with restless ecumenical fervour. He was able to keep one foot lovingly rooted in the ground of his Orthodox tradition, while the other foot stepped familiarly in the Protestant and Catholic traditions. This layman loved the church, despised churchiness. He savoured honest speech, could not digest pious platitudes. The sports world so respected him that it elected him to the International Olympic Committee (1978).

TOM STRANSKY

- M. Begzos, "N. Nissiotis", in *Ecumenical Pioneers*, I. Bria & D. Heller eds, WCC, 1995
- E. Castro, T. Torrance, P. Mar Gregorios, L. Vischer et al., in *Nicos Nissiotis*, M. Begzos ed., Athens, Grigoris, 1994 (with complete list of his writings)
- T. Stransky, A. Blancy, "Sketches of Nikos Nissiotis", *ER*, 48, 4, 1996.

## NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

THE TERM "non-governmental organization" (NGO) came into common usage with the creation of the United Nations\* to designate private non-profit associations which provide an independent channel of expression of citizens' views in the formation of public policy and which engage in organized action in the economic, social and cultural fields. Other terms commonly used are "private voluntary organizations", "private sector organizations" and "civil society organizations".

The French revolution in 1789 first established freedom of association. Private organizations became widespread in the West from 1850, particularly in countries influenced by the Protestant reform movement, constituting a new factor in international relations. Among the first international associations to be created were the Evangelical Alliance (1846) and the World Alliance of YMCAs (1855). Both inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) and NGOs grew in number during the 20th century.

NGO representatives participating as advisers to governmental delegations at the San Francisco conference in 1945 urged that the new United Nations be an instrument not only of governments but also of the world's peoples. O. Frederick Nolde (later the organizing director of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs [CCIA] was chosen as their spokesperson and argued convincingly for significant changes in the draft UN charter.

One result of their effort was the addition of a preamble which begins, "We the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war..." Another was the inclusion of article 71, which calls for "suitable arrangements [to be made] for consultation with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within the competence of the Economic and Social Council".

Soon after 1945 the UN Economic and Social Council (Ecosoc) extended "consultative status" to a select group of international NGOs ranging from trade union federations, religious organizations (including the CCIA) and associations in such fields as science, social welfare, humanitarian assistance, education, peace\* and disarmament,\* decolonization, development\* and the promotion of the status of women. Around the same time, similar arrangements were established by various UN agencies. The WCC, through the CCIA, maintains formal consultative relations with UNESCO, UNICEF, UNEP, FAO and ILO and is associated with other IGOs like UNHCR, UNDP, IOM, and WHO.

The term "NGO" was originally applied primarily to international non-governmental organizations comprising national affiliates in several countries, and to specialized national organizations recognized by the UN. Some 1500 have now been granted consultative status by the ECOSOC. More recently, the use of the term has been widened to include citizens' organizations at all levels of society working sometimes in opposition to governments, but now increasingly alongside or in cooperation with them.

The number of international NGOs grew from 1300 in 1960 to over 46,000 by 2000. National and local NGOs have proliferated in even larger proportion over the same period, many of them engaged in activities related to economic and social development (often serving as preferred channels for official overseas development funds flowing from the industrialized nations to developing countries), refugee\* assistance and humanitarian aid, human rights\* and the environment.

In a report to the general assembly in December 1996, the UN secretary-general described NGOs as important "new actors" in the process of global governance who play a central operational role in the development field and in response to humanitarian emergencies, and whose "democratizing potential" deserves a stronger voice in legislation and policy-making at the UN. New guidelines for consultative relations between the UN and NGOs, adopted by Ecosoc in July 1996, represented a step in this direction.

DWAIN EPPS

## NORTH AMERICA: CANADA

THE CANADIAN ecumenical movement began before the 19th century. First, the transfer of political authority from France to the United Kingdom (1763) introduced a broad variety of denominational groups into Canada, most of them deriving from older communities in the American colonies or Great Britain. The independence of the USA 20 years later accelerated the pace of settlement in the so-called frontier areas, bringing in thousands of white, black and Amerindian Christians who chose to remain under the British crown. Most new townships had only one or two congregations, and many individuals simply joined the denomination which had first begun to serve in their area. Roman Catholicism and the principal branches of Protestant Christianity quickly established ecclesiastical jurisdictions according to their own models in the zones of more concentrated settlement. Nevertheless, the continuing expansion of the region under intensive cultivation pro-

duced a recurrent pattern of regular multi-denominational worship in a large number of less populous municipalities.

Around the turn of the 20th century, theological convergence and pragmatic considerations combined to inspire a widespread feeling that the Christian community, or at least the Protestant groups, should unite. Canadian Christians, it was said, ought to overcome the divisions inherited from Renaissance Europe and join in a fellowship of common faith and witness adapted to the special circumstances of their new society. Five major denominations began serious negotiations, but eventually the Anglicans and Baptists withdrew and only Congregationalists, Methodists and two-thirds of the Presbyterians merged to form the United Church of Canada in 1925. This was the very first such union of churches from different ecclesiological traditions in the world.

The United Church declared itself to be open to further combinations, and its representatives have held talks with representatives of several other churches. Conversations with Anglicans and Disciples came near to agreement in the late 1960s but finally ended without achieving their objective, and only the Evangelical United Brethren and a few independent congregations have joined during the years since the original union. In 1989 the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada formally agreed to a mutual sharing of word and sacraments, but with no fusion of structures. No other pluri-confessional mergers or covenants have been realized, although there have been several series of bilateral exchanges involving most of the churches now represented in the country, including the Orthodox.

After the initial wave of ecumenical enthusiasm had achieved the union of 1925, confessional loyalties re-asserted themselves with some force. Gradually, however, interest developed in a conciliar model as a middle option between uncompromising rivalry and corporate amalgamation, until in 1944 leaders of half a dozen denominations met at Yorkminster Baptist Church in Toronto to establish the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC).

Representatives of the same groups were among the founders of the WCC in Amsterdam four years later.

According to its constitution, the CCC is "a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (see **WCC, basis of**). Most of the country's largest denominations are part of the CCC: the United Church of Canada, the Anglican Church of Canada, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, which are involved in virtually every aspect of the CCC's life. The smaller churches participate in the measure that their resources permit. These include the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, the British Methodist Episcopal Church (of Caribbean origin), the Salvation Army in Canada and Bermuda, the Council of Reformed Churches in Canada, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the Orthodox Church in America, the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Armenian Orthodox Church and the Polish National Catholic Church. Since becoming the CCC's first associate member in 1986, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has joined in the work of several of the council's commissions and committees. In 1997 the bishops' conference requested, and received, full membership status in the CCC.

The triennial assembly is at once the CCC's principal public manifestation and its supreme authority. Delegates are chosen by the member churches, and representatives of local ecumenical groups and such related bodies as the Student Christian Movement and the Women's Inter-Church Council also attend. Each assembly elects the officers who will serve for the next three years.

The CCC has continued to grow, at the end of 2001 comprising 18 full members. The council's own staff has never become very large, but the council itself has consistently played a pivotal role in discerning

and realizing the ecumenical agenda in Canada. It has also made a significant contribution to interchurch cooperation on an international scale, both through the structures of the WCC and in direct cooperation with regional and national organizations in every part of the world.

Ecumenical coalitions are a special feature of the Canadian ecclesiastical scene. Historically, each coalition was supported by the appropriate divisions of a group of church offices or mission societies, and each addressed a particular concern of the Christian community in Canada. Some had a geographical focus, others sought to inform public opinion and influence policy. Yet another type of coalition specialized in economic affairs. Altogether, there were about a dozen coalitions at any given time in official affiliation with the coalition administration committee of the CCC. In 2001 the coalitions merged to form a single umbrella organization known as the Canadian Churches for Justice and Peace. While providing centralized administration for the movement, the CCJP will continue the programme emphases of the coalitions.

The Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries, whose roots reach back to the early 1920s, operates now as an agency of the CCC. It offers ecumenical training to prospective missionaries and special courses for people returning to Canada after a period of church service abroad. The forum also conducts overseas tours for Canadian theological students, and each year it brings a respected ecumenical personality to visit interchurch groups in several provinces. A more academic sister organization is the Churches' Council for Theological Education, which assists the churches and seminaries in coordinating ministerial formation across denominational and geographical obstacles, while the Canadian Association for Pastoral Education has a special interest in the training of hospital chaplains.

The Student Christian Movement (SCM), a major participant in the CCC's youth working group, provides ecumenical leadership on campus and forms vital contacts for the present and future among

participating churches in all parts of the country. Another ecumenical organization with an active programme and a long history of working with the CCC is the Canadian Bible Society. The SCM and the Bible Society both have strong links to their own international federations. The Women's Inter-Church Council, an autonomous network of Christian women's organizations, is the Canadian link in the World Day of Prayer\* structure and the touchstone for Canadian involvement in the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women.\*

In the years since the Second Vatican Council, the Roman Catholic Church has become an integral part of ecumenical life in Canada. RC dioceses and orders belong to most of the coalitions and local interchurch councils.

Relations between the CCC and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada have been cordial, and at least two churches belong to both. Unlike the council, the fellowship also has individual memberships; the larger denominations in its ranks, however, are still reluctant to be too closely associated with the conciliar movement because of perceived differences in theological outlook.

STUART E. BROWN

■ M. Best, *Will Our Church Disappear?: Strategies for the Renewal of the United Church of Canada*, Winfield, Wood Lake, 1994 ■ T. Murphy & R. Perin eds, *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, Oxford, Oxford UP, 1996.

## NORTH AMERICA: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

BEWILDERING diversity and division have always marked Christianity in the USA. Some 700 different Christian churches exist, some large and some very small, each with its own independent authority and organization. Their differences and divisions are rooted in different theological, ethnic, social and racial backgrounds.

The reasons for this fragmentation provide insight into the peculiar character of the US churches and their struggle for unity\* and faithfulness: (1) all the Euro-

pean schisms were transplanted to American soil; (2) a radical individualism and revivalism, especially on the American frontier, fostered the spirit of voluntarism and isolation; (3) religious freedom and the separation of church and state (i.e. no church holds a privileged position) was a fundamental civil doctrine which encouraged the rise of new, separate religious groups; (4) different waves of immigrants brought, and continue to bring, people of diverse ethnic, cultural and national traditions as well as the divisive tensions which these produce. In this milieu a new form of the church, the denomination (see **denominationalism**), became dominant, and the church often became identified with partisan names and traditions: Adventist, Baptist, Congregational, Disciples of Christ, Episcopal, Lutheran, Methodist, Moravian, Orthodox, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Quaker, Roman Catholic, and churches of many other shades and varieties.

The proliferation of divided denominations, however, was countered by an equally dramatic movement towards Christian unity. Already beginning in the early 19th century, US Christianity was engaged in the struggle between sectarianism and catholicity, between division and unity. This ecumenical pilgrimage can be described in three categories.

The first approach is *association through voluntary, non-denominational bodies*. Early in American church history individual Christians, not churches as such, sought common action in particular tasks related to evangelism, religious education, social witness and reform. Leaders in these movements did not necessarily envisage their goal as the unity of the churches. Institutions which drew Christians together for witness and service included the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (1810), the American Home Missionary Society (1826), the American Bible Society (1826), the American Sunday School Union (1824), the American Peace Society (1828), the American Anti-slavery Society (1833), and youth and student movements such as the Young Men's Christian Associ-

ation (US, 1852), the Young Women's Christian Association (1872) and the Student Volunteer Movement (1886).

Particularly important to this cooperative spirit was the US branch of the Evangelical Alliance (1867), a fellowship within the World's Evangelical Alliance (London, 1846). Its purpose was "to bring individual Christians into closer fellowship and cooperation on the basis of the spiritual union which already exists in the vital relation of Christ to the members of his body in all ages and all countries". The Evangelical Alliance championed Christian unity, religious liberty for minorities in countries where an established church or other religions discriminated against them, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, arbitrations for peace, and international mission. Although it was an association of individuals, not churches, the Evangelical Alliance was a portentous precursor to later ecumenical bodies in the US and worldwide. Its collaboration among individual Christians in addressing crisis concerns was a model for later Christians in dealing with such local and global issues as hunger, justice, peace, theological education, interfaith dialogue, racism and care for the poor and oppressed.

A second approach to unity in the US is *conciliar ecumenism or cooperation in mission*. The earliest model and pioneer was the Federal Council of Churches of Christ, constituted by 33 Protestant church bodies in 1908 (see **federalism**). Its purpose was "to manifest the essential oneness of the Christian churches of America in Jesus Christ as their divine Lord and Saviour". In particular its goals were (1) to bring the churches "into united service for Christ and the world", (2) "to encourage shared worship and mutual counsel in the spiritual life and religious activities of the churches", and (3) "to mobilize the combined influence of the churches in improving the moral and social conditions of people and to promote the application of the law of Christ in every relation of human life". The Federal Council had no authority to draw up a creed, to propose a common form of worship or church government, or in any way to limit the full autonomy of the member

churches. Yet these Protestant churches established a new course for ecumenism through their common witness in evangelism, Christian education, race relations, works of mercy and relief, international peace and justice. While at this point the Orthodox churches in the US were not members, they later became full members in conciliar bodies.

In 1950 the conciliar impulse among American churches took another major step forward in the formation of the National Council of Churches of Christ (NCCC). While the Federal Council represented only a portion of cooperative activity among the churches, other strategic ecumenical organizations developed, like the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, the Home Missions Council, the International Council of Religious Education, and the United Council of Church Women. At the inauguration of the NCCC 13 ecumenical agencies and 29 member churches, including several Orthodox and African American, united into one inclusive national council, confessing "Jesus Christ as the divine Lord and Saviour". For the next several decades the NCCC witnessed to Christian unity through programmes on racial justice and liberation, women's issues, global mission, international witness towards relief and development (Church World Service), Christian education and youth work (United Christian Youth Movement), Bible translations such as the Revised Standard Version (1954) and New RSV (1989), Christian unity, stewardship and international affairs. Ironically, Faith and Order was intentionally left out until 1959 (following the North American Faith and Order Conference at Oberlin, Ohio, in 1957), when a commission was formed.

In 1981 the NCCC transformed its mandate and character from that of "a cooperative agency of the churches" to "a community of Christian communions". Such a covenantal relationship promised to call the US churches into a fuller expression of "visible unity as a sign of the unity of humankind and to enable the churches to act responsibly together in living out that wholeness in witness and service to the world". At the heart of this

change was the desire for a more accountable sense of unity and mission. At the end of the 20th century, however, that vision had yet to be fully embraced by the member churches. In the meantime the crisis of the mainline churches – largely the constituents of the NCCC – as well as the crisis of ecumenical funding, the distrust of the NCCC's leadership and changes in American society have all led to a greatly diminished leadership and visibility of the NCCC. Some of the same factors have affected the work and witness of many local and regional ecumenical bodies.

The participation of the Orthodox churches – made more significant by the entrance of most Orthodox into the World Council of Churches – has greatly benefited the NCCC. In the 1990s, however, their effective participation lessened as the NCCC – according to their perceptions – advocated "positions that run contrary to historic Christian teachings" and made witnesses that Orthodox bishops, clergy and parishes find unacceptable. Especially divisive for the Orthodox are the emphasis on social and political activities, the acceptance of inclusive language, openness to gay and lesbian life-styles, the ordination of women and feminist theology. As the Orthodox churches become more integrated into the American society and assume a more ecumenical role, and as the Protestant churches come to understand the gifts of Orthodoxy and its pivotal witness with the whole church, their place in the ecumenical movement will bring renewal to ecumenism in the US. The future will require Protestants and Orthodox churches – partners in conciliar ecumenism – to participate more intentionally and humbly with the Roman Catholic Church and conservative evangelical churches in a wider Christian ecumenism.

A third approach to ecumenism which marks US church history is the *search for visible church unity*. While federation or cooperation is often thought to be the most dominant form of ecumenism in the US, American church history reveals that the witness to organic church union or visible unity has been equally prominent. In church union the traditions, sacraments,

ministries, and witnesses of two or more divided churches are blended into a common faith and identity and brought into a common mission and sacramental life enriched by diversity. Beginning in the 19th century, four US churches have given special leadership towards visible unity: the German and Swiss Reformed, Lutheran, Episcopal and Disciples of Christ.

Philip Schaff, a Swiss-American Reformed church historian and theologian, greatly influenced the ecumenical perspective of the American churches by his prolific writings and his work with early ecumenical bodies such as the Evangelical Alliance. In 1893 he called for “federal or confederative union”, which envisioned the future uniting of Protestant churches and the Roman Catholic Church into an “evangelical catholicism”. Among German-American Lutherans, Samuel Simon Schmucker issued in 1838 his *Fraternal Appeal to the American Churches, with a Plan for Catholic Union, on Apostolic Principles*. His plan called for the formation of the Apostolic Protestant Church, whose unity would be based on “biblical fundamentals” with “diversity in non-essentials”. A united confession of faith would bind the churches together, and local congregations would retain their faith, ministry and discipline. This unity would bring about open communion and a mutual sharing of members and ministry.

The Episcopal Church produced three articulate advocates of Christian unity in the 19th century. In 1841 Thomas Hubbard Vail proposed one “comprehensive church”, which he defined as the currently constituted Protestant Episcopal Church. More irenically, William Augustus Muhlenberg in 1853 proposed an “evangelical catholic” church based on a diversity of worship and discipline and with a common episcopal ministry which all churches would gladly receive. In his 1870 book *The Church Idea: An Essay toward Unity*, William Reed Huntington offered the Episcopal Church to other Christians as “the Church of the Reconciliation”, inviting other churches to join with them in forming the “Catholic Church of America”. He proposed a four-point platform as the basis of all future church union at-

tempts: the holy scriptures as the word of God, the primitive creeds as the rule of faith, the two sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s supper, and the historic episcopate. This proposal became known as the Chicago-Lambeth quadrilateral.\*

Since their beginning in the American frontier of the 19th century, the Disciples of Christ have been a major witness to church unity, teaching that sectarianism and division in the church is sin and voicing an unconditional passion for visible unity among all Christians. In 1804 Barton Stone and a number of other ministers, mostly Presbyterians, issued a moving call for Christian unity entitled *The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield (Kentucky) Presbytery*. The radically ecumenical posture of this document declares, reminiscent of the New Delhi statement on unity, “We will that this body die, be dissolved, and sink into union with the Body of Christ at large.” Later Stone set the central conviction of his movement, stating, “Let Christian union be our polar star.” On the western Pennsylvania frontier two Scots-Irish immigrant ministers to America, Thomas Campbell and his son Alexander, found unbearable the anti-ecumenical teachings and practices of the 19th-century Presbyterians. Reluctantly they formed another church, the Disciples. Pledging to bring about the unity of all Christians based on the simplicity of the biblical faith, Thomas Campbell taught: “The church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one” (1809). Stone and the Campbells united in 1832 at Lexington, Kentucky, an event which launched the unique ecumenical leadership of the Disciples of Christ within the church universal.

In the 20th century church union among the churches in America was proposed – but not achieved – by three multi-lateral initiatives. Between 1918 and 1920 the American Council on Organic Union, meeting each time in Philadelphia, attempted to bring 19 “evangelical” (Protestant) churches into “a visible body” to be known as the United Church of Christ in America. While initially preserving denominational autonomy, a plan – called the Philadelphia Plan of Union – encour-

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aged collaboration in many mission areas as the first step towards fuller, organic union. In 1935 the popular Methodist evangelist E. Stanley Jones, influenced by his years as a missionary in India, travelled across the US and other countries calling for "union with a federal structure". Modelled upon the US federal-state political system, this plan would make the various denominations branches of the United Church of America. In 1949 a more mature Conference on Church Union sought to unite those churches which are "in sufficient accord in the essentials of the Christian faith and order" and which "already accord one another mutual recognition of ministries and sacraments". This so-called Greenwich plan was important for future church union conversations, especially because both predominantly white and African American churches were involved. Momentum for this venture was lost in 1953 when the Presbyterian Church in the USA withdrew and the Congregational Christian and the Evangelical and Reformed churches united in 1957 to become the United Church of Christ.

In 1962 the yearning for visible unity led to the formation of the Consultation on Church Union (COCU\*), the most dramatic and far-reaching multilateral attempt at church unity in American history. COCU resulted from a sermon preached two years earlier at Grace Cathedral (Episcopal) in San Francisco by Eugene Carson Blake, then stated clerk of the United Presbyterian Church and later general secretary of the World Council of Churches. Blake called upon the churches to form a united church "truly catholic, truly evangelical, and truly reformed". Eventually nine churches entered in this pilgrimage: African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Methodist Episcopal, Episcopal, International Council of Community Churches, Presbyterian (USA), United Church of Christ and United Methodist. At various stages theological commissions and plenaries of the nine COCU churches produced "Principles of Church Union"

(1966), "A Plan of Union for the Church of Christ Uniting" (1970), ecumenical liturgies of the word and sacrament (1968, 1984) and of baptism (1973), "The COCU Consensus" (1984), and "The Churches in Covenant Communion" (1989). Highly significant for an inclusive expression of visible unity was the full participation of the three historic African American Methodist churches. The overcoming of racism was a central commitment of the COCU process.

When the COCU churches met in 1999 to approve the proposal for "covenant communion" (*koinonia*), two of the churches – the Presbyterian (USA) and the Episcopal – expressed their unreadiness to move towards the agreed-upon reconciliation of ministries because of disagreements on the ministry of oversight (episcopate). In response, the churches decided to pursue a modified relationship based on seven of the eight dimensions of covenanting and to live in unity under the common name of Churches Uniting in Christ (CUIC), which was inaugurated in January 2002.

In the late 1960s the US churches began to participate in interconfessional bilateral dialogues, an expression of the ecumenical movement that gained importance largely through the impact of Vatican II. The defining significance of the bilaterals can best be grasped by listing those of recent decades, many of which are linked to international dialogues. They include bilateral dialogues of Roman Catholics with Anglicans, Disciples of Christ, Lutherans, Orthodox, Reformed, Southern Baptists, and United Methodist. Also, the Lutherans have met separately with the Episcopal Church, Orthodox and Reformed. Other dialogues include Episcopal with Orthodox, and United Methodist with AME/AMEZion/CME.

In 1997 four churches of the Reformation – the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Reformed Church in America and the United Church of Christ – also entered into "full communion". This measure of unity was based on two documents: "A Common Calling" (1992) and "A Formula

of Agreement" (1997), which declared there are no "church-dividing differences" among these churches. This agreement allowed the recognition of each other as churches in the gospel, of each other's baptism and celebration of the Lord's supper and of appropriate channels of consultation and decision making within the existing structures of these churches.

In 2001 the Episcopal Church in the US and the ELCA formally inaugurated "full communion". The Concordat of Agreement, a step towards eventual visible unity, affirms agreement in doctrine, the mutual recognition of each other's sacraments and ministries, as well as common witness in service. Lutherans agreed that the ordination/installation of all future bishops will involve prayers and the laying on of hands of both Episcopal and Lutheran bishops. Thus the threefold ministry of bishops, presbyters and deacons in historic succession will be the future pattern of the one ordained ministry of word and sacrament.

As the churches enter the 21st century, the search for Christian unity in the US faces dramatic issues: the identity crisis of the mainline churches; the extraordinary power of pluralism and individualism in the society and the churches; explosive alienations caused by race, culture, gender and ethnic identities; a radical localism; the rising presence and participation of Pentecostal and Holiness churches and the challenge of a growing interfaith presence. Within this changing landscape the American churches face new divisive issues and ecumenical dynamics in their mandate towards unity. The struggles for wholeness are profound, but ecumenism remains a gift of the gospel to these churches. As one looks over the course of the ecumenical movement, one is impressed both by how far the churches have come and by still how distant the goal of full, visible unity seems. Such is always the case with humankind's ability to live out God's grace.

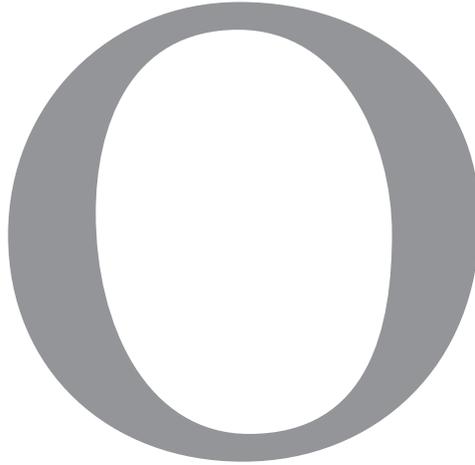
PAUL A. CROW, Jr

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## NORTH AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ECUMENISTS

THE NORTH American Academy of Ecumenists (NAAE) is the successor organization to an association of American and Canadian professors of ecumenics that was born of the ecumenical interest generated by the first North American Faith and Order consultation, held in Oberlin, Ohio, in 1957. In the wake of Vatican II,\* this association re-established itself as an academy in 1967. The goal of the NAAE is to inform, relate and encourage men and women whose profession or ministry involves ecumenical activities and studies. Membership includes clergy and laity, professors and students. It is an "academy" by virtue of its members' shared concern for the theological reflection and scholarship that must accompany the movement towards mutual religious understanding and the unity of the churches. Its annual conference proceedings and papers appear in the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* and in *Ecumenical Trends*.

JOSEPH A. LOYA



### **ODELL HODGSON, LUIS E.**

B. 28 Nov. 1912, Buenos Aires, Argentina; d. 22 Jan. 2000, Premià del Mar, Spain. Odell Hodgson represented his country at the first world conference of Christian youth at Amsterdam 1939. Between the assemblies at New Delhi and Uppsala he was a member of the working committee of the Department on Church and Society and he cooperated in various interchurch aid activities. He represented the International Missionary Council\* in the joint committee that prepared its integration with the WCC, 1959-61. Lay leader of the Methodist Church in Argentina and Uruguay, and first lay president of the Methodist church in Uruguay, 1973-75, he participated in the initiation of the Latin American Union of Evangelical

Youth (ULAJE) in 1941 and was its vice-chairman, 1945-55; he was executive secretary of Church and Society in Latin America (ISAL), 1961-68; and he contributed to the formation of the Commission for Evangelical Unity in Latin America (UNELAM), 1963-64.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

### **OIKOCREDIT**

OIKOCREDIT, or the Ecumenical Development Co-operative Society as it was originally called, was established in 1975 at the initiative of the WCC as “an instrument for the promotion of justice and development among the poor” and as “a proper means of re-deploying part of the investment resources of the churches”. Using a

model of a just economic order, churches can play a more concrete role in economic development by mobilizing credit for development in poor areas through loans and investments with cooperative enterprises. The finances originate from churches, religious orders and individuals who support development as a liberating process for economic growth, social justice and self-reliance.

Oikocredit has 461 members of all denominations: Roman Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox. By December 1999 it had mobilized approximately EUR 120 million in share capital; and thousands of people had improved their economic status and self-reliance through participation in enterprises financed by Oikocredit. Although Oikocredit funds groups unable to qualify for commercial credit because their collateral is insufficient or their repayment capability is unproved, it has maintained the full face value of the loan fund and shareholders' investments. Of the EUR 57.3 million which were outstanding in 1999 with 272 projects in 65 countries, a large part consists of money repaid by poor people whom no bank would trust.

Oikocredit puts into practice resource sharing: for the poor who share the borrowed capital by repaying it, and for churches and individuals (1) by investing in people normally considered unworthy or too powerless to qualify, and (2) by sharing power. The majority of the votes and most of the members of the board of directors are from developing countries.

GERT VAN MAANEN

## OIKOUMENE

“OIKOUMENE” is derived from the Greek word *oikein*, “to inhabit”. With the meaning of “inhabited earth” or “the whole world”, the term has been used since Herodotos (5th century B.C.). Since the Hellenistic period the term has been used in *secular* contexts to refer politically to the realm of the Greco-Roman empire or to mark the cultural distinction between the civilized world and the lands of the barbarians.

The *biblical* writings generally follow the secular usage, e.g. taking oikoumene as a synonym for “earth” (Ps. 24:1), yet without giving particular prominence to the term. In the New Testament the political connotation of the term is visible in Luke 4:5-7 (see also Luke 2:1; Acts 17:6) and in Revelation (esp. 16:14). The expected reign of God can be called the “coming oikoumene” (Heb. 2:5).

The subsequent, much more widespread *ecclesiastical* use of the term is linked with the extension of the Christian community across the entire Roman empire. By the 4th century the oikoumene had become the “Christian world”, with the double (political and religious) meaning of “Christian empire” and “whole church”. The adjective *oikoumenikos* (Latin *universalis* or *generalis*) refers to everything that has universal validity. Thus, ecumenical is a quality claimed for particular councils and their dogmatic decisions (see **ecumenical councils**) or is used as a title of honour for specific patriarchal sees or for respected teachers of the whole church.

In Roman Catholic and Orthodox tradition, which preserved the memory of the early link between church and empire, the term remained in use, though its meaning became more and more technical. The churches of the Reformation which developed into regional or national entities lost sight of the ecumenical dimension for more than 200 years. The pietistic revival (under Nicholas von Zinzendorf et al.) led to the re-discovery of the worldwide missionary calling of the church as well as to a renewal of the consciousness of Christian unity\* and fellowship across the differences of nations and confessions (Evangelical Alliance, 1846). In both contexts the term “ecumenical” has been reclaimed; the specifically modern meaning, however, refers to a spiritual attitude manifesting the awareness of the oneness of the people of God\* and the longing for its restoration (Söderblom).

Present-day usage is largely conditioned by the new reality of the organized ecumenical movement, as represented in particular by the WCC, and the different ways of reacting to this reality. The WCC

itself, in an early statement by its central committee (1951), gave an account of its understanding of the term “ecumenical”. In the light of the original Greek meaning, the term should be used “to describe everything that relates to the whole task of the whole church to bring the gospel to the whole world. It therefore covers... both unity and mission in the context of the whole world.” It has proved difficult to maintain the tension built into this definition.

Thus, the *Roman Catholic Church*, after having overcome its very strong initial reservations, accepted the new usage of the term, placing the emphasis, however, exclusively on the unity dimension. The Decree on Ecumenism of the Second Vatican Council\* (1964) defines: “The term ‘ecumenical movement’ indicates the initiatives and activities encouraged and organized... to promote Christian unity” (para. 4).

The *Orthodox churches* have participated actively in the ecumenical movement from the beginning. With a critical accent they defined their understanding of the ecumenical movement as “ecumenism in time”: “The immediate objective of the ecumenical search is, according to the Orthodox understanding, a re-integration of Christian mind, a recovery of apostolic tradition, a fullness of Christian vision and belief, in agreement with all ages” (New Delhi 1961).

Among the *churches of the Reformation* there is no common understanding of ecumenism. For many Protestant majority churches “ecumenical” refers to the external relations with churches in foreign countries. For those living among a diversity of denominations, “ecumenical” means the coming and being together of churches. For many, the ecumenical movement represents the manifestation of Christian concern for a world community in justice and peace. Over against this “worldly ecumenism” conservative evangelicals advocate a “confessing ecumenism” gathering the true believers from among the churches.

Within the ecumenical movement the WCC has sought to integrate the vision of John 17:21 (“that they may all be one... so

that the world may believe”) with the vision of Eph. 1:10 (God’s “plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in [Christ], things in heaven and things on earth”). But the effort to integrate these two biblical visions has been challenged by a continuing tension and sometimes antagonism between those who advocate the primacy of the social dimension of ecumenism and those who advocate the primacy of spiritual or ecclesial ecumenism. More recently, a growing number of voices from the churches, especially in Asia but also in Latin America, have spoken of the need for a “wider ecumenism” or “macro-ecumenism” – an understanding which would open the ecumenical movement to other religious and cultural traditions beyond the Christian community.

Churchly and worldly, spiritual and missionary-social dimensions belong together in a comprehensive understanding of oikoumene. Oikoumene is a relational, dynamic concept which extends beyond the fellowship of Christians and churches to the human community within the whole of creation.\* The transformation of the oikoumene as the “inhabited earth” into the living household (*oikos*) of God – that remains the calling of the ecumenical movement.

KONRAD RAISER

■ *Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the World Council of Churches: A Policy Statement*, WCC, 1997 ■ W.A. Visser ’t Hooft, *The Meaning of Ecumenical*, Burge Memorial Lecture 1953, London, SCM Press, 1953 ■ W.A. Visser ’t Hooft, “The Word ‘Ecumenical’: Its History and Use”, in *HI-I*.

## OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH

THE OLD Catholic Church (OCC) considers the ideal of the undivided church\* of the first centuries to be the focus of unity,\* while realizing that historically the actual existence of such a primitive undivided church is problematic. Therefore this ideal is perhaps even more a task for the future than a fact of the past. In its active enthusiasm for the ecumenical movement from

its very beginning, the OCC demonstrates its belief in the necessity of this task.

The history of the OCC of the Netherlands as a separate institution goes back to the troubles of the post-Reformation period. Since the Protestant authorities had ended the formal existence of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) and had forbidden its public worship, the central authorities at Rome considered the Netherlands to have reverted to the status of a missionary area. Yet substantial parts of the Catholic church had remained intact and continued to function. A conflict slowly grew between the missionary ecclesiology of RC missionaries and the more established ecclesiology of the secular clergy, who obeyed the apostolic vicars who had replaced the pre-Reformation bishops. This conflict was worsened by accusations of Jansenism hurled at the secular clergy.

The outcome was the deposition, in 1702, of the apostolic vicar Peter Codde. As a consequence, a large part of the secular clergy with their parishes returned to the Roman party. The chapter of Utrecht finally chose an archbishop of its own, Cornelis Steenoven, who was consecrated in 1724 by a sympathizing French (Canadian) bishop, Dominique Marie Varlet. This act meant a definite breach between Rome and Utrecht. The official name of the Dutch Old Catholic church became "Roman Catholic Church of the Old Episcopal Clergy", a name which became more significant at the moment that the RCC in the Netherlands restored its hierarchy in 1853.

In 1870 a movement against the proclamation of the infallibility\* of the pope and his universal jurisdiction by the First Vatican Council\* arose in Germany, Switzerland and Austria-Hungary (esp. in Bohemia and Moravia), from where the name "Old Catholic" originated. In 1889 two of these newly established Old Catholic churches united with the Church of Utrecht in the Union of Utrecht. The bishops published a declaration which begins with the motto of St Vincent of Lérins: "Let us hold that faith which has been believed everywhere, always, by all. For that is truly and in the strictest sense Catholic." This motto immediately refers

to the controversy around the First Vatican Council. It should be used not so much as a formal criterion of the truth (otherwise nothing can ever change in the church) but rather as an appeal to all Christians to hold the Catholic faith\* of all ages, in order that they may all be one in this faith. Until this unity has been achieved, no single church should make one-sided attempts to formulate new Christian dogmas.\*

The Old Catholic churches, from their diverse beginnings, have remained episcopal churches (see **episcopacy**). Most of the bishops are chosen in the churches, and the role of synods and laity is increasingly important for the very identity of these churches. The Polish National Catholic Church of the USA and Canada, and the Polish Catholic Church in Poland, which joined the Union of Utrecht in the 20th century, basically have the same episcopal-synodical structure. Smaller Old Catholic communities in France, Sweden and Italy have their own priests but cooperate with neighbouring countries which have a bishop. In all churches of the Old Catholic communion, clerical celibacy ceased to be an obligation. Recently, women have been admitted to the diaconate\* and also to the priesthood, which has led to difficulties between the Western European and North American Old Catholic churches.

From 1870 onwards, intensive ecumenical contacts, especially with the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox churches, resulted in Anglican-Old Catholic intercommunion,\* established by the 1931 Bonn agreement (the relationship was termed "full communion" in 1958) and in the Old Catholic-Orthodox dialogue,\* 1973-87. In 1965 a concordat of full communion,\* modelled after the Bonn agreement, was established with the Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church, the Lusitanian Church (Portugal) and the Philippine Independent Church.

Old Catholic involvement in the ecumenical movement formally began with the participation of two bishops, from the Netherlands and Switzerland, at the Lausanne Faith and Order\* conference (1927). This side of ecumenism has always remained a major interest for Old

Catholics, who have never missed a F&O conference. Old Catholics also participate in other activities of the WCC and of national councils of churches.\* The OCC believes the unity which the ecumenical movement seeks for the churches is one which needs to exist as a reconciled diversity\* of all, rooted in the common faith and order of the ancient church of the first ecumenical councils\* and their creeds.

MARTIN PARMENTIER

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**OLD CATHOLIC-ORTHODOX DIALOGUE**

THE RELATIONSHIP between Old Catholics and Orthodox has developed in five phases. The first was 1871-88. While the Dutch Old Catholic church from the 18th century repeated the Roman anathemas\* against the Eastern church, the young anti-Vatican movement in Germany began to take initiatives for a serious dialogue. Anglicans and Orthodox were both invited to the Bonn reunion conferences of 1874 and 1875. It was decided that agreement on the faith of the ecumenical councils,\* scripture and Tradition,\* the office of bishop and the seven sacraments was necessary for unity.\* Both the developments which had led to the declaration of papal infallibility\* in the Roman Catholic Church and those which in Protestantism had led to discontinuity with the early church were rejected. As for the filioque,\* it was agreed that the clause had been inserted wrongly into the creed but that it was possible to explain it in an orthodox way.

The second phase was 1889-1917, i.e. from the establishment of the union of Utrecht until the Russian revolution. In this period, dialogue commissions were formed in Rotterdam (Old Catholic) and in St Petersburg (Orthodox). The commissions never met, but they exchanged memoranda on the filioque, the eucharist\* and the canonical validity of Old Catholic episcopal orders. Conservative theologians like Bishop Sergius of Yamburg (later patriarch

of Moscow) required that Old Catholics should first of all recognize the Orthodox church as the one true church.\* In 1904 Patriarch Joachim of Constantinople wrote an encyclical demanding an official and comprehensive confession of the faith of the Old Catholic churches. Due to communication problems this demand was not received in Utrecht (the demand was reiterated and met in 1970). In 1912 the Russian commission stated, with approval of the holy synod, that all questions put to the Rotterdam commission had been answered satisfactorily.

The third phase was 1920-60. The initiative now shifted from Russia to Constantinople. Three months after the Anglican-Old Catholic Bonn agreement in 1931, an official Old Catholic-Orthodox conference met in Bonn. No serious dogmatic points of difference were found to remain, but the Orthodox delegates had no power to accept the conference's decisions on behalf of their churches. None raised the matter of the recently concluded Anglican-Old Catholic intercommunion.\* Later Orthodox criticism of this relationship was disappointing for Old Catholics, as the chairman of the 1931 conference, one of the subsequent critics, was the fully informed Orthodox archbishop in England.

The fourth phase was 1961-75. It began with the pan-Orthodox conference of Rhodes in 1961 and the official delivery by the Old Catholics to the ecumenical patriarch on 21 June 1970 of the *Homologia* (which was first requested in 1904). It lasted until the actual beginning of the "dialogue of truth" by the joint commission of Old Catholic and Orthodox theologians in 1975.

The fifth phase comprised the direct dialogue held 1975-87 on the following subjects: (1) the doctrine of God:\* divine revelation\* and its transmission, the canon\* of holy scripture, the Holy Trinity;\* (2) Christology: the incarnation\* of the Word of God, the hypostatic union, the mother of God; (3) ecclesiology: the nature and marks of the church, the unity of the church and the local churches, the boundaries of the church, the authority\* of the church and in the church, the indefectibility of the church, the synods (councils) of

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the church, the necessity of apostolic succession, the head of the church; (4) soteriology: the redeeming work of Jesus Christ,\* the operation of the Holy Spirit\* in the church and the appropriation of salvation; (5) sacramental doctrine: the sacraments\* of the church, baptism,\* confirmation,\* the eucharist, penance,\* the anointing of the sick,\* ordination,\* marriage;\* (6) eschatology:\* the church and the end of time, life after death, the resurrection\* of the dead and the renewal of the earth; and (7) ecclesial communion:\* conditions and consequences. Between 1975 and 1987 the two sides reached formal agreement on all these points.

With the completion of this dialogue, a sixth phase of the Old Catholic-Orthodox relationship has begun. Now the churches will have to decide what practical conclusions can be drawn from the theological agreement which has been reached. A major point for consideration is the relationship of full communion between the Old Catholic and other churches, and the extent to which in the present ecumenical situation Old Catholic-Orthodox communion could and should be an exclusive one. A remaining task therefore is to relate the positive results of this bilateral dialogue\* to the multilateral dialogue\* of the churches of the WCC, especially as it develops through the work of the commission on Faith and Order.\*

The sixth phase of this dialogue has become characterized by new problems: the debate about the ordination of women in the Old Catholic churches and the closer relationship of some Old Catholic churches with churches of the Reformation. On the first issue, consultations were held in 1996, and the results are published in *Bild Christi und Geschlecht*. On the second issue, it has been emphasized that no full intercommunion has been established anywhere.

MARTIN PARMENTIER

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## OLD TESTAMENT AND CHRISTIAN UNITY

THE BEARING of the Old Testament on Christian unity merits discussion from several points of view: canon,\* lectionary practice (see **liturgical texts, common**) and interpretation (see **hermeneutics**).

It is well known that the OT canon of the Protestant churches agrees with the Hebrew Bible as regards the number of books. But the OT and the Hebrew Bible are not really the same, in view of the Jewish three-stepped canon of Tanakh (law, prophets and writings). In contrast, the terminology often used in dividing up the Christian OT is somewhat amorphous and even misleading ("historical" books, "prophetic" books etc.). In Protestant Christianity the influence of Luther has been paramount, although earlier figures such as Jerome also favoured the smaller (Hebrew) canon. In contrast to the Reformation, the Roman Catholic tradition accepted a broader canon (including 1-2 Macc., Jdt., Tob., Sir., Wis., Bar., and certain parts of Dan. and Esth.), which was officially proclaimed at the council of Trent\* in 1546. The position of the Eastern (Orthodox) churches is rather fluid. The general tendency is to accept some of the books generally called apocryphal (e.g. even 3 Macc.).

The adoption of a common liturgical lectionary by the mainline Christian churches in many parts of the world has been a bold and truly ecumenical move. At least Christians might share common biblical passages on Sundays and other holidays, despite their holding separate worship services. It is not a matter of great importance that the translations may differ (thus, for English-speaking Roman Catholics, the *New American Bible* or the *New Jerusalem Bible*, as opposed to the

*New Revised Standard Version* or the *New English Bible*). In truth there is no “Catholic” or “Protestant” Bible in the vernacular. Translations are done under various auspices, but the translators work from commonly accepted critical texts in the original languages. Differences between them are dictated by technical and scholarly differences of opinion, not by religious beliefs. Such has been the experience of the Catholic and Protestant scholars who have collaborated in some of the English translations as well as the French (*Traduction oecuménique de la Bible*) and the German (*Einheitsübersetzung*).

For the last two centuries the historical-critical method has dominated the interpretation of the OT by Christians (see **exegesis, methods of**). Despite its limitations, which have been vigorously proclaimed in recent years, this methodology remains a valuable hermeneutical tool – and ecumenical as well. For it has brought together biblical scholars (Protestant, Catholic and Jewish) in a common effort to understand the OT in its historical setting. The accepted results of this scholarship have influenced clerical and lay leadership in these communities. It is the most effective means of correcting certain theological biases and clarifying the theological presuppositions of Christian interpreters. Protestant Christianity, particularly Lutheran, has tended to interpret the OT in the light of the contrast between law and gospel; Roman Catholics and Orthodox have favoured the typological approach. Progress in hermeneutical sophistication has enabled all Christians to hear the OT on its own terms and not in stereotypes. The gospel (or better, Christian interpretation of the gospel message) needs to be corrected in the light of *torah* piety (Pss. 1, 119), and the eschatology\* of the New Testament needs the grim realism of Job and Ecclesiastes if the Christian is to understand the mystery of God.\*

Christianity has been able to find its roots in the OT (despite Adolf von Harnack’s advice to the Protestant churches to abandon it, à la Marcion) and to stress continuity with certain ideas (“people of God”\* etc.). But this selective usage should be broadened by the obvious chal-

lenges one Testament offers to the other. Thus, churchly triumphalism deserves to be humbled by the puzzling treatment accorded to the children of Israel as people of God. Or freedom from the law (antinomian strains) needs to be balanced by the emphasis on the *mitzvot* as seen in Deuteronomy. A biblical theology which merely justifies a narrow Christian view contributes nothing to the oikoumene.

The old problem of scripture and Tradition no longer needs to be viewed as involving two adversaries. Modern biblical studies have highlighted the role of Tradition in the formation and production of the biblical word (see **Tradition and traditions**). Current hermeneutical theory acknowledges that all texts, including the Bible, have an after-life of their own, in which their meaning is extended. However, there persists in all branches of Christianity a certain fundamentalism which is unwilling to admit the limitations of the word of God\* (see e.g. the description of Yahweh, the warrior God, in Joshua). The irony of fundamentalism is that it shares the common traditional concepts about the Bible (e.g. inspiration,\* biblical truth), but it proceeds to apply these concepts to the biblical text in a rigid manner. For many fundamentalists the Bible itself replaces the church. The education of Christian readers might profitably begin with the OT, which presents such a wide variety of literary forms and thereby prepares for a more sophisticated approach to the word of God.

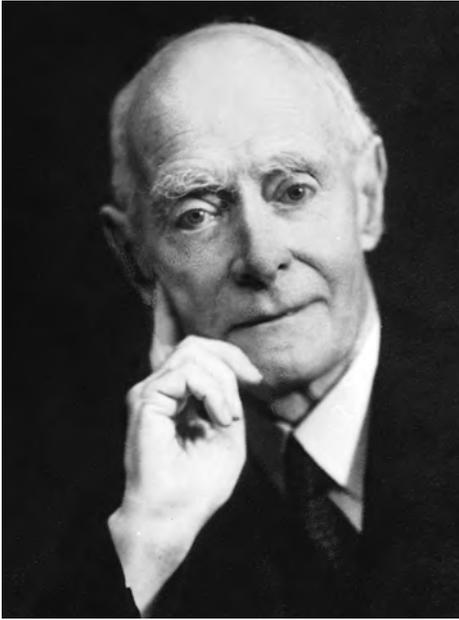
See also **fundamentalists, New Testament and Christian unity**.

ROLAND E. MURPHY

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**OLDHAM, JOSEPH HOULDSWORTH**

B. 20 Oct. 1874, Bombay, India; d. 16 May 1969, St Leonards on Sea, UK. One of the chief architects of the ecumenical



movement from the end of the 19th century up to the formation of the WCC in 1938 and its foundation in 1948, Oldham was founder and organizer of more significant ecumenical initiatives than any other Christian of his generation, with the possible exception of John R. Mott. Executive secretary of the world missionary conference in Edinburgh 1910, in 1911 he became the secretary of the continuation committee, and in 1921 the secretary of the International Missionary Council,\* which replaced it. From his office in 1912 he launched the *International Review of Missions*, which he edited until 1927. In 1934 he became chairman of the research committee for the Universal Christian Council on Life and Work\*, and organizer of its conference on "Church, Community and State" in Oxford, 1937. In 1938 he prepared with others the meeting in Utrecht which drew up the constitution and made final plans for the formation of the WCC. Not surprisingly he was made an honorary president of the Council at its first assembly in 1948.

When the work of the continuation committee was interrupted by the first world war, Oldham shifted his attention to the problems of German missionaries interned in British colonies. This brought

him to the attention of the British colonial and foreign office, where he gained a reputation as a determined and reliable representative of the missionary movement. Already in the war years he was thinking of the future: What should be the pattern of missionary cooperation and the goals of missionary work in the new spiritual, social and political conditions which the war was producing?

The wartime experience had strengthened his conviction that "there is one gospel which is entrusted to Christ's one church, broken though that may be". This church had to find the means to communicate this gospel in a new "one world" context.

In the following years he became deeply involved in the problems of colonial Africa. He took the lead in the missionary struggle against racism\* and forced labour. He pressed the colonial governments to give more attention to education, while at the same time working for the preservation of African culture by helping to create the international Institute of African Languages and Cultures, of which he became the administrative director. The publication of *Christianity and the Race Problem* brought him to the forefront of a struggle which would preoccupy the ecumenical movement to the present day.

During the 1930s Oldham's attention was drawn to the development of the modern state, a result of the political and economic upheavals of the time. The preparatory study programme he organized for the Oxford conference on the spiritual-ethical basis of the church's task in the world became a model of ecumenically common study. This brought the Life and Work movement out of its early tendency towards idealism and utopianism and provided it with carefully thought-out positions on such matters as the "function of the church in society", the "Christian understanding of man", and the "kingdom of God and history". These works greatly clarified and strengthened the world Christian community as it faced the rise of Hitlerism, the threat of the totalitarian state, and the problem of economic justice and order, for which the Oxford

conference is now chiefly remembered. Throughout the war years Oldham promoted ecumenical study interest, especially among laypersons in English-speaking countries, through his leadership of the Christian Frontier Council and the influential *Christian News-Letter*, which he and Kathleen Bliss edited.

In 1946 he became vice-chairman of the study commission on "The Church and the Disorder of Society" in preparation for the WCC first assembly in 1948. His essay in the preparatory study volume *A Responsible Society* produced the key idea for the assembly's report on social questions. Oldham also pressed hard for more ecumenical attention to the "meaning of work" in modern technological society. After 1955 he ceased all active involvement in the ecumenical movement.

He was educated at Edinburgh Academy in Scotland and at Trinity College, Oxford. His plan to enter the Indian civil service was radically altered by his conversion at an Oxford meeting conducted by American evangelist Dwight L. Moody. He later spent a year at the University of Halle, where his teacher was Gustav Warneck, a leading German missiologist. Oldham was never ordained and remained an elder in Free St George's, Edinburgh, until he moved to England in 1921 and became an Anglican layman.

At his memorial service in London, W.A. Visser 't Hooft summarized thus Oldham's immense contribution: "Ecumenical history is full of examples of new development which he started, but which others carried to their conclusion. I have no hesitation in saying that the ecumenical movement owes more to him than to any other of its pioneers."

KATHLEEN BLISS

- J.H. Oldham, *Christianity and the Race Problem*, London, SCM Press, 1924
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## OPPRESSION, ECUMENICAL CONSEQUENCES OF

THE SUPPORT of the ecumenical movement for those struggling for liberation from oppression has been a noteworthy aspect of ecumenism during much of the 20th century. Although not perfectly and not unanimously, the ecumenical movement has in many ways been the conscience of the Christian church as it has sought to express solidarity with the oppressed and those struggling for justice. This role was particularly evident during the struggle against apartheid\* in South Africa, as both inside and outside the country the ecumenical church played a key role in ending the oppressive system.

Through sharing in such endeavours, churches and Christians have often discovered the reality of their unity in Jesus Christ, despite the fact of denominational and confessional differences. Such experiences of Christian unity have been rooted in a common commitment to Jesus Christ, expressed in worship and embodied in social action. Although traditional issues of faith and order may not be discussed explicitly, the unity experienced is based implicitly on a deep faith in God's justice, love and liberating power revealed in Jesus Christ.

However, the achievement of liberation and the transition to democracy has often coincided, in South Africa and elsewhere, with a back-tracking on ecumenical commitment and a concomitant strengthening of denominational identity and resolve. This resurgence of denominationalism\* may not be surprising in hindsight because ecumenical commitment during the years of the struggle may not have fundamentally altered denominational allegiance for the vast majority within the churches. Ecumenical participation in the struggle for justice and liberation has often been limited to those who have been prepared to take a stand for the truth and accept the cost of prophetic witness. Nonetheless, it remains ecumenically tragic when Christians and churches who were engaged together in such struggles fail to build on that experience once the transition to a more just social order is achieved.

We cannot lightly dismiss the value of denominational identity, for in times of social change and crisis it has often proved a source of security and empowerment. Yet denominationalism (i.e. a failure to recognize the provisionality of denominations) is clearly a major stumbling block to the full life of the ecumenical church, making any movement beyond denominational boundaries seem threatening to the experience of *koinonia*, meaningful identity and relationships, and often effectiveness in mission. When denominational priorities are placed above the ecumenical mandate, and therefore above the call to the church of Jesus Christ to witness to the reign of God, then what should be a cause for mutual enrichment becomes a source of division which undermines the witness of the church.

The search for Christian unity and the struggle for justice in the world belong together, as has been amply demonstrated in many contexts. That is, the unity of the church is not simply a matter of uniting denominations in common structures and institutions but of developing *koinonia*\* within a broken and divided world. Moreover, since the major sources of division within the church are often more social, cultural, sexual and political than theological, the search for unity must deal with these divisive realities if it is to be an authentic expression of the unity we have in Jesus Christ.

Christian unity which is culturally or socially homogeneous, even if it involves the overcoming of historic divisions, is not really an adequate expression of the Trinitarian *koinonia* which is given in Christ through the Spirit. Sharing the common life of the Spirit respects and yet finds a way to overcome the limitations of natural relationships with others who are not of the same culture, race, nation, gender or class. By such sharing, the church witnesses to the reign of God in Jesus Christ through the power of the Spirit.

Until the reign of God is revealed in all its fullness, both the struggle for justice and the search to express Christian unity more faithfully remain an ongoing responsibility of the Christian church. The ending of apartheid did not mean a final vic-

tory over injustice, but it ushered in a new era in the struggle against racism, poverty and the oppression of women. So the struggle for justice continues. Central to this struggle is the need to deal with the past in a way which will bring the truth into the open and lead to healing and reconciliation. Such goals are central to the ecumenical ministry of the church. How tragic it will be if now, when the witness and ministry of the church are so crucial, the church withdraws into its denominational shells and fails in being a laboratory of reconciliation and *koinonia* within its own life, and an agent for the healing of the nations.

See also **violence, religious roots of.**

JOHN W. DE GRUCHY

■ W. Boesak, *God's Wrathful Children: Political Oppression and Christian Ethics*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1995.

## ORDER

IN 20TH-CENTURY ecumenical discussions on social issues, order and liberty/freedom\* have been correlative terms, often representing two major philosophical and political traditions at work, the two major thrusts of social thinking in dialectical tension and even the two major systems of social organization influencing ecumenical actions and concerns. The WCC's constitution includes the following purposes: to express the common concern of the churches in the service of human need, the breaking down of barriers between people, and the promotion of one human family in justice and peace. This responsibility for participating in a new ordering of human society has largely been centralized within the Council's organizational structure, although its actions have always been closely inter-related. An overview of the history of this involvement shows continuity as well as changes and development.

### "ORDER" IN ECUMENICAL SOCIAL THOUGHT

The concept of social disorder formed an important backdrop to several ecumenical initiatives of the 19th century. In the development of ecumenical social

thought and action in the early 20th century, reflected for example at two Life and Work conferences (Stockholm 1925 and Oxford 1937), this theme became even more apparent. "The forces of evil against which Christians have to contend are found not only in the hearts of men as individuals, but have entered into and infected the structure of society, and there also must be combatted" (William Temple, Oxford conference report).

Before the WCC's Amsterdam assembly (1948), J.H. Oldham, W.A. Visser 't Hooft, Reinhold Niebuhr and M.M. Thomas discussed the best term for identifying the church's responsibility in the world. Phrases like "open society", "free society" and "free and responsible society" were considered, before "responsible society"\* was adopted. For two decades, this proved to be the key phrase describing the ecumenical vision of the church's role in the social order.

The overall theme of the Amsterdam meeting was "Man's Disorder and God's Design". Sections 3 and 4 dealt specifically with the church and the disorder of society, and the church and the international disorder. A preparatory booklet said: "We see also signs of God's design in the struggles... for economic justice, for political freedom, for a world order that can deliver humanity from war. The results of these efforts will be imperfect and subject to corruption by man's pride and self-interest, but to work for these goals is a responsibility that God lays upon men." In the following years, most of these motifs re-appeared repeatedly.

At Evanston (1954), the term "responsible society" was broadened, and its meaning as a guide for action was clarified: "Responsible society is not an alternative social political system, but a criterion by which we judge all existing social orders." Sections 3, 4 and 5 dealt with topics related to the question of responsible world order amid disorder and conflict: social questions (the responsible society in a world perspective), international affairs (Christians in the struggle for world community) and intergroup relations (the churches amid racial and ethnic tensions).

After Evanston, a complex and widespread study on "Common Christian Responsibility towards Areas of Rapid Social Change" concentrated on the responsibility of the churches in diverse socio-economic and political contexts, with special emphasis on the new nations formulating their concerns and viewpoints. This study laid the foundation for the world conference on Church and Society (Geneva 1966), on "Christians in the Technical and Social Revolutions of Our Time", addressing economic development in a world perspective; the nature and function of the state\* in a revolutionary age; structures of international cooperation – living together in a pluralistic world society; and humankind and community in changing societies. The underlying theme was clearly the responsibility for social action in diverse, rapidly changing, revolutionary contexts, an emphasis far different from that of Oxford and Amsterdam. Several of these issues led to other studies and projects.

In 1968 Uppsala affirmed the positions taken at Geneva. The same year a committee on Society, Development and Peace was constituted by the WCC and the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (SODEPAX\*). A wide field of issues was addressed at two major conferences (Beirut 1968 and Montreux 1970), in various research documents and in manifold activities.

In 1970 the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development (see **development**) started its work, confident about the possibilities of transferring technology,\* international economic cooperation and infusions of foreign capital. During this process, however, the growth model of development came under heavy criticism, as the emphasis shifted to the people's own struggle for liberation, for justice and economic self-reliance.

A meeting at Bucharest in 1974, concluding a five-year study programme on "The Future of Man and Society in a World of Science-Based Technology", introduced the long-term concept of a "just and sustainable society", which was debated at Nairobi (1975) and further developed by the central committee meeting in 1977 into

a “just, participatory and sustainable society”\* (JPSS) programme. The search for a just order now found even greater emphasis, with participation and sustainability indicating necessary dimensions of this struggle for justice in the world order.

Again at Nairobi questions of social organization played a major role when, under the theme “Jesus Christ Frees and Unites”, the sections, among other things, dealt with seeking community: the common search of people of various faiths, cultures and ideologies (sec. 3); education for liberation and community (4); structures of injustice and struggles for liberation (5); and human development: ambiguities of power, technology and quality of life (6). The official report was published under the apt title *Breaking Barriers*.

After 1977 the JPSS programme formed a very important part of ecumenical social vision and action. An advisory committee delineated the three key concepts, emphasizing a theological interpretation of the people’s struggle against unjust powers in the perspective of the messianic kingdom (see **kingdom of God**).

A major development took place when the Vancouver assembly (1983) called on the churches to engage “in a conciliar process of mutual commitment (covenant) to justice, peace and the integrity of creation” (JPIC). It was seen not as a new programme but as a “programme emphasis”, affecting all the work being undertaken. In January 1987 the central committee spelled out what this process entails: it is a call to the churches to speak and act together in each place; to do so as a faith response; to base their positions on biblical teachings, Christian traditions and careful analyses of their own situations; to grasp the inter-relatedness of the varying contextual issues and to work on a global response as well; to draw upon available resources, including those of other faith traditions and ideologies.

This call affected almost all activities and became the new overall vision for responsible participation in ordering human society. Several regional meetings have already addressed facets of the process, many discussions have been held, position papers published, and initiatives taken.

Representatives of the Vatican Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace have already joined the discussions. Precisely because of the truly ecumenical participation, concepts of both “conciliarity”\* (council) and “covenant”\* are still problematic, discussed continuously and understood differently.

The WCC’s team on Justice, Peace and Creation is, for example, focusing on concerns related to the churches’ role in a world increasingly dominated by science and technology. Especially the integrity of creation (see **justice, peace and the integrity of creation**) has become important, with the insight that “attempts to maintain social and ecological stability through old approaches to development and environmental protection will increase instability, so that stability must be sought through change”. A search for a theology and ethics of nature\* has become an integral part of the search for responsible social ordering.

A world convocation on JPIC met in Seoul in early 1990, in which the Roman Catholic Church participated fully, although not as “co-inviter”. This meeting, however, was not the culmination of the process but only an important step along the way.

### THREATS TO A JUST ORDER

The inter-related global threats responded to in JPIC, namely oppression (see **oppression, ecumenical consequences of**), militarism\* and the destruction of the environment,\* are all seen in terms of disorder. One aspect of the response against oppression and injustice is the striving for a New International Economic Order (see **economics**). By the end of the 1980s, feelings of frustration and despair replaced the earlier optimism in the global social and economic context. The concept of development as understood in the early 1970s has become extremely suspect. High rates of unemployment\* in wealthy industrialized countries, a widening gap between rich and poor, volatility in the international monetary system, the concentration of economic power in transnational corpora-

tions, the enormous proportions of international debt and repressive measures against popular movements trying to change the impoverishment of a growing number of people in the world have all led to this sense of crisis.

A second aspect of this response was the so-called international food disorder programme. Vancouver made a 13-point call to action in this regard to the member churches, and over the next seven years a task force involved representatives from all programme areas of the Council in addressing its implications. The call included strengthening structures for meeting emergencies, building ecumenical support for long-term solutions, monitoring international policies, providing support for the participation of the poor in food production and distribution, being advocates for farmers and landless rural workers, and denouncing contemporary International Monetary Fund policies. After the 1990 Seoul conference these concerns were incorporated in the WCC's approach to justice, peace and the integrity of creation as well as its critique of globalization (see **food crisis/hunger**).

An important aspect of the response against militarism is a series of world military order studies, conferences and reports. Especially from the third-world perspective the extent of world militarization and the fact that political and economic decisions are made in terms of military interests, often leading to legitimation of the destructive and unjust order of "law and order" and the violation of human rights,\* have been pointed out.

Similarly, the three concepts used in JPIC to describe the purpose of the churches' social action can all be seen in terms of order: justice, peace and the integrity of creation – "introducing a sense of wholeness in a fragmented and divided society"; the new idea of "integrity of creation" goes beyond the call for a "sustainable society" precisely in that it "points to an understanding of the wholeness of created life in the world as it is in the plan of God"; the process means that "we must all orient ourselves to a Word which incorporates the whole created order and is prepared to suffer for its healing".

For order in an ecclesiological sense, see **church order, Faith and Order**.

D.J. SMIT

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## ORDINATION

IN ECUMENICAL discussion about ordination, five questions have to be considered: What is the rite of ordination? Who is ordained? By whom is the ordination performed? In what context is this to be done? What rites of unification can be found for a mutual recognition of ministries between churches?

At least since the time of *The Apostolic Tradition*, the church order attributed to Hippolytus, the ancient rite for the ordination of bishop, presbyters and deacons consisted primarily of the laying on of hands, with a prayer for the grace of the Spirit. In other documents, it is apparent that installation of bishops in the cathedra was significant because of their responsibility for apostolic teaching. In Eastern churches, in the ordination of a bishop the imposition of hands was later complemented by the placing of the gospel on the neck of the ordinand, and in all ordinations by investiture and the acclamation of the people. In Western churches, from the early middle ages, the central rite was first accompanied and then eventually obscured by anointings, investiture and the tradition of instruments. The use of these ceremonies fortified a priestly and sacramental understanding of order.

The 16th-century reformers looked for a ritual that would give priority to God's call to ministry, place the ministry in relation to the common priesthood of all the faithful, and avoid priestly or sacramental interpretations of order. As they acknowl-

edged but one ministry of word and sacrament,\* so they largely practised but one ordination, doing away with the distinction between presbyter and bishop. For Luther, the service of ordination consisted of the laying on of hands and the recitation of the Lord's prayer, though Lutheran churches did keep other elements of prayer for the ordinand. John Calvin accentuated election and prayer by the congregation and did not deem the laying on of hands to be necessary. Many Reformed churches did keep it, however, or substituted for it the extension of the right hand of fellowship. Though pastors and teachers were the ministers of the word, sometimes elders and deacons were ordained with similar rites.

The Anglican church retained the laying on of hands and the prayer of the people, doing away with the medieval blessing prayers, in which it found elements of the priestly and the sacramental and which had come to be called prayers of consecration. It also retained the offices of bishop, presbyter and deacon (see **ministry, threefold**). Baptists and Congregationalists preferred ordination services which would show the tie to God's call and to the local congregation rather than depict an act of ecclesiastical bestowal of power. In some cases, the laying on of hands was kept as part of such services, linked with prayer for the ordinand by the congregation and forms of recognition of ministry by the local congregation or by a broader fellowship of churches. The extension of the right hand of fellowship was sometimes used instead of the laying on of hands. While ordination was primarily for ministers of word and sacrament, at times deacons and elders have been or are installed with similar observances in these churches.

In recent times, the ordination services of the Church of South India have had an influence on Protestant churches generally, and many revised ordination rites have restored the laying on of hands to pride of place. Other factors in new rites include the presentation and examination of the candidate, exhortation and the prayer of the people. Studies of the ancient tradition pertinent to liturgical reform have had their impact on the ordinal of the Roman pontifical. Though it retains anointings

and the tradition of instruments, the Roman pontifical now gives clear priority to the laying on of hands and the blessing prayer, incorporating a petition for the gift of the Spirit. This ritual also includes the prayer of the people, presentation and examination of the candidate, and episcopal exhortations. *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* has now suggested that all churches restore the laying on of hands as the primary ordination rite, as sign of the gift of the Spirit for ministry, along with the suggestion that all churches restore the threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter and deacon. Implementing this would entail introducing distinct ordination services in those churches which still prefer ordination to the one ministry of word and sacrament, without ritual distinction of orders.

It is one thing for churches to adopt this ritual of laying on of hands with prayer; it is another for them to agree on its significance and its necessity. For this reason studies of the ancient tradition have become important to ecumenical agreement. It cannot be said without reservation that there is clear evidence of the need for the rite in the appointment of church officers in the New Testament, although a number of texts associate it with a sending for ministry or assignment to community responsibility. The introduction of the rite may have been influenced by a post-baptismal laying on of hands in recognition of the gift of the Spirit in the early church and by a ritual for the appointment of prophets within Judaism. However, as far as historical origins are concerned, it is only in *The Apostolic Tradition* that it is clearly said that bishop, presbyters and deacons are to be appointed with an episcopal laying on of hands and prayer, and that they alone are to be inducted into office in this way. In some early church orders, deaconesses and widows are included among those who receive the laying on of hands. It is hard to know, however, whether they were intended to be numbered among the clergy (see **laity/clergy**) or even whether such a practice was much followed. The requirement of the laying on of hands for the threefold ministry and its reservation to them did indeed become the universal

practice of the church, though not necessarily in all local churches at the same time. Nor was the same weight given to it everywhere, and it did not stand alone without a larger set of observances.

We can grasp some idea of the difference in shades of meaning attributed to the laying on of hands by contrasting the use of the Greek word *cheirotomia* with that of the Latin word *ordinatio*. The former means precisely the laying on of hands, and its primary significance is the gift of the Spirit for the service of the church. It is not clear whether at first it meant the actual empowerment for office or a prayer for the guidance of one otherwise designated and installed. It may well be anachronistic to make such distinctions, given that *cheirotomia* and blessing constituted a unity with other actions, including election or approval of the candidate for ministry by the people, assignment to the service of a particular church within the communion of churches, the participation of other churches (often through their bishops), the prayer of the people as well as of the bishop who ordained, fasting and other forms of preparation, and completion of the rites in the celebration of the eucharist.\* In contrast, while *ordinatio* includes reference to multiple procedures, it does not directly mean the laying on of hands but brings the official assignment to office to the fore and is used also for installation in the lesser orders, for which laying on of hands was not employed. While in churches using this term "laying on of hands" was a normal part of the ordination of bishops, presbyters and deacons, it is advanced as an opinion by some scholars that on occasion, even without the rite, the *ordinatio* might be taken as complete, provided a person was legitimately assigned as a member of the clergy.

Such matters obviously affect the ecumenical acceptance of the laying on of hands by a bishop as the common ordination rite. It becomes more acceptable to all, the more it is kept in fuller context, including a link to a particular church and the recognition and prayer of all the people. For some churches, it would be viewed more favourably if it was not in-

vested with a strong sacramental efficacy and if the need for continuity in ministry through episcopal ordination was not deemed indispensable to the validity of ministry. Without such attributions of sacramental efficacy, it could be accepted as indeed a sign of the gift of the Spirit and of the apostolic continuity of the church in which ministry is exercised. The Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, however, would like to see their own sacramental appreciation of the rite acknowledged. Mutual agreement on this sacramental understanding was formulated in 1988 by the Joint International Commission for theological dialogue between the Orthodox church and the Roman Catholic Church. As far as mutual recognition of ministries between the churches is concerned, for the RCC issues of validity need first to be resolved, involving episcopal succession and the understanding on which ordinations are performed. For Orthodox churches, recognition of ministry must occur within the context of recognition of churches. For many Protestant churches, a common faith must lie at the foundations of such acceptance. Thus the conditions surrounding the adoption of this rite are not the same for all churches, even though there is a growing acceptance of its use and significance.

See also **diaconate, episcopacy, ministry in the church, ordination of women, presbyterate, priesthood.**

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## ORDINATION OF WOMEN

SOME WOULD argue that the move towards the ordination\* of women to a ministry of word (see **word of God**) and sacrament\* began within the pages of the New Testament. Jesus' treatment of women was revolutionary in the cultural context of his day, and he entrusted to women the news of his resurrection. Women held prominent positions in the early Christian communities and throughout the history of the church have exercised a recognized (though not ordained) ministry as confessors, teachers, theologians and abbesses.

Nevertheless, the 12 apostles were men, the ordered threefold ministry\* (of bishop, presbyter and deacon) from its emergence early in the 2nd century was male and, for 19 centuries, the ministry of word and sacrament has been exercised only by men. At the Reformation it was a characteristic of the radical movements, especially the Anabaptists, to accept women as ministers.

The movement to ordain women to a full ministry of word and sacrament began in the 19th century in the context of the changing role of women in Western industrializing countries. Women were moving out of the home to work in factories, education and social work. In the church, recognized but not ordained ministries developed. Roman Catholic religious orders for women burgeoned; women were accepted and sent as missionaries; in fast-growing European industrial towns women exercised a ministry as social workers, Salvation Army sisters, Anglican Church Army sisters, Wesleyan class leaders. The order of deaconess, revived among the Moravian Brethren in the 18th century, was instituted in 1836 in Kaiserswerth in Germany in Reformed and Lutheran traditions and spread to Protestant churches all over Europe and eventually to churches around the world.

Those churches which at the time of the Reformation had moved away from the threefold pattern were the first to ordain women. The absence of a "catholic" view of the priesthood\* of the ministry had its effect. Moreover, since many of these churches emphasized the local or re-

gional church (see **local church**), this development could take place without the formal agreement of a worldwide communion.\* For example, the Methodists in the US ordained women in 1956, in England in 1974; among Reformed churches, the Congregationalists of England and Wales ordained women in 1917, the Congregational Union of Scotland in 1929 and the Eglise réformée in France in 1965. By 1960 Lutheran churches in Germany, Scandinavia (except Finland) and the US had all ordained women. The ordination of women in the Church of Sweden in 1960 marked a significant development in a church which had maintained the historic episcopal succession and which had an agreement of intercommunion,\* based on the recognition of ministries, with the Church of England, a church which claimed to retain the ministry of the universal church at the Reformation.

A 1970 survey carried out by the WCC found Baptist, Congregational, Disciples, Lutheran, Methodist, Reformed and United churches which ordained women. But many of the churches that ordain women had not taken this move in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Clearly the status and role of women in society in the different continents affect the practice of the ordination of women.

Since 1970 the number of women ordained in churches that ordain women has increased, and the practice has spread in the developing countries. Although no church has reversed its decision to ordain women, there is often resistance to the ministry of women, and positions of responsibility are slow in opening up.

In 1971 Hong Kong became the first of a number of Anglican provinces to ordain women (having already, as an emergency, ordained a woman during the second world war, an ordination subsequently set aside); the USA, Canada, New Zealand, Brazil, Kenya and Uganda followed, and by 1997 a large number of the 37 provinces ordained women to the presbyterate. The Church of England ordained its first women as priests in 1993 and by 1997 almost 2000 of its 11,000 priests were women. The Church of England continues to recognize the position of those who are

opposed to women priests. By act of synod it has consecrated three bishops who are themselves opposed to the ordination of women and who minister to congregations who remain opposed. This act is the consequence of the Church of England's understanding that the matter of women's ordination to the ministry of the universal church remains a matter of discernment and open reception in the whole church. At the Lambeth conference in 1978 the provinces agreed to remain in communion with one another in spite of different beliefs and practices. However, the fact that the priestly ministry of women lawfully ordained in some provinces is not recognized in others means that there is in fact no longer full interchangeability of ministries, and thus not full communion, within the Anglican communion.

By 2000 the Old Catholic churches in Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland had ordained women to the priesthood, while other Old Catholic churches are opposed. The situation is to be reviewed by the international conference of bishops to decide whether and how communion may be maintained with a difference of belief and practice on the matter.

The position in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches remains unchanged, although an unofficial movement favouring the ordination of women in the RCC has appeared, particularly in the Netherlands, the USA and England. The official Roman Catholic position is stated in *Inter Insigniores*, a 1976 declaration of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The RCC is not free, it is said, to change the unbroken tradition of the universal church on this matter. In his apostolic letter *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* of May 1994, Pope John Paul II declared he had no authority to change the church's tradition of ordaining only men to the priesthood. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued a response in November 1995 stating that the teaching of the pope's letter is to be understood as belonging to the deposit of faith and is to be held definitively.

The Orthodox churches remain opposed. In 1989 they held a consultation in

Rhodes to set out their reasons for maintaining the unbroken tradition of the church. Thus the two largest and oldest churches continue to uphold the tradition of an all-male priesthood.

The movement to ordain women to the full ministry of word and sacrament, especially among the churches springing from the Reformation, has coincided with the movement towards the visible unity\* of the church. The one has clearly had an effect on the other, for the visible unity of the church involves the recognition not only of all its baptized members as members of a single community of faith but also of those who are called to be ministers of the one communion. As long ago as 1916 the Anglican William Temple expressed a view which many committed ecumenists have shared: "I would like to see women ordained;... desirable as it would be in itself, the effect might be (probably would be) to put back the re-union of Christendom – and re-union is more important."

The conflict between the movement to ordain women and the move towards the unity of the church is illustrated by the experiences of uniting churches. The existence of women ministers in the United Church of Canada was one of the reasons that Anglicans did not enter union with that church in 1956. In the Anglican-Methodist scheme for unity in England in the 1960s, the Methodists delayed ordaining women in order that the two churches might consider the matter together. Only after the failure of the scheme did Methodists proceed to ordain women. In the subsequent covenanting\* proposals involving United Reformed, Methodist, Moravian and Anglican churches, the ordination of women was once more an issue. Since 1997, discussions between the Methodist Church and the Church of England have once more drawn attention to the difficulty of moving to visible unity when only one partner has women exercising a ministry of oversight and the legislation of the other church excludes the possibility.

When women were admitted to the full ministry in the Church of Sweden, it was argued that this step would gravely damage relations of intercommunion with the

Church of England (however, see **Anglican-Lutheran dialogue, Porvoo communion**). In 1931 the Old Catholics and Anglicans entered into the Bonn agreement, one of "full communion". The move of some Anglican provinces to ordain women met with grave concern among Old Catholics, and ultimately the Polish National Catholic Church terminated the agreement. At the consultation of united and uniting churches in 1987, the situation was summed up in this way: "For some churches the ordination of women adds to the hindrances to unity; but the united churches are clear that further union for them is being made a more open possibility by the willingness of those to share that ordination of women which they have found to be a creative element in their common life."

The theological issues involved in the ordination of women have been clarified and developed particularly in the context of ecumenical conversation. The concern was already voiced at the first world conference on Faith and Order (Lausanne 1927) and has been a recurring theme in WCC assemblies, in the work of F&O and in WCC departments responsible for women's concerns. The Council has proved both the most creative but also the most divisive forum in which to face the issue. The churches in the catholic tradition, particularly the Orthodox churches, have felt forced to face a question which was not on their own agenda and which challenged unacceptably their belief that the holy Tradition\* is clear and unchangeable.

The 1982 Lima document on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* does not treat the ordination of women in the main part of the ministry text but considers the issue in a commentary (to M18), which gives a short description of the positions of those churches which ordain women and those which do not. There is no convergence between the churches on the matter. Behind those short sentences lies a long history of debate and clarification of the issues, not least through the insights of the study on "The Community of Women and Men in the Church", which in 1980 produced a book entitled *Ordination of Women in Ecumenical Perspective*.

The contribution of the WCC has been to help the churches to set the discussion within the context of an emerging convergence on the understanding of ministry and priesthood and perhaps, even more important, within the concept of the unity we seek. The studies on the unity of the church and the renewal of human community have enlarged and enriched the perspective of this unity. Some have come to maintain that the churches' ministry must include women in order to show to the world the depths of unity in human community and to make the values of the gospel and the vision of the kingdom credible in a broken and divided world. The unity of the church ought not to be set over against the unity of the human community. In the context of the WCC the challenge has also gone to the churches that "openness to each other holds the possibility that the Spirit may well speak to one church through the insights of another. Ecumenical considerations, therefore, should encourage, not restrain, the facing of this question." The WCC provides the right context for deepening the understanding of the exegetical, doctrinal and pastoral questions which arise in relation to the ordination or non-ordination of women to the priesthood. The discussion continued within the work of the Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women. It is increasingly recognized that all the different opinions and practices need to be acknowledged and no church marginalized in the ongoing debate.

Bilateral conversations, particularly those between churches with differing practices, have had to face the issue squarely. The matter has figured prominently in the Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue.\* Just as growth in communion and reconciliation of ministries seemed possible on the basis of the agreed statement on ministry, some Anglican provinces proceeded to ordain women, which led the pope to caution about this "grave new obstacle" to the movement towards unity. In an official correspondence between the pope, the archbishop of Canterbury and Cardinal Johannes Willebrands some of the central arguments for and against the ordination of women were set out.

They include the question of the representative nature of priesthood and whether women may appropriately represent God in Christ, particularly in the presidency of the eucharist.\* The argument relates to the fundamental significance of the maleness of Jesus in the incarnation\* and the relation of maleness to the nature of God. It is bound up with the argument, used also by some in fundamentalist and evangelical traditions, for the headship of men and for the “proper subordination of women to men in the order of creation, which also precludes women’s ordination”. A third argument concerns how decisions are taken on a matter relating to the ministry of the universal church when there is division in the church. Some believe only a truly ecumenical council\* would have power to resolve the issue. The agenda revealed in ecumenical dialogue touches matters at the centre of faith\* regarding what is believed about the ministry, the church, men and women created in God’s image and, most crucial of all, the nature and being of God.\* Churches committed to unity are forced to face how they may move into deeper communion while remaining divided on the issue.

Until recently, developments have mainly concerned the ordination of women to the presbyterate.\* The first woman bishop, Marjorie Matthews of the United Methodist Church, USA, was greeted at the 1983 Vancouver assembly of the WCC. More recently, in England for example, women have assumed oversight roles in the Methodist and the United Reformed churches, both non-episcopal churches. By 1997 there were women bishops in Lutheran churches in Scandinavia and Germany.

The Lambeth conference in 1988 resolved that, should a woman be consecrated bishop in a province of the Anglican communion, every attempt would be made to maintain “the highest degree of communion” possible, despite lack of agreement on the issue of women bishops. The development would be tested in an open process of reception in the Anglican communion and the universal church. A commission was set up to monitor developments in the Anglican communion. In

1989 Barbara Harris was consecrated bishop in the USA and became suffragan bishop in the diocese of Massachusetts. In 1990 Penelope Jamieson was consecrated bishop of Dunedin, New Zealand, the first woman to become a diocesan bishop in the Anglican communion. With these two consecrations women became fully a part of the threefold ministry in the Anglican communion. In the 1998 Lambeth conference 11 women bishops took part for the first time, although not all provinces recognize the episcopal ministry of women. The Church of England recognizes neither women as bishops nor the ministry of those (men or women) ordained by a woman bishop. No male bishop refused to attend the conference, and the bishops passed a resolution affirming an ongoing process of discernment and open reception within the Anglican communion and the universal church. According to the Roman Catholic Church this development makes reconciliation of ministries between Anglicans and Roman Catholics more difficult.

See also **ministry in the church**.

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## ORIENTAL ORTHODOX CHURCHES

THE SIX Oriental Orthodox churches – Coptic, Syrian, Armenian, Ethiopian, Eritrean and (Indian) Malankara – are also called ancient Oriental, lesser Eastern, and pre- or ante-Chalcedonian churches. They are the churches of the first three ecumenical councils\* (Nicaea,\* Constantino-ple\* and Ephesus) but do not accept the fourth, Chalcedon\* (451). The six

churches are in communion\* with each other.

The Ethiopian, Coptic and Indian churches have been full members of the WCC since its inauguration in Amsterdam in 1948. The Syrian church joined at the New Delhi assembly (1961), and in Paris in 1962 the central committee admitted the Armenian church. Since the entry of Byzantine Orthodox churches at New Delhi, there have been a number of bilateral consultations between the Byzantine and Oriental churches which have brought them closer to each other, though communion has not yet been achieved (see **Oriental Orthodox-Orthodox dialogue**).

The statement of Nikos Nissiotis at New Delhi – that once there is a schism,\* both parties are in schism – was objected to by conservative theologians, but it has paved the way for mutual respect in place of the ancient heresy-hunting, which was perhaps a necessary stage during the development of dogmas. Whenever the paradoxical mystery of Christology and the Trinity\* could not be fully appreciated, rationalism erected walls that blocked wider communion. The Faith and Order\* commission of the WCC paved the way for bilateral consultations between theologians of Byzantine and Oriental churches at Aarhus (1964), Bristol (1967), Geneva (1970) and Addis Ababa (1971).

The *Coptic Orthodox Church* traces its history back to St Mark the Evangelist, who founded the church in Egypt. The ancient Egyptian patriarchate of Alexandria represented one of the chief sees of the early church within the Roman empire. The Copts, descendants of the ancient Egyptians, preserved the Coptic language in their liturgy.\* Through a long period of persecution since Byzantine times, the Coptic Orthodox Church tenaciously held fast to the “faith of the fathers”. A chief strength was its continuing the great ascetic-monastic traditions that originated in the Egyptian deserts. The church has initiated considerable missionary work in other parts of Africa and has a significant diaspora\* in North America, Europe, Australia and the Middle East.

The *Syrian Orthodox Church*, which traces its origins to A.D. 37, holds the tra-

ditions of St Peter’s work. The church suffered severe persecution during the struggle against Hellenistic domination at the time of the council of Chalcedon and later through Mongol invasions and Turkish rule. The patriarchate had to be moved several times, finally being established in Damascus only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Syrian liturgical and theological life flourished until the 13th century but steadily declined afterwards. The monastic movement produced many universally acknowledged saints\* and contributed enormously to the creation of a rich liturgical tradition. In 1665 the Antiochian church came into contact with the ancient church of St Thomas Christians in India, which led to the West Syrian liturgy being introduced to the Christians in South India. Though the Syrian church is vastly reduced in number because of Muslim domination, it has a considerable diaspora in the US, Australia and Europe.

The *Armenian Apostolic Church* traditionally attributes its beginning to the preaching of St Thaddeus and St Bartholomew. In 301 Armenia became the first nation to make Christianity its official religion. Victims of terrible persecution through the centuries, Armenian Christians heroically preserved their apostolic faith. The catholicos of All Armenians resides in Etchmiadzin, Armenia. There are three ecclesiastical centres within the church apart from Etchmiadzin: the catholicate of Cilicia (Antelias, Lebanon), the patriarchate of Jerusalem and the patriarchate of Constantinople. The Armenian church has a significant diaspora in all the continents. The Armenian national aspirations and the Armenian Orthodox faith are integrally interconnected.

The *Ethiopian Orthodox Church* traces its history back to apostolic times. Long under the tutelage of the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Ethiopian church declared autocephaly in 1950 and is now governed by its own patriarch in Addis Ababa. The church uses both the ancient language of Geez and modern Amharic in its liturgy. Influenced by a long tradition of monastic spirituality, this church has produced considerable religious literature

and has its own iconographic tradition. It is now gradually moving beyond age-old social and economic structures to meet contemporary challenges.

The *Eritrean Orthodox Church* is also an autocephalous church, with a direct relationship to the Coptic Orthodox Church. Its first patriarch, Philipos I, was consecrated in 1998.

The *Malankara (Indian) Orthodox Church* has always cherished the tradition of St Thomas as the founding father of Christianity in India. The Indian church, now divided into Roman Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox families, has suffered from Western colonial missions. The church came into contact with the Syrian patriarchate of Antioch in 1665 and thus inherited the west Syrian liturgical and spiritual tradition. The Orthodox church in India declared itself autocephalous in 1912, though conflicts with the Syrian patriarchate continue. With two theological colleges, Kottayam and Nagapur, a mission training centre and many educational and charitable institutions, the church is fully involved in the life of the country. Besides the catholicos residing at Kottayam, Kerala, the church has 17 bishops and more than 1000 parishes. It has a diaspora in North America, Malaysia, Singapore and the Gulf countries.

Five of the Oriental churches have contributed leaders to the ecumenical movement: Aboon Theophilus, patriarch of Ethiopia, was one of the presidents of the WCC from Evanston to New Delhi; the late Armenian Catholicos Karekin (Sarkissian) was the vice-moderator of the central committee from Uppsala to Nairobi; the late Paulos Mar Gregorios of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church (India) had been one of the presidents from Vancouver to Canberra and also moderator of the Sub-unit on Church and Society from Nairobi to Vancouver; Patriarch Shenouda and the late Bishop Samuel of the Coptic Church, Patriarch Ignatius Zakka of the Syrian Church, and V.C. Samuel of the Malankara Church have done signal service for the ecumenical movement; Vasken, former catholicos of All Armenia, has hosted a number of ecumenical meetings in Holy Etchmiadzin.

The contributions have been greatest in the area of Faith and Order of the WCC.

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## ORIENTAL ORTHODOX-ORTHODOX DIALOGUE

THE DIVISION between the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox families of churches can be traced back to the council of Chalcedon\* (451). The Eastern Orthodox family (all those churches in communion\* with the see of Constantinople) accepted Chalcedon as the fourth ecumenical council,\* while the Oriental Orthodox (ancient churches of Egypt, Syria, Armenia, India and Ethiopia; in 1998, also Eritrea) rejected the council. The main conflict was in the area of Christology – how the divine and the human natures are united in the person of Jesus Christ.\* However, strong political, cultural and social factors also played a part. The differences resulted in the breach of communion between these two Eastern families, which in spite of separation maintain to this day a remarkable unity\* in theological approach, liturgical-spiritual ethos and general church discipline.\*

The conflict between the Alexandrine and Antiochene theological traditions in the East was a major factor in the Christological controversy of the 5th century. Already in the council of Ephesus in 431 the conflict came to a head. Nestorius, the patriarch of Constantinople and a theologian belonging to the Antiochene tradition, was condemned. Cyril of Alexandria's Christology was accepted by the council as the norm of orthodoxy. The council of Ephesus was only the beginning of a long drawn-out controversy which culminated at Chalcedon.

In the Antiochene phrase "two natures after the union", the Alexandrine side sus-

pected a “Nestorian” dividing of natures in Christ. Alexandrine phrases like “from two natures” and “one incarnate nature of God the Word” appeared to the Antiochenes as reflecting the monophysite confusion of natures. Emperor Theodosius tried to reconcile the two factions in 433 through the Formulary of Reunion, but it did not bring about lasting peace. The Alexandrines and the Antiochenes interpreted the terms of the reunion differently.

The issue of Eutychianism can be understood only against that background. Eutyches, an old monk in Constantinople, was accused of denying that Christ was in two natures after the union and that the incarnate Christ was consubstantial with us human beings. He was condemned in 448 in the home synod of Constantinople. Eutyches was not a theologian and probably did not understand the subtleties of the Christological discussion. It is clear, however, that he had strong connections in the imperial court through his nephew Chrysaphius, who was the grand chamberlain of the emperor. The Alexandrine side used his services for political connections at the court.

Meanwhile Pope Leo I of Rome had sent a tome to the East setting forth a Christological doctrine apparently intended to resolve the controversy. Some Antiochene theologians found its Christology similar to their own. The tome brought in the new factor of Western theology to the already muddled situation in the East and further complicated it.

In the second council of Ephesus (449), convened by Emperor Theodosius and presided over by Dioscorus of Alexandria, Eutyches was admitted to communion on the assurance that he adhered to the faith of the fathers as expressed in Nicea\* and Ephesus. Leo’s contribution, intended to be read in the council, was ignored.

In the council of Chalcedon 451, these two issues – the admitting of Eutyches to communion and the ignoring of the tome of Leo – were brought up as two principal accusations against Dioscorus I, patriarch of Alexandria (441-51). The council condemned Dioscorus, though his doctrinal orthodoxy was neither examined nor questioned, and at the same time it ac-

knowledged the Christology of the tome of Leo as truly Orthodox.

It is noteworthy that the non-Chalcedonian churches which rejected the doctrinal formulations of Chalcedon never adhered to any monophysite or Eutychian doctrine as attributed to them by the Chalcedonians. It is also now recognized that the Chalcedonian churches did not intend any Nestorianism in holding the Christology of Chalcedon. The mutual recognition of this fact is the starting point of the new dialogue. This fact, however, had been already recognized by perceptive theologians in the earlier post-Chalcedonian era. Serious attempts were made to bring together the two sides and to restore the broken communion, but persistent cultural and political factors hindered the attempts at reunion. The dialogue could be resumed only recently, after 1500 years of separation.

A series of four unofficial conversations took place between 1964 and 1971 at the initiative of Paul Verghese (later Metropolitan Paulos Gregorios) and Nikos Nissiotis, both on the WCC staff at the time. Agreed statements were produced from these conversations, which underline the complete Christological agreement between the two families. The first (Aarhus 1964) declared: “We recognize in each other the one Orthodox faith of the church. Fifteen centuries of alienation have not led us astray from the faith of our fathers... On the essence of the Christological dogma we found ourselves in full agreement. Through the different terminologies used by each side, we saw the same truth expressed.” Finding common ground in the formulation “one incarnate nature (*physis* or *hypostasis*) of God’s Word”, a phrase used by Cyril of Alexandria, the common father of both sides, both traditions re-affirmed their rejection of both the Nestorian and Eutychian teachings.

The fundamental agreement reached in Aarhus was re-enforced in subsequent conversations by agreement in several new areas. “Some of us affirm two natures, wills and energies hypostatically united in the one Lord Jesus Christ. Some of us affirm one united divine-human nature, will and

energy in the same Christ. But both sides speak of a union without confusion, without change, without divisions, without separation. The four adverbs belong to our common tradition. Both affirm the dynamic permanence of the Godhead and the Manhood, with all their natural properties and faculties, in the one Christ" (Bristol consultation 1967). Both sides could affirm together "the common Tradition of the one church in all important matters – liturgy and spirituality, doctrine and canonical practice, in our understanding of the Holy Trinity, of the incarnation, of the person and work of the Holy Spirit, on the nature of the church as the communion of saints with its ministry and sacraments, and on the life of the world to come when our Lord and Saviour shall come in all his glory" (Geneva 1970).

The major difficulties on the way to the restoration of communion identified by these unofficial consultations were the following: (1) the meaning and place of certain councils in the life of the church (the Chalcedonian side accepted seven ecumenical councils, while the non-Chalcedonian family accepted only the first three as ecumenical councils); (2) the respective anathematization or acclamation as saints of certain controversial teachers in the church like Leo, Dioscorus, Severus (patriarch of Antioch), and others; (3) jurisdictional questions related to manifestation of the unity of the church at local, regional and world levels.

It was agreed that councils should be seen as charismatic events in the life of the church rather than as an authority over the church. The agreement calls for making a distinction between the true intention of the dogmatic definition of a council and the particular terminology in which it is expressed. The latter has less authority than the intention.

As to the anathemas,\* it may not be necessary formally to lift them. Nor is it necessary for a church to recognize as saints those who were once condemned by that church. The Addis Ababa consultation of 1971 gave special attention to the questions of anathemas. It advocated the quiet dropping of anathemas. The lifting of anathemas, however, could be formally

announced at the time of union. It was agreed that the church has the authority to lift the anathemas which it once imposed for pastoral or other reasons.

The unofficial conversations suggested to their churches, among other proposals, the appointment of an official joint commission to deal with the issues that separated the two families in the past and to consider the mutual agreement reached at an unofficial level so that necessary steps could be taken to restore full unity in eucharistic communion.

Responding to the solid Christological agreement reached by the unofficial consultations and to their suggestions to appoint an official commission, the churches took action and constituted officially a joint commission of the theological dialogue between the Orthodox church and the Oriental Orthodox churches. In the second meeting of this commission, at the Anba Bishoy monastery in Egypt in 1989, a historic agreement was signed. Opening a new chapter in ecumenical history and overcoming 1500 years of separation, the agreed statement said: "We have inherited from our fathers in Christ the one apostolic faith and tradition, though as churches we have been separated from each other for centuries. As two families of Orthodox churches long out of communion with each other, we now pray and trust in God to restore that communion on the basis of the apostolic faith of the undivided church of the first centuries which we confess in our common creed."

The third meeting of the joint commission (Chambésy 1990) re-affirmed the earlier agreement on faith and recommended to local churches in both families that all previous anathemas against each other's councils and fathers should be lifted. Now that both sides have accepted the first three ecumenical councils as their common heritage, the Oriental Orthodox will respond positively to the Orthodox interpretation of the four later councils, in line with the common agreement in all other aspects of faith.

The fourth meeting of the joint commission (Chambésy 1993) made proposals for the lifting of anathemas, which would be done unanimously and simultaneously

by the heads of all churches through the signing of an appropriate ecclesiastical act. This action would restore communion with immediate effect. All condemnation, synodical and personal, against each other would be removed. A list of the heads of churches to be remembered in the liturgy (diptych) would be prepared. Questions of regional jurisdiction would be settled by the concerned local churches. As decided by the committee, the two co-chairpersons of the joint commission together have been visiting local Orthodox churches, on both sides, to encourage the process of unity.

With major theological and historical obstacles to unity now being removed, there is fresh hope that the Orthodox churches will soon take action to restore communion between their two families.

K.M. GEORGE

■ C. Chaillot & A. Belopopsky eds, *Towards Unity: The Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches*, Geneva, Inter-Orthodox Dialogue, 1998 ■ “Communiqué of the Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Churches, 20-24 June 1989, Egypt”, *The Star of the East*, 2, 1-2, 1989 ■ P. Gregorios, W.H. Lazareth & N.A. Nissiotis eds, *Does Chalcedon Divide or Unite? Towards Convergence in Orthodox Christology*, WCC, 1981 ■ reports of the unofficial conversations between theologians of the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox churches from 1964 to 1971, *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 10, 2, 1964-65; 13, 1968; 16, 1-2, 1971 ■ V.C. Samuel, *The Council of Chalcedon Re-examined: A Historical and Theological Survey*, Madras, CLS, 1977.

## ORIENTAL ORTHODOX-REFORMED DIALOGUE

INFORMAL conversations and contact among the Reformed and the Oriental Orthodox churches\* during ecumenical gatherings eventually paved the way for officially organizing dialogues between these two Christian communions. A formal letter of invitation was sent by the general secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches\* (WARC) to the head of each of the five Oriental Orthodox churches in 1991, which led to a first meeting in 1992 among a group of

authorized representatives of the Oriental Orthodox churches and representatives of the WARC at the Ecumenical Centre, Geneva. This meeting was co-chaired by Pope Shenouda III of Alexandria and Milan Opočenský, general secretary of the WARC.

Pope Shenouda III extended an invitation to hold the first dialogue session in 1993 at Anba Bishoy monastery, Wadi El-Natroun, Egypt. The mutual edification and enrichment experienced at the Anba Bishoy monastery dialogue led to a commitment by both families to pursue the dialogue on a regular basis. Subsequent meetings were held at Driebergen, Netherlands (1994); Kottayam, India (1997); Richmond, Virginia, USA (1998); Damascus, Syria (1999); Musselburgh, Scotland (2000); and Beirut, Lebanon (2001), which concluded the first phase of dialogue.

The dialogue began by dealing with the understanding of scripture\* and Tradition\* in each other's churches, with this discussion connected to the mission and ministry of the church today. The progress has been slow but productive. The session at Richmond began a process of developing a common statement on the theological issues discussed so far.

A highlight of these dialogues was the adoption at the session in Driebergen of the agreed statement on Christology, which emerged from the biblical traditions and the patristic roots to which both the partners in dialogue owe their allegiance. The dialogues have helped these two families of churches to understand and appreciate each other's theological positions and traditions and acknowledge the need for greater ecumenical cooperation in dealing with the common contemporary challenges facing Christians, humanity and creation itself.

H.S. WILSON

■ H.S. Wilson ed., *Oriental Orthodox-Reformed Dialogue: The First Four Sessions*, Geneva, WARC, 1998.

## ORIENTAL ORTHODOX-ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUE

THE ORIENTAL Orthodox churches\* comprise six independent churches – Armen-

ian, Syrian, Coptic, Ethiopian, Eritrean and Indian (Malankara) – that historically inherit a refusal of the Christological teachings of the council of Chalcedon\* (451). This rejection led to a break in communion\* with those who accepted the council's teachings. In contrast to the Chalcedonian formula of one person and two natures in Christ, these churches affirmed the formula of Cyril of Alexandria, who spoke of "the one incarnate nature of the Word of God". In the eyes of the Oriental Orthodox, those who accepted Chalcedon held an essentially Nestorian Christology, which, in spite of verbal clarifications, compromised the unity of Christ's person. For Catholics, the "one nature" formula of the Oriental Orthodox seemed indistinguishable from the monophysite position of Eutyches, who taught that Jesus' humanity was totally subsumed into his divinity.

Movement beyond these entrenched positions gained momentum in the late 1960s, in the context of visits by heads of Oriental Orthodox churches to Rome and unofficial meetings of theologians. These contacts have resulted in substantial progress towards resolution of those theological problems which have traditionally divided the two communions. Since 1967 the following heads of Oriental Orthodox churches have met with the pope in Rome: Armenian Catholicos Khoren I (Cilicia) in 1967, Armenian Catholicos Vasken I (Etchmiadzin) in 1970, Syrian Patriarch Ignatius Yacoub III in 1971, Coptic Pope Shenouda III in 1973, Syrian Patriarch Ignatius Yacoub III in 1980, Ethiopian Patriarch Tekle Haimanot in 1981, Armenian Catholicos Karekin II (Cilicia) in 1983, Syrian Catholicos of India Mar Baselius Thoma Mathews I in 1983, Syrian Patriarch Ignatius Zakka I in 1984, Ethiopian Patriarch Paulos in 1988, Armenian Catholicos Karekin I (Etchmiadzin) in 1996, and Armenian Catholicos Karekin II (Etchmiadzin) in 2000. Several of these visits culminated in the signing of important joint communiqués or common declarations.

Alongside these official visits, five unofficial theological consultations have been held between theologians of both

sides under the auspices of the Pro Oriente\* foundation in Vienna, in 1971, 1973, 1976, 1978 and 1988. At these meetings, Christological and ecclesiological issues were discussed, and final communiqués were published stating areas of agreement and continuing disagreement.

The most substantial progress has been in the area of Christology. As early as 1970, in the common declaration signed by Pope Paul VI and Armenian Catholicos Vasken I, theologians were encouraged to explore this area, which was the theme of the first Pro Oriente meeting in 1971. The work of these theologians provided a basis for the historic Christological profession of faith signed by Pope Paul VI and Coptic Pope Shenouda III in 1973. Avoiding terminology which had been the source of disagreement in the past, this declaration made use of new language to express a common faith in Christ.

The second theological consultation (1973) took up this theme again. In its final communiqué, the group affirmed that while the Oriental Orthodox consider that some of the terms used at Chalcedon can be misleading, both sides agree that the formula can be understood in a correct manner. The heretical Eutychian and Nestorian Christologies were both rejected.

Since 1973, popes and Oriental Orthodox hierarchs have repeatedly asserted that their faith in Christ is the same. In the 1984 common declaration of Pope John Paul II and Syrian Patriarch Ignatius Zakka I, which also contained a common Christological profession of faith, it was stated that past schisms and divisions concerning the doctrine of the incarnation\* "in no way affect or touch the substance of their faith", because the disputes arose from differences in terminology and culture. The 1996 common declaration of Pope John Paul II and Armenian Catholicos Karekin I spoke of their "fundamental common faith in God and in Jesus Christ".

These various affirmations make it clear that the Christological dispute between these two communions has been substantially resolved. We must remember, however, that the Ethiopian, Eritrean and

Indian churches have not yet been party to such agreements.

Progress has also been made in the area of ecclesiology, but difficulties remain. Both sides have clearly recognized the ecclesial reality of the other and the authenticity of each other's sacraments.\* In their 1984 common declaration, Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Ignatius Zakka I even authorized their faithful to receive the sacraments of penance,\* eucharist\* and anointing of the sick\* in the other church when access to one of their own priests was materially or morally impossible.

The theology of ecumenical councils\* and primacy\* has been discussed at the Pro Oriente meetings. Although much common ground has been discovered, certain divergences remain unresolved.

The particularly sensitive issue of Eastern Catholic churches\* made up of former Oriental Orthodox Christians or their descendants was discussed at the 1978 consultation. Oriental Orthodox strongly assert that the existence of these churches is inseparably linked to Roman Catholic proselytism\* among the Oriental Orthodox, based upon a denial of the ecclesial reality of their churches. In response to this concern, proselytism on the part of either side had been condemned in the 1973 common declaration of Pope Paul VI and Coptic Pope Shenouda III.

The 1988 fifth theological consultation evaluated the results of the first four meetings and called for the establishment of an official theological dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox churches as a whole. Since that time Pro Oriente has sponsored local consultations in Egypt, India and Syria.

Within this complex set of relationships between the two communions, a separate official dialogue between the Roman Catholic and Coptic churches has been in progress since its institution by Pope Paul VI and Pope Shenouda III in 1973. Eight meetings have taken place, in 1974, 1975, 1976, 1978, 1988, 1990, 1991 and 1992. Theological experts of the two sides have examined various issues and submitted recommendations to their respective authorities.

Moreover, an official theological dialogue between the Roman Catholic

Church and the Orthodox Syrian Church of India began in 1989. The latter church includes a large part of the Oriental Orthodox faithful in India; the others remain under the jurisdiction of the Syrian patriarchate in Damascus.

RONALD G. ROBERSON

■ C. Chaillot & A. Belopopky eds, *Towards Unity: The Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches*, Geneva, Inter-Orthodox Dialogue, 1998 ■ Official documents from this relationship up to 1995 can be found in *Oriental Orthodox-Roman Catholic Interchurch Marriages and Other Pastoral Relationships*, Washington DC, National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches, 1995. The papers presented at the first five unofficial Pro Oriente consultations were published in English in supplements to *Wort und Wahrheit*, nos 1-4, 1972-78. Selected documentation from all four meetings has been published as *Four Vienna Consultations*, Vienna, Pro Oriente, 1988.

## ORTHODOX-REFORMED DIALOGUE

THE FIRST official international dialogue between the Orthodox churches and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches\* (WARC) took place in 1988 in Leuenberg, Switzerland, with 34 participants from different countries, under the leadership of Metropolitan Panteleimon Rodopoulos (for the Ecumenical Patriarchate) and Lukas Vischer (for the WARC). The primary theme considered was the doctrine of the Trinity,\* as based on the Nicene Creed.\* The second gathering, held in Moscow in 1990, continued discussions on the same subject.

Behind these official Reformed-Orthodox dialogues lies a long history of Orthodox and Protestant contacts. The earliest exchange of letters took place between the Lutheran theological faculty of the University of Tübingen and Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople from 1573 to 1581 (see **Lutheran-Orthodox dialogue**). For the Calvinists, the first Orthodox-Reformed discussions centred on the stormy debate over the "unorthodox" confession of faith of Ecumenical Patriarch Cyril (Kyrill) Loukaris (ruled 1620-38).

Under the influence of Calvin's teachings, Cyril summarized his reforming beliefs in his published *Eastern Confession of the Christian Faith*. The original document can be seen at the Geneva public library, which has a wealth of materials related to this controversial confession. This confession eventually cost Cyril his life; to the best of our knowledge, this reform-minded patriarch never repudiated his statement, though there have been numerous attempts either to discredit or to dismiss it as a political document in the highly volatile polemics between Protestants and Catholics seeking to win the favour of Orthodox believers at that time.

In light of this history, it is necessary for present Orthodox-Reformed dialogues to establish firm grounds on which both traditions can confess the essentials of their Christian faith\* in common, hence the decision for the official international dialogues to focus on the Trinitarian foundation based on the Nicene Creed. More recently, the international dialogues have centred on the church. This was the case in Aberdeen, Scotland, for the fifth session (1996), where the theme was "The Identity and Unity of the Church" in the context of the Nicene Creed and the patristic tradition of the ancient church.

The sixth session, held in Zakynthos, Greece, in 1998, focused on the crucial issue of church membership and sacraments. The seventh session, which took place at Pittsburgh (PA) in 2000, discussed further the implications of church membership within the Body of Christ with an emphasis on baptism and chrismation. While there is agreement on our common ground on baptism, there is still a difference in our understanding of the role and seal of the Spirit in chrismation.

In retrospect, it seems that these official international dialogues have been well prepared through a prior series of earlier Orthodox-Reformed consultations initiated in several countries. As early as the 1920s in Romania (Transylvania), discussions between Orthodox and Reformed had started; they continued in the 1950s in Germany, 1968-75 in North America, the 1970s in Hungary (Debrecen) and since 1981 in France and Switzerland.

The themes in these various consultations have ranged widely with studies on Christology, the eucharist,\* the role of confession and creeds,\* God's saving and sanctifying work through the Holy Spirit,\* the meaning of the divine liturgy,\* God's revelation\* and history,\* historical relativism and authority\* in Christian dogma,\* tradition\* and contemporaneity, spiritual values and social responsibility of the church to society, the relationship of creation\* and redemption\* (nature\* and grace\*), and practical and pastoral issues such as mixed marriages\* and proselytism.\*

As each side seeks to interpret faithfully their tradition, participants are constantly discovering the common bonding of the Holy Spirit. Orthodoxy appeals to the tradition of the "undivided church", which preceded the great schism\* of 1054 between the Eastern and Western churches, and points to the ecumenical councils\* beginning with Nicea\* as its norm. The Reformed tradition looks to scripture and the earliest church for its standards. Dialogue offers the possibility for accepting each other's respective traditions without losing the special gifts each brings to the table of dialogue for our mutual edification and enrichment.

CARNEGIE SAMUEL CALIAN

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Legacy of Kyrill Loukaris: A Contribution to the Orthodox-Reformed Dialogue”, *MS*, 25, 2, 1986. The Zakynthos 1998 papers are published in *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 43, 1-4, 1998.

## ORTHODOX-ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUE

THE SCHISM\* between what are now known as the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches is usually traced back to the mutual excommunications\* of Patriarch Michael Cerularius of Constantinople and Cardinal Humbert, the papal legate, in 1054. But in fact this was only a single low point in a long history of strained relations that reached its real culmination only with the crusades\* and the sack of Constantinople by the Latins in 1204. Although many non-theological factors were relevant in this gradual estrangement of Eastern and Western Christians, doctrinal issues were also involved. The most important of these concerned the eternal procession of the Holy Spirit\* (related to the addition of the filioque\* to the Nicene Creed\* by the Western church) and papal primacy.\*

Two major attempts at achieving re-union between the two churches took place at the second council of Lyons in 1274 and the council of Florence in 1438-39. But in both cases, although a formal union was promulgated, it was ultimately rejected by the general Orthodox population. Centuries of mutual isolation and hostility ensued, with each church de facto denying the ecclesial reality of the other.

The situation began to improve only in the 1960s, when important changes in attitude took place within both the Catholic and the Orthodox churches. From the Catholic perspective, the convocation of the Second Vatican Council,\* coupled with the presence of Orthodox observers at the Council, marked a greater openness to the Orthodox. A positive evaluation of the Eastern tradition is found in the Council documents (see Decree on Ecumenism\* 14-18). From the Orthodox perspective, the third pan-Orthodox conference (Rhodes 1964) encouraged local Orthodox churches to engage in studies prepar-

ing for an eventual dialogue with the Catholic church.

Other events in the same decade exemplified a growing “dialogue of charity” between the two communions and increased the momentum towards a formal theological dialogue. In January 1964 Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople met for the first time, in Jerusalem. In a common declaration of 7 December 1965, the mutual excommunications of 1054 were “erased from the memory” of the church. In 1967 the pope and the patriarch exchanged visits in Rome and Istanbul.

This more positive atmosphere made possible the establishment of a joint commission in 1976 to prepare for an official dialogue. In 1978 it submitted a programmatic document to the authorities of both churches in which the goal of the dialogue was clearly defined as the re-establishment of full communion.\* It proposed a methodology according to which the dialogue would begin with the elements that unite Catholics and Orthodox and then move to the more divisive points. The commission recommended that the sacraments\* be considered first, especially as they relate to ecclesiology (see **church**).

The official announcement of the beginning of the theological dialogue was made jointly by Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Dimitrios I in Istanbul on 30 November 1979. This new joint international commission for theological dialogue between the Catholic church and the Orthodox church was to include experts representing both churches in equal numbers, the Orthodox side including representatives of all 14 autocephalous and autonomous Orthodox churches. The fact that a large number of members were to be Catholic and Orthodox hierarchs revealed the importance both churches attributed to this dialogue.

The first plenary session took place on the Greek islands of Patmos and Rhodes in 1980. This organizational meeting unanimously adopted the plan for dialogue set forth in the 1978 document and chose initial themes for examination. Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, president of the Vatican’s Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity,\* and Archbishop Stylianos of Aus-

tralia (Patriarchate of Constantinople) were chosen as co-presidents. Three joint sub-commissions were set up to produce studies which would then be synthesized into draft documents to be debated at plenary sessions held every two years.

The second plenary session took place in Munich in 1982. Here the first agreed text was finalized: "The Mystery of the Church and of the Eucharist in the Light of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity". It describes a common approach to the relation between the eucharist\* and the Trinity,\* the church and the eucharist, and the local church\* and the universal church.

The Greek island of Crete was the site of the third plenary session, in 1984. A draft document entitled "Faith, Sacraments and the Unity of the Church" was discussed. It treated the relationship between the profession of the same faith\* and sacramental communion, giving particular attention to the sacraments of initiation. Because of some Orthodox reservations about Catholic practices in this matter, and some technical difficulties, it was not possible to adopt the document at that time.

The fourth plenary took place near Bari, Italy, in two separate sessions one year apart. The first session, in 1986, was boycotted by several Orthodox churches because of what they understood as both Catholic support for the schismatic Macedonian Orthodox church and continued Catholic proselytism\* among Orthodox Christians. Once these issues were resolved, the plenary met in a second session at Bari in 1987. Here the document that had been discussed at Crete was revised and approved.

The Orthodox monastery at Valamo, Finland, hosted the fifth plenary session in 1988. A third common document was adopted, entitled "The Sacrament of Order in the Sacramental Structure of the Church, with Particular Reference to the Importance of the Apostolic Succession for the Sanctification and Unity of the People of God". It was also decided at this session to establish a sub-commission to study the vexed questions of Uniatism and the status of the Eastern Catholic churches.\* Moreover, the topic of the next document, to be discussed in 1990 at the sixth plenary session in Freising, Germany,

was decided upon: "Ecclesiological and Canonical Consequences of the Sacramental Structure of the Church: Conciliarity and Authority in the Church".

But between the meetings in Valamo and Freising, the cataclysmic political changes in Eastern and Central Europe added a new factor to Orthodox-Catholic relations that had a direct impact on the progress of the dialogue. The collapse of the communist regimes allowed for the re-emergence of Eastern Catholic churches that had been officially liquidated by the communists and forced to merge with the local Orthodox churches. This development set the stage for confrontation as the Eastern Catholics demanded the return of churches that had been in Orthodox hands for decades, and as the Orthodox feared a resurgence of the old Catholic policy of Uniatism, through which Orthodox faithful had been drawn into the Catholic church, often through missionary activity, while being allowed to retain their Orthodox rituals and other practices. The situation was worsened by the fact that contemporary improvements in Catholic-Orthodox relations were virtually unknown in the region. Very hurtful conflicts between Eastern Catholics and Orthodox were taking place in western Ukraine and Romania.

When the international commission gathered in Freising in June 1990, at the request of the Orthodox side, the document prepared for discussion was set aside and the question of the origins of Uniatism and the present status of the Eastern Catholic churches was taken up instead. A brief statement was issued, and a process was set in motion for a fuller treatment of the topic at the seventh plenary session, which took place at Balamand, Lebanon, in 1993. Here a document was issued entitled "Uniatism, Method of Union of the Past, and the Present Search for Full Communion". The document hinges on two central points: it rejects Uniatism as a method of achieving unity between Orthodox and Catholics, and it affirms the right of the Eastern Catholic churches to exist and to respond to the pastoral needs of their faithful.

The document has been criticized in some Catholic and Orthodox circles, how-

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ever, and has been rejected formally by the Orthodox Church of Greece and the Greek Catholic church of Romania. Given the lack of a consensus, the Orthodox side requested that the same topic be taken up again at the eighth plenary session, originally scheduled to take place in 1996 in Emmitsburg, Maryland, USA, under the auspices of the archdiocese of Baltimore. After a series of postponements, it was rescheduled for 1999. But the NATO bombardment of Serbia earlier that year made it impossible for some of the Orthodox to travel to a NATO country, and the session was again postponed, until July 2000. During the meeting the commission discussed a draft document, "Ecclesiological and Canonical Implications of Uniatism", but was unable to reach agreement. The members agreed to "report to their churches who will indicate how to overcome this obstacle for the peaceful continuation of the dialogue".

Thus the dialogue has been going through a difficult phase in recent years as the two sides struggled with an emotionally charged issue brought to the fore by unforeseen political developments. Nevertheless, as was envisaged in the 1978 document that set the course of this dialogue, progress has been made in the effort to establish a common theological foundation, on the basis of which the more difficult questions, especially the role of the church of Rome and its bishop among the local churches, can be most fruitfully discussed.

It should also be noted that the Russian Orthodox Church, while fully participating in the international Orthodox-Catholic dialogue, was engaged in separate theological conversations with the Catholic church between 1967 and 1987. These conversations were held at irregular intervals and were largely restricted to the social teaching of the two churches. Six meetings took place, dealing with the following topics: "The Social Thought of the Roman Catholic Church" (Leningrad 1967), "The Role of the Christian in the Developing Society" (Bari 1970), "The Church in a World in Transformation" (Zagorsk 1973), "The Christian Proclamation of Salvation in a Changing World" (Trent 1975), "The Local Church and the

Universal Church" (Odessa 1980) and "The Diaconal Function of the Church, Especially in the Service of Peace" (Venice 1987). Press communiqués, at times substantial, were released at the end of each session. Since 1987 official discussions on concrete issues have taken place between representatives of the Moscow patriarchate and the holy see on a regular basis.

RONALD G. ROBERSON

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- E. Kilmartin, *Towards Reunion: The Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches*, New York, Paulist, 1979
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## ORTHODOXY

"ORTHODOXY" means "right opinion" or "right belief" (also "right glorification", as in the Slavonic translation). Consequently, any human community which bases itself on an accepted system of thought, opinions or beliefs can claim "orthodoxy" for its doctrines. Within the Christian context, the term came to be associated with certain sections of Eastern Christendom: the Chalcedonian (or Eastern Orthodox) and non-Chalcedonian (or Oriental Orthodox) churches. In this narrow sense the word will be dealt with here.

Eastern Christians are not united within one communion.\* The main divisions appeared in the 5th century. Some did not accept the third ecumenical council (Ephesus 431), and more rejected the fourth (Chalcedon\* 451). This non-acceptance was due both to the theological disagreements over the Christological debates and to the reluctance of some, mainly non-Greek or non-Byzantine Christians, to accept the idea that the con-

iliar dogmatic definitions should be imposed as imperial laws by the capital, Constantinople (see **dogma**). In hindsight after 15 centuries, those theological differences now appear to have been mainly due to terminological misunderstandings; furthermore, the subsequent displacements of power have suppressed all traces of political imperial domination on the part of Byzantium-Constantinople, or New Rome. With the fall of the Russian empire in 1917, most of Orthodoxy has lost any dream of a Byzantine "symphony". Issues blocking reunion today are indeed not so much theological as practical (see **Oriental Orthodox-Orthodox dialogue**).

The gradual estrangement between the Christian West and the Christian East culminated in a split between what had been the two halves of the Roman empire, which most historians label as the Latins and the Greeks. In fact, the "Latins", though they all used Latin as their liturgical and theological language, included Germanic Franks, Celts and Anglo-Saxons; the "Greeks" or "Byzantines" incorporated the traditions not only of Constantinople but also of Asia Minor, Egypt (Alexandria), Syria (Antioch) and Palestine (Jerusalem).

The date generally recognized as that of the schism,\* 1054, was that of an exchange of excommunications\* between the legates of Pope Leo IX and the patriarch of Constantinople, Michael Cerularius. (These excommunications were solemnly lifted in 1964 by Pope Paul VI and Athenagoras I, the patriarch of Constantinople; see **Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue**.) But the 1054 dating is somewhat conventional, for only later did the other three patriarchates of the famous "pentarchy" (Antioch, Alexandria, Jerusalem) break with Rome (universally recognized as the ancient "primatial" see; see **primacy**). And already in the 9th century difficulties had begun (e.g., between Photius, patriarch of Constantinople, and Pope Nicholas I).

The real issues at stake in the schism were doctrinal and ecclesiological: (1) the Western addition of the filioque\* ("and from the Son") to the Nicene Creed,\* concerning the procession of the Holy Spirit;\*

and (2) the jurisdictional claims of the papacy to a right of universal intervention. In spite of progress made, these two questions still constitute the main obstacles to reunion between the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic churches.

One of the consequences of the Western crusades\* in the East (1095-1270) was a worsening of the breach between East and West. The papal appointment at that time of "Latin" bishops who paralleled existing Orthodox bishops in such ancient sees as Antioch and Constantinople represented in fact an unchurching of long-existing Christian communities. Moreover, attempts at reunion at the councils of Lyons (1274) and of Ferrara-Florence (1438-39) not only failed but, in the eyes of the vast majority of the Orthodox, actually represented a consummation of the schism. After Florence, the two halves of Christendom largely ignored each other.

As a result of this breach and estrangement, the Orthodox world has not experienced the Western crises which resulted in the Protestant Reformation and in the Roman Catholic Counter-Reformation. The Orthodox world had its own crises in the East, as it had to deal from afar with the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, its isolation under Islamic rule, the fall of Christian Constantinople to the Muslims (1453), the rise of nationalisms, etc. But since these crises did not affect the essential faith\* of the church, the Orthodox preserved a very strong sense of unbroken continuity with the faith of the apostles (see **apostolicity**) as interpreted and witnessed to by the seven great ecumenical councils\* and the fathers of the church (see **patristics**).

Undeniably, the theology taught in Orthodox schools, particularly in the "Byzantine", or Eastern Orthodox, world, came under Western influences, both medieval scholastic and Protestant. Beyond a few surviving vestiges of these influences, however, Orthodoxy has rediscovered its own proper identity through patristic revivals. These revivals have helped to reveal the common, authentic theological spirit of the Eastern and the Oriental Orthodox, which refuses the systematizing tendencies of various crystallizations.

The essential theological approach of Orthodoxy consists in an uncompromising adherence to the confession of Jesus Christ\* as the incarnate Son of God, second person of the Holy Trinity.\* In this perspective, the incarnation\* is the most central event in history,\* the only true revolution, because in Jesus Christ and his redemptive work, the personal, Triune God, the living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, not only manifests but gives himself fully to humanity.

The divine person of Jesus Christ assumed humanity, doing so even to the utmost limits of the human condition: unto death itself, and death upon the cross, with the agony of the dying person's sense of being forsaken by God. Humanity thus becomes totally transformed, re-generated in him. This tasting of death by a divine person – what Gregory of Nazianzus calls “the humanity of God” which “sanctifies humanity” – could only result in victory over death, in the destruction of death. This accomplishment necessarily confers a new quality on all life. The sacrificial action of Jesus Christ re-generates, re-creates the whole of creation.\* “A few drops of blood re-make the whole universe” (Gregory of Nazianzus). This humanity, which Christ assumed and sanctified, has a cosmic dimension. Christ's victory over death grants a new life to the whole of creation. Each human being, called to “put on Christ” (Gal. 3:27), is royally, prophetically and ministerially responsible for the whole universe.

The resurrection\* is therefore a cosmic and very central event, and the Orthodox accordingly place great emphasis on the passion-resurrection of Christ, the paschal character of the Christian life. This life is offered in Christ through the gift of grace,\* which is the breath of the Holy Spirit – the gift of God himself. Salvation,\* in the Orthodox perspective, is not restricted to redemption\* in the strict sense, i.e. only freeing humanity from sin.\* Salvation is viewed in terms not so much of one's justification\* as of one's participation in the true destiny of human nature, fully realized in Christ. Salvation is offered to all as a free gift, to be freely accepted by all. The gift of the Holy Spirit

enables human beings to become “participants of the divine nature” (2 Pet. 1:4).

This participation of human beings in the divine life of the Holy Trinity – their incorporation in Christ as adopted sons and daughters through the Spirit of the Son, who in their hearts cries “Abba! Father!” (Gal. 4:6; cf. Rom. 8:15) – is what the Orthodox often express in the famous patristic adage “God became man that man may become God” (Irenaeus et al.). It is also the meaning of the term “deification” (*theosis*).

Participation in the divine life implies growth in Christ to the dimension of becoming a true person,\* i.e. the dimension of cosmic humanity, members of Christ, members of one another, temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19, 12:12; Eph. 4:25). Christians are co-responsible for the recapitulation of the whole creation for union with God. In other words, the whole of history is their responsibility, and no human situation can possibly be excluded. It is a “eucharistic” view of the destiny of humanity and creation. And the eucharistic offering – the very heart of life – is “for the life of the world” (liturgy of John Chrysostom and of Basil the Great; cf. John 6:51). Consequently, the eucharist\* commits all to participate in history.

The Orthodox conception of salvation leads to the understanding that the church\* is not just an institution in a purely human sense but is primarily a community of persons who are built into “a spiritual house”. “Like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 2:5). The church is hierarchical, but hierarchy must be viewed in the larger perspective of 1 Cor. 12 and 13 – within the same Body of Christ, with a diversity of functions, bound together in love and called to witness to this love – which excludes any sense of domination or subservience.

According to the Orthodox teaching on the church, all its institutional aspects (hierarchy, discipline, organization, etc.) should be nothing but the expressions of the deep nature of the church as described

above. They are all by nature charismatic (see **charism(ata)**), their authority is that of Christ and the Spirit, the “two hands of the Father” (Irenaeus). They are all there to serve the essential and central action of the church: the eucharistic offering for the whole creation in the unity of the one Spirit and in communion with all things visible and invisible – “the whole company of heaven” (liturgy of the Church of England). This eucharistic offering, as the Orthodox like to recall, quoting Chrysostom, does not end in the church building but is there to irrigate the whole of life through the faithful. They should go out into the world as witnesses, every one in his or her own way, according to the diversity of gifts, to the new life offered to humanity in Christ.

The foundation of Orthodox ecclesiology is the local eucharistic community: the bishop (see **episcopacy**), surrounded by and presiding over the presbyterate\* and the community. This local church\* or diocese (today often the parish, where the priest fulfills most of the bishop’s duties, i.e. preaching of the word of God\* and presiding over the celebration of the sacrament\*) – in so far as it is faithful to the faith of the apostles, the catholic faith of the church, and therefore is in communion\* with all the local churches faithful to the same faith – is not a part of the church universal but is itself an expression of the church universal.

Consequently, the Orthodox church is, according to its ecclesiology, a fellowship of local churches, in communion of faith and sacrament. But only one local church – traditionally, the church of Rome – is entrusted with the duty to “preside in love” over all the churches. Since the split between East and West, however, the church of Constantinople presides over the Eastern Orthodox churches.

The relations of communion and unity in faith among the local churches constitute what the Orthodox mean by conciliarity.\* The conciliar nature of the Orthodox church is sometimes expressed in councils, but it is not restricted to them and is not dependent on their actual meeting. According to Orthodox ecclesiology, every time the eucharist is celebrated, the

conciliar nature of the church is expressed. The plurality of consecrators of a local bishop also clearly expresses conciliarity: as co-consecrators, bishops from neighbouring local churches witness to the faithfulness to the apostolic faith of the church in which the new bishop will in turn be guaranteeing this faithfulness.

Conciliar relations among local churches through the president, whose role is to be the sign of unity, are well expressed in the 34th of the so-called Apostolic Canons: “Let the bishops of each province recognize the one who is primate among them, let them accept him as their head and let them do nothing without his having expressed his opinion, even though it is incumbent on every one to look to the affairs of his diocese and the dependent territories. But he in his turn must do nothing without the accord of all. Thus concord will reign, and God will be glorified through Christ in the Holy Spirit.” The Trinitarian conclusion indicates that relations among churches are to be based upon the same principles of unity in diversity as those of persons in the church; furthermore, personhood is in the image of the unity in diversity in the Holy Trinity.

Quite naturally, many discrepancies exist between this ideal teaching and the actual historical reality of Orthodox churches. Many distortions of Orthodoxy are due to human sinfulness. For instance, Orthodoxy at the dawn of the 21st century presents many divisions, in particular those of jurisdiction which have become clearly apparent with the dispersion of Orthodox throughout the world, especially in the West. With the rise of nationalism\* in the 19th century, there appeared a tendency to identify Orthodoxy with a particular culture, ethnic group or nation. This tendency was condemned as a heresy\* in 1872 by a local council in Constantinople (received by all the other churches) under the name “phyletism”. In spite of this condemnation, the tendency still exists among the Orthodox to substitute in practice a nationalistic ecclesiology for the traditional territorial principle, following the apostolic definition (e.g., “the church of God that is in Corinth”, 1 Cor. 1:2) which unites all the people (Jews,

Greeks, etc.) in a given place in one eucharistic community. The Orthodox who are scattered throughout the world tend to be claimed by their “mother churches” according to an ethnic, cultural or national principle, which leads to a multiplicity of jurisdictions in one place instead of one bishop in each place (see *diaspora*). Although some progress has recently been made, the debate continues; at issue is the purity of ecclesiology.

Another temptation for modern Orthodoxy is the crystallizing of patristic theology into a new form of scholasticism as a system of thought. Instead, there should be ever-renewed efforts to orient each generation to a living sense of union with God. This tendency simply to repeat as a rigid catechism what the fathers have said in the past may be termed repetitive orthodoxy, which often leads to a refusal to consider the challenges of history today. Some who succumb to this temptation have tended to reject ecumenism as *the* heresy of the 20th century, holding that the unity of Christians can be achieved only through the formal conversion of all to the historic Orthodox church.

Orthodox ecclesiology claims to be eucharistic; the church is the sacrament par excellence. All too often, however, the reality of life belies this understanding of the church. In too many cases baptism\* (as well as marriage\*) tends to be a purely social event, and people may partake of the eucharist only once a year, if at all. Many churches have indeed reacted against this contradiction within Orthodoxy, but there is still a long way to go. Another problem is that, in too many cases, the eucharistic prayers are said in such a way that people cannot hear them. As a result, the laity\* tend to regard themselves (and are regarded) as passive members of the church

who are not fully co-responsible in the unity of the one church and in the unity of the one Spirit with the presiding minister, thus obscuring the reality of 1 Cor. 12 and 13.

The vast majority of Orthodox churches are engaged in the ecumenical movement. With the exception of one or two communities (such as the Russian Church in Exile or the Greek Old-Calendarists, and two churches – Georgia and Bulgaria – which withdrew in 1997-98), they are all member churches of the WCC. Thus, in spite of all its historical sins, Orthodoxy has a vocation\* in the striving towards the recovery of unity among Christians. This vocation is a very special one, since the Orthodox firmly believe that “the Orthodox church is the church of Christ on earth” (Sergius Bulgakov). This conviction, paradoxical as it may sound, can on certain conditions serve the ecumenical search for unity. Bulgakov expresses the first condition: “The church of Christ is not an institution but a new life with Christ and in Christ, moved by the Holy Spirit.” In other words, the Orthodox community can truly serve Christian unity in so far as they witness to true Orthodoxy and remember that when Orthodoxy is true to itself, it confesses that it does not know the limits of the church of Christ: the Spirit “blows where it chooses” (John 3:8). Also, the Orthodox serve Christian unity whenever they remember that one of the essential duties in being an Orthodox consists in one’s permanent conversion to Orthodoxy.

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# P

## PACIFIC

THE AREA covers Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia. Christianity was first introduced here by Spanish missionaries in Micronesia in the 17th century, but its significant spread began when the London Missionary Society (LMS) sent missionaries to Tahiti in 1798. From that time the Christian faith moved across the islands broadly from east to west until, in the 20th century, it became the majority faith of all Pacific peoples except among descendants of the migrant Indian (Indo-Fijian) population in Fiji. In Micronesia, nearer the equator, many islands became Christian as a result of Protestant and Roman Catholic missionary activity originating in North America. In Australia and New Zealand sub-bases developed for missions from Britain and continental Europe.

A cooperative spirit prevailed among the Protestant missions from the beginning. Comity agreements provided that different denominations would work in different territories. Only in Samoa did any serious competition develop between Protestant bodies, in this case Wesleyan Methodists and the LMS (predominantly Congregationalist). The usual situation was one of denominational uniformity within each area and isolation of each area from the others. The relation to Roman Catholics was another matter. Usually arriving later on the scene than the Protestants, and therefore in many places a minority, Catholics were regarded with hostility, a feeling which they reciprocated.

The main large-scale contact between the churches of different territories took the form of Pacific Islander missions sent from

Christianized islands to unevangelized areas – first from Tahiti to the Cook Islands and Samoa, then from Tonga to Samoa and Fiji, and finally, in large numbers, from Fiji, Samoa, Tonga and the Cook Islands to Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. This contact, however, did not develop much understanding, since there was a tendency among Polynesian Islander missionaries to regard those they served as primitive and to report them as such to their home constituencies.

Not until 1926 was there any interdenominational conference on church work in the island Pacific. Sydney and Auckland were the scenes of two conferences held in connection with a visit of the ecumenical leader John R. Mott. A larger conference was held in Morpeth, Australia, in 1948, but these meetings were for foreign missionaries, not Islanders. The first meeting to involve Islander Christians was convened jointly in 1961 under the auspices of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches at Malua, Western Samoa. Here the decision was made to form a Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC), a resolution put into effect in 1966. The PCC then became the main vehicle of ecumenism in the Pacific.

Another vehicle was the Pacific Theological College in Suva, also founded in 1966 as an international training centre where future leaders of the churches could study together and come to know each other. It was the first Pacific institution to confer the bachelor of divinity degree and, later, the master of theology. Soon after its establishment, ecumenical associations of theological schools were formed – the South Pacific Association of Theological Schools (SPATS) for schools east of New Guinea, and the Melanesian Association of Theological Schools (MATS) for schools in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. The former had a rather fitful existence for a time but has re-gained strength; the latter has been a strong, continuing force for cooperative study and advancement.

Christian education has also developed ecumenically. Following the Malua conference, an ambitious plan was formulated for an ecumenical effort to write a complete Christian education curriculum from pre-school to adult grades. This was to be re-

lated to island life and was to draw on island culture. Eventually the entire Pacific Island Christian Education Curriculum was completed and published in 28 books.

The establishment of the curriculum and the Pacific Theological College was a result of the Malua meeting. In both cases the WCC played an important part. The strong presence of the PCC also owed a great deal to the enabling role played by the WCC, through bringing together leaders from the Pacific, both from the church and the community, to meet and share common concerns and to be exposed to the wider ecumenical movement. When these ecumenical agencies were coming into existence during the 1960s, an enormous change was taking place in the Roman Catholic Church. With the convening of the Second Vatican Council,\* implementation of the Council's constitutions and decrees led to Catholic attitudes in the Pacific Islands undergoing profound transformation. Joint action for mission followed. Up until this time Catholics had held aloof from contacts with other churches and from the ecumenical organizations. They then began to get to know their fellow Christians and to consider cooperating with them. Taken together, Catholics made up the largest single church in the Pacific, and they constituted the biggest church in New Caledonia and Papua New Guinea. Soon they became one of the strongest ecumenical forces in the region. The Catholic bishops conference of the Pacific (CEPAC) joined the PCC in 1976 and the Catholic bishops conference of Papua New Guinea did the same in 1991. The Catholic theological schools became members of MATS and SPATS. The central Roman Catholic regional seminary was established near the Pacific Theological College, promoting cooperative efforts and mutual understanding in theological education.

All the developments considered thus far were on an international scale. National ecumenism came later, reversing the usual order. The slowness in national reconciliation and collaboration may be attributed largely to the effects of the comity maintained by the early missions. Because of comity each country tended to have at first only one church, which regarded itself as the church of the whole people. It looked upon other churches, when they came in, as interlopers.

The formation of ecumenical organizations would imply an equal place for all churches, something that the previously dominant bodies were not eager to allow. National councils of churches became strong first in those countries which had no single dominant church, primarily Papua New Guinea and secondarily Solomon Islands. Papua New Guinea developed the Melanesian Council of Churches, the largest and most active of all the national councils. After some years of remarkable effectiveness on the national scene, with a large staff and close contacts with the government, it passed through a period of financial and personnel difficulties from which it only gradually recovered. The Solomon Islands Christian Association has played a significant role in its country, as has the Tonga Council of Churches. Lesser, but still valuable, bodies have been the Fiji Council of Churches, the Samoa Council of Churches and the Vanuatu Christian Council.

In recent years the influx and growth of a large number of non-cooperating churches has gradually altered the picture as far as ecumenism is concerned. Most of these churches are of a Pentecostal or charismatic type, though the largest and most rapidly growing is the Mormon (Latter-day Saints) church. Small efforts have been made towards developing understanding and possible cooperation with some of these bodies. The most significant of these efforts is the cooperative contact of the Melanesian Council of Churches with the Evangelical Alliance of the South Pacific, an organization of newer churches and Christian institutions, in Papua New Guinea. In general, however, separation from these bodies is continuing and represents the greatest challenge to the ecumenical spirit in the Pacific.

See also **Pacific Conference of Churches**.

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## PACIFIC CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES

THE PACIFIC Conference of Churches (PCC) is the regional ecumenical organization for the island Pacific,\* foreshadowed by decisions of the first Pacific Conference of Churches, held at Malua, Western Samoa, in 1961. Its official formation took place five years later at its first assembly on the Loyalty island of Lifou, in Vanuatu. Subsequent assemblies were held in Fiji (1971), Papua New Guinea (1976), Tonga (1981), Western Samoa (1986), Vanuatu (1991) and Tahiti (1997). The headquarters were first in Samoa but in 1967 moved to Suva, Fiji. The PCC is one of several major regional bodies linked, through delegated representative status, with the WCC.

The conference grew rapidly under the leadership of two of its general secretaries, Setareki Tuilovoni (1967-74) and Lorine Tevi (1977-81), both of Fiji. It was also much strengthened by the contributions of an early chair, Sione 'Amanaki Havea of Tonga (1966-71). More recently, Bishop Patelisio Finau (Roman Catholic, Tonga) gave a similar impulse to ecumenism as chair preceding his death in office in 1993. New churches joined the PCC's fellowship, and membership was also thrown open to national Christian councils. In 1976 most of the Roman Catholic dioceses of the Pacific joined, and in 1991 six new bodies were accepted, including the two largest Pacific churches, the Catholic bishops conference of Papua New Guinea and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea. The conference has always had strong participation from the French-speaking islands of New Caledonia and Tahiti, and they are now fully incorporated into its life, with the provision of simultaneous translation at its meetings and the publication of French versions of its reports and documents. The only countries where it has lost members are Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

Participation by the churches of Micronesia has been sporadic because of distance.

The conference has reached out to the churches with a variety of programmes. It has introduced modern methods of Christian education and training for better family life, spreading these through seminars all over the area. It has helped the churches in their communication efforts and in youth programmes. It has tried to improve the role and status of women by holding regional conferences for women and setting an example itself with the appointment of a woman as chair, Fetaui Mata'afa (1971-76), and another as general secretary (Tevi). It has devoted much attention to economic development rooted in the realities of village life. It has taken the lead in dealing with political problems of the region, speaking out against nuclear testing and in favour of movements leading up to national independence for Island countries.

In 1982 the steady growth of the organization was reversed in a decision, taken under the leadership of the long-time chairman, Bishop Jabez Bryce of Fiji (1976-86), to make drastic reductions in staff and programmes in the hope of decreasing extreme dependence on foreign funds. But the dependence did not change and from 1986 on there has been steady re-growth.

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## PACIFISM

THE DERIVATION of the word "pacifism" – from Latin *pax* (peace) and *facere* (to make) – establishes an immediate connection with Jesus' statement in the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the peace-makers" (Matt. 5:9). There have been many varieties of pacifism based both on religious and on secular philosophies – most notably Buddhism. Within the Christian church, the transition which culminated under the Emperor Constantine changed the church from being a religion whose adherents refused to kill in its first three centuries to being the religion of the empire and the army.

There has always been a minority tradition of Christian pacifism based on the Sermon on the Mount, for example, Francis of Assisi, the left wing of the Reformation (e.g. Mennonites) and the Quakers, founded in the 17th century in England by George Fox. A Quaker, William Allen, founded the Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace in 1816. By 1900 there were at least 400 peace organizations. The mood of optimism and belief in progress was punctured by the first world war.

The abolition of war, like the abolition of slavery, had seemed a realizable goal to many at the time of the Hague conferences of 1899 and 1907. War\* is, historically, almost entirely a male activity, and feminist analyses link the social structures of patriarchy and war closely together. Pacifist women have been strongly represented through peace organizations from the Women's International League of Peace and Freedom (early conferences in 1915 and 1920) through to the Greenham women. Eminent individuals among their number include Bertha von Suttner, Muriel Lester, Maude Royden, Dorothy Day and Aung San Sun Kyi (Myanmar's Nobel laureate).

In the 20th century the Sermon on the Mount was returned to the Christian church as practical politics by a Hindu, Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948). He, in turn, had been inspired by such thinkers as Henry David Thoreau (1817-62) from the US and the unorthodox Russian Orthodox Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910). Gandhi used pacifist methods, including civil disobedience, in the movement to liberate India from British colonial rule. From Gandhi, the line of influence passes through such struggles as the US civil rights movement, led by Martin Luther King, Jr, and black opposition to apartheid in South Africa, with such non-violent leaders as Albert Luthuli in an earlier generation and Allan Boesak, Frank Chikane, Desmond Tutu and Brazilian bishop Dom Helder Camara in Brazil in the latter phase.

Shortly after the outbreak of the first world war, the Fellowship of Reconciliation\* was established. During the war conscientious objection led to significant numbers of people being imprisoned, including the atheist philosopher Bertrand Russell in Britain. Disillusionment after 1918 gave a

massive boost to pacifism, as churches realized that they had often lent uncritical support to national war efforts.

Between the two world wars pacifism became a mass movement under such leaders as Dick Sheppard, founder of the Peace Pledge Union. But as the storm clouds of fascism\* darkened in the 1930s, support for pacifism waned. Pacifism as a mass movement was past, and a much smaller core of conscientious objectors refused to serve in the second world war. Nazism proved to be the decisive factor in undermining the popularity and credibility of pacifism. In theological circles, the critique of Reinhold Niebuhr and the example of Dietrich Bonhoeffer proved damaging for pacifism.

The advent of the nuclear era has made a profound difference to the traditional arguments between pacifists and adherents of the just-war\* theory. Since the second world war, with peaks beginning in the late 1950s and late 1970s, major “ban-the-bomb” movements have developed with strong Christian and Christian pacifist involvement. The debate about German re-armament in the 1950s (led by Barth, Niemöller, Heinemann, Gollwitzer et al.) and the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament set the trend. There was a growing convergence between pacifists and “nuclear pacifists”, who argued that strict application of just-war criteria precluded the use of nuclear weapons. The movement beginning in the late 1970s, with strong campaigns in the US and most of Western Europe (particularly Holland and the Federal Republic of Germany), had strong pacifist involvement, particularly through women’s organizations and participation. The anti-nuclear campaign drew many Christians into an activist and pacifist expression of their faith.

At the same time, pacifism has been challenged in terms of the right of resistance in the face of oppression. During the 1950s and 1960s decolonization\* proceeded surprisingly peacefully in many countries, but in others armed liberation\* movements were formed. The decision of the WCC to support the humanitarian projects of armed liberation movements in Southern Africa created controversy within its member churches. The strongest rejection came from churches not known for a predominantly pacifist po-

sition, particularly in the Federal Republic of Germany and Great Britain.

This debate followed the 1968 Uppsala assembly, where Martin Luther King, Jr, was to have preached. Before his murder earlier that year, King had taken an unpopular stance and courageously denounced the Vietnam war – a cause which unleashed the mass protests of the 1960s, including much of the 1968 student movement.

In Latin America, Brazilian bishop Helder Camara argued that in terms of both principle and practice, active non-violence was the best way to break the “spiral of violence”, whereas Camilo Torres, Ernesto Cardenal and others argued that armed resistance could be required. All stressed the primacy of liberation.

Recent events in countries as different as the Philippines and those in Central Europe have shown that mass non-violent movements can bring political transformation (although China serves as a counter example). It can be a costly method, as the teaching, example and death of leaders including King and Gandhi have emphasized. History is not so clear-cut or moral as to guarantee the success of non-violence, and political change often occurs as a result of a mix of non-violent and violent forms of resistance (e.g. in South Africa). Many historical examples show, however, that massive levels of state violence in war or repression have a severely declining utility, and mass non-violent action is increasingly seen as both a moral and a more effective approach. These conclusions also have relevance to the nuclear debate. Related concepts such as civilian defence, non-offensive defence and non-provocative defence are appropriate attempts to implement pacifism – or at least non-aggressive forms of defence – as a substitute for the weaponry of mass destruction. Gene Sharp has done prodigious work in cataloguing the range of techniques below the threshold of violence that people can use.

Ecumenical debate has reflected these shifts in the world political scene. The WCC’s first assembly (Amsterdam 1948) stated that “war as a method of settling disputes is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ”. From the European context, the final document of the European Ecumenical Assembly (1989)

stated: "There are no situations in our countries or on our continent in which violence is required or justified" (61). It is perhaps a measure of the injustice in the countries of the South that there are no comparably clear ecumenical statements from other continents, or at the world level. The WCC's world convocation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation\* (Seoul 1990) spoke, however, of the need to overcome the institution of war, and it continued the clear denunciation of the possession as well as the use of weapons of mass destruction. Non-violent alternatives received renewed impetus through the WCC's Programme to Overcome Violence emanating from the Johannesburg 1994 central committee. The Decade to Overcome Violence, 2001-10, conceived at the WCC's eighth assembly (Harare 1998), invites all Christians to "offer their own gifts for peace-making according to their own particular calling, to learn from one another and to act together".

Whereas the church consensus of the Constantinian era accepted war and state violence, the emerging ecumenical consensus rejects war but does not preclude resistance to tyranny or oppressive government. The historic peace churches\* (Quakers, Mennonites etc.), pacifist fellowships within denominations and interfaith and interdenominational groups such as the International Fellowship of Reconciliation provide the organizational face of Christian pacifism. Churches have campaigned for the rights of conscientious objectors and succeeded in achieving this right in a number of countries.

See also **just war; militarism/militarization; peace; violence and non-violence; violence, religious roots of.**

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## PAN-ORTHODOX CONFERENCES

THE PAN-ORTHODOX conferences were inaugurated at Rhodes in 1961 at the initiative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, after consultation with all the canonical Eastern Orthodox churches. It was not, however, the first pan-Orthodox encounter. After the great schism between East and West (1054) and the fall of the Byzantine empire (1453), the ecumenical patriarch, in collegial cooperation with all the patriarchs of the East, convoked several councils in Constantinople (1484, 1590, 1735, 1848, 1872) to deal with canonical and ecclesiological matters, including the elevation of the metropolitan of Moscow to patriarchal dignity (1590).

Behind Rhodes 1961 was the recognition of new Orthodox realities resulting from the establishment in the Balkan peninsula of many national Orthodox churches at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. In 1923 (Constantinople) and in 1930 (Mt Athos) two inter-Orthodox meetings were held, the first dealing with pastoral and canonical issues, and the second with the preparation of the agenda for a general synod of the Orthodox church. A pre-synod meeting scheduled for 1932 could not be held because of the precarious world situation.

This agenda, finally addressed at the 1961 conference, included doctrinal, missionary, socio-ethical and ecumenical topics. The second and third conferences (Rhodes 1963, 1964) dealt with the issues of bilateral dialogues\* with other churches and denominations, and the attendance of Orthodox observers at the Second Vatican Council. The fourth conference (Chambésy, Geneva, 1968) revised the agenda drawn up in 1961 and established an inter-Orthodox preparatory commission of the Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox church.

The first pre-conciliar pan-Orthodox conference met in Chambésy (1976) and decided upon a ten-point agenda for the council: the Orthodox diaspora, autocephaly, autonomy, the diptychs, revision of the calendar, marriage impediments, fasting rules, interchurch relations, the ecumenical movement, and peace and justice. The inter-Orthodox theological preparatory commission will prepare documents on each of these subjects which, after further elaboration and approval by the pre-conciliar conferences, will be referred to the future Great and Holy Council for consideration and action.

Of special importance for the ecumenical movement are two documents drawn up by the third pre-conciliar pan-Orthodox conference (Chambésy 1986). The first, entitled "Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Christian World", evaluates and sets guidelines for the bilateral dialogues of the Orthodox church with the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Old Catholic, Lutheran, non-Chalcedonian (Oriental Orthodox) and Reformed churches. In the second document, "The Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Movement", the Orthodox church as a whole expresses its commitment to Christian unity and reiterates its readiness to continue to participate in all ecumenical bodies, particularly within the WCC. The document stresses, however, that "the Orthodox church, loyal to her ecclesiology, to the identity of her internal structure and the teaching of the undivided church, while participating in the WCC, absolutely rejects the idea of the equality of confessions and refuses to conceive church unity as an interconfessional re-adjustment. In this sense, the unity sought within the WCC cannot simply be the result of theological agreements."

In addition, the document underlines the necessity of creating within the WCC and other ecumenical organizations the conditions needed to enable the Orthodox churches to act on the basis of their own ecclesiological identity, in accordance with their own way of thinking and on an equal footing with other churches.

The pan-Orthodox conferences are convoked by the ecumenical patriarch, *primus inter pares* in the Orthodox church, and presided over by the senior delegate of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which is responsi-

ble for overall coordination. Since 1970 a secretariat for the preparation of the Great and Holy Council has been located at the Orthodox centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy.

After his election in 1991 to the see of Constantinople, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, in an effort to strengthen inter-Orthodox unity, convoked summit meetings parallel to the above pan-Orthodox conciliar process, which enabled the Orthodox primates to speak in unison on a variety of issues affecting the Orthodox church, the Christian oikoumene in general and contemporary society. Two such meetings took place in Constantinople (Istanbul) in 1992 on "Sunday of Orthodoxy" and on the island of Patmos in 1995 on the occasion of the 1900th anniversary of the book of Revelation.

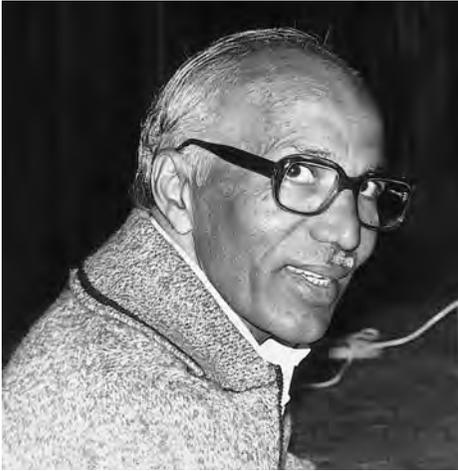
See also **Eastern Orthodoxy, Orthodoxy.**

GEORGES TSETISIS

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## PARMAR, SAMUEL L.

B. 7 Aug. 1921, Banaras, Uttar Pradesh, India; d. 29 May 1979, Allahabad, India. Associate director of the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey,\* 1964-67, Parmar, a member of the Church of North India, was chairman of the working committee on Church and Society, member of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, vice-chairman of the World Student Christian Federation,\* and WCC representative on the SODEPAX committee. He also held leading church-related positions in his own country: he was vice-chairman of the Student Christian Movement of India, chairman of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, Bangalore, and a member of the



executive committee of the National Council of Churches of India. He taught international economics at Allahabad University College. A competent economist and knowledgeable on issues of development, he was an adviser to the Uppsala assembly, and his contributions helped in shaping the WCC's understanding of the processes and goals of development.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## PARTICIPATION

PARTICIPATION implies belonging to and involvement in an organization, being an active member of a decision-making body, involved in policy making or participating in the procedures, programmes, staffing or financing of the organization. Within the ecumenical movement there are different levels of participation. For most, attendance at an international ecumenical event is a one-time experience of personal involvement at the world level; for a few, however, that experience will evolve into a more active involvement in the ecumenical bodies that set policy and make decisions.

Pressure for adequate representation by women, laity, youth, people with disabilities, indigenous peoples – the marginalized – has raised questions about the purpose of WCC gatherings. The very success of the participatory process has brought with it frustra-

tions and problems never envisaged when the original 147 member churches first assembled in Amsterdam in 1948. Enormous difficulties surface today whenever the WCC has to allocate assembly seats, appoint a presidium or central committee, compile membership of commissions and working groups or choose staff. The participatory process, demanding that various categories be fully represented, can overshadow the stated aim of the activity or meeting itself. Some of the WCC difficulties stem from failure to recognize that different forms of participation are required by different kinds of events.

## GROWTH OF INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION

From the earliest days of the ecumenical movement, outstanding leaders from the so-called younger churches, especially from Asia, had been actively participating in international conferences. The years from the 1940s to the late 1960s found these churches involved in the transition from Western-mission-centred patterns to indigenous leadership. Not only did the assembly meet on Asian soil (New Delhi 1961), but the Council moved to be genuinely worldwide with the admission of 11 African churches to its membership.

By the time of the world conference on Church and Society in 1966, participants from Africa, Asia and Latin America were in equal numbers to those from the North. Their presence influenced the Council to change priorities and perspectives on world affairs. Concern for development,\* for revolution,\* for non-violent forms of struggle and for racial justice\* became embodied in WCC programmes. After an absence of 40 years from the WCC, Christians from the People's Republic of China were represented for the first time when the China Christian Council applied for membership at the Canberra assembly (1991). The participation of a church undergoing rapid growth and change will influence the world church in the years ahead.

The 1966 conference marked a shift in emphasis for the WCC, for it was the first to have more lay participants than clergy. The Vancouver assembly (1983), with nearly half the participants from the laity, strongly recommended that the churches encourage the full participation of the laity and ensure the

equipping of laity for ministry in the world. However, despite the good intentions, timing of church events and conferences very often excludes those who are bound by the terms of their secular employment.

The Commission on World Mission and Evangelism conference at San Antonio, Texas (1989), was a highly participatory event leading to Acts of Faithfulness, which endeavoured to evoke from the participants a sense of active commitment towards the resolutions they made. Stories of involvement in mission\* at the local level dominated the conference, requiring a follow-up of reflection and articulation of the theological insights arising from that involvement. Utilizing the gifts of the people of God\* leads to creative tension between participants whose ability is to testify to their experiences through the medium of storytelling and those with the gift to articulate the ecumenical vision from a theological perspective. Unless both are present, the Body of Christ is not complete.

The growing participation by representatives of indigenous peoples\* at San Antonio blossomed at the Canberra assembly. The history of Aborigine extermination and cultural genocide enacted at the assembly became a focus for other indigenous peoples wishing to raise issues about land rights, language and cultural identity in their own countries of origin.

### PARTICIPATION OF CHURCHES

At its 40th anniversary in 1988 the WCC was still confronted by the fact that roughly two-thirds of Christianity was not participating in its work for unity\* and renewal.\* Among those who have not sought closer relationships are churches which oppose the search for worldwide unity on principle, as for example many on the evangelical wing of the Protestant churches, as well as members of independent Christian groups and churches. Nor is the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) a member of the WCC.

In contrast to the rather chilly reaction the RCC gave the first assembly at Amsterdam (1948), Roman Catholic observers were present at the third assembly at New Delhi and in larger numbers at later assemblies. After Vatican II\* a whole network of new relationships was established through

the Secretariat (now Pontifical Council) for Promoting Christian Unity.\* Discussions at following assemblies, the work of the Joint Working Group\* since 1965, full participation in the Faith and Order\* commission since 1968, representation on other commissions and two papal visits to the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva have underlined a policy of increased collaboration.

At Amsterdam only four Eastern Orthodox churches – the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Church of Cyprus, the Church of Greece, and the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of the USA – were represented. By the time of New Delhi, however, the removal of misunderstandings and the climate of change in East-West political relationships opened the way for the entry of four large Eastern European Orthodox churches into the WCC. The Orthodox have made a unique contribution to the ongoing debate on the unity of the church, but their participation has meant a difficult adjustment to a predominantly Protestant and Western ethos, liturgy,\* agenda and style of work. Recently they have argued that their representation in the affairs of the Council has not properly reflected their strength within Christendom. Moreover, changed attitudes within non-Orthodox churches on such matters as the ordination of women, use of inclusive language for the person of God, the discussion of human sexual orientation, alleged syncretic actions in acts of worship, and confusions in the area of ecclesiology has made for difficulties in the partnership. The Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC wrestled with these issues for almost three years, and in a unanimously agreed report (2002) suggests ways in which the World Council may become a more participatory body: decision making by consensus, establishing a framework for common prayer, moving in mutual trust to handle critical social and ethical issues, commitment to further ecclesiological work, and elaboration of processes whereby churches become members of the council and as such are represented in its governing bodies. In particular, the report identifies two ways of relating to the WCC: as member churches belonging to the fellowship, or as churches which, without obligation on either side, wish to be in association with the WCC.

### PARTICIPATION OF VARIOUS GROUPS

The ecumenical movement has made efforts over the years to increase the participation of several specific groups of people.

*Children.* While children and their needs have been a focus of discussion within the ecumenical movement since a WCC consultation on children in 1951, their participation has been limited. By 1980 the admission of children to the eucharist\* had become a matter for serious debate within the ecumenical movement. This issue was discussed in 1980 at Bad Segeberg, Federal Republic of Germany, followed later that year by a consultation on "Children as Active Partners in the Christian Community", at Evian, France. Apart from a final statement and a "Message to the Children of the World", there were no specific recommendations to the churches.

Not until the sixth assembly of the WCC at Vancouver in 1983 did the active participation of children become a reality. In preparation for the assembly, children from more than 30 countries contributed pictures, poems and stories illustrating the theme "The City of Hope". Recommendations urged the participation of children within church structures, in decision making and in discussions of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*.\*

At the Harare assembly in 1998 a padare (informal get-together for sharing) was held to draw particular attention to the dignity of children and their rights. Children from 13 countries who had been involved in two WCC consultations on children's issues in 1996 and 1997 wrote a letter requesting WCC member churches to support a global ecumenical children's network.

*Persons with disabilities.* In the course of the centuries countless Christians have given their lives to the service of people with disabilities, but the question remains as to how much the churches have allowed persons with disabilities to participate fully in their own communal life. Not until the Faith and Order commission meeting at Louvain in 1971 was the participation of the disabled taken seriously. From the fifth assembly of the WCC in Nairobi (1975) came a historic statement on "The Handicapped and the Wholeness of the Family of God". It

warned: "The church cannot exemplify 'the full humanity revealed in Christ', bear witness to the interdependence of humankind or achieve unity in diversity if it continues to acquiesce in the social isolation of disabled persons and to deny them full participation in its life."

The Nairobi report brought about a deepened engagement with persons with disabilities in many churches. Concerns expressed led to a consultation on "The Life and Witness of the Handicapped in a Christian Parish" at Bad Saarow, German Democratic Republic (1978). A statement urged: "Full and unconditional acceptance of the disabled must be made a reality at the very heart of the church's life. It must not be relegated to the circumference nor treated as a separate specialist area of the church's life."

The Vancouver assembly expanded the recommendations of Bad Saarow by encouraging local congregations to examine factors which hinder integration and participation by the disabled, and by suggesting that churches accept people with disabilities as students and teachers in theological colleges. It was noted for the first time at an assembly that a "small but significant group of disabled persons took part".

The first of three regional consultations of the programme on disabilities was held in Montevideo, Uruguay (1987). The consultation recommended to the WCC that at least 15 persons with disabilities be delegates of churches at the seventh assembly of the WCC in 1991 and that the needs and participation of persons with disabilities be considered as integral components at regional consultations. In 1990 the programme produced a resource kit containing biblical and theological reflections for the churches.

In a statement on human rights brought before the eighth assembly in Harare, the WCC declared: "We re-affirm the right of persons who have special needs because of physical or mental disabilities to equal opportunity in all aspects of the life and service of the church... We welcome the creation of the new network of ecumenical disability advocates, and encourage churches to support it."

*Women.* Throughout their history both the Young Women's Christian Association\* (YWCA) and the World Student Christian

Federation\* (WSCF) have provided an invaluable training ground for women leaders in the ecumenical movement. Networks formed within the two movements during the second world war were utilized by the WCC in process of formation to circulate a questionnaire about the role of women in the church. Replies from 58 countries provided a basis for study and discussion at a conference on "The Life and Work of Women in the Church" prior to the first assembly of the WCC in Amsterdam. Despite only 6% of the representatives being women, the assembly supported the suggestion that a permanent commission on the life and work of women in the church be formed.

Beginning in the 1960s the developing world was preoccupied with questions concerning marriage and family\* life. Regional assemblies in Asia and Africa in the early 1960s provided a catalyst for a series of seminars involving large numbers of women throughout each region. These were followed by an equally enthusiastic participation of churches in the Pacific and throughout Europe. Bridging the 1960s and 1970s was a growing relationship with Roman Catholic women.

Some 160 women from 49 countries met in Berlin in 1974 to study "Sexism in the 1970s" and to challenge the churches to recognize them as equals and partners in the work of the church. The participants in Berlin urged that, beyond the fifth assembly, a special project be established called "Education for Participation", regionally based, funded and staffed by women. Participants pledged to work together to raise financial support to send women from their home churches as official delegates to the Nairobi assembly in 1975. As a result women made up a conspicuous 22% of the assembly. The document "The Community of Women and Men in the Church" was recommended for a three-year study by the churches. From 1978 to 1981 the study programme enjoyed the most extensive grassroots participation of any such project in WCC history, culminating in a consultation at Sheffield in 1981. Among many recommendations, Sheffield urged that 50% of all members elected to sub-units and committees of the WCC be women. The Vancouver assembly provided

proof of the effectiveness of Sheffield, as 30% of the delegates were women.

Over the years participation by Orthodox women in ecumenical activities had been slow to receive official encouragement from their churches. At the conference for Orthodox women in Agapia, Romania, in 1976, at least half of the 45 women present had studied theology, and several were active in ecumenical affairs. The high profile of Orthodox women at Vancouver led to a heightened desire for more information about the Orthodox church.

In 1988 the WCC initiated an Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women, calling on the churches for full participation by women in church and community life. This decade culminated in a festival of celebration held immediately before the eighth assembly in Harare.

Staff from the WCC along with 60 representative women attended an NGO forum at the fourth UN world conference on women, held at Beijing in 1995. The WCC went to Beijing to listen, contribute through running workshops and take the voices of women back to churches. A five-person delegation attending the intergovernmental meeting called for an ecumenical gathering where women of faith could join together in discussion.

*Young people.* Youth\* can trace the genesis of their participation in the ecumenical movement to the middle of the 19th century. The Young Men's Christian Association\* and the World YWCA,\* founded in 1844 and 1855 respectively, were only marginally concerned about their relationship to the churches prior to the first world war. The Student Christian Movement which came into existence between 1890 and 1910 almost from the first took up the cause of Christian unity. All three movements nurtured future leaders with an ecumenical outlook. Both world wars provided opportunities for the movements to work among the armed forces and maintain the fellowship across enemy lines. Work with prisoners of war was later followed by involvement with refugees and displaced persons.

The first great worldwide gathering of Christian youth was held in Amsterdam in 1939, just before the outbreak of the second world war. After both world wars, the Inter-

national Fellowship of Reconciliation\* organized work camps for young people in Europe in order to promote reconciliation and peace through service. By 1950 work camps were taken into the programme of the newly formed Youth department of the WCC. Thousands of young people experienced at first hand a living, working, worshipping fellowship lasting from three weeks to one year in countries around the world. The Ecumenical Institute at Bossey\* provided youth with a centre for discussion and study of ecumenical concerns.

Some 1700 young people gathered in Lausanne in 1960 from all parts of Europe. Lausanne, like the simultaneous Strasbourg conference of the WSCF, saw the beginnings of a radical re-interpretation of the ecumenical task. Regional youth assemblies followed elsewhere, reflecting the call of the post-colonial world to revolution. The 1960s saw the rise of denominational youth movements, with many young people trying to participate on equal terms in local churches.

From 1965 a series of encounters was held between younger Orthodox and Protestant theologians, joined in 1970 by Roman Catholics. A total of 127 young people attended the pre-assembly youth conference prior to the fourth assembly of the WCC at Uppsala (1968), manifesting a spirit both confident and defiant. The meeting issued a statement declaring that youth were anxious to participate in the assembly to the fullest possible extent. Youth argued for full participation of youth concerns within all departments of the WCC.

By the 1970s many youth deeply involved with crucial issues within their own societies were experiencing alienation from the churches and a growing disenchantment with the ecumenical movement. This was the time of new religious movements, including the Jesus movement, which many young people saw as a celebration of their own culture. Also during this time, a growing number of young people gathered to participate in discussion and worship with the Taizé\* community in France.

The WCC Youth programme received a particular lift from the Vancouver assembly, where 13.5% of the delegates were youth, compared with 9% at Nairobi. Major ecumenical meetings provide a unique opportu-

nity for youth to learn about and to participate in the ecumenical movement by attending as stewards.

The year 1985 was the International Year of Youth. Its theme, "Participation, Development and Peace", was developed in inter-regional conferences which strengthened the international network of ecumenical youth. In 1986 the WCC youth working group met at Iloilo City in the Philippines. It was a landmark for the global ecumenical youth movement and became a forerunner to the Ecumenical Global Gathering of Youth and Students, which took place at Rio de Janeiro in 1993.

Rural youth programmes have developed networks which take initiatives to remedy rural problems in developing countries. In Asia the young detainees' programme seeks to support youth who have been imprisoned for their commitment to the poor and oppressed. Through world youth projects, 40 projects and programmes are supported worldwide. Opportunity is also given for youth to serve as interns with the WCC and regional youth offices. By 1987 the main thrust was towards strengthening networks and fostering solidarity rather than arranging conferences or coordinating structures.

## CONCLUSION

Philip Potter shared with the Vancouver assembly his hope that the "churches should be a fellowship of participation". If this vision is to become a reality locally and internationally, far more creative effort needs to be made to open up channels through which that participation can be experienced. Following the Vancouver assembly the Sub-unit on Renewal and Congregational Life promoted ecumenical liturgy and music through worship workshops, leading to the formation of regional networks formed to assist congregations to become vital centres of Christian worship, life, mission and service through their lay members. Locally, participation is often hampered because ecumenical activity is seen as an optional extra to the programmes of individual churches rather than as an integral part. Internationally, the number who can participate is limited by finance. Wider and more representative participation calls for an active expansion of the inner circle in the selection process and a genuine

commitment to enable as many people as possible to participate for their own enrichment and that of the ecumenical movement.

DOROTHY HARVEY

■ D. Gill, "Participation: Beyond the Numbers Game", in *ER*, 40, 3-4, 1988 ■ S. Herzel, *A Voice for Women: The Women's Department of the World Council of Churches*, WCC, 1981 ■ G. Müller-Fahrenholz, ... *And Do Not Hinder Them: An Ecumenical Plea for the Admission of Children to the Eucharist*, WCC, 1982 ■ G. Müller-Fahrenholz ed., *Partners in Life: The Handicapped and the Church*, WCC, 1979 ■ *Participatory Action Research on AIDS and the Community As a Source of Care and Healing*, WCC, 1993 ■ D.M. Paton ed., *Breaking Barriers*, Nairobi, 1975, London, SPCK, 1976.

## PARTIES, POLITICAL

POLITICAL parties are groups organized both to achieve political ends and to exercise political power within a broader system of government. Like interest groups, political parties pursue the social, economic or ideological causes of an organized constituency. Unlike interest groups, political parties seek to gain political office, power and control to effectuate these causes – usually by popular election, sometimes by revolutionary force.

Though many prototypes can be found in history, political parties first came to prominence in early 19th-century European and American democracies. Through colonization, popularization and imitation since then, political parties have come to operate virtually everywhere – in democratic, aristocratic and autocratic polities alike. They range from small "cadre parties" comprising a handful of elites or autocrats to "mass-based parties" with millions of adherents and representatives, local and international.

Political parties usually galvanize around individuals, ideologies and institutions. Charismatic leaders, chieftains or gurus, such as Gandhi, Hitler, Mandela or Khomeni, can inspire a political party for a generation or two. Political ideologies of liberalism or socialism, or ties of blood, soil and language, can often sustain political parties over several generations. Religious, social and economic institutions can play critical roles in nurturing the ideology and supporting the causes of political parties. Whatever their nucleus, po-

litical parties of any note and duration have refined structures and procedures for selecting officers, enlisting members, declaring goals and implementing policies in their quest for political power.

Religion has been a particularly pervasive agent of political party formation in the 20th century. In Europe and Latin America, for example, the Christian Democratic Party has been a formidable political force, recently joined by several Evangelical political groups. In Saharan Africa, the Middle East, Turkey, Pakistan, Indonesia and elsewhere, political parties and leaders associated with various Muslim sects have come to dominate politics. In the former Soviet Union, China, North Korea and elsewhere, various Communist parties, bound together by a common faith in Marxist atheism, have boasted millions of local members and ample allies worldwide.

Modern nation states have come to embrace either a one-party, two-party or multi-party system. One-party systems – as prevailed in fascist Germany and Italy before 1945, the Soviet communist bloc until 1989, and many post-colonial African, Latin America and Asian communities throughout the 20th century – have a strong tendency to political dictatorship and minimal toleration of dissent. Two-party systems – which are quite rare outside the USA – tend to prefer single-member electoral districts or regions and a strong executive branch. Multi-party systems – which dominate Western and Eastern Europe today – tend to feature proportional representation, legislative coalitions and executive power-sharing. One of the cardinal features of modern democratization is the shift from a one-party to a two- or multi-party system, with free and open popular elections.

The ecumenical movement must avoid partisan support for one political party or political cause alone. It must instead use its collective power and moral suasion to facilitate the formation and functioning of political parties and structures that embrace the universal commands of love, peace and justice and the universal ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity.

JOHN WITTE, Jr

■ M. Duverger, *Political Parties*, London, Methuen, 1954 ■ B. Graham, *Representation*

and Party Politics, Oxford, Blackwell, 1993 ■ V. Randall ed., *Political Parties in the Third World*, New York, Sage, 1988 ■ G. Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1976.

## PATON, WILLIAM

B. 13 Nov. 1886, London, UK; d. 21 Aug. 1943, Kendal, UK. William Paton was the “fourth man” of post-1910 British ecumenism, somewhat overshadowed by Temple, Bell and Oldham. “If he had been an Anglican, he would have been an archbishop,” said Cyril Garbett. He was the indispensable diplomat and bureaucrat behind the creation of the WCC.

Paton was educated at Whitgift School, Pembroke College, Oxford, and from 1908 to 1911 at Westminster College, Cambridge, under John Skinner. From 1911 to 1921 he served his apprenticeship with the Student Christian Movement, being secretary of the Student Volunteer Missionary Association, and for a year was secretary with the Indian YMCA. In 1917 he was ordained in the Presbyterian Church of England. The Indian YMCA re-called him in 1921 as its secretary, and he later served, with K.T. Paul, in the reformed National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon. He had a formidable reputation as a missionary strategist fore-



shadowing Indian independence and the Church of South India. Paton thus belonged to the generation shaped by John R. Mott and Edinburgh 1910 – he parodied Mott’s slogan “the evangelization of the world in one generation” as “the moon turned to blood in one generation”.

Direct evangelism\* began to move into dialogue, and books such as J.N. Farquhar’s *The Crown of Hinduism* greatly influenced Paton. After 1927, when he succeeded J.H. Oldham as secretary of the International Missionary Council,\* the first of the three “prongs” of the post-Edinburgh ecumenical initiatives, Paton’s key task was organizing the missionary conferences at Jerusalem (1928) and Tambaram (Madras, 1938). Jerusalem was typified by a more liberal approach to missions. Christianity seemed the “crown” or fulfilment of the great world faiths. Paton’s policy of encouragement of full participation of the so-called younger churches was highly significant. For Tambaram, preliminary reading (sponsored by Paton) included Hendrik Kraemer’s *Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, with its assertion of the centrality of Christ in human history, downplaying all “religion”, including Christianity. Since the second world war some of the emphases stemming from Jerusalem have come to the surface again.

Paton’s diplomatic and organizing skill came into full prominence when, with W.A. Visser ’t Hooft, he became associate general secretary of the provisional WCC in 1938. He was also deeply involved in the British scene with Jews, refugees, internees and peace aims, where he was an ally of Bell and Carter.

Paton was awarded the doctorate of divinity by Edinburgh university in 1939. His book *A Life of Alexander Duff* revealed his lifelong interest in missionary education, which had full scope in his work for the Lindsay report on Indian higher education (1931) and editorship of the *International Review of Missions*. Almost his last published article ends: “Behind all the holding of conferences and making of organizations there has grown up a reality of personal trust and friendship together with a minimal organization. It is impossible for any Christian mind to doubt that the drawing together on the part of the churches just at the time

when political hopes of peace grew darkest was no less than the act of God training and fitting us for what was to come" (W. Temple ed., *Is Christ Divided?*, 1943, 23).

A rock-like character, he was the "Admirable Crichton" of the formative years of the ecumenical movement. This and his work in India reveal him to be a man of greater stature than is often realized. His theology moved from the missiology of the era of J.R. Mott to the more confessional ecumenism of the age of Kraemer and Barth.

JOHN MUNSEY TURNER

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## PATRISTICS

"PATRISTICS" or "patrology" is a term which designates the academic discipline dedicated to the study of the fathers. In the Old Testament the concept of paternity was often used as a reminder of the continuity of the people of Israel, going back to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the "first fathers" (or "patriarchs"). God was often designated as the God of the fathers, pointing at the genetic continuity of the "holy nation", chosen by God.

In this biblical context Jesus commands his disciples, "call no one your father on earth" (Matt. 23:9), since membership in the people of God "in Christ" is not created genetically by "the will of man" (John 1:13) but by a new birth "of water and Spirit" (John 3:5), God himself being the only heavenly Father (Matt. 6:9) of those who have received adoption in his Son, Jesus.

However, human beings are assuming ministries which are actually accomplishing the work of God, e.g. Simon becomes a stone (John 1:42; cf. Matt. 16:18), whereas Christ is the true "rock" of Israel (1 Cor.

10:4); or Peter is told to shepherd (John 21:15), although God is the shepherd of Israel (Ps. 23:1). Thus Paul claims to have become the Corinthians' "father" in Christ (1 Cor. 4:15), and spiritual fatherhood becomes associated with presidency at sacramental functions and is assumed by bishops or presbyters. By extension, with the rise of spiritual direction by monastic elders, the title of father or mother is also attributed to holy monastics beginning in the 4th century. The general usage designates as fathers those who – after the time of the apostles – have secured the continuity of the apostolic message by teaching the true faith and thus assuring the "spiritual birth" of Christian generations (see **apostolicity**). Writing in the 2nd century, Irenaeus declares: "When any person has been taught from the mouth of another, he is termed the son of him who instructs him, and the latter is called his father" (*Against Heresies* 4.41.2).

Particular concern for the study of patristics, i.e. the life and writings of "fathers", is understandably emphasized in connection with the idea of Tradition,\* which implies continuity and consistency in the teaching of the church at all times. The role of patristics in shaping theology necessarily depends upon the authority\* attributed to Tradition. In the Orthodox church the patristic legacy provides the main authoritative direction for understanding and interpreting the content of scripture (see **hermeneutics**, **teaching authority**). In Roman Catholicism, patristic authority is also emphasized, but the existence, in the modern church, of a more clearly defined magisterium\* tends to make references to the fathers less essential in practice. This magisterium has adopted four qualifications for those who are to be regarded as fathers of the church: orthodoxy of doctrine, holiness of life, ecclesiastical approval and antiquity. The title "doctors of the church" is attributed to those who lack the last qualification, i.e. those who lived after the 8th century. This category includes the great scholastics who determined the direction of Western theology since the middle ages. The Orthodox, although sometimes insisting upon the particular traditional authority of the period of the ecumenical councils,\* which coincides with the classic patristic period, would not consider such chronological

limits as absolute and would accept the authority of many fathers who lived in the second millennium of Christianity.

Another concept important both for Orthodox and Roman Catholics in their approach to patristic authority is the notion of patristic consensus.\* Since it is obvious that, on the one hand, no single individual can be seen as an exclusive interpreter of Tradition and that, on the other hand, there are contradictions on individual issues between otherwise very authoritative fathers, the real content of transmitted truth should be sought where there is unquestionable consensus. Sometimes the consensus is easier to define in terms of theological methodology or a general approach to issues, rather than in actual theological formulations. One speaks then of the “sense of the fathers”.

The overall insistence of the reformers of the 16th century on the Bible as the unique – or at least a very privileged – source of divine revelation\* removed patristics from the basic curriculum of most Protestant theological schools. It should be noted, however, that Calvin, Luther and particularly Melancthon looked at the fathers with great respect as authoritative commentators on scriptural texts.

There is a further problem related to the question of authority: any academic course in patristics today includes the study of authors who do not qualify as either fathers or doctors of the church. Indeed, it is impossible to understand the historical development of Christian thought without considering the entire contents of early Christian literature, which includes persons who were formally condemned by ecclesiastical authority either during their life-time (Nestorius) or after their death (Origen, Theodore of Mopsuestia). There are also influential authors whose true identity is unknown because they wrote under a cover name (Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite). Secular historians of Christian doctrine would include such authors in their survey without hesitation, whereas Orthodox or Roman Catholic theologians would attempt to qualify their position in reference to the mainstream of Tradition.

Early Christian literature, which is generally studied under the general name of patristics, has come to us in Greek, Latin and Syriac, with additional texts available in

Coptic, Ethiopian, Armenian, Arabic, Georgian and sometimes Slavonic versions. Their publication in printed form began in the 16th century. Some publications involved interesting ecumenical concerns. For instance, the French Benedictines of St Maur – a congregation founded in 1618 in Paris – worked with the generous support of King Louis XIV, who was interested in finding in early Christian literature some support for his Gallican sympathies. “Maurist” editions are being used in a reprinted form today. Similarly, the publication in Venice in 1718 by Nikodemos the Hagiorite of the famous *Philokalia* – a large anthology of Greek patristic texts on the spirituality of “mental” prayer – would have been impossible without the editor’s Western contacts. (He also published a modern Greek paraphrase of the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola.) In 1882 Adolf von Harnack began the famous series *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* as a source for the study of early Christianity on the basis of his own Protestant approach.

The most widely available collections of Greek and Latin texts – the *Patrologia Graeca* (162 vols) and the *Patrologia Latina* (221 vols), by the French priest J.-P. Migne (d.1875) – are also in their own way an ecumenical witness. Migne was very comprehensive, including texts of various Christian theological tendencies (even Greek anti-Latin polemics, e.g. Patriarch Photius). He also reprinted the Orthodox *Philokalia*. Furthermore, his Greek patrology ends with A.D. 1453, whereas the Latin one stops at the works of Innocent III (1160-1216). Paradoxically, the editor seems to imply that the patristic tradition continued longer in the East than in the Latin West.

The texts printed by Migne have often been superseded by new series, with more critical editions. The French series *Sources chrétiennes* was started in Paris in 1941 by Henri de Lubac and Jean Daniélou in the conscious attempt to restore the traditions of the early church within Catholicism, thus making ecumenical dialogue easier. This same ecumenical concern earlier dominated the so-called Oxford movement within Anglicanism. The famous *Library of the Fathers* (45 vols, Oxford, 1838-88), containing the English translations of major patristic

texts, was edited by Edward Pusey, John Keble and Cardinal Newman and laid the basis for the “Anglo-catholic” revival. It was often reprinted and complemented by other English editions, including the more recent series initiated by Roman Catholics. As a result, works written by Greek or Latin fathers are now more available in English than in French or German translations. In 19th-century Russia, patristic translations were initiated by the leader of modern Russian theological scholarship, Metropolitan Filaret (Drozdov, 1782-1867). It is important to note that Filaret’s patristic interests were inseparable in his mind and activities from biblical research: in particular, he was a zealous promoter of a new Russian translation of the Bible.

The obvious importance of these great enterprises of editing and translating the writings of the fathers lay in the concern, in each case, to grasp the mind of the Christian community *before* the occurrence of historical schisms,\* splits or other crises. The result, more often than not, was a better understanding of what is absolute and permanent in the Christian faith\* and what is of relative importance, determined by passing historical factors. Certainly not all approaches to patristic research were successful: e.g. in spite of great scholarly achievement, the liberal 19th-century school, led by Harnack, hardly succeeded in its attempt to prove that, starting with the 3rd century, Greek Christian thought was Hellenized to the point of becoming intrinsically unfaithful to original “Paulinism”. The achievements of the Oxford movement were more lasting. It did not swing the entire Anglican communion to “catholic” principles, but it became very influential in establishing the thoroughly biblical content of patristic thought, as it developed in the classic period of the 4th century.

The revival of patristic studies in France and Germany after the second world war represented attempts, among Roman Catholics, to understand the Christian traditions as independent from medieval scholasticism, which had appeared to many as stale and unhelpful in the framework of the prevailing new existential approach to theology. Furthermore, on the patristic basis, the dialogue with other Christians, particularly the Orthodox, was becoming easier. Some basic methodological achievements, linked to the

patristic revival, seem to be universally accepted today: e.g. the existence of two distinct models of Trinitarian theology in the 4th century – the Augustinian in the West and the Cappadocian in the East – which explains the divisive issue of the filioque\* addition to the creed; the impossibility of understanding the later development of the Roman papacy without first admitting the predominance in early Christianity of an ecclesiology of the local church,\* etc.

If one avoids the temptation of making the notion of a “return to the fathers” into a slogan or a conservative panacea, there is no doubt that the entire problem of Tradition, as it stands before divided Christians today, requires reference to the methodology and achievements of patristics. Unless one accepts a blind doctrine of *sola scriptura* – which very few Protestants would uphold today – one cannot discover the *mind* of Christianity without referring to the fathers, recognizing that the specific authority of scripture is enhanced rather than diminished when one studies the ways in which it was read and understood throughout the centuries.

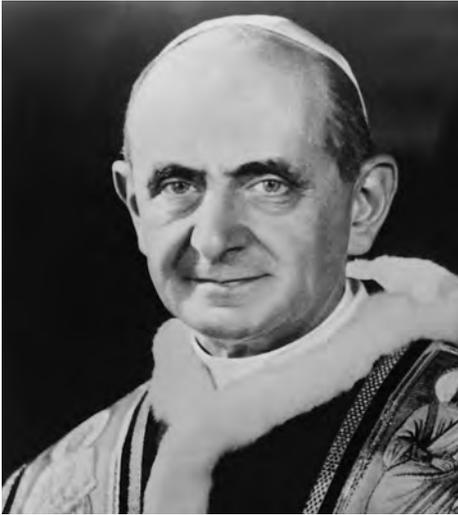
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## PAUL VI (Giovanni Battista Montini)

B. 26 Sept. 1897, Concesio, Lombardy, Italy; d. 6 Aug. 1978, Rome; bishop of Rome and pope from 21 June 1963. Paul VI presided over the last three sessions of Vatican Council II\* and guided the Catholic church through its difficult post-council transition.

Born into an upper-class family and ordained in 1920, Montini went to Rome for



graduate studies in philosophy, canon law and literature, then served the Roman curia,\* where he remained for 22 years in its secretariat of state. He also ministered to students at the university of Rome, set up a weekly newspaper to develop a Catholic intellectual elite and organized seminars from which leaders of the Christian Democratic Party would emerge. During the second world war Pius XII entrusted to Montini a variety of duties: directing the Vatican's extensive relief work, settling displaced persons and hiding political refugees.

Montini had remained responsible for the ordinary affairs of the church until 1954, when (to the cynical surprise of insiders) Pius XII removed his most direct influence in the Vatican by appointing him archbishop of Milan, one of the church's largest ecclesiastical jurisdictions. Montini quickly revealed his organizational skills and pastoral sensitivity in concern for social needs and the role of the laity. Calling himself the "archbishop of the workers", he gave priority to winning back to the church the labouring class in the communist strongholds of Milan.

He was active in the central preparatory commission for Vatican II and a prominent leader among the bishops at its first session (1962), especially in pressing for a new document on the church in the modern world. After the death of John XXIII in June 1963, Montini was elected his successor and vigorously continued a council that he would not himself have called. He described the objec-

tive of Vatican II "to make the church of the 20th century ever better fitted for proclaiming the gospel to the people of the 20th century". If John XXIII had conceived and given spirit to the council, Paul VI helped give the event its flesh and blood. The main reason for his hesitations over the radical drafts on ecumenism, the Jews, and religious freedom was to ensure that the opposing minority bishops would become *convaincus, pas vaincus* (convinced, not conquered).

Within the Roman curia, Paul VI established offices to implement new concerns: secretariats for promoting Christian unity,\* for non-Christians, for non-believers; also the council for the laity, the commission for justice and peace, and the office of mass communications. He diminished the Italian influence in the curia, better internationalized the college of cardinals, and instituted the synod of bishops as an instrument of collegial consultation; it represented the various episcopal regions and met in 1967, 1969, 1971, 1974 and 1977. He was the first modern pope to travel outside Italy, visiting the holy land, India, South America, Africa, Australia, Oceania, the United Nations (New York), Constantinople and Geneva (WCC, June 1969).

Paul VI judged that the distrust and rivalries among the churches produced a "strange, absurd situation", one of Christianity's and humanity's "gravest problems". He considered ecumenism an obligatory, "mysterious" part of his papal ministry, though he admitted that most other Christians regarded the papacy as an ecumenical stumbling block. He met with Anglican and Protestant leaders, addressed ecumenical groups, reminded RC bishops of their ecumenical responsibilities and gave his updated ecumenical reflections during the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.\*

After he and Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras embraced on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem as "two pilgrims with eyes fixed on Christ" (January 1964), both later agreed solemnly to "remove from the memory and from the midst of the church the excommunication of 1054" (7 December 1965). Paul VI visited Athenagoras in Istanbul in July 1967, and the patriarch returned the visit in Rome in October. These two heads of "sister churches"\* proclaimed common declarations.

The same was done when the pope received also the heads of the Armenian Orthodox (1968), the Syrian Orthodox (1971), and Coptic Orthodox (1973) churches.

Called “progressive” for his appeals for social justice in the evolution of developing countries (*Populorum Progressio*, 1967), for his teaching on urbanization, racial discrimination, environment and the evolution of Marxism (e.g. *Octogesima Adveniens*, 1971) and for his call for evangelization of the modern world (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 1975), Paul VI was just as loudly dubbed “conservative” on the eucharist (*Mysterium Fidei*, 1965), artificial birth control (*Humanae Vitae*, 1968), priestly celibacy (*Sacerdotalis Caelibatus*, 1967) and the non-ordination of women (1977).

As revisionist history takes a more objective look at Pope Paul’s personality and the tasks he could not avoid and did face head-on, in the evaluation of the nine modern popes since Pius IX (d. 1878), one hears, with hints of nostalgia, Montini’s name mentioned as “the greatest of them all”.

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## PAX CHRISTI INTERNATIONAL

PAX CHRISTI International, an international Roman Catholic peace movement, was initiated in March 1945 by a small French group led by Bishop Pierre Théas of Lourdes, recently released from a Nazi prisoner-of-war camp. The group’s original purpose was to promote reconciliation between the French and the Germans, especially but not exclusively Catholics. During the 1950s and 1960s, the movement spread through most of Western Europe, then to the USA, Canada and Australia (1970s); then to Asia and

Africa (1980s); then to Central and Eastern Europe (1990s).

As a federation of national sections, PCI “believes that Christians should be in the forefront of the search for new approaches in the field of demilitarization, security and arms trade, human rights, ecology and development and the linking of these issues”. PCI tries to establish a broad Catholic coalition of different political stances, striving also for dialogue and cooperation with other Christian associations. It propagates papal and other church statements on justice and peace, and supports peace prayer campaigns and studies on sociological, psychological and spiritual conditions of peace, e.g. Christian alternatives to violence and the use of “de-militarizing” Catholic education. PCI supports its autonomous youth forum delegates from national sections and coordinates their peace work in summer camps and hostels and youth leadership conferences (e.g. “Migrants and Xenophobia in Europe” and “Conscientious Objection and Alternative Service”). PCI has contacts with similar groups in other churches, and with ecumenical and inter-religious organizations such as the Christian Peace Conference,\* the World Conference on Religion and Peace,\* and the WCC, especially in its ecumenical process concerning justice, peace and the integrity of creation.\* PCI is represented with consultative status in several intergovernmental organizations, e.g. the UN Economic and Social Council, the UN Human Rights Commission, and the Council of Europe.

PCI headquarters are in Brussels. It publishes a bimonthly *Newsletter* in English and French.

TOM STRANSKY

## PAX ROMANA

FOUNDED in Switzerland in 1921, Pax Romana (PR) is an international movement of Roman Catholic students, with a section (since 1946) for graduates and professionals – International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs (in French, MIIC). Under the umbrella of “Christian presence and evangelization of culture”, PR’s concerns and priorities include the search for more humane means of scientific development, promotion of intercultural di-

alogue, joint actions with the poor and oppressed for the defence of their culture and human dignity, and re-inforcement of human rights in all political regimes.

As an international community of laity,\* PR in 2001 embraced federations from 71 countries in all six continents. Its headquarters are in Geneva, but specialized secretariats are located elsewhere: Catholic secondary school teachers (Vienna); Catholic engineers, agronomists and industry officials (Paris); Catholic jurists (Barcelona); Christian artists (Munich); and scientific questions (Boulogne-sur-Seine, France).

In 1887 Baron George de Montenach and Count Albert de Mun tried to organize French and Swiss RC students through a meeting, eventually held two years later in Fribourg. But such efforts led to an organization only after the first world war. In its beginnings PR was kept aloof from ecumenical cooperation (see **RCC and pre-Vatican II ecumenism**). But with Vatican permission in 1955 PR sponsored a conference on the university, culture and human community, with the World Student Christian Federation.\*

One of PR's most innovative leaders in ecumenical activities was the Australian Rosemary Goldie, the PR staff member in Fribourg. In 1952 she left for a top position in the Roman curia.\* She organized international and regional congresses of the lay apostolate, including the post-Vatican II congress of laity in Rome (1986), with active participation by lay representatives of other churches. In 1967, after she had become a general secretary of Pope Paul VI's newly created Council for the Laity, she initiated contacts with the WCC, the WSCF, YWCAs and YMCAs.

Besides its publication of seminar and conference reports, PR issues a newsletter in English, French, and Spanish and a journal *Convergence* (since 1989 also with the International Young Catholic Students and the International Movement of Catholic Students).

TOM STRANSKY

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## PAYNE, ERNEST ALEXANDER

B. 19 Feb. 1902, London, UK; d. 14 Jan. 1980, London. Vice-moderator of the WCC central committee, 1954-68, and a president of the WCC, 1968-75, Payne was general secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, 1951-67, vice-president of the United Society for Christian Literature and of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and chairman of the executive committee of the British Council of Churches, 1962-71. He studied in London, Oxford and Marburg and was ordained in 1928. Trained in church history and the history of denomina-



tionalism, he influenced the discussion on the "non-theological factors in the making and unmaking of church union" and played an important role in the revision of the basis of the WCC in 1954. In a rare recognition for a Free churchman, a memorial service for him was held in Westminster Abbey, London.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## PEACE

THE HEBREW “shalom” designates not only the reduction of conflict but rightness, wholeness – not only peace but justice.\* The same root is properly translated as liberation\* or salvation.\* It denotes things as they should be and shall be in the divine purpose. The vision of Isa. 2 and Micah 4 promises that peoples will “no longer learn war” because “the oracle of Yahweh will go out from Jerusalem”.

That this shalom is fulfilled in the work of Jesus Christ\* is what the apostles called good news. “Peace on earth” was promised by the angels of Luke 2:14. That the inauguration of God’s rule is at hand was the promise of John, as it was of Jesus. In the light of this beginning, the seventh beatitude calls peace-makers “children of God”. The fulfilment of the law by a “higher righteousness” (Matt. 5) reveals that it is by loving one’s enemies that disciples are like their heavenly Father. Eph. 2:14 says that Christ is “our peace” because by reconciling Jew and gentile he has created “one new humanity” (v.15). This reality expresses itself in the harmonious interaction of the many ministries in the body (Eph. 4 and par. in Rom. 12 and 1 Cor. 12) and in formal procedures of conflict resolution (Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 6:5-6). Effective reconciliation\* is a real experience in the believing community, and its extension to the ends of the earth is a concrete social project.

The peace-making function of the church\* as community is undergirded theologically by the confession of Christ’s lordship, which refuses to let the rulers of the present world sacralize its oppressive and divisive structures. The primitive Jewish denunciation of idolatry unveils the pretensions of any who would claim the right to sacrifice lives to their causes.

The re-alignment which began in the 4th century abandoned the universality of the gospel vision in favour of an alliance of the bishops with the Roman empire, yet it did promote a vision of peace in the earthly city. Pax Romana, now externally Christianized, was not the Hebraic vision of a global right order\* but rather the relative tranquillity of a very large, but not worldwide, empire. Constantine’s support for the churches was seen as prefiguring and furthering the king-

dom of God.\* Augustine re-defined the peace of God as belonging in heaven or in the human heart. It no longer called for loving the enemies of the empire or for empowering underdogs.

Medieval bishops and synods worked for the *pax terrena*, seeking to restrain local wars by proclaiming “the truce of God” and “the peace of God”, or by intervening between princes as mediators. Gradually canon law\* (Gratian) and then academic theologians (Francisco de Vitoria, Francisco Suarez) developed the “justifiable war” or “just war”\* tradition as a “concrete utopia”. The notion that wars could be evaluated in terms of authority, cause, intention, means, etc. projected the unrealistic hope that the violence of rulers might be restrained by respect for due process and the rights of the victim. Jurists like Hugo Grotius formulated these visions of restraint in the language of international law. Treaties (culminating in those at The Hague, 1899, 1907) committed governments to respect rules safeguarding the rights of prisoners and occupied populations. Thus the usage was re-inforced that “peace” refers to reducing unrest and damage, under the control of the present regime, including the use of violence in a “police” function.

As nationalism undermined the vision of Christendom and technology\* increased war’s destructiveness, other kinds of utopia arose as well. Visions of world order were projected by philosophers like Kant, later taken over by popes and politicians. The first world war was supposed to end war; anti-militarists spoke of outlawing war. In the Kellogg-Briand pact (1927) governments disavowed “war as an instrument of national policy”. Vatican social teaching (see **social encyclicals, papal**) posits such a world order as the way to eliminate war. “Peace” here means a reversal of Augustine’s relegating to heaven the promise of a new righteous order; the hope has continued to be that the present regimes could be called on to carry it out.

The other critical vision came to be called pacifism.\* Rooted historically in the radical renewal vision of the historic peace churches,\* recovered in the 19th century by Tolstoy, Garrison and others and in the 20th by the International Fellowship of Reconcili-

ation,\* pacifism rejects on moral grounds all war, even for causes purported just. Ever since the Oxford Life and Work conference (1937), ecumenical statements have recognized the unresolved tension between just war\* and pacifism as moral positions. There has been less responsible theological attention directed to the fact that in many cases the military activities in which Christians have served their governments cannot stand up to scrutiny under just-war principles, and would not have been acceptable if there had been such testing.

Without resolving the tension, numerous areas of common witness\* have been found. Just-war and pacifist reasoning agree in rejecting war waged for unjust causes, or the use of means unable to respect the criteria of discrimination, proportion, and non-combatant immunity. These criteria found expression in the work of the WCC study commission on Christians and the prevention of war in a nuclear age (1955-57), which rejected any all-out use of nuclear weapons.

The question of war had been present in WCC assemblies since the creation of the WCC. Amsterdam 1948 (sec. 4) included such affirmations as "war is contrary to the will of God" and "peace requires an attack on the causes of conflict between the powers" but could not find agreement in answering the question: Can war now be an act of justice? Evanston 1954 emphasized the relation of peace and justice at the national and international levels and encouraged "a continuing effort to reach agreement on outstanding issues, such as the peace treaties and disarmament" and "readiness to submit all unresolved questions of conflict to an impartial international organization and to carry out its decisions". Uppsala 1968 drew on earlier work in stating: "The concentration of nuclear weapons in the hands of a few nations presents the world with serious problems: (a) how to guarantee the security of the non-nuclear nations; (b) how to enable these nations to play their part in preventing war; and (c) how to prevent the nuclear powers from freezing the existing order at the expense of changes needed for social and political justice." But not until Vancouver 1983 did the all-out rejection of nuclear weapons find expression in assembly documents.

Both pacifists and just-war theorists call on present governments and international agencies to make the most of present possibilities for peaceful change and the reduction of hostilities. They work in the spirit of the WCC in process of formation, which in 1946 created the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs to monitor the state of international relations and to testify at those points where a common witness is possible.

A further commonality between just war and pacifism became visible as well in the 20th century. Whereas pacifism, as represented from the age of Francis of Assisi and the Waldensians until that of Tolstoy and Garrison, was at first held by persons and small groups with no political weight and seemed to call only for abstention from involvement in violence, possibilities for effectively achieving political goals through non-violent direct action have become visible. Mohandas K. Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr, have been among the architects and protagonists of this development, whose presence and potential are far wider than currently recognized. This fact was confirmed in an exploratory way by the WCC study on "Violence, Non-Violence, and the Struggle for Justice" (1971-73), which took cognizance of the growth of peace studies as a branch of political science and of conflict resolution as a social skill. War and police violence are no longer self-evidently the ultimate means of restoring peace and achieving justice.

Further common concerns support the struggle against racism\* (since Uppsala) and against militarism (since Nairobi). The Programme to Combat Racism\* heightened the awareness that in places where no war is going on, human dignity is nonetheless being violated. The militarism studies made it clear that, not only in classic dictatorships but also in the "national security state", where the might of the armed forces is directed within their own borders, both peace and justice are ill served by "preparedness".

The world Christian community, especially as visible in the new missionary movements of the 18th and 19th centuries and the ecumenical relationships developed still more recently, represents an agency of peacemaking in ways that are often under-esti-

mated. The mere fact of being a transnational, polycultural community is peace action. Missionary service and international diakonia\* educate those who send and pray, those who travel, and those who receive, in cross-cultural awareness of the believing community as a global fellowship, first-fruits of a global humanity. Interchurch reconciliation develops models for possible interdependence between nations and blocs. World Christendom brings prophetic judgment to bear on injustices occurring in regions whose rulers do not want the "peace" of their regime disturbed, and it supports Christians in a posture of resistance. People-to-people relationships develop international understanding from below, as support and corrective for the less redemptive internationalisms of diplomacy, trade, tourism, sport and entertainment.

As ecumenical thought became less Eurocentric, the equation of peace with tranquility under the present regime was increasingly questioned. The usage arose of yoking the concepts "justice" and "peace" in dialectical tension. Some meant by this conjunction that neither justice nor peace is possible without the other. Others meant that justice (defined in terms of a particular contemporary political programme) must come first, thereby retrieving in a new form the just-war tradition. To this binary formulation has been added since Vancouver (1983) "the integrity [or safeguarding] of creation", recognizing that neither tranquillity nor structural change can suffice without the underlying resources of ecology, economy and culture.\* This broadening of the leitmotif coincided with the call for a new kind of conciliar process which should work somehow "from below". The present system of cooperating and competing confessional bureaucracies cannot adequately channel the energies and the shared commitments which such a restored vision of the wholeness shalom demands.

The 1999 WCC central committee deplored "the erosion of the authority and capacity of the United Nations... to develop, codify and guarantee respect for the international rule of law" and insisted on heeding the Canberra plea to "promote non-violent approaches to conflict transformation and resolution, and post-conflict healing and reconciliation".

See also **disarmament, international order, militarism/militarization, violence and non-violence.**

JOHN H. YODER

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## PENANCE AND RECONCILIATION

THE FORMS for the remission of sins committed after baptism\* have undergone some surprising changes in the course of church history. The 1st and 2nd centuries knew various and even divergent practices. The Pauline literature appears to exclude reconciliation\* after baptism (1 Cor. 5:13; see also Heb. 6:4-6), while Matthew already foreshadows an ecclesial procedure (18:15-17); several texts allude to a kind of general confession (James 5:16; 1 John 1:8-2:2; *Didache* 14:1).

The 3rd century saw the development of a "canonical penance". In the East, the *Epistola Canonica* of Gregory Thaumaturgus distinguishes four successive stages through which penitents must pass. In the West, canonical penance, which could be undergone only once in a life-time for the serious sins of murder, adultery and apostasy, is a sort of partial excommunication\* and comprises three steps: the entry into the order of penitents (at the beginning of Lent, from the 4th century onwards), the *actio paenitentiae*, or (long) period of amendment, and finally the celebration of reconciliation (on Holy Thursday) presided over by the bishop, when the entire community prays for the penitents, now re-instated into full ecclesial communion.\*

By the 5th century the East was placing more stress on the therapeutic aspect of

penance; confession was tied to spiritual guidance, and often the penitent confessed to a monk. From the 7th to the 11th centuries, the West acquired from Irish monks a "tariff penance", whereby sins were penalized according to degrees of gravity specified in the Penitential Books. Its abuses led to yet another form, namely "confession", which is characterized by four parts: contrition, confession made to a priest, satisfaction (all three being acts of the penitent), and absolution. At the end of the middle ages, a "devotional confession" had developed, which sometimes became more frequent than communion.

### THE REFORM OF THE 16TH CENTURY

In practice, the rejection of confession was not always as clear-cut as the theological principles of the Protestant Reformation might require. Luther was acquainted with confession, even though, from 1520, he no longer counted it as a sacrament.\* The Augsburg confession refers to confession in article 12, and to penance in article 13; the Apology for the Augsburg confession lists penance among the sacraments (art. 13). Calvin strongly criticized the "power of the keys" attributed to the priest but did not minimize the place of forgiveness of sins in the church (*Institutes* 3.4). The Anglican Book of Common Prayer provides for auricular confession and also for a general confession of sins during the eucharist and the office; the 16th article of religion provides for the forgiveness of sin after baptism. The other reforming movements were more radical, usually retaining only a general confession of sins during worship and occasionally forms for confession in small groups.

### CONTEMPORARY TENDENCIES

Theological reflection on penance and reconciliation is done today within the context of soteriology, notably by means of the Pauline concept of reconciliation. This solid theological framework allows one to go beyond confessional controversies and to bring into focus the essential theological question, i.e. the reality of salvation\* (reconciliation) in the church. A good example of this rethinking is provided in the beginning of the introduction to the Roman *Ordo Paenitentiae* (1973).

Along the same lines, current theology grounds reflection on penance and reconciliation in baptism, notably by recalling their historic origin as *paenitentia secunda*. This reflection is concerned with the forgiveness of sins, those committed before baptism, as well as those committed subsequently. In this context the questions of the sacramentality of penance and of its minister may also be re-formulated.

Theologians are divided on the importance of confession in penance. Some attribute to it a great importance, renewed today by psychology and the need people have to be "heard" in the midst of secularized society; they stress the therapeutic aspect of the process. Others prefer to emphasize its ecclesial dimension, the subsequent reconciliation among members of the community and, at the extreme, its aspect of church discipline.\* In this respect, the choice of terminology (whether penance, confession or reconciliation) is not neutral. Attempts are made to take into account the social and collective aspect of sin,\* but theologies of penance are as yet too little in touch with psychoanalysis, sociology, and even the moral theology of sin.

There is now a diffusion of diverse forms, contrary to the standard forms for so long used in auricular and in general confession. Thus, the Roman *Ordo Paenitentiae* of 1973 first offers a revised ritual for individual confession and then two forms for community celebration, the first with individual, and the second with communal confession and absolution (with canonical restrictions for the latter). In Western Catholicism, one witnesses a passage from frequent confession to a rhythm of a few celebrations per year.

Orthodoxy has diverse practices. In some Greek- and Arabic-speaking churches, confession has almost entirely disappeared, while in the Slavic churches, the most traditional forms of confession are still maintained. In Anglicanism there is a certain re-assertion of the value of confession, attested in the revision of liturgical books. Thus the American Book of Common Prayer (1979) includes "The Reconciliation of a Penitent", as does the Canadian Book of Alternative Services (1980). The same tendency is manifest in some currents of Lutheranism, where pastors

invite the people to a community celebration during penitential seasons such as Lent.

These issues have been little discussed within the ecumenical movement, perhaps because of the sacramental quality attributed to penance and reconciliation by the Catholics and Orthodox, which is troublesome for the Protestant churches. Recent theological tendencies, however, seem bound eventually to remove the obstacle.

The most ecumenical aspect of the question is that of the reconciliation of the churches themselves. Today, many consider the ecumenical endeavour as a true ministry of reconciliation. The unions realized among various churches offer material for reflection.

See also **redemption**.

PAUL DE CLERCK

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## PENTECOST

THE TERM derives from *pentēkostē* (lit. 50th), the Greek name for the Jewish Feast of Weeks at the close of the grain harvest 50 days after Passover and Unleavened Bread (see Tob. 2:1). In the early church, "Pentecost" at first designated the whole period of 50 days from Easter;\* only later did it refer particularly to the 50th day, which became a feast in its own right.

The 50 days celebrating Christ's resurrection\* were the "most joyful season" (Tertullian), one "great Sunday" (Athanasius); there was no kneeling for prayer but only standing (to mark the heavenly location of believers in Christ, in anticipation of the general resurrection); and there was no fasting (a foretaste of the heavenly banquet with the messianic bridegroom). In the 4th century, the 50th day was regarded as the seal of

the period, with Christ's ascension and the Spirit's descent as its twin themes. At the turn into the 5th century, the two distinct feasts emerged of Ascension (40 days after Easter; see Acts 1:1-11) and Pentecost (see Acts 2:1-4). The vigil of Pentecost became a baptismal occasion, and the white robes of the baptized account for the English "Whit-sunday".

First in sectarian Judaism in the intertestamental period, and then in rabbinic Judaism by the 2nd and 3rd centuries of the Christian era, the Feast of Weeks has become associated with the law-giving and covenant\* of Sinai. Sermons at the feast of Pentecost by Christian preachers of the 5th century relate the new covenant of the Spirit to the old covenant of the law. Furthermore, the gift of the Holy Spirit\* for apostolic preaching is considered as a reversal of Babel, bringing unity\* and catholicity\* to the church\* and its mission.\* An ancient Latin collect prays: "Make the peoples dispersed by the division of language to be joined by your heavenly gift in the united confession of your name."

In the modern ecumenical movement, Pentecost became a time of special prayer for Christian unity. The preparatory conference of Faith and Order\* at Geneva in 1920 appealed for an annual week of prayer for the unity of the church, ending with Whitsunday. In 1941 F&O changed its dates to the 18-25 January octave, but the Pentecost time remains favoured in some parts of the world (see **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**). The presidents of the WCC send a Pentecost message to member churches every year.

See also **Holy Spirit**.

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT

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## PENTECOSTAL-REFORMED DIALOGUE

THE BILATERAL dialogue between the Pentecostal movement and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches\* (WARC), presently in its early stages, is the first official ecumenical conversation by Pentecostals\* with a Protes-

tant world communion. Dating from the turn of the 20th century, Pentecostalism is best known for its emphasis on the ongoing sanctification\* and empowerment of the Holy Spirit\* in the life of the church\* and its mission\* in the world.

The general council of the WARC proposed the possibility of dialogue with Pentecostals at the request of its Korean members during its meeting in 1989 in Seoul, South Korea. A series of contacts followed between WARC theology secretary Henry Wilson (India) and Pentecostal theologian Cecil M. Robeck, Jr, (Pasadena, CA). Wilson and Robeck convened the organizational meeting in Mathersey, England, in 1994. Delegates reviewed the current state of Reformed-Pentecostal relations around the world, taking note of various regional discussions between their members in the Netherlands, South Africa and, to a lesser extent, the US. It was proposed that the first round of international discussions centre on the issue of spirituality\* in the two traditions.

The first dialogue was hosted by the Waldensian Church on behalf of the WARC at Torre Pelice, Italy, in 1996. It was proposed that the dialogue between the two traditions seek to increase mutual understanding and respect, identify areas of theological agreement, convergence or disagreement, and explore possibilities for common witness.\* Discussions revolved around the issue of spirituality in relation to biblical interpretation, justice and ecumenism. The discussions focused on the mutual challenge implied in the centrality of the Word in the Reformed tradition and the Pentecostal emphasis on the Spirit. All agreed, however, on the central role that both the Bible and the Holy Spirit play in the church's obedience to Christ through proclamation and praxis. Delegates from both sides of the dialogue were challenged by the diversity of their respective traditions in arriving at common affirmations concerning spirituality.

The second round of talks occurred in 1997 in Chicago at McCormick Theological Seminary with the theme "The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Church". Papers were offered on the relation of the Holy Spirit to scripture\* and the role of the Spirit in both proclamation and spiritual gifts. Most significantly, the issue of the nature and role of

prophecy\* in the church today was discussed, especially in relation to the role of scripture as the criterion for discerning the apostolic witness. Both teams concurred that prophecy was vital as a means of making the apostolic voice in scripture dynamic and relevant for today, but the Reformed team tended to accent the role of prophecy in social criticism. The Pentecostals, while not discounting the importance of social criticism, emphasized prophecy as an inspired utterance for personal and ecclesial edification. Both teams confessed together that the Spirit is necessary for the function of the Bible as the word of God\* for the church, for "it is only by the Holy Spirit that the scriptures become the living Word of God for the church" ("Word and Spirit, Church and World", para. 33).

The third round took place the following year at Kappel, Switzerland, focusing on "The Holy Spirit and Mission in Eschatological Perspective". Dominant attention was given to the issue of the relationship between the gospel and culture.\* The Reformed team affirmed the historic commitment of Reformed churches to Jesus Christ as the way of salvation,\* but in agreement with the world conference on mission and evangelism at San Antonio, Texas (1989), also noted that "we cannot set limits to the saving power of God" (*ibid.*, para. 72). The Pentecostals noted their historic hesitance to recognize any possibility for salvation outside of faith in Jesus Christ. Both sides were able to confess together that "the gospel implies first the salvation of humanity, but also the enhancement of human dignity and liberation" (para. 70).

The fourth round of talks occurred in 1999 at Seoul, Korea, with the theme "The Holy Spirit, Charisma and the Kingdom of God". Major attention was placed on the nature and function of spiritual gifts in the church. Pentecostals noted their historic emphasis on the extraordinary gifts discussed in 1 Cor. 12-14 and asked the Reformed team why such little attention is paid to these gifts in the mainstream life of many of their churches. The Reformed team noted that Reformed churches are "sometimes too casual" in exercising spiritual gifts and "do not encourage or even sanction" many of those listed in 1 Cor. 12-14. But they also resisted

the notion that any one gift (like glossolalia) or set of gifts can become normative for Christian experience. Both teams agreed that “no biblical listing of gifts is a template to be laid over the entire church” (*ibid.*, para. 55) and affirmed that all segments of the church need to broaden their understanding of the spiritual gifts.

The fifth meeting in Brazil was occupied with the writing of the final report for the first five years of talks, which has now been published. Discussions are underway concerning the possibility of another five years of conversation. Regardless of what the future holds for the dialogue, the talks since 1996 have helped to build bridges of understanding between these two significant families of Christians.

FRANK D. MACCHIA

■ F.D. Macchia, “Spirit, Word, and Kingdom: Theological Reflections on the Reformed/Pentecostal Dialogue”, *Ecumenical Trends*, 30, 3, 2001 ■ “Word and Spirit, Church and World: The Final Report of the International Dialogue between Representatives of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and Some Classical Pentecostal Churches and Leaders, 1996-2000”, *Pneuma: Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, 23, 1, 2001.

## PENTECOSTAL-ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUE

UNIQUE among the international dialogues, the Pentecostal-Roman Catholic conversations began with official Roman Catholic representatives but only with Pentecostal and other Protestant charismatics whom the co-chairman, David Du Plessis, had recruited. The impetus had come from contacts Du Plessis had made as guest of the Secretariat (now Pontifical Council) for Promoting Christian Unity\* to observe Vatican Council II;\* from initiatives of Ray Bringham, an American charismatic; and from the Vatican’s acceptance of the fast-rising charismatic movement within the Roman Catholic Church. From the beginning of the dialogue in 1972, Kilian McDonnell, US Benedictine priest, has been co-chairman.

The dialogue was initially organized in five-year periods, with one session per year. During the first period (1972-76) the Pentecostal team included also charismatics from

Protestant churches, who presented the majority of the papers. The topics concentrated on the Holy Spirit’s\* role in Christian initiation, the Spirit and the church,\* and the Spirit’s role in prayer and worship.

For the second period (1977, 1979-82), the Pentecostals decided to exclude charismatics from other churches. Du Plessis’s efforts to get official denominational backing, especially from the large American Assemblies of God, met constant rebuff, but he secured participation by smaller Pentecostal groups. Topics addressed faith\* and experience, biblical hermeneutics,\* speaking in tongues, healing, the church as communion\* in worship, scripture and Tradition, Mary,\* and ministry in the church.\*

The three-year gap before the third quinquennium (1985-89) partly reflected the Vatican’s concern that the dialogue receive more backing from Pentecostal denominations. For this third series, on the theme “Perspectives on Koinonia”, David Du Plessis (d.1987) was replaced as Pentecostal co-chairman by his younger brother, Justus.

Since the third quinquennium there has been more Pentecostal participation, often as observers, with some backing of Pentecostal denominations, in a more international team. The fourth series, from 1990 to 1997, has been the most focused, leading to the joint report on “Evangelization, Proselytism and Common Witness”, the most important document to come from this dialogue. At the turn of the third millennium, and in face of the secularization\* of post-modernity, Catholics and Pentecostals outline the scriptural and theological bases of their understanding and practice of evangelization and ask each other challenging questions about the proclamation of the gospel and ministries for social justice. A fifth phase began in 1998 on the theme “Christian Initiation and the Baptism in the Holy Spirit”.

The importance of this dialogue may lie primarily in assisting a largely anti-ecumenical movement slowly to re-evaluate its attitudes and positions. In this process the visionary role of David Du Plessis and the contribution of ecumenist and scholar Cecil M. Robeck, Jr, the Pentecostal co-chairman since 1992, have been of particular significance.

PETER HOCKEN

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## PENTECOSTAL WORLD CONFERENCE

ORGANIZED in 1947 in Zurich, Switzerland, the Pentecostal World Conference (PWC) intended originally to have limited legislative powers which would facilitate relations between the various Pentecostal denominations and aid them in common witness. Broad Pentecostal participation, inclusive of the Brazilians, Scandinavians and many independent Pentecostals, was made possible only when the powers of this body were limited to those of persuasion and consensus. Its purposes now include the promotion of "spiritual" fellowship, demonstration before the world of the "essential unity of Spirit-baptized believers" in fulfilment of Jesus' prayer in John 17:21, and cooperation on other items of mutual concern.

Every three years about 5000 to 10,000 Pentecostal leaders gather to listen to popular speakers, worship together, network with their peers, exchange ideas and information, challenge one another to greater responsibility in witness, and occasionally to make non-binding pronouncements. Between conferences the work of the PWC is overseen by an international advisory board which is generally composed of heads of communions and preachers with high visibility. Information is disseminated through the quarterly *World Pentecost*. The 1995 meeting was in Jerusalem; 1998, Seoul, Korea; and in 2001 in Los Angeles, to commemorate what some argue is the centennial anniversary of Pentecostalism.

See **Pentecostals**.

CECIL M. ROBECK, Jr

■ C.M. Robeck, Jr, "Taking Stock", *One World*, 210, 1995.

## PENTECOSTALS

THE 20TH-CENTURY Pentecostal movement affirms a post-conversion work of the Holy Spirit.\* This work is designated baptism in the Spirit, generally understood as empowerment for mission\* and ministry,\* and is said to represent the restoration of the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Cor. 12:8-10 (see **charism(ata)**). Of these gifts, speaking in tongues has particular significance for most Pentecostals as the initial evidence of baptism in the Spirit.

First-generation Pentecostals saw the Pentecostal movement as a revival with distinctive characteristics. It was the latter rain, a downpour of Holy Spirit in the last days before the parousia, comparable in power only to the spring rain of the New Testament church. It was the full gospel, completing the restoration of the gospel established by the Reformation and furthered by Wesleyan sanctification.\* It was the "foursquare gospel", manifesting Jesus as Saviour, Healer, Baptizer in the Holy Spirit, and Coming King. It was the apostolic faith, identical with the supernatural faith of the first Christians. It was Pentecostal, because in baptism in the Spirit each believer experiences a personal Pentecost, with God restoring the divine endowments of the church poured out at Pentecost\* but lost through later apostasy and unbelief. These terms have influenced the name of many Pentecostal denominations.

Most Pentecostal histories hold that the Pentecostal movement stems from the ministry of Charles Parham, around 1900-1901 in the US; he first linked baptism in the Spirit with glossolalia. The movement's explosion beyond a local Holiness revival in Kansas and Texas resulted from the multiracial Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles, 1906-1909, under the black pastor William J. Seymour. Further impetus came from Parham's mission in Zion City, Illinois, in late 1906. Within two years of the Azusa Street outbreak, the Pentecostal movement had centres throughout the US, in many northern European countries, in India and China, and in West and South Africa. The following years saw its establishment in Latin America, especially in Brazil and Chile, and more missions in Africa and Asia.

The Pentecostal movement initially had a strong eschatological orientation (see **eschatology**). It emphasized that Pentecost had to be preached throughout the world before the imminent return of the Lord. Many Evangelicals denounced the Pentecostal movement for unbridled emotionalism, spiritual deception and the subordination of scripture to experience. Strongest opposition was from among Holiness groups. They had been a matrix for Pentecostal concepts and provided most Pentecostal recruits in North America and Europe.

Despite this Evangelical rejection, the Pentecostal movement in America and Europe adopted conservative Evangelical doctrine, pre-millennial eschatology and a fundamentalist approach to biblical exegesis. In the USA this process was cemented by white Pentecostal membership in the National Association of Evangelicals, from its founding in 1943.

The Pentecostal movement's rapid spread led to the formation of Pentecostal denominations and independent ministries. We can distinguish four categories: (1) Holiness churches which add baptism in the Spirit as a third blessing after regeneration and sanctification, e.g. the black Church of God in Christ (1907), the Church of God of Cleveland, Tennessee (1907) and the Pentecostal Holiness Church (1911); (2) two-stage Pentecostals, mostly from a Reformed background, who profess baptism in the Spirit as a "second blessing", e.g. the Assemblies of God (1914), the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (1919); (3) the Oneness Church, which rejects the Trinity,\* affirms a modalist Christology, and baptizes only in Jesus' name, e.g. the United Pentecostal Church (origins in 1914, formed in 1945); and (4) churches which restore the offices of apostle and prophet on the basis of Eph. 4:11, e.g. the Apostolic Church (1918).

Other major figures in the Pentecostal movement were Lewi Pethrus of Sweden, who strongly defended the autonomy of each assembly; Smith Wigglesworth, an itinerant British evangelist; Aimee Semple McPherson, American evangelist; Donald Gee, British educator; and Nicholas Bhengu, an African prophet. Missionary heroes include the American Lillian Trasher in Egypt, the Swedes Daniel Berg and Gunnar Vingren

in Brazil, the Canadian C. Austin Chawner in Mozambique, and the English William Burton and James Salter in the Congo.

The Pentecostal movement has flourished among the poor and uneducated (hence the title of R.M. Anderson's study *Vision of the Disinherited*). It appeals through its oral-gestural character, involving less conceptual forms of communication, such as hand-clapping, raised arms, dance, visions, dreams and prophecy, and through its participatory patterns, which characterize especially the earliest phases of the movement. Consequently, Pentecostal churches begin as bodies of fervent believers who exalt spiritual experience and wisdom over formal education. Bible colleges and educational institutions have followed only in the third and fourth generations.

The Pentecostal movement has spread rapidly in the third world, faster in the indigenous churches than in those controlled by foreign mission boards. In Latin America, Pentecostals now account for 80% of the Protestants, far outstripping the numbers in older Protestant missions and churches. Worldwide Pentecostals now number more than 150 million Christians. The largest family of churches is the Assemblies of God.\*

The first Pentecostal world conference\* was held at Zurich in 1947, the second in Paris in 1949. These early conferences saw fierce opposition to attempts to form a representative body that could speak for the entire Pentecostal movement. Now held every three years, they are largely celebratory occasions which centre on worship, testimonies and inspirational preaching, without any forum for public debate.

Pentecostals have generally been hostile to the ecumenical movement, which they perceive as embracing the apostate and stigmatize as merely human efforts to organize institutional unity. This opposition has been less marked in the third world, with two Chilean Pentecostal churches joining the WCC in 1961, followed in 1969 by the larger "O Brasil para Cristo" church of Manoel de Mello. The vision of baptism in the Spirit promoting Christian unity inspired some early Pentecostals. It had been kept alive especially by David Du Plessis (d.1987; see **charism(ata)**). He attended all the WCC assemblies from Evanston to Vancouver and

laboured to gain official denominational support for the international Pentecostal-Roman Catholic dialogue.\* An international Reformed-Pentecostal dialogue took place between 1996 and 2000 leading to a report “Word and Spirit, Church and World”.

Local theological dialogues involving Pentecostals have taken place in Finland, the Netherlands and South Africa. Some American Pentecostal scholars have participated in the Faith and Order\* study on the apostolic faith and reflect those more open attitudes which are developing within the Society for Pentecostal Studies, formed in 1971. The Pentecostal movement today faces the dilemma of how to be less sectarian without becoming too cerebral and thus losing its power and appeal.

PETER HOCKEN

■ S.M. Burgess & G.B. McGee eds, *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Grand Rapids MI, Zondervan, 1996 ■ H. Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century*, London, Cassell, 1996 ■ D. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, Metuchen NJ, Scarecrow, 1987 ■ W.J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, Peabody MA, Hendrickson, 1997 ■ W.J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*, Minneapolis, Augsburg, 1972 ■ OC, 23, 1-2, 1987 ■ C.M. Robeck, *A Collection of Pentecostal Writings on Ecumenical Issues*, Pasadena CA, Robeck, 2000 ■ C.M. Robeck, “Pentecostals and Ecumenism in a Pluralistic World”, in *The Globalization of Pentecostalism*, M. Dampster et al. eds, Oxford, Regnum, 1999.

## PEOPLE

THE TERM “people” is an elusive word with different meanings and connotations in its various historical, linguistic, national, cultural and ideological settings. Theologically, it is significant in the ecclesiological use as “people of God”,\* in the biblical references to people and also in the modern social, economic and ideological meanings and connotations.

The biblical vocabulary presents some problems. The two basic Hebrew terms, ‘*am* and *goy* (plural *goyim*), usually translated “people” and “nation” respectively, are sometimes used interchangeably, but as a rule the former designates relations of consanguinity (family and extended family). *Goy*, however, usually designates land and political organization. The two terms are ap-

plied both to Israel and to other peoples, but the first is preferred for Israel, whereas *goy(im)* is more used for the other nations. The word ‘*am* is used in many composite names with the name of God, while *goy* is not used in this way. In this sense we could say that Israel is a “people” that becomes a “nation”, although we cannot rigidly separate these two dimensions of Israel’s life and calling (see **land**). Variations, however, also include social conditions within Israel. Perhaps the most interesting is the expression ‘*am ha ’erets* (the people of the land), which in pre-exilic times designates either “the men” or more frequently the higher sectors of society (landowners, authorities) and after the exile is used for the non-Jewish (e.g. Samaritans) living within or around the borders of the returned exiles. Finally, by extension, the phrase designates in the times of Jesus “the people who do not know (or do not observe) the law”, the despised “multitudes”, for whom Jesus felt compassion.

The New Testament vocabulary is also complex. *Laos* is used in at least four ways: as a number of peoples without any definite identity, as a specific people having definite particularities, as “the common people” over against the rulers or the “upper classes” and as “the chosen people”, the eschatological community, the people of the covenant.\* Luke seems to prefer the popular meaning (as crowd or population), while Pauline literature leans to the figurative meaning (the Christian community). In this connection it is interesting to note the use of *ochlos* (usually translated “crowd”), which, with some exceptions, the gospels use for “the common people” who came to Jesus, those despised by the higher classes and the religious authorities, a term almost synonymous with ‘*am ha ’erets*.

Even this cursory review points to at least three significant theological issues: (1) the relation of people to God, which appears in different linguistic constructions and finally becomes a technical term, “people of God”; (2) the “internal” constitution of the people, i.e. the relation between the different sectors of the people – full citizens, leaders, common people – and the relation between people in consanguineous relations and as structured in a political body; and, finally, (3) the relation between “the people” (Israel, the church) and the other peoples (“the nations”, Greek *ta ethnē*).

## ECUMENICAL USAGE BEFORE THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The notion of people appeared in missionary discussions about “the religions of the peoples”, usually posed in terms of the relation between the revelation in Jesus Christ and the non-Christian religions (see **revelation, mission**). The issue has re-appeared lately as part of the claims of marginalized peoples (native populations, black) or traditional cultures to recover their own cultural identity, including their religious symbols and traditions.

A more direct challenge for the ecumenical movement was the ideological use of the concept of people by totalitarian movements such as fascism\* and Nazism. Extraordinary claims for a particular people are not new. However, the ideology of “pan-Germanism” with all its political connotations, developed in Romanticism and incorporated in different organizations and associations since the last decades of the 19th century, assumed political and religious proportions that presented the church with an unavoidable challenge. The Oxford conference (1937; see **ecumenical conferences**) was partly dominated by the need to respond. The problems involved three inter-related issues. First, by identifying people and nation, the mystical attributes related to the *Volk* (in its romantic and even some pietistic tendencies) were transferred to the political ambitions, policies and decisions of the state. Second, since this *Volk* was also considered a superior race (a myth of consanguinity and soil, *Blut und Boden*), the idea of “purity of the people” fostered ethnic persecution (see e.g. **anti-semitism**). Third, a certain “revelational” and even “salvific” significance is attached to people, a claim that goes from the extremes of elevating a supposedly original Germanic religion to the rank of exclusive and superior revelation and rejecting Christianity as a corruption (Alfred Rosenberg), through degrees of identification of Christianity with this Germanic religion to more modest claims of some special and unique identity and role for the German (or Germanic) people.

The issue engaged both Edinburgh 1937 and Oxford 1937. The Oxford statements address the three issues mentioned above: a totalitarianism that denies “the sovereignty

of Christ and the freedom of the church”, the persecution of minorities on the basis of race and colour and “the deification of one’s own people”, which is “a sin against God”. This last point could only be understood as a response to an affirmation of Theodor Heckel early in 1937, stating positively that “fundamentally National Socialism is the *Volk*. At its heart is the unique life-style of the (biologically) homogeneous *Volk* and its rich store of creative values.”

Beyond these more specific declarations, the quest for a social and political ethics based on the notions of justice and freedom, “a responsible society”, can be understood as an attempt to build, on a Christological basis, a response to the challenge of totalitarianism. The relation between the Confessing Church\* and the WCC was strengthened during the war and led to actions like the Stuttgart declaration.\* The warning against the dangers of a “people’s ideology” led the WCC and many member churches in the 1940s and 1950s to a definite mistrust of all nationalist claims, which is reflected even in the names for the churches that avoid genitives of the land, preferring forms like “church in...” and other more neutral expressions.

## THIRD-WORLD CONTRIBUTIONS

With the participation of third-world churches, a different perspective appeared on questions of “people” and “nationalism”. Peoples that had just gained their independence or who were in the midst of liberation struggles against colonial or neo-colonial domination saw their commitment to the nation as a legitimate expression of a Christian’s commitment to justice and freedom (see **decolonization, nation**). “People” here gains a positive meaning. Moreover, mainly in Asia and Latin America, where local economic and political minorities or military regimes, frequently allied to foreign interests, held control, the struggle for emancipation brought the people – now in the social sense of the common people, the poor,\* the peasants – against the power elites. Governments in Asia and Latin America, reacting to the restiveness of growing populations, became totalitarian and mercilessly curtailed civil liberties and violated the human rights of their peoples. As a consequence, people’s move-

ments erupted all over Asia and Latin America, and the more perceptive elements of the churches stood in solidarity with the people and took up their cause. Their sufferings are perceived as a powerful cry to the God of justice, who, in mysterious ways, introduces a dynamics in history which judges, liberates and transforms society as a whole.

In secular history, the visible initiator and bearer of this historical dynamics is the people. People, therefore, are not the objects of history but the subjects of their own history. God is perceived as being genuinely incarnate in people's struggles for justice\* and humanity because justice belongs to the very nature of God. But God's identification with the poor, the oppressed and all victims of injustice is not because of some ontological or ethical quality of goodness which the people possess but because of their actual historical condition as victims of injustice. Such an understanding of "people" holds enormous revolutionary potential, and the most articulate practitioners have been involved in different kinds of movements for socio-political transformation. A good number have been incarcerated, tortured and murdered because their thought and action are perceived to be subversive of the interests of the state. In such contexts ancient creeds and primeval symbols once more become energizing and inspiring.

This struggle has made possible a new exploration of the biblical, theological and political dimensions of the concept of people. Asian theologians point out that the Bible itself enshrines this understanding of people. Biblical scholarship indicates that the people of God referred to in the Bible was not a single tribe but a motley group of marginalized, powerless, disfranchised people who were bound together by a common experience of oppression and injustice, and by a common yearning for justice and freedom (N. Gottwald, *Tribes of Jahweh*, 1979). The OT prophets confronted tyrannical rulers and corrupt wielders of religious authority with God's judgment. In much of the NT, Jesus is portrayed as an iconoclast who champions the cause of the poor, the powerless, the oppressed. He associated himself with the poor, prostitutes, drunkards, the sick – a segment of society that the official theology of the time considered outside the

pale of God's kingdom. For Jesus there is a linkage between the people and the kingdom of God,\* and this linkage is the focus of many Asian theologians today.

The Christian Conference of Asia\* has organized a number of consultations and seminars to explore systematically the implications of a people-centred theology in the areas of Christology, ecclesiology and soteriology. A new openness has emerged towards such groups, seen as being of a piece with the Body of Christ. And soteriology is being given a socio-political dimension, in which a person's liberation is linked with his or her actual solidarity with the poor and oppressed. Such theologians do not romanticize people, for they know only too well that people can and do embrace false values, can be swallowed up by the psyche of the mob and can give rise to and follow demagogues; but as victims of injustice, they yearn for God's justice and righteousness. In other words, the theological understanding of people is consistent with the theology of grace which runs through mainline theological thought: people are the bearers of God's grace\* because as victims of injustice they are the ones God seeks to be in solidarity with. And God does not merely liberate people from injustice; God also seeks to express God's image in them, to transform them and make them agents of God's liberating grace.

While there is substantial agreement among third-world theologians and communities on this understanding of people, the various social, political, cultural and religious differences lead to different emphases. In Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s, the concept of people received mainly a social, economic and political connotation, defined by three concentric circles: (1) the poor and oppressed, the marginalized majorities (peasants, workers, sub-proletariat); (2) those who become aware of themselves and their condition and assume the cause of their liberation (who could be seen as an avant-garde or a force within the larger poor population); and (3) those who, without belonging to the marginal, make an option for them and unite themselves with them in their historical pilgrimage. The idea that the people, in this sense, belong by right to the "people of God" is not theologically problematic, since these majorities are almost to-

tally Christian (see **church base communities; theology, liberation**).

In two points, however, corrections to thinking have been necessary. In the first place, the experience of participation in the life of this people led theologians to realize the importance of ethnic and cultural factors in the self-understanding of the people and the meaning of such factors in the struggles for liberation. Culture and race could not be seen as a secondary or peripheral dimension but as belonging together with the social and economic condition for any significant understanding of people. Culture, tradition and ethnic belonging are inseparable from religion, particularly among native and black populations.

Second, in Asia and Africa it has become clear that these dimensions have been prominent from the beginning. In Asia the theological efforts to recover and re-read the religious and cultural tradition, as expressed in folklore, dance, language, customs and gestures (see **culture**), can be seen in much theological production in India, Korea (see **theology, minjung**) and the Philippines. The biographies and stories of the people are one of the main sources from which theology must be derived. Thus, the people are seen not as recipients of a theology elaborated elsewhere but as the subject of theology. In Latin America, Bible reading in the church base community takes this character of theological reflection, a hermeneutics\* born from the experience of the people in contact with the biblical text.

### CURRENT ECUMENICAL INITIATIVES

Several WCC programmes focus on the role, the condition and the struggles of "the people", particularly in the meaning indicated in the preceding paragraphs. At the political level, the defence of human rights,\* the Programme to Combat Racism\* and the support of land rights claims of native populations are all part of the people's struggles. The Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development programme of the church in solidarity with the poor and the work of the sub-commission on rural and industrial mission have related to people's movements. In 1985 the Programme on Theological Education organized a consultation in Mexico on theology by the people. The

concern was twofold: to seek new ways of doing theology in community, and to see that an active commitment to justice and peace become an integral concern of the theological enterprise. Though the consultation was very much aware of theological (as well as political) dangers present in an uncritical populism, and though attention was called to the need for a certain distancing in any rigorous reflection, it strongly affirmed a theology that positively recognizes and assumes its organic relation to the people and the historical and cultural conditions which, frequently unacknowledged (and therefore uncritically incorporated), are present in all theological work.

CYRIS MOON and LEVI V. ORACIÓN

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### PEOPLE OF GOD

IN THE OLD Testament, "people of God" designates the calling and mission of Israel as the people chosen by God from among all the peoples (Ex. 6:7 etc.). In the New Testament the term describes the self-understanding of the Christian community (1 Pet. 2:9), which is the "true" people of God of the end times, founded by the self-offering of Christ and united by the Spirit of God. Through faith\* in Christ and baptism\* into him, Israel and all peoples are made into the one new people of God, which takes concrete form in the local church. This claim of the primitive Christian community raised the problem of the respective places of Israel and the church\* in the history of salvation (see **salvation history**), which already in the patristic literature was reduced to a metaphoric opposition between Israel as the prototype of infidelity and sin\* and the church as the prototype of salvation\* (see **Israel and the church**). As a result of the Jewish-Christian

dialogue,\* a growing number of theologians today affirm that God remains faithful to Israel and keeps the covenant with his chosen people.

In the 20th century the biblical term received fresh attention as part of the renewal of ecclesiology. The way was prepared by exegetical studies and by a more general shift in the approach to ecclesiology, involving now also the historical character of the church and the role of Christology and eschatology. At Vatican II\* “people of God” appears in *Lumen Gentium* as a second central concept in ecclesiology alongside “sacrament” (i.e. the church as a sign and instrument of salvation; *LG* 9-17). The category there serves as a basis for the unity of laity\* and clergy in the church as the one messianic people of God. Towards humankind as a whole, which is the people of God in the broadest sense and diversely related to the church, the church acts as the sign and the instrument of salvation and unity.\* The existence of the church is determined by the hope that all humankind may be integrated into the messianic people; until this unity is finally achieved, the church’s existence remains a “pro-existence”, i.e. for the sake of the world. The church moves towards this consummation as the pilgrim people of God. Within the Roman Catholic Church, the formulations of *LG* were particularly taken up by liberation theology and linked with the idea of a “people’s church”. The church as the people of God goes hand in hand with the acquisition of (political) peoplehood by oppressed social groups.

In ecumenical work on ecclesiological questions, “people of God” has likewise been adopted as an image of the church. In *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* (1982), the understanding of ministry is developed on the basis of the opening declaration that “God calls the whole of humanity to become God’s people” (M1). The mission\* of the church to proclaim the kingdom of God\* in the world is founded on this calling (M1-4; see also the final “perspectives on ecclesiology” in *BEM, 1982-1990*). In *The Nature and Purpose of the Church* (interim report, 1998), the church, as the people of God, “continues the way of pilgrimage to the eternal rest prepared for it (Heb. 4:9-11)”; it is “a prophetic sign of the fulfilment God will

bring about through Christ by the power of the Spirit” (31).

In comparison with other descriptions of the church, “people of God” has the following advantages as an ecclesiological image. It does not allow the nature of the church to be separated from its concrete historical form. The nature of the church is determined by its relation to the kingdom of God. As the people called by God, the church lives under God’s direction until the kingdom comes. At the same time, the church plays a part in the history of salvation by acting, in faithfulness to its vocation,\* as a sign of hope in every particular situation. The image of the people of God presupposes the active participation of all members of the church, while also pointing to the unity of the church and finally of all humankind. Besides the danger of a politicization of the concept (which is present in liberation theology), other open questions remain in connection with the Jewish-Christian dialogue and the dialogue with other living religions (see **dialogue, interfaith**), as well as in the matter of the concrete structures required by the church in fulfilment of its calling.

See also **images of the church; laity/clergy; ministry in the church; people; theology, liberation.**

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## PERSON

THE LATIN word for person, *persona*, probably derives from the Greek *prosōpon*, which refers to the mask an actor wore in the theatre. Both the Latin and Greek words for person were associated with the role one took upon oneself either as a part of the Greek theatre or as a member of the Roman state. In neither case was the concept of a person determinative of the essence of some-

one (i.e. who one really is), a concept expressed in Greek as *hypostasis*, and in Latin as *substantia*.

The notion of person has a crucial place within early Christian Trinitarian and Christological discussions. These early debates sought formulations which would witness to the church's confession of biblical monotheism as well as the divinity of the Son and the Spirit. Yet one of the results of the early debates and councils was that the concept of person no longer simply meant the role one takes but now indicated one's being, one's essence. Exactly how this change took place is not actually clear; however, it was the arguments within Eastern and Western churches concerning the relation of the Father, Son and Spirit which brought the notion of person to the centre.

The church in the East and the West realized that the central challenge was to speak of God\* in a way as to respect both the divine unity or oneness and the eternal expressions of God as Father, Son and Spirit. Eventually, the church agreed that the most appropriate formulations would have to affirm that God is one divine reality in three eternal manifestations. Western theological formulations, following the lead of Tertullian and the suggestions of Augustine, spoke of God as one substance or essence in three persons, *una substantia, tres personae* (Tertullian, *Against Praxeas*, 11-12; Augustine, *On the Trinity*, books 1-7). In basic agreement with the West, the East, following the Cappadocian fathers, spoke of God as one divine nature or being, *mia physis*, or *ousia*, in three persons, *treis hypostaseis* (Basil, *Letter 38*, 2). Unfortunately, some terminological confusion resulted from the fact that the East used *hypostasis* for what is three, while the West used *substantia* for what is one (and *persona* for what is three).

By using the concept of person (*hypostasis* or *persona*), the church was able to affirm that God is not the sum of three divine parts; rather God is Father, Son and Spirit, indicative of one essence. Yet the use of "person" also revealed a subtle but crucial difference between Eastern and Western theological formulations. This difference stems not from any overarching theological dispute between East and West but from perceived theological dangers within their

somewhat different philosophical contexts.

In fear of tritheism, the West placed emphasis on the unity of the Father, Son and Spirit in the divine essence. It was better to think of God first as one essence in three persons, because everything that can be said of God can be said equally of Father, Son and Spirit. "Person" was therefore basically a limiting term which prohibited the exchange of divine names (e.g. the Son is not the Father, etc.).

Attempting to rework Aristotelian and Neo-platonic categories, the East placed emphasis on the unity of the Father, Son and Spirit in the person of the Father. It was better to think of God as the Father, who is the source of the Son by generation and of the Spirit by spiration, because there is no naked divine substance which exists without the divine persons. This meant that "person" was fundamentally a positive term which constitutes the divine nature or essence. The divine nature consists in the fact that God is the persons of Father, Son and Spirit in communion.

This subtle difference in the use of "person" meant that the West was able to guard itself more carefully than the East against any accusations of tritheism. Western theologians were able to say that it was the relations of Father, Son and Spirit in the divine essence which made them persons. Thus the divine persons were defined as three relationally distinct ways of existing in one essence (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a.29.4). While the East was in basic agreement with the West that the divine persons are constituted by their relationships, the West was unable to grasp the break the East had made with the general doctrines of essence or substance. Such a break meant that the divine essence does not precede but is constituted by the Father's begetting of the Son and sending forth the Spirit. As John Zizioulas states, God is Trinity "because the Father as a person freely wills this communion" (44).

### PERSON AND INDIVIDUALISM

Western theologians, for the most part, have been more uncomfortable than their Eastern counterparts with the notion of person. The West perceived the notion as inadequate because, even with the important

qualifications, it was difficult to see how the divine persons could suggest real relations without also suggesting three distinct beings. The danger of God's being thought of as three distinct beings was based not only on the continuing acceptance of substance-essence categories but also on the acceptance, in some measure, of the Boethian definition of person, which placed incommunicability, substantiality, and intellectuality as fundamental to being a person (Boethius, *Treatise against Eutyches and Nestorius*, 3; see Fortman, 161ff.).

The idea of person was made more problematic with the addition of the attributes of personality and self-consciousness. With the inclusion of these attributes, added during the Enlightenment, most Western theologians now saw the notion of person as an obstacle to be overcome in elaborating the doctrine of the Trinity as well as in explaining the relation of God as person to the human person (Barth, 35ff.). If a person could be defined as a self-conscious individual with intrinsic rights who was able to reason and pursue the perceived good, then God could not actually be three persons (but possibly was one person).

Theological reflection in the West has had to contend with the ideology of individualism, which defines the person according to essential attributes and rights. Such persons are the building blocks of community and society, and thus the protection of the wills and rights of the individual becomes our greatest task. Against this perspective, some theological circles in the West have attempted to return to the Trinitarian persons and their relations as the basis upon which we understand ourselves as persons. Thus Walter Kasper has argued that persons are defined not by their individual essence or attributes but by their relationships (285ff.; cf. Hill).

Although this return in the West to the doctrine of the Trinity\* signals an attempt to overcome "substance" definitions of personhood, the West has still not fully appreciated the break Eastern theologians have made with essence-substance presuppositions. It was the necessity that Father, Son and Spirit fully partake in the non-corporeal divine essence that was overturned by the Eastern theologians (Zizioulas, 40ff.; cf. Lossky, 111ff.).

Eastern theologians have wanted to push the West beyond simply saying that "God is not a substance because God's existence is prior to God's essence", towards seeing that God as the person of the Father (who in love begets the Son and sends forth the Spirit) constitutes God's essence. Thus the movement of the persons towards each other in love is the mode of God's existence (Zizioulas, 46). For the East, individualism can be overcome only by overcoming the notions of divine or human essences applied to the idea of person.

### PERSON AND CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Theologians in the East and West recognize that the Trinitarian concept of person should serve as the basis of our definitions of personhood. They also recognize that to understand fully what it means to be a person, one must enter into communion\* with the Triune God through the sacramental life of the church.\* In and through the life of the church, we partake in the divine life in which the Son by the Spirit turns us towards the Father. The church must stress that in Jesus Christ we enter into a new understanding of personhood. We are persons not because of any essential national, racial or biological necessities but because we live in response to the love of God. The church accordingly must remember that true unity and healthy human community take place only as we enter into fellowship with the Triune God (John 17).

See also **anthropology, theological**.

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## PLURALISM

PLURALISM has engaged the attention of philosopher William James (*A Pluralistic Universe*, 1909), who argued against monistic metaphysical systems in defence of the multiformity of nature,\* and of political scientists who have contended for a diversity of social organization over against the monopoly of an absolute state. Ecumenically, pluralism became an issue at a comparatively late stage. While some at the first Life and Work\* conference (Stockholm 1925) saw in the League of Nations the potential nucleus of a worldwide Christian commonwealth, by the time of the Oxford Life and Work conference (1937), the tune had changed, in view of the threat the forces of neo-paganism posed to any unified Christian culture.

Secularization\* and the renaissance of cultural and social diversity demonstrated two things. First, the ideal of a monolithic corpus Christianum and its attendant privileges had to be abandoned. Christians were becoming a minority in the world, and in any case "return" to an integrated Christian commonwealth made no sense for non-Western churches, which had never had a share in the authority of Western Christendom. Within the Roman Catholic Church, Vatican II\* emphasized the recognition of a universal plurality, replacing compulsion by intellectual and political freedom.

Second, ecumenical discussion of the issue should recognize a distinction between existing *plurality* and *pluralism* (in the sense of diversity as a value in itself). It should avoid the extremes of exclusiveness (ignoring plurality in order not to succumb to pluralism) and inclusiveness (transferring the fact of plurality into pluralism), for neither does justice to the need for peaceful relations in the "global village" and the right of people to freely live a meaningful life in society. In common usage, however, the terms "plurality" and "pluralism" are interchangeable.

The ecumenical movement has pioneered in demonstrating that an approximation to Christian unity\* is possible with converging church structures and theological traditions

alongside continuing diversity of theological reflection and plurality of life-styles. Plurality of theological perspectives has vastly increased with the emergence of third-world and feminist theologies. As Christian cooperation transcends historical frontiers, the question inevitably arises whether similar processes are possible within the plurality of religions in the world. On the whole, the ecumenical movement has refused to countenance an introverted and exclusivist Christianity which ignores the existing plurality of religions and ideologies, while not endorsing the pluralist view that all religions are so many paths to one divine reality (see **uniqueness of Christ, theology of religions**).

As new channels of dialogue between people of different faiths open up (see **dialogue, interfaith**), many ecumenically initiated, the relevance of an enlightened understanding of religious plurality becomes clearer. Respect for and cooperation with others can disclose commonalities among people of different faiths. What is held in common serves as a basis for understanding what is different, and vice versa. The freedom for worship which one group expects must be granted to others. One of the outstanding ecumenical tasks is thus to articulate a Christian theology of religion\* which can promote and undergird a responsible dialogue with people of different faiths. A number of attempts are being made to work out fresh approaches to such a theology, and the WCC's sub-unit dealing with dialogue has significantly contributed to it. In 1984 the sub-unit organized a Jewish-Christian conference on "The Meaning and Limits of Religious Pluralism in the World Today". The topic has since also been dealt with in dialogues with Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims. In January 1990 the sub-unit brought together in Baar, Switzerland, an ecumenical group of prominent theologians from Protestant, RC and Orthodox churches to explore the basic issues of religious plurality. The Lutheran World Federation\* convened a similar meeting in 1986.

Since 1990 the WCC inter-religious relations and dialogue team has continued to promote interfaith contacts, to analyze and monitor the role of religion in society, and to encourage theological reflection on religious plurality. A number of key consultations and publications have been central to this con-

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tinuing concern, including *My Neighbour's Faith and Mine: A Study Guide* (1986), "Teaching Christianity in Dialogue with Other Faith Traditions" (Geneva 2000), "Women and Religious Education and Instruction" (Mülheim 1999), "Anti-semitism in Church and Society" (Warsaw 1999) and "Religious Freedom, Community Rights and Individual Rights: A Christian-Muslim Perspective" (Hartford CT 1999).

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## POLYGAMY

POLYGAMY is the practice of a plural marriage in which there is more than one spouse simultaneously. It includes polyandry (one woman married to more than one man) and polygyny (one man married to more than one woman). One can also speak of "serial polygamy", or marital relations with a person besides one's first spouse. Here (and customarily) "polygamy" has the sense of polygyny.

From fairly early in its history, Christianity taught that monogamy is the paradigm of marriage. That history was in part shaped by Graeco-Roman culture, including the influence of Roman law at several points: consent

is essential for marriage; its purpose is procreation; impediments to marriage include impotence, consanguinity and disparity of cult. The idea that marriage is indissoluble and monogamous probably owes something to the Graeco-Roman traditional pagan "religion of the hearth". The indebtedness to this tradition was well articulated by Augustine when he wrote: "Now indeed in our time, and in keeping with Roman customs, it is no longer allowed to take another wife, so as to have more than one wife living" (*The Advantage of Marriage* 7). He also deduced views of marriage from the New Testament, where marriage acquires sacramental significance (21).

The missionary church took this Romanized understanding of marriage, including a negative view of polygamy, to the ends of the earth. On the few occasions polygamy was tolerated, it was because, as Pope Gregory II wrote in 726 to Boniface, missionary to the Germanic peoples of northern Europe, the people lacked "high ideals" or because it was expedient to wean primitive people gradually from their rude practices.

In those earlier times polygamy was not discussed as a missionary and pastoral problem but was always debated in apologetic and theoretical terms, especially trying to deal with the embarrassing fact that many of the Old Testament patriarchs had more than one wife. Against this background the council of Trent\* condemned the pastoral proposals of the 16th-century reformers Martin Luther and Philipp Melancthon, who justified the polygamous marriages of Henry VIII of England and Philip of Hesse.

When Roman Catholic missionaries went to Africa, they demanded that polygamists divorce all but one of their wives, thereby inflicting great pain on wives who had entered the relationship innocently before becoming Christian. This approach was based on Pope Paul III's constitution *Altitudo* (1537). In the 20th century Pope Pius XII went further in enunciating a canonical regulation by which the pope had the power to dissolve valid marriages between non-Christians, neither of whom intended to receive baptism.

Protestants have displayed a slightly more liberal attitude which includes several variations: (1) women and children may be baptized but not the polygamous husband; (2) the husband may be baptized if he di-

vorces all wives but his first; (3) the husband may be baptized if he divorces all but his preferred wife; (4) the entire family may be baptized in clear understanding that subsequent plural marriages are forbidden; (5) on the testimony of their faith alone, anyone in a polygamous marriage may be baptized, with no further conditions. Polygamy has thus been seen as a missionary issue, though the seemingly liberal approach was tinged with an anthropology that left much to be desired, ethnocentrism and rather questionable exegeses of scripture.

The Anglican Lambeth conference of 1888, responding to the debate in Africa, especially in the diocese of Natal at the time of Bishop John Colenso, faced the matter directly. Only 21 of the 104 bishops were prepared to accept polygamists, and 34 opposed any concessions, even to the wives of polygamists. With some qualifications, it declared that "polygamy is inconsistent with the law of Christians concerning marriage". Only at the Lambeth conference of 1988 was the official position revised to allow polygamists to be received into the church, provided they promised not to take any more wives; they were not to be compelled to put away their wives. The consent of the local Anglican community was also to be sought (res. 26). Similarly, the Bremen mission, in its church rules for 1976, opted for monogamy as "the true marriage according to God" but still allowed the admission of polygamists to baptism\* and communion\* (para. 62).

Today African Instituted Churches,\* a mark of buoyant Christian life in Africa, are divided over the issue of polygamy. The evidence suggests that the positive acceptance of polygamy by some of the AICs is a significant factor behind their growth. However, such churches have been excluded from ecumenical fellowship for presumably not upholding authentic Christian faith.

Several basic issues are at stake in the discussion of polygamy. First, should the law of monogamy become a criterion of Christian faith and a mark of the true church? There is room for debate. Second, whatever one's theological position on the issue, it must be in dialogue with the evidence from social scientists, lest the church's position become irrelevant and pastorally harmful. Third, it is important not to make a carica-

ture of a particular people's marriage customs. Some have viewed polygamy as a sign of loose living, whereas in Africa, for example, social traditions have encased polygamous relationships in strict morality.

Two issues need separate responses: What should be done with a polygamist who desires to join the church? What should be done with a Christian who decides to become a polygamist for whatever reason? The first question is one of pastoral practice. Is it sensible for the church to refuse membership on grounds of polygamy when others who commit serious sins are not unchurched? The second question is the more difficult one of theology. Although churches have typically formulated laws against polygamy, it is worth asking here whether the law of the church equals the law of Christ.

See also **anthropology, cultural**.

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## PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY

In 1989 the PCPCU superseded the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (SPCU), the title generally used in this volume. The SPCU originated as a preparatory organ of Vatican II,\* then functioned as a Council drafting body, and since 1966 it has been the permanent office of the Roman curia\* which deals with the pastoral promotion of the church's participation in the one ecumenical movement. In 1989 John Paul II made minor structural changes in his Roman curia, and the SPCU became a pontifical council.

John XXIII created the SPCU in 1960 to enable "those who bear the name of Christians but are separated from this apostolic see to find more easily the path by which they may arrive at that unity for which Christ prayed". The pope appointed Cardinal Augustine Bea (1881-1968) to be the SPCU president, and Johannes Willebrands

(1909-) its secretary. After Bea's death, Willebrands was president until 1989, when Cardinal Edward I. Cassidy succeeded him. Cardinal Walter Kasper took over in 2001.

The SPCU began official contacts with leaders in the Anglican, Orthodox and Protestant churches. It evaluated their suggestions for the Vatican II themes and, as appropriate, used them for its own draft work or passed them on to other preparatory commissions. The SPCU negotiated with the world confessional bodies (e.g. the World Methodist Council) to delegate observers to the Council. By the end of its fourth session, 169 persons, including substitutes, had been officially delegated.

The SPCU was responsible for drafting four promulgated pastoral documents on ecumenism (see **Decree on Ecumenism**), on religious freedom, on the relation of the church to the non-Christian religions, and on divine revelation (co-drafted with the theological commission).

SPCU contacts with other Christian communions initiated the personal and organizational relations which in the period after Vatican II led to the active presence of SPCU-delegated observers at confessional and interconfessional gatherings and to a series of international bilateral dialogues. The SPCU has been co-sponsoring theological dialogues with the Lutheran World Federation (1965), the Anglican communion (1966), the World Methodist Council (1966), the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht (1966), the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (1968), Pentecostals (1972), the Disciples of Christ (1977), the Orthodox church (1979), the Baptist World Alliance (1984), the World Evangelical Fellowship (1993), and the Mennonite World Conference (1998).

The first annual meeting of the Joint Working Group\* between the RCC and the WCC was held in 1966. This group recommends to the parent bodies the agenda and means of collaboration in studies and action.

Since Vatican II the SPCU has been issuing norms and guidelines on specific topics. Of major import are its Ecumenical Directories\* of 1967 and 1969, and the comprehensive, cohesive directory of 1993.

The PCPCU has two sections: the Eastern deals with the Orthodox churches of the

Byzantine tradition and the Oriental Orthodox churches (Coptic, Syrian, Armenian, Ethiopian, Eritrean and Malankara), as well as the Assyrian Church of the East; the Western section is responsible for the Anglican and Protestant churches. The PCPCU is in liaison with other offices of the Roman curia with overlapping competencies, e.g. with the congregations for the doctrine of the faith, for the Eastern Catholic churches, for the evangelization of peoples, and with the pontifical council for justice and peace.

In 1968 the SPCU launched the independent Catholic Biblical Federation\* and, with the United Bible Societies, co-authored guidelines for interconfessional cooperation in the translation and distribution of the Bible (1968, rev. ed. 1987).

In bearing the holy see's competence for Jewish religious concerns, the SPCU formed, with the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations, the Catholic/Jewish international liaison committee. In 1974 Paul VI set up the commission for religious relations with the Jews; its president is ex officio the PCPCU president. In 1975 the commission issued guidelines and suggestions for implementing Vatican II's statement on the Jews; in 1985, notes on the Catholic presentation of Jews and Judaism in preaching and catechesis; and in 1998, *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah*.

TOM STRANSKY

■ SPCU, *Information Service*, Vatican City, three times a year in English and in French ■ "An Historical Sketch of the SPCU", in *Doing the Truth in Charity: Vatican Ecumenical Documents, 1964-80*, T. Stransky & J. Sheerin eds, New York, Paulist, 1982 ■ T. Stransky, "The Foundations of the SPCU", in *Vatican II by Those Who Were There*, A. Stapoole ed., London, Chapman, 1986.

## POOR

THE ECUMENICAL concern for the poor during the decades after Amsterdam 1948 moved from an overview approach to becoming a pivot around which the dogmatic task as a whole might turn.

*The concordance view.* "The unequal distribution of the blessings of life is not ideal in the sight of God" (*Westminster Dic-*

tionary of the Bible). Such a premise led to a lining up of biblical data for an overview of the poor. Usually the Mosaic law functioned as bedrock of the biblical notion of the poor, especially in regard to equality in ownership of the land. A Jubilee every 50 years seemed the proper recourse, ensuring that injustices accrued in land ownership would be corrected (Lev. 25:13-25). From here the wide range covered by these dynamics would be visible: widows, orphans and strangers in the land enjoy what we might call the protection privilege of the poor (e.g. Ps. 9:18). It is common knowledge that the prophets frequently speak up for the poor (e.g. Isa. 1:23; Mal. 3:5). Within this framework it seems obvious why Jesus shows special concern for the poor (Matt. 11:5; Luke 14:21-23) and why the early church was strongly committed to care for its own poor and also other poor. So everywhere in the Bible, the conclusion runs, the implication is that God wants us to help the poor.

*The liberation view.* With the 1968 Medellín\* conference the ecumenical image of the poor changed. Now God was viewed as doing more than just expressing displeasure with the unequal distribution of material blessings. The poor were seen as a major agent in the working out of the divine purposes in history.\* But it took an awakening of the church of an entire continent to give the poor so crucial a role. In the Medellín documents the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America discovered its inescapable solidarity\* with the poor, so it could envision its future as the church of the poor protesting poverty.\* The word "poor" now became less sentimental: "The 'poor' person today is the oppressed one, the one marginalized from society, the member of the proletariat struggling for... basic rights;... the exploited and plundered social class, the country struggling for its liberation" (Gustavo Gutiérrez).

*The God of the poor.* Since Medellín, Latin American theology has moved towards assessing the reality of God\* itself in the light of the poor. In Jon Sobrino's terms: "The present history of the world is the ongoing history of the suffering of God." The theodicy question will therefore be answered in a new way (see **suffering**). Now theological discourse is more dialectical than analogical. In terms of the analogy of being, the di-

vine was known more in terms of its likeness to created reality. Now the stress is on the unlikeness, for dialectical cognition knows things in their dissimilarity. The theological will here "be known... from its contrary, from the negative structures of reality, the structures of oppression as lived experience" (Victorio Araya). Encounter with God is thus mediated through oppression and injustice as these realities point to the utterly different, i.e. liberation,\* life (see **life and death**) and justice.\* Black theology and other minority theologies take this position.

*The poor God.* As the debate moves towards a new dogma of the character of God, we realize that ultimately God is known not in the sheer point/counterpoint of merely human discourse dialectics but in the work of Jesus manifest in the eucharist,\* living the proclaimed word. In the body language of this life, God personally appears as despised and rejected by human beings, a refugee child, a rejected prophet, a crucified Messiah. Encounter with God is mediated through these very distinct negativities unlocking God's liberating struggle for justice in all of creation.

See also **people; theology, liberation; theology, minjung.**

FREDERICK HERZOG

- V. Araya, *God of the Poor*, Maryknoll NY, Orbis, 1987
- C. Boerma, *The Poor Side of Europe*, WCC, 1989
- J.H. Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power*, New York, Seabury, 1969
- G. Gutiérrez, *Teología de la liberación (ET A Theology of Liberation)*, Maryknoll NY, Orbis, 1973
- B.L. Myers, *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development*, Maryknoll NY, Orbis, 1999.

## POPULATION

THE WCC HAS addressed various issues related to global population growth since the late 1950s. In 1959, at the initiative of Richard M. Fagley of the WCC's Commission on International Affairs, the officers of the WCC and the International Missionary Council convened an international ecumenical study group on "Responsible Parenthood and the Population Problem" (Oxford 1959). As a result of the WCC study on "Christian Responsibility towards Areas of Rapid Social

Change" (1955-62), Egbert de Vries calls attention in his book *Man in Rapid Social Change* (1961) to the population problems in Africa, Asia and "other areas of rapid social change" and mentions five critical features: the dramatic drop in death rates in the last decades, the absence of empty spaces into which excess population could move, the difficulty in achieving rapid increases of food supply in the short run, the lack of purchasing power to buy, in a large scale, imported food, and the cultural and social resistance to forms of family planning or other methods of birth control.

The fourth assembly in Uppsala (1968) was the first to directly address the challenge of the population question, pointing to the enormous task of providing food and housing for a population that was projected to double by the end of the century. At the same time it called on the churches to support the needed action and to resolve their differences about certain methods of population control.

In 1971 in the context of the ecumenical study of limits in growth, environment and use of resources, the central committee authorized an international study of the related problems of population policy, social justice and the quality of life. The result was received by the central committee in 1973 and was commended to the churches "for study, comment and suitable action".

In 1974 the WCC central committee submitted a report on "Population Policy, Social Justice and the Quality of Life" to the UN international conference on population held in Bucharest, Romania. The report called upon developed countries to reduce their wasteful consumption, assist developing countries with their growing populations and consider the impact population growth would have on their plans for economic development. The report recommended that state-sponsored population policies be "non-coercive", and it supported the right of parents to have access to the means of family planning that were "acceptable to them on conscience".

The WCC assemblies in Nairobi (1975) and Vancouver (1983) did not deal with population issues in substantial de-

tail. The assembly in Canberra (1991), however, declared that member communions of the WCC can no longer "ignore the root causes of population growth which lie, more than in anything else, in the poverty and the lack of social security still prevailing in two thirds of the world".

Since Canberra, concern about population issues within the WCC has increased. A 1992 study document, "Christian Faith and the World Economy Today", re-affirmed the "important link between population growth on the one hand and poverty and inequality on the other hand". Another report was issued by the group on population and development at an ecumenical meeting held in conjunction with the earth summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. The report stressed that the WCC should continue to view population policies within the larger context of sustainable development. It also emphasized "the rights of women to reproductive freedom and to the conditions which make choice possible and meaningful". The report encouraged WCC member churches to pressure governments "to provide adequate health care, safe reproductive options, education and other information" that enable responsible reproductive choices.

In 1994 the WCC sent a delegation to the UN international conference on population and development, held in Cairo, Egypt. After the conference, the WCC executive committee asked an international group of experts to prepare a discussion paper for member communions on population issues. The subsequent report, "Churches, Population and Development: Cairo and Beyond" (1996), referred primarily to the UN Programme of Action which was adopted in Cairo.

The 1996 discussion paper focused on four particular areas of concern. First, with regard to the environment, the paper criticized the failure of the conference "to outline any concrete measures that Northern governments should take to change unsustainable consumption and production patterns".

Second, it offered a substantial critique of the assumption that sustainable development requires sustainable economic

growth. Instead, it offered an alternative conception of sustainable development rooted in the quest to develop "sustainable communities".

Third, the 1996 paper praised the new emphasis the Programme of Action placed on reproductive rights as the foundation for population policies. The paper asserted that "reproductive rights are understood to encompass the right to safe, effective contraception, safe legal abortion, safe, women-controlled pregnancy and childbirth, and access to infertility treatment and health services". (Many churches and Christians maintain a traditional opposition to abortion as a means of population control.)

Fourth, it noted the substantial emphasis the Programme of Action gives to migration issues. It called for the strengthening of "the substantial cooperation among churches and with intergovernmental agencies in responding to refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants".

JAMES B. MARTIN-SCHRAMM

■ *Churches, Population and Development: Cairo and Beyond*, WCC, 1996 ■ R.M. Fagley, *The Population Explosion and Christian Responsibility*, New York, Oxford UP, 1960 ■ J.B. Martin-Schramm, *Population Perils and the Churches' Response*, WCC, 1997 ■ *Population Policy, Social Justice and the Quality of Life*, WCC report to the UN third world population conference, 1974 ■ J.C. Schwarz, *Global Population from a Catholic Perspective*, Mystic CT, Twenty-Third Pubs, 1998.

## PORVOO COMMUNION

THE PORVOO communion comprises those episcopally ordered churches of Northern Europe which are "in communion" by virtue of their approval of the 1992 Porvoo Declaration. As of 2000 these were the Anglican churches in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales; and the Lutheran churches in Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden.

See also **Anglican-Lutheran dialogue**.

DAVID TUSTIN

## POTTER, PHILIP A.

B. 19 Aug. 1921, Roseau, Dominica (West Indies). Third general secretary of the

WCC (1972-84), Potter devoted a long career in church service to mission, ecumenism and work with youth and students. Besides 24 years on the WCC staff, he was a missionary to poor and mostly illiterate Creole-speaking people in Haiti, president of the World Student Christian Federation\* and a staff member of the Methodist Missionary Society in London.

In 1944, after leaving the post of assistant to Dominica's attorney general to become a Methodist lay pastor on the island of Nevis, Potter began ministerial training at Caenwood Theological Seminary in Jamaica (later he did post-graduate work at London University). Jamaica Student Christian Movement representative at the world conference on Christian youth (Oslo 1947), he was spokesperson for youth at WCC assemblies in 1948 and 1954, and from 1954 to 1960 he worked in the WCC Youth department in Geneva.

As a Methodist Missionary Society overseas secretary, he was active in the International Missionary Council during integration with the WCC; and in 1967 he became director of the WCC Division of World Mission and Evangelism, though he had looked forward to spending the rest of his career as a theological teacher. Named to succeed Eugene Carson Blake as WCC general secretary in 1972, he led the Council until the end of 1984, when he finally took up the challenge he had felt earlier to return to the Caribbean to work with students at the University of the West Indies, though he continued some international travel and ecumenical involvement.

A central committee resolution honouring Potter on his retirement identified some main thrusts the WCC owed to his leadership: "the insistence on the fundamental unity of Christian witness and Christian service which the gospel commands and makes possible, the correlation of faith and action, the inseparable connection between the personal spiritual life of Christian believers and their obedient action in the world". An eloquent and forceful speaker and leader of Bible studies, Potter received numerous honorary degrees and awards.

PAULINE WEBB

■ M.N. Jagessar, *Full Life for All. The Work and Theology of Philip A. Potter*, Zoetermeer, Uitgeverij Boeckencentrum, 1997 ■ K. Raiser ed., *House of Living Stones: Hommage to Philip A. Potter*, Heiningen, Pro Ökumene, 1996 ■ P. Webb ed., *Faith and Faithfulness*, WCC, 1984 ■ *The Whole Oikoumene*, comp. Ans J. van der Bent, WCC, 1980.

## POVERTY

IN HER celebrated book *The Idea of Poverty* (1984), Gertrude Himmelfarb observes that by the middle of the 18th century in England it was not possible to speak categorically about “the poor”, despite the intensive debate about “the poor” and “poverty” which had been going on at least since the Elizabethan poor laws, enacted in 1597-98. “In the period of only a century, circumstances conspired to create a highly differentiated poor.\* This was not a matter of raising or lowering the poverty level. The changes affecting the poor were changes in kind as well as degree, in quality as well as quantity, in ideas, beliefs, perceptions, values. They were changes in what might be called the ‘moral imagination’.” The notion of poverty had become so complex that it was difficult to define poverty and to develop a coherent strategy to reduce it.

Ecumenical literature of the last 60 years reflects the same diffuse and changing understanding of poverty, which is not surprising in view of the diverse cultural assumptions, social situations and groupings of the poor reflected in the ecumenical debate. Given this complexity, it is useful to identify common denominators in an ecumenical understanding of poverty and to examine why poverty occurs and how to alleviate it.

The ecumenical discussion focuses on poverty which is generalized (widespread, affecting 40-50% of a nation’s population), persistent (rather than cyclical) and systemic (rather than poverty which results from indolence, incapacitation, etc.). Other types of poverty are important, but destitution as a generalized and persistent phenomenon is so universal, central and demanding that the ecumenical debate centres on systemically induced poverty. Most ecumenical literature on poverty centres on broad discussions of social justice, socio-

economic development, a “responsible society”,\* a “just, participatory and sustainable society”,\* capitalism, communism, a New International Economic Order.

A corollary of this emphasis on a systemic analysis means that poverty is a historical (social, economic, political) issue rather than a natural one. Generalized poverty is not perceived as resulting primarily from the shortcomings of individuals, natural laws such as the survival of the fittest, the pre-ordained ordering by God of social divisions, ineluctable laws of supply and demand exacerbated by population (as in Malthus), or even a defective and ungenerous natural environment. Poverty is usually perceived as a direct result of the failure, intentional or otherwise, of political and economic organization to satisfy the legitimate rights of all people for a dignified, equitable life. Moreover, these are perceived as rights which should be expected and demanded from any social system, rather than reliance upon charity or benevolent paternalism. It is assumed that defective systems can be corrected to meet basic human needs.

An ecumenical perspective on poverty is not limited to an exclusively economic understanding, although economic criteria are crucial. In recent years the notion of poverty has expanded from questions of mere subsistence to include a wide range of human and social rights. Marginalization from political processes, denial of opportunities for education or job, denial of speech and assembly, etc. are seen as integral to deprivation and poverty.

This view is illustrated in Julio de Santa Ana’s influential *Towards a Church of the Poor* (1979), which defines poverty as “unfulfilment of basic human needs required to adequately sustain life free of disease, misery, hunger, pain, suffering, hopelessness and fear, on the one hand, and the condition of defenceless people suffering from structural injustices on the other. Such a life would not be limited to the satisfaction of basic human needs but would include an existence with dignity, based on the exercise of justice, participation and freedom.” The definition of poverty is blurred, but it is clearly more than a matter of lacking material wealth.

Because poverty is understood as primarily systemic, produced by inadequate political, economic and social organization, today's global interdependence of these systems makes poverty dependent upon a constellation of forces which transcend national boundaries and policies. Those peoples who are culturally, technologically, economically and politically powerful globally re-inforce their own (and one another's) power, at the expense of the half to three-quarters of the world's people living in poverty. An adequate analysis of poverty and an effective strategy to diminish it must be conceived globally. Thus the ecumenical debate addresses such issues as transnational corporations, third-world indebtedness, trade and tariff policies, transfers of capital and technology, a New International Economic Order.

Poverty is perceived as both absolute and relative – absolute because there are minimum conditions essential for sustaining life itself; relative because poverty is partially defined by what levels of existence are possible in a particular society, what levels are enjoyed by other members of that society and what levels have come to be defined as necessary. Two objective economic criteria have increasingly found their way into ecumenical conversations: physical quality of life index (measured by infant mortality, literacy and life expectancy) and equality index (measuring the relative economic conditions of the different quintiles of the population). Composite indexes of economic well-being, such as average caloric consumption and gross national product, are generally considered irrelevant or inappropriate.

Much ecumenical literature suggests that the poverty of the many is a direct result of the undue affluence of a relatively few. There exists an enrichment/impoverishment relationship, a zero-sum situation, in which the increased material well-being of some necessarily entails diminished weal for others. This analysis of the relationship between wealth and poverty has not been endorsed in any ecumenical conference, but it has grown in prominence in less formal statements. It tends to become a simple class analysis.

An intriguing change in terminology has occurred in the WCC's discussions of poverty. From 1948 to 1974 there was emphasis on "poverty", a term to reflect structural analyses of why people are destitute and marginalized. There was an economically defined "sub-class" of people, oppressed and marginalized, below an identified material poverty line. The vast majority of the poor were poor because of structures of oppression. In the early 1970s a terminological shift occurred. Instead of referring to poverty, it became fashionable to talk about "the poor". Several reasons could be adduced for this change. The term "poverty" seemed too impersonal and abstract. "Poverty" too easily assumed that structures are benign and reformable, ignoring the power realities against which the poor struggle tooth and claw. "Poverty" seemed to miss non-economic, and especially political, aspects of deprivation and alienation. To some, "poverty" seemed to treat the poor and marginalized as a homogeneous entity, when actually there are differences and controversies among them.

The analysis of poverty's causes remained, but strategies to cope with it changed. Perhaps the major reason for changed terminology was a growing conviction that the remedy for poverty was not top-down reforms but changes of structure emanating from among the poor, acting as agents for their own emancipation. What has emerged is an implicit tension between those who emphasize changing international structural relationships (e.g. debt policies, transnational corporations' policies) and those who stress the need for people's movements to define and fight for their own destiny. To some extent these two analyses and strategies, which are both competitive and complementary, are reflected in the language of "poverty" and "the poor".

Ecumenical literature is highly critical of every economic system; none can be identified with the Christian gospel. In the 1950s and 1960s, the WCC's literature was careful to point out the failure of both capitalism and communism. An alternative "third way" has been a constant theme. In the 1950s the concept of a re-

sponsible society was formulated to point towards this third way, emphasizing political and economic freedom and responsibility. By the mid-1970s, a "just, participatory and sustainable society" was advocated, highlighting material well-being, political participation and ecological sanity. The ecumenical position, especially as it has been defined in the WCC and in regional and national Christian councils, increasingly criticizes laissez-faire capitalism.\* There is an expressed conviction that some form of socialism,\* not equated with communism, is the system most likely to overcome poverty.

Notwithstanding allegations to the contrary, ecumenical views on poverty are rooted in biblical-theological arguments. Convinced that a passion for social justice is essential to a Judeo-Christian understanding of covenant,\* current ecumenical literature argues that God makes a "preferential option for the poor". This option for the poor is evident in the calling of a slave people, in the denunciation by the prophets of the amassing of and reliance on wealth, and in Jesus' calling of a no-name band of disciples. This option for the poor is not only an emotional attachment to the vulnerable. It is based upon the relative freedom of the poor to eschew the securities and prestige of this world; they think they do not need the present structures, so they can be relatively free to challenge them. While all people are called to be agents of liberation,\* the poor are most fully free to receive the gospel and thus to be agents of new possibilities. Their location in society gives them a perspective on reality different from how things appear "from the top". This perspective is sometimes referred to as the epistemological privilege of the poor. Much current ecumenical literature stresses that the poor have historically played this creative role, and that because of their social position they can play that role again today. The possibilities for social transformation are linked closely with the capacity of the poor to achieve their own emancipation, the liberation of the rich and the healing and wholeness of even non-human nature.

Finally, this emerging vision of the roots and character of poverty has led to

significant alteration in understanding the role of the churches in overcoming poverty. In broad strokes one can trace differing stages in the churches' understanding of how they should promote justice and overcome poverty. First, poverty is an expression of the "laws of nature", of divine will. The churches' task is to respond to the most egregious and destructive consequences of this poverty through charity, without changing the system. Second, poverty is the result of unpredictable and unfortunate forces in one's environment, but that environment is basically sound. Again, the churches' task is to offer relief. Third, poverty is a result of moral or character failings of the poor. The church should urge regeneration of the sinful. Fourth, poverty is a consequence of humanly devised social systems which need improvement. The churches' task is to bring a prophetic judgment and constructive presence to the reform of social structures, usually through top-down evolutionary reform. Finally, poverty is a result of social structures which express and perpetuate the vested interests and egoism of the powerful, who are reluctant to relinquish privilege. The churches' main task is to identify with and support those groups of the poor struggling to win their own and others' liberation and dignity. Such support means taking seriously the goals and strategies of those engaged in the struggle for justice.

This enumeration is not an airtight typology or a description of a linear evolution of ecumenical thinking about poverty. What is abundantly clear, however, is the complex, creative and emergent character of ecumenical reflection on poverty. This debate rests on differing assumptions and analyses; it is a sociological, anthropological, political and economic debate. But in the final analysis, ecumenical literature reveals that the issue of poverty ultimately entails a theological, moral and spiritual debate as well.

See also **development, economics.**

RICHARD D.N. DICKINSON

■ C. Boerma, *The Poor Side of Europe*, WCC, 1989 ■ C. Elliott, *Comfortable Compassion*, London, Hodder & Stoughton,

1987 ■ G. Gutiérrez, *The Power of the Poor in History*, London, SCM Press, 1983 ■ D.A. Leon & G. Walt eds, *Poverty, Inequality and Health: An International Perspective*, Oxford, Oxford UP, 2001 ■ D. Narayan, *Can Anyone Hear Us?*, New York, Oxford UP, 2000 ■ H.L. Perkins, *Roots for Vision: Reflections on the Gospel and the Churches' Task in Re-Peopling the De-Peopled*, Singapore, CCA, 1985 ■ *Poor in the World Economy*, WCC, 1989.

## POWER

POWER IS not only the self-expression of a subject, whether divine, human or natural; it expresses a relation between a subject and an object. Recovery of this insight, in which Christian theology and the ecumenical movement have played a significant role, has been one of the outcomes of 20th-century ideological struggles.

### POWER IN THE MODERN AGE

The issue was posed for the modern age by the vast expansion of human control over the forces of nature. The conversion of coal, oil and then the nucleus of the atom into energy to drive machines has changed the very meaning of the word in the popular mind. Power has come to mean first a natural force at the service of endlessly expanding human needs and desires. The implicit assumption has been that there is no determinate limit to its expansion and that the meaning of human life consists in the freedom to enjoy it.

The older meaning of the word did not disappear, however. Rather, political-social power was compounded with technological-economic power in new unstable ways. Forces of production, often anonymous, have created new power elites who have sought political influence in various ways. At the same time, a revolution of rising expectations has empowered masses of people in both the benefits of an expanding economy and the political power that gives it direction. It is not surprising that other masses, powerless for centuries, are rising in revolutionary action to claim their share.

Reinhold Niebuhr was the first to grasp this modern complex of issues theologically. Human power, he wrote, is

good, as the response of human vitalities to their Creator. It is also the source of evil in the world as "the will to live becomes the will to power", which knows no limits to its desire for domination. The first task of human society,\* therefore, is to avert the judgment of God and human destruction by balancing power against power so as to achieve a relative justice.\* This justice is always unstable, however. The balance of power on which it rests will break down unless it is set under the inspiration and judgment of higher levels of mutual-ity, ultimately that of the saving grace\* of God in Jesus Christ. It is itself subject to judgment by the Lord of history, whose ultimate mercy and character is revealed on the cross. In Niebuhr's view, history will be, until the final judgment, the story of various forms of power – political, economic, religious, popular and military – struggling to achieve tentative forms of order which express a relative justice but also a new form of domination subject to further protest and change, challenged and humbled by the mercy of God in the servanthood and sacrifice of Christ.

Niebuhr's great contribution was to overcome both the simple continuity between divine and human power in liberal Christianity and the dualism of traditional orthodoxy, with a dialectical understanding of sin\* and grace in the human power struggle. In this contribution he provided a foundation for the ecumenical movement.

In 1948 the WCC Amsterdam assembly warned of "vast concentrations of power", both political and economic, and a technical society having a "momentum of its own" rooted in human creativity and power struggles but subjecting human beings to its laws while destroying community and deepening injustice throughout the world. The assembly sounded a note of triumphant hope in its message: "There is a word of God for our world. It is that the world is in the hands of the living God, whose will for it is wholly good, that in Jesus Christ his incarnate Word who lived and died and rose from the dead, God has broken the power of evil once for all and opened for everyone the gate into freedom and joy in the Holy

Spirit.” The task of living this message, however, meant subordinating and humanizing these powers, finding a way between the absolutes of communism and laissez-faire capitalism to create just and satisfying ways of life for “little men in big societies” and of decentralizing power into responsible decision-making communities (sec. 3 report).

### THE ECUMENICAL DEBATE: AMSTERDAM TO GENEVA

Amsterdam set the agenda of the ecumenical movement in dealing with power for the next two decades. It had three levels.

A *practical theological understanding of the power of God in Christ*. Niebuhr posed the issue in speaking of the transcendent yet ever-relevant presence of the crucified Christ in a world of human power struggles. Karl Barth re-defined it as the reality of God who is not abstract omnipotence: “To possess the power to do everything without distinction would be a limitation or rather the removal of his power and not its extension. Possessing that power, he would not be God.” Rather “God’s omnipotence is the omnipotence of his free love”, of the perfection of his “grace, holiness, mercy, justice, patience and wisdom” in Jesus Christ (*Church Dogmatics*, II/1, 490-608). Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his immensely influential *Letters and Papers from Prison*, against the background of his own life and death, gave the theme an urgent social relevance: “Man’s religiosity makes him look in his distress to the power of God in the world...; the Bible directs man to God’s powerlessness and suffering; only the suffering God can help. To that extent we may say that the development towards the world’s coming of age... which has done away with a false conception of God opens up a way of seeing the God of the Bible, who wins power and space in the world by his weakness.”

The power of God in the serving, crucified and risen Christ to save the world from its own powers became a dominant theme of the ecumenical movement in the period following Amsterdam. It was central to the messages of the assemblies at

Evanston 1954 and New Delhi 1961. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches\* took as the theme of its assembly in Brazil in 1959 “The Servant Lord and His Servant People”. Its combination of repentant humility with action and confidence in the power of the word (see **word of God**) permeated missiological reflection, as mission practice during this period moved from its centre in the West to being a worldwide enterprise.

*Biblical reflection on the nature of power.* “We do not find the Bible claiming to be a book of philosophy or science or history. It does not speak to us of God but in the name of God... Each of [God’s] words is an act. For this reason we can refer interchangeably to the Bible as the word of God or as the book of the acts of God.” With these words Suzanne de Diétrich set the tone of ecumenical Bible study which she herself helped to guide for nearly 30 years (see **Bible, its role in the ecumenical movement**). The biblical God is a God who acts, a God of power, a God who creates, who calls, who binds himself to us in covenant,\* who is faithful when we are faithless and who redeems the world in Christ. This perspective describes not so much a particular biblical theology as an attitude towards the Bible which has characterized the ecumenical movement from its formation. Hendrick Kraemer called this attitude “biblical realism” in his challenge to the world mission of the church in 1937. It is active encounter with the power of God, through which the churches are constantly called to repentance in their relations with the world and with one another and also to re-discover together their ecumenical mission.

This encounter has also had another dimension: a fresh study of the relation between the power of Christ and the principalities and powers of the world in the New Testament. Several writers from various traditions have contributed to this discussion. In each case the question was raised how these powers operate in the world today. At least one such power, the political, is clearly identified in the NT (Rom. 13). If Mammon is taken seriously, there are also economic powers. Albert van den Heuvel suggests, citing Col. 2, that “public opinion, the pres-

sure of conformity, moral rules and religious observances, philosophies and ideologies" are also among them.

In any case, ecumenical study has made certain points clear. First, the powers are created by God and have their meaning in God's purpose and plan. Second, the powers are rooted in human desires and actions, in human idolatries and false absolutes, but in their structure they transcend human beings and have power over them. We are responsible both for them and for their victims. As such, they are destructive and rebellious against God. Third, Christ on the cross was the victim of these powers. In his resurrection\* he is Lord over them. Fourth, the church\* is witness in a world dominated by the powers of Christ's victory and coming reign. This role involves conflict against the powers (Eph. 6:12) and witness to them of their true purpose in the economy of God (Eph. 3:10). We are left with the continuing question of identifying the powers in modern society which need to be resisted and redeemed, and of the strategy of this conflict and this witness.

*Guidance for Christian responsibility amid the powers of the contemporary world.* The term "responsible society"\* was coined at Amsterdam to indicate both a style of Christian action and the form of a society towards which that action would aim. "For a society to be responsible under modern conditions, it is required that people have freedom to control, to criticize and change their governments, that power be made responsible by law and tradition and be distributed as widely as possible throughout the whole community, [and] that economic justice and provision of equality of opportunity be established for all the members of society" (sec. 3). Theologically, the concept found its deepest roots in Dietrich Bonhoeffer's "Structure of Responsible Life", lived concretely for the neighbour in the world of political and social forces, ready to accept the guilt of impure but necessary action in the power struggle, a life guided but not dominated by conscience and the law, bearing witness in the human struggle to the presence and coming judgment and mercy of Christ (*Ethics*, ch. 6).

The form which this responsibility took in the ecumenical witness varied with time and place. The Bangkok (1949) and Lucknow (1952) conferences of the churches in Asia emphasized fundamental social revolution beset by ideological conflicts as the basic power at work in their world. They called for "the proclamation of the word of God with a profound sense of its relevance to the ideological and political conflicts of the Orient" (Bangkok) and in that context for democratic transformation of the social order, for freedom of religion and other human rights, for effective land reform and full development of natural resources, for common sharing of the national wealth and responsible development of human community.

The WCC's Evanston assembly (1954) made a discriminating analysis of state\* power as not the source but the guardian of social justice, of economic power in concrete terms which went beyond the labels of "capitalism"\* and "socialism".\* It then explored the differing particular responsibilities of the church in the Western world, the communist world and the economically underdeveloped regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The Salonika conference on "Christian Action in Rapid Social Change" (1959) emphasized (1) the powers of technology,\* (2) nationalism,\* and (3) the dynamics of economic development.\* It called for Christian action towards new forms of human community to cope with the first, discriminating participation in nation-building to bring out the creativity and counter the idolatry of the second, and the right use of the world's resources to promote "the widest possible participation in the planning process and in the execution of plans" for progress in the midst of the third.

The Geneva conference on Church and Society (1966) said bluntly that "in seeking a responsible society we need to discover the operations of power, unveil the hidden centres of power and hold all power accountable to men and God... Since man fulfills his God-given potential only by exercising power and by sharing in making the decisions that affect his life, we believe that maximum participation in

authentic decision making must characterize the systems where technologies are shaped and employed." This vision includes workers as well as experts and managers in an industry, and an informed general public, organized perhaps in advocacy groups to bring countervailing power to bear where needed. It also includes the state, which the report said should not be the only repository of power but should nevertheless have the means of controlling other centres in the public interest.

Beyond this understanding, however, consensus in the Geneva conference broke down. There was no agreement as to the degree to which the state should exercise its controlling and managing power, about the way in which participation in state power by conflicting groups and interests among the people should be organized, or even about the role of law\* vs the powers of revolutionary change. Behind such differences lay a deeper dispute about the nature of power itself, which challenged the context of previous ecumenical debate.

This challenge had many sources in social experience and ideology.\* But whether it grew out of the cause of black power in the US or South Africa, the class struggle of the poor in Latin America or the rising self-consciousness of peoples in Asia, the theme was the same: the experience of living in the midst of a struggle against the dominant and oppressive powers in society is basic to humanity, to faith\* and to theology. To be aware of oneself as a human being, to be conscientized, is to find oneself already in the midst of struggle against the structures of class domination. In the midst of this praxis and theoretical awareness, one discerns also one's relation to the power of God.

### THE ONGOING DEBATE

This starting point and this stance have had three consequences for the ecumenical debate about power.

First, a profound *suspicion of the ideological bias* in previous ecumenical theology and social ethics, and a demand that solidarity with the oppressed, whether with the poor\* in class terms, with the blacks in terms of race, or with "the people" as culturally defined, be the starting

point for all theological and ethical action and reflection. "God's word of reconciliation means that we can only be justified by becoming black," wrote James Cone in the US situation. "Theology to be authentically Asian must be immersed in our historic-cultural situation and grow out of it. Theology which should emerge from the people's struggle for liberation would spontaneously formulate itself in religious-cultural idioms of the people." So wrote the Asian participants in an ecumenical conference whose report appears in *Towards a Church of the Poor*. One could multiply the examples. Only from a particular position and engagement in the world power struggle can truth about God be known.

Second, the demand that *action in the form of engagement* on the right side of social conflict be the test of faith and the form of Christian obedience. The WCC, representing the churches of the world, must therefore also be so involved. This is the motivation behind the Programme to Combat Racism,\* and it defines the difference in emphasis between interchurch aid and the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development.

Third, a theology of *continuity between the human struggle for liberation and the saving work of God in Jesus Christ*. "The historical-political liberating event is the growth of the kingdom and is a salvific event; but it is not the coming of the kingdom, not *all* of salvation. It is the historical realization of the kingdom and therefore it also proclaims its fullness." So wrote Gustavo Gutiérrez in his now-classic *Theology of Liberation*. Christ is identified with the human power struggle of the poor and completes it with his work.

The issue at stake in all three points of this challenge is not the empowerment of the poor and the oppressed to achieve their just participation in society, which has been a theme of ecumenical ethics from the beginning. Nor is it the healthy reminder that the theology and ethics even of Christian people can be distorted and biased by their political and economic interests and allegiance of the power structures in which they feel secure. This, too, has been an ongoing discovery of churches

in mission and in ecumenical encounter, a cause for continual repentance and renewal of life.

The fundamental question is rather that of the relation between divine and human power. Can the world be redeemed by replacing the principalities and powers that now dominate it with others representing the people and the poor? Is the justice achieved by human struggle itself subject to the judgment of God and the correction of further struggle for the corruption which is present in its relative goodness? Are there resources in the Christian community to empower believers in their struggle against injustice while at the same time believing in and praying for divine forgiveness and transformation of us all? Will we learn in this light that human power is more ambivalent and more complex than we now imagine? Much work remains to be done in internal ecumenical struggle to clarify the relation of God's power in Christ to our own.

A final word must be said which qualifies this whole discussion. During the past 30 years, the awareness has been forced upon the world that human power over the non-human creation, or nature,\* although without determinate limits, can defeat itself and lead to our destruction. The discovery of nuclear power is only the most obvious example. Synthetic chemical compounds that do not degrade, pesticides that also poison people, energy-producing fuels that pollute the air and change our climate – these are only a few examples of the consequences of human power that have not been brought to live within the limits of God's creation.

The problem in this area is that nature cannot rise up and liberate itself. Future generations, who will bear the consequences of our technology and industry, cannot vote in our elections or struggle against our exploitation of them. Instead, we must muster the restraint and discipline to respect the integrity of creation, although we have the power to destroy it for our immediate profit. "The Christian hope sets science and technology in the open-ended process of God's history with his creation," says the report of the WCC conference on "Faith, Science and the Fu-

ture" in 1979. Human beings cannot renounce their power. Their task is to discern the promise of nature in partnership with humanity. This too is ecumenical agenda for the future. It is intertwined with the struggle for justice, in that no ecological policy will succeed which is not secured by shared access for all to the resources of the earth and just distribution of the products made from them.

The power of God is indeed self-limited by covenant with the people of God, implicitly with the whole creation as well. It is an open-ended covenant filled with promise, a covenant redeemed even when human beings in their power struggles seek to destroy it. Under the risen Christ and looking to his coming, it is a promising covenant fulfilled in the service of one another and appreciative use of the creation around us. The exercise of power in this responsibility is an ecumenical art we are only beginning to learn.

See also **justice, peace and the integrity of creation; order.**

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## PRAXIS

THE WESTERN reception of the notion of praxis should be traced back to Aristotle's distinction between pure contemplation (*theōria*), production (*poiēsis*) and a human moral action which expresses the intention of the agent, the value of which cannot be separated from the agent (*praxis*). While some ascetics and mystics

shared the Neo-platonic contempt for praxis as contaminated by the material world in which it operates, many church fathers, including Clement of Alexandria, saw it as an expression of Christian love. The word does not necessarily appear, but the form of human expression that it designates is present in scholastic theology, although always second to theory. The theological significance of human purposeful action inspired by love has never been denied, even if it is differently valued. A whole theological tradition has extolled it over against a purely intellectual and propositional theology. The tradition of "practical Christianity" has been a powerful component of the ecumenical movement from the very beginning, finding polemical expression in the slogan "doctrine divides, but action unites". Such vindication, however, does not attach to praxis any epistemological or methodological significance in dogmatic thinking. "Theoria" may or may not be liked, but it remains – even when directed to "religious experience" – the only muse of dogmatics.

Marx inverted the Aristotelian paradigm and assigned to praxis the place of privilege, arguing that in human beings' purposeful transformation of the world, they create themselves as well as the world around them. To be sure, they cannot do it capriciously or arbitrarily but according to the laws of the material world (of which they are part) – not as a purely mechanical operation (*poiēsis*) but as *human* work, an intention through which one affirms one's freedom.\* Antonio Gramsci tries to capture this dialectics when he rebaptizes Marxian materialism "the philosophy of praxis".

This overshadowing influence of Marx in the modern recovery of the notion of praxis rendered it suspicious when contemporary political and liberation theology re-introduced it, not only in the realm of ethics but as an instrument of knowledge, a methodological principle and a form of verification in dogmatics. Thus in the Vatican "Instruction on Certain Aspects of the Theology of Liberation" (1984), the use of "praxis" in some currents of that theology is criticized for its relation to "the materialist conception of

history to which praxis is linked", for its political contents centred on class struggle and it made revolutionary praxis a criterion of truth.

It is therefore important to characterize more precisely the place attributed to praxis in these (liberation and political) theologies. In a more general sense we can say that the act of knowledge is never a purely passive contemplation of abstract truth but is an act involving the totality (psychological, social, historical) of the human reality of the knower, including his or her intentional relation to the world. Praxis cannot be conceived as independent from theory. In fact, theory is reached by a process of abstraction on the basis of praxis; a specific practice, as a concrete form of human praxis, always has an implicit theory. Thus, praxis cannot be understood as mere pragmatic action. This relation between praxis and its theoretical content is a mutual one in which each element supports, tests and corrects the other. Since praxis signifies an active relation to the world, it necessarily affects its subject; persons are thus modified by their praxis as they modify the world by it.

More specifically, the theologies mentioned usually highlight some elements. First, the contents of the Christian praxis envisaged is defined by "an option for the poor", thus pointing to a location (which is both social and spiritual) in history and society which defines a "horizon of knowledge". Second, it is a praxis of faith,\* which is therefore controlled by the object of that faith, Jesus Christ\* – his person, his message, the kingdom which he announced and inaugurated. Third, it is a communal praxis, lived and acted out and critically revised within the community of faith. Fourth, it verifies the Christian message in so far as it makes it a reality in human history.\* One could say that it enacts the presence of the kingdom, although in the limited and imperfect form of a sign which participates in the reality it signifies but does not render it perfectly present. Finally, since the Spirit of God is present in history, Christian praxis is an act of discernment and therefore a form of knowing (see John 7:17) with dogmatic significance. In this sense Gustavo Gutiér-

rez can say that “theology is a critical reflection on Christian praxis in the light of the word”.

The word “praxis” has not entered the WCC vocabulary in any significant way. But the “action-reflection” model, which is operative in several programmes and activities of the WCC, is inspired by analogous concerns.

See also **theology, liberation; theology, political.**

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## PRAYER IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

ECUMENICAL prayer was anticipated by Jesus in the “Our Father”, focused upon his followers in the great prayer for unity\* in John 17 and then widened out again to embrace all human beings in the spread of the gospel since Pentecost.\* It is prayer offered for the unity of Christ’s universal church\* and the well-being of the world he came to save. Although this vision has never been wholly lost sight of in divided Christendom, it was, however, left mainly to a few discerning souls in every tradition to recognize their unity of spirit with those otherwise separated from them, and to travelling Christians of one kind or another to promote a cross-fertilization of prayer and devotion across confessional and national boundaries. It was not until the turn of the 19th century and through an awakened concern for mission\* and unity and a growing experience of the interdependence of the whole human family that the deeper implications of such prayer began to be more widely known and available.

The first modern movement to be inspired by our Lord’s high priestly prayer “that they may all be one” arose from two quite separate sources and resulted eventually in what is now well known as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.\* Today this week is observed either in January

or at Pentecost, according to local preference, and has continued to give many local Christians an experience of ecumenical prayer. As an extension of the week of prayer, many religious communities follow the practice of lighting a candle week by week – the Thursday candle – accompanied by the prayer: “Grant that in you, who are perfect love, we may find the way that leads to unity, in obedience to your love and your truth.”

Described in the Orthodox Easter prayer as “the myrrh-bearing women”, the ministering-praying women of the New Testament have been followed and identified with the countless Christian women who, as part of families, congregations, religious orders and positions of leadership, have played a vital part in healing the bruised and broken Body of Christ. Over the last 100 years two women’s organizations have made a second, particularly important contribution to ecumenical prayer. The World Day of Prayer,\* founded in the USA in 1887 in response to needs following the civil war and for prayer for missions overseas, has developed over the years into a worldwide movement, composed mainly of women, who engage in “informed prayer and prayerful action” on behalf of the needs of the whole world. The second such movement, conceived in 1956, was the brain-child of the Asian Christian Women’s Conference. Focusing on the smallest coin of each country’s currency, offered with prayer for peace, the Fellowship of the Least Coin continues to draw a response from women all over the world.

More recent participation of women in ecumenical prayer and decision making has led to a demand that the language of prayer itself should be revised to do justice to the place and activity of women within the church and to acknowledge the feminine attributes of God. Ecumenical prayer is currently being greatly enriched along these lines: “O God whose word is life and whose delight is to answer our cry, give us faith like the Syro-Phoenician woman, who refused to remain an outsider; that we too may have the wit to argue and demand that our daughters be made whole, through Jesus Christ, Amen” (Morley).

A third and arguably the most significant contribution to the growth of ecumenical prayer has been the quickening of concern for the renewal and mission of the church, which led to the inception of the modern missionary movement and to its fruit in the suffering, praying, growing churches around the world today.

Originating in a series of humble "concerts of prayer" for the renewal of the church in Scotland in the late 18th century, the movement eventually spread to other countries and played an important part in the programme of the newly formed mission agencies and subsequently in their great conferences. Attributing much of the success of the 1910 world missionary conference in Edinburgh to the fact that it had been the focus of wide intercession,\* John R. Mott wrote: "The heart of Edinburgh was not in its speeches but in its periods of prayer." Ninety years later, the same has been said of a series of important and increasingly representative gatherings of Christians, in the shape of the successive assemblies of the WCC (the eighth of which was held in Harare in 1998), that at the heart of each were acts of corporate worship which, to those privileged to share in them, offered an unparalleled opportunity to experience the riches of truly ecumenical prayer.

In the early years of the modern missionary movement, first by necessity and later by desire, cooperation developed between the different missionary groups, accompanied by prayer and consultation and later common action, and eventually, in some places, by plans for church union. Thus it was that united prayer among missionaries of different denominations grew, much of it directed towards the renewal and evangelistic outreach of the newly established churches. Such prayer, however, was not without its critics among local Christians, many of whom were excluded from early missionary assemblies and who came to feel that prayer itself only too easily became an instrument of paternalism. Moreover, many local Christians resented imported denominationalism\* and imposed forms of worship and sought freedom to address God in their own way and in the mode of their own culture. A prayer

used at a later Asia youth assembly expressed what many were feeling at a much earlier time: "O Lord, lead us not into imitation." It was a prayer which was already being answered as early dependency and denominationalism gave way to autonomous churches and eventually, in some areas, to the formation of united churches, whose liturgies have contributed in a special way to ecumenical prayer.

The fourth and central strand in the development of ecumenical prayer emerges from the well-known early student gatherings in Europe and North America, where young men and women met together for prayer, to read the Bible and to face the challenge of service overseas. In such prayer and meeting, impatience with denominational differences was generated; to meet the needs of these young people, organizations like the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations and the Student Christian Movement came into being. Between them they produced the earliest books of ecumenical prayer and worship. Now somewhat dated and limited in the range of their material, they were nevertheless pioneers in their field and gave many of the future leaders of the missionary and ecumenical movement their first taste of ecumenical prayer. The presence of such student groups at Edinburgh 1910 and subsequent ecumenical gatherings, and the concerns they voiced, along with those of representatives of an ever-widening circle of churches, were to form the milieu of the WCC. Many of those present at the WCC's first assembly (Amsterdam 1948) spoke of the moving moment when, after hundreds of years of confessionalism and division, representatives of many different churches and nationalities were for the first time able to say the Lord's prayer together, each in his or her own tongue.

The worship of the early assemblies, however, remained fairly traditional as the various church leaders shared their own denominational treasures. Those earlier years were marked by an over-optimistic internationalism, which regarded the kingdom of God\* as attainable in a relatively short period of time. This assumption was to be severely challenged, along

with the patterns of prayer which went with it. The reality of the ever-changing world situation demanded a realignment of prayer and theology, which provided the theme for a particularly formative WCC assembly at Uppsala in 1968.

Work camps and student conferences and the changing needs of young people produced more informal acts of worship and new approaches to intercession. A growing number of churches from a wide spectrum of traditions, including members of the Orthodox family, African Independent, Pentecostal and black American churches, and with an ever-increasing representation from third-world countries, officially entered the ecumenical movement, bringing with them both ancient liturgies and new insights into prayer and worship. Many of these challenged what was held to be an overly cerebral approach to worship and pointed to new dimensions of prayer in the form of symbols, music and movement more meaningful to the vast majority of the world's Christians.

In addition, the wide-reaching changes initiated at Vatican II\* have allowed greater participation of Roman Catholics in ecumenical prayer, and the revitalization of many traditional Christian practices and acts of devotion has been reflected in a renewed interest in a specifically Christian life-style, the use of silence, pilgrimages and the observance of vigils and fasts. Similarly, the hurt and pain experienced by Christians in many places and situations has forced ecumenical prayer back to its biblical roots and to the crying and questioning of the people of God in the Old Testament, producing many contemporary lamentations. A more sympathetic approach to those of other faiths has brought with it an awareness that they too are people of prayer and have much to offer on this subject and others.

Meanwhile in response to various WCC assembly themes from Uppsala onwards, the Council's mandate and ecumenical vision have been widening considerably, and this has been mirrored in the content of its prayer. The programmes of development\* and those to combat

racism, to promote peace and health and the good of the environment; the ever-growing recognition of social justice as a spiritual commitment; and the decade of churches in solidarity with women have all had their implications for ecumenical spirituality. While in an increasingly one-world culture there are still significant differences of need between different peoples, there are also an increasing number of concerns held in common across the world. But unity continues unchanged as a central theme of all ecumenical prayer, although perhaps nowadays directed less towards organized schemes of union and more towards the ending of the shame and scandal of divisions at the local level, in addition to that between peoples and races divided from one another. To respond to all such needs the concept of solidarity has been fostered in recent years to express a relationship which is to be deepened between different churches and peoples of the world, and in which prayer and the sharing of spiritual resources is held to play a very important part. To this end an ecumenical cycle of prayer has been produced.

If the widening out of its concerns over the years has led some to refer, disparagingly, to the WCC as "the United Nations at prayer", it is a title which is nevertheless welcomed by some, especially when it comes to finding ways of identifying with those many people around the world who, often in situations of desperation, relate their prayers to the realities of their lives as they use one of the most ecumenical of all prayers: "Maranatha: come, Lord Jesus, come, soon."

See also **ecumenical prayer cycle, spirituality in the ecumenical movement, worship in the ecumenical movement.**

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## PRESBYTERATE

THE TERM “presbyterate” has been given to the second order of ministry from the time when the three orders of bishop, presbyter and deacon were clearly distinguished. The words *presbyteratus* and *presbyter* are still used in the Latin version of the Roman pontifical, though they are usually translated in other languages as “priesthood” and “priest”. *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* has the traditional distinction between bishop and presbyter in mind when it suggests the universal adoption of the threefold ministry (see **ministry, threefold**).

Ecumenically what is at stake is the distinction between the ministry of the bishop and that of presbyters within the one pastoral ministry, as well as the importance of adopting an episcopal church structure which places a second order of pastors, called presbyters, under the supervision of the episcopacy.\* At the world conference on Faith and Order\* in Lausanne in 1927, there seemed to be some acknowledgment of the three kinds of church structure under the names of episcopal, presbyterian and congregational (see **church order**). In the responses to BEM, some churches have asked why this distinction has now been dropped, so that a presbyterian structure with only one order of pastors and a supervisory presbytery should be expected to give way to an episcopal structure that appears to favour distinct roles of bishop and presbyter within the pastoral ministry. Others have asked why there is no reference to the role of elder, as distinct from pastor, as practised in some Reformed churches.

Calvin allowed for only one ministry of word and sacrament, without internal distinction of orders. In the church struc-

ture of Geneva he assigned this place to pastors, but he also had elders (this term translates the Greek *presbyteroi*), teachers and deacons, since he found these offices in the New Testament. Elders were not pastors and had no part in the ministry of word and sacrament, but they had a role in church governance. With some differences in how the office is envisaged and in how elders are designated, many churches today believe that elders are part of the church structure indicated in NT texts. Ecumenically, the question arises whether adopting a distinction between bishop and presbyter within the pastoral ministry introduces an unnecessary ranking within that ministry and also whether so doing suppresses an office distinct from it that is, however, pertinent to the good of the church.

It is not easy to draw any clear conclusions about bishops and presbyters in NT writings. The church in Jerusalem seems to have been governed by a group of presbyters, or elders, under the presidency of James, adopting a pattern found in Jewish communities (Acts 11:29-30, ch. 15; Gal. 2:9). This pattern carried over into some churches of Asia Minor (Acts 14:23). In other churches, leaders are called bishops and deacons (Phil. 1:1). There is no great precision about the ministry of any of these roles. The pastoral epistles mention both bishops and presbyters. Some exegeses take the titles as synonymous.

In the post-apostolic period, there is reason to believe that some churches, such as Rome and Alexandria, were governed by a presbyterium, or group of presbyters, one of whose number exercised the sacramental and presidential ministry in the community. In the letters of Ignatius of Antioch there is clear mention for the churches of Asia Minor of the tripartite ministry of bishop, presbyters and deacons. This is the pattern clearly adopted in the ordination\* ritual of *The Apostolic Tradition* attributed to Hippolytus, which prevailed until the Reformation.

Despite the clear distinction of names, there is no great clarity in the evolution of the presbyterate as a distinct office and ministry. From writings such as those of Hippolytus and Cyprian of Carthage,

there is reason to see that the office was by very nature collegial and that the main role of the presbytery was to advise and act with the bishop in matters of church government, such as the purchase and disposal of church property, the selection of ministers, the healing of conflicts within the community and the excommunication\* and reconciliation\* of sinners. Their part in teaching and in sacramental ministry appears to have been at first one of substitution for the bishop. With the expansion of the church and the separation of local churches into diverse communities, presbyters assumed as normal the presidency of smaller communities, and a sacramental and teaching ministry. Indeed, by the 4th or 5th century the ordination of presbyters was to this pastoral office rather than to membership in the collegial presbyterate, though traces of this latter role are to be found in church order and canon law\* down through the ages. Such was the evolution that in time the sacramental ministry and priesthood\* were predicated primarily of the presbyterate rather than of the episcopacy, which was taken by many medieval theologians to be a divinely instituted jurisdiction rather than a sacrament. Thus the words *sacerdos* and *presbyter* became practically synonymous. In English, the word "priest" is related etymologically to *presbyter* but has assumed a sacerdotal meaning.

At the Second Vatican Council,\* the Roman Catholic Church clearly affirmed the sacramental nature of the episcopacy. At the same time, it affirmed that ordination to the presbyterate is ordination to the comprehensive ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral care, rather than only to sacrament. In allowing this ministry to both bishop and presbyter, it attributed a supervisory and magisterial role to the bishop and retrieved something of the collegiate sense of the presbyterium from early centuries, applying it to the exercise of the full ministry. If one abstracts the sacerdotal and hierarchical factors in Roman Catholic teaching, it appears to correspond in a general way to the suggested adoption of the threefold pattern in ecumenical discussions. While the adoption of the episcopacy would be a sacra-

mental expression of the church's apostolicity\* and would provide for a link between churches beyond local boundaries, the existence of a group of presbyters sharing in the pastoral ministry would allow for its collegiate nature in the particular church. The risk is that the collegiate would be swallowed up in the hierarchical and that the equation of presbyterate with pastoral ministry would suppress the participation of the church membership in the ordering of church life through its representative elders.

An examination of the simple word "presbyterate" thus uncovers a number of valid ecumenical questions. Is it not important to maintain a collegiate responsibility, even on the local level, for pastoral ministry? Does the distinction between bishop and presbyter allow for this collegiality,\* and how is it to be maintained if this division is adopted? However, is it not also important to keep open a collegiate responsibility for church governance which includes the members not appointed to the pastoral ministry (i.e. the laity)? Can this broader involvement now be allowed for through the office of elder, and does the equation between presbyterate and pastoral ministry of word and sacrament not obscure this part of church heritage?

See also **ministry in the church, priesthood.**

DAVID N. POWER

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## PRIESTHOOD

AS A CULTIC term connected with the offering of sacrifice, "priesthood" is problematic in ecumenical discussions at the point where the theology of ministry\* intersects with the theology of the eucharist.\* The Roman

Catholic and Orthodox churches teach a ministerial priesthood that is exercised in the celebration of the eucharist and that is distinct from the common priesthood of all the baptized exercised in the pursuit of a life according to the gospel and culminating in the act of worship. The first is indeed related to the second and is intended to bring it to fruition, but it is particular inasmuch as it means an exercise of sacramental ministry and offering performed in the person of Christ. Without the power given to the ordained ministry to perform this service, the common priesthood could not be nurtured or expressed in the service of the eucharistic sacrifice.

With the teaching of the Second Vatican Council\* on the laity,\* the Roman Catholic Church began to give much more prominence to the active role of the baptized in teaching, apostolate and worship than it had done for some centuries, but it continues to give some preference to the use of the word "priesthood" in speaking of the sacramental powers and ministry of the ordained and to teach a difference in kind rather than in degree between common priesthood and ministerial priesthood. This understanding of the term therefore remains a point of tension in the dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant churches, although the tension has been eased somewhat by reason of the agreements formulated on the nature of the eucharistic sacrifice, when seen in its proper sacramental relationship to the sacrifice of the cross. Nonetheless, it continues to be disputed whether priesthood in the New Testament sense is to be used only of the baptized and of the church as a body, or whether it has a more particular meaning in the case of the ordained.

The roots of the dispute are found in the early Christian assumption of sacerdotal terminology to speak of the church and the faithful, and later of its worship and ministries. The initial tendency of NT writers was to eschew any direct use of priestly terms, so as to contrast the gospel with the older covenant.\* Even in the case of Christ's death, formal use of sacrificial language is low key, the principal purpose of any reference to it being to indicate that

this redeeming death is the fulfilment of the Old Testament types, including the sacrificial ones such as the paschal lamb and the covenant sacrifice. The letter to the Hebrews deliberately writes of Jesus Christ\* as priestly mediator and of his death and heavenly intercession as priestly. Whenever a cultic term is used in the NT in reference to the church,\* it is to designate a life according to the gospel, acts of mutual service, and the ministry of apostolic preaching. In a more general way, the church as a body is called a living sacrifice, a royal priesthood, a temple of God's Spirit, for in its obedience to the gospel, true worship is rendered to God, and the glory of God is made manifest to all. Some Catholic exegetes believe that this usage is a legitimate foundation for the language of ministerial priesthood, but the point is controversial.

In the post-apostolic church, sacrifice and priesthood began to be used of the eucharistic prayer, or more generally of the eucharistic celebration, by way of such OT texts as Mal. 1:10, or by way of contrasting this one sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving with the religious sacrifices of the Jews and of the pagans. With 3rd-century writers like Hippolytus and Cyprian, the bishop began to be called a priest because of his presidency of the eucharist, where he offers the gifts. Subsequently this term is used also of presbyters who join the bishop in this ministry or take his place (see *presbyterate*). When writers such as John Chrysostom made a formal link between the action of the bishop and the heavenly liturgy of Christ the High Priest, sacerdotal language was the natural way of expressing that relation. Hence, in the use of sacerdotal terminology the relation of the minister to Christ came more into the forefront than did his relation to the people. Medieval and scholastic theology then related the priesthood of the minister to his action *in persona Christi* and gave the ministerial priesthood decided priority over the common priesthood. In face of the problems of the reformers, the council of Trent\* formally taught the priesthood of the sacrament of order and its connection with the eucharistic sacrifice.

Many of the dialogues which have taken place between the Roman Catholic Church and other churches since the Second Vatican Council have found some reconciliation of differences in the new accent on the priesthood of the church as such, both common and ministerial; in the sacramental and memorial understanding of the eucharistic sacrifice; in the clear relationship of the ministerial priesthood to the common priesthood, both in worship and in the church's obedience to the gospel; and in the clear subordination of both to the one priesthood of Jesus Christ. Thus *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* states: "Ordained ministers are related, as are all Christians, both to the priesthood of Christ, and to the priesthood of the church. But they may appropriately be called priests because they fulfill a particular priestly service by strengthening and building up the royal and prophetic priesthood of the faithful through word and sacraments, through their prayers of intercession, and through their pastoral guidance of the community" (M17).

The statement in BEM is quite irenic, but it glosses over the particular sacramental relation to Christ which the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches predicate of the ordained bishop and presbyter. Thus other dialogues, such as that between the Vatican Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Lutheran World Federation,\* note a continuing divergence in the use of priestly predicates and in sacramental practices, highlighting the sacrifice of the ordained minister, sanctioned by the Roman church but found unsatisfactory by the Lutheran. For its part, in response to the ARCIC (see **Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue**) statements on eucharist and ministry, the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith found the priestly and sacrificial nature of both eucharistic action and ordained ministry underdeveloped. In offering the response to this request for clarifications, ARCIC II stated that it preferred not to use the word "character" to describe the quality of ordained ministry. Instead, it chose to express the reality intended by the word by emphasizing the Spirit's seal on the minister and the ir-

revocability of the call given and the gifts bestowed. With regard to the role of the ordained minister in the eucharist, the ARCIC response underlined that it is only an episcopally ordained minister who presides at the eucharist, and that this presidency is exercised in Christ's name, bringing the whole congregation into Christ's self-offering.

While there is a growing consensus on the role of the ordained minister in the life and liturgy of the church, differences still remain over the use of the term "priest" and over the sacramentality of order and ordination.\* The 1991 report from the Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue,\* *The Apostolic Tradition*, expressed the considerable accord reached but located the difference between the two churches in the preferred use of the term "sacrament" on the one side and of the term "sign" on the other. This and similar positions also affect the precise understanding of the relation between the common priesthood of the faithful and the priesthood attributed to the ordained.

See also **episcopacy, sacrament(s)**.

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**PRIMACY**

PRIMACY is one of the burning ecumenical issues. The difficulty springs from two sources: first, the biblical texts which speak of Peter's special role within the apostolic community make no reference to a succession in the fulfilling of this func-

tion; second, the subsequent functioning of the Roman primacy has raised problems to do with prestige and power that have frequently seemed intractable. The issue of primacy was central to the separation between East and West (see **East-West confrontation**) and, within the West, to the division at the Reformation.\*

### PRIMACY IN ECUMENICAL DIALOGUES

The achievements in this area that have followed the entry of the Roman Catholic Church into the ecumenical dialogue are significant. There has been convergence and even agreement on some points, which is particularly evident in *The Final Report* of ARCIC I (1981) (see **Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue**). It is there recognized that the New Testament references apply to Peter and not to his successors. However, a broader interpretation of the way in which God in his providence (i.e. in the patristic sense of this term) acts on behalf of his church\* permits the affirmation that the primacy is in accord with God's plan. Indeed, the care of the churches, with their need to remain visibly united in their confession of faith,\* sacramental life and mission,\* requires a ministry of this nature. The only episcopal see that lays claim to this office is Rome, the city which preserves the witness of Peter and Paul, who were martyred there (*Final Report*, Authority I, nos 22-23; Authority II, nos 2-9,33). Nevertheless, the form in which the primacy is exercised continues to be problematic. Nor was it possible to reach full agreement on an understanding of infallibility\* (Authority II, nos 29,31).

The Methodist-Roman Catholic joint commission (see **Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue**) has paid equal attention to this question (Nairobi report, 1986, nos 39-75). Agreement was achieved with regard to the role attributed to Peter in the NT (nos 39-47) and to the need for a ministry of authority\* (no. 48), but the matter of the Roman primacy raised difficulties when it was faced concretely. While the idea of primacy remains alien to Methodists (no. 37), they admit that it could be useful (no. 58). The Catholic viewpoint is objectively presented in this report, but the Methodists

declare that, if they should some day come to accept some degree of primacy and leadership from the bishop of Rome, their reasons might differ from those affirmed by the Roman Catholic Church today.

In the USA the Lutheran-Roman Catholic group (see **Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue**) has examined the problem in depth (*Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue*, vols 5-6). For the sake of unity\* and the universal mission of the church, the Lutherans are prepared to accept an authentic Petrine office (5.28,30), provided it would be purged of the aberrations condemned by the Reformation, become pastoral rather than juridical, respect evangelical freedom, submit to the authority of the word of God\* and safeguard the spiritual inheritance of the Lutheran tradition. Infallibility wisely construed, which would be concerned with the faith and refrain from the oppressive use of authority, could be of service to the Spirit in guiding the church towards the fullness of truth.

These conclusions are close to those of the French Dombes Group. Its document of 1985 on *Le ministère de communion dans l'Eglise universelle* (*Documentation catholique*, no. 83, 1986) proposed that the Petrine office should be at the service of a universal communion,\* acting primarily as an arbitrator between churches, as a guide in discerning new directions for the future and as the bond and promoter of visible unity (nos 152-62). But a primacy of power and centralized authority is not acceptable (nos 136,153).

There has as yet been no statement on this subject from the Orthodox-Roman Catholic commission (see **Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue**). However, it is clear that as a result of the warm exchange of words and gestures between Paul VI and Athenagoras (see *Tomos Agapes: Vatican-Phanar, 1958-70, 1971*), Orthodoxy is changing the way it looks at the primacy of the bishop of Rome. The harsh stance taken by the encyclical of the four patriarchs in response to Pius IX's invitation (*In Suprema Petri Sede*, 6 January 1848) is no longer that of Athenagoras, who describes the ancient see of Rome as first according to honour and order. But the Orthodox churches

would find it difficult to accept a Roman primacy which differed from that of the first few centuries, even if some Orthodox sense the need for a ministry of unity in a form different from the one presently exercised by the patriarch of Constantinople.

### PRIMACY IN THE HISTORIC ROMAN CHURCH

From a historical perspective the primacy of Rome is that of a local church\* in the city where the witness of Peter and Paul was fused by their martyrdom into an indivisible confession of faith. In Peter, this faith is linked to the preaching of Jesus and the memory of the Twelve, who represent Israel and the privileged witnesses to the life, death and resurrection of the Lord. In Paul, the newness of the faith, its universal mission and its radical openness are revealed. Because the church located in Rome is thus the guardian of this apostolic witness (see **apostolic tradition**, **apostolicity**), its directives are to be followed in order to preserve unity. In looking to Rome in times of crisis, the other churches remain, or should remain, free from any interference in their own internal affairs, because the Roman primacy is not based on domination.

Each bishop is the representative of his local church; the bishop of Rome is thus present as guardian and instrument of the primacy of the church of Peter and Paul. He continues the function of leadership exercised among the apostles by Peter, who had particular concern for the faith both before and after Pentecost,\* first as spokesman for the apostolic group and then later as its leader. It is in this context that the words "strengthen your brothers" (Luke 22:32) and even "you are Peter" (Matt. 16:18) should be applied to the bishop of Rome. This background provides the basis of the conviction that through the bishops of the see of Rome, the primacy entrusted to Peter survives as the bond of communion with the authentic apostolic tradition.

However, it is a primacy which is an integral part of, and inseparable from, the episcopal body (see **episcopacy**). The point of departure was "Peter himself, a single person" (Cyprian, *On the Unity of the Catholic Church*, 4-5), but with him it is

the whole collegium that becomes involved. As Augustine explained: "If Christ spoke to one person alone, it was in order to emphasize unity" (*Sermons* 295.2-8; *Letters* 53.2; *Homilies on the Gospel of John* 124.5). Primacy must be understood within this framework.

Until the intervention of Leo the Great (440-61) at Chalcedon,\* ecumenical councils\* were in communion with Rome without being under its authority. The element essential to these assemblies was their communion in faith and spirit, a requirement to which the Eastern church adheres to this day. Before Leo there was no submission to a primacy of jurisdiction. A turning point came when Leo asserted his sense of the rightful authority he had as bishop of Rome, which was the meaning of his intervention at Chalcedon, where his legate occupied the chief seat beside Patriarch Anatolius. He also intervened when the rights of some episcopal sees were being infringed. His function was one of service.

The exercise of the prerogatives of Rome was remarkably balanced under Gregory the Great (590-604), but this spirit gradually gave way to an increasing claim to absolute power. Gregory VII laid down regulations for the functioning of this power in *Dictatus Papae* (1075), and Innocent III (1198-1216) went as far as to say that the ancient patriarchal churches had received their privileges from the church of Rome. The rupture with the Eastern churches, followed by the conciliar controversy (see **conciliarity**), led to a further hardening of attitudes in the West and resulted in the view of a church governed by a pontiff who looked on the other bishops as his vicars rather than as brothers.

Against the background of these later developments, Vatican I's\* constitution *Pastor Aeternus* sounds moderate. In it the *raison d'être* of the Roman primacy is viewed as the close unity of the bishops and the *koinonia*\* of all Christians (DS 3050-52). Vatican I made it clear that the primacy belongs to the *church* of Rome and that it takes effect in the *bishop* of Rome through the exercise of a genuinely episcopal authority (DS 3060) that does not restrict the authority of other bishops

over their own flock (DS 3061). The Roman primate is bishop of Rome, but he is not bishop of any other local church. Nevertheless, he does have over the faithful of other local churches a power which is “immediate” (i.e. does not necessarily pass through any intermediaries) and “ordinary” (i.e. is not delegated but is given by virtue of his function).

## VATICAN II AND PRIMACY

Vatican II did no more than re-read *Pastor Aeternus* by placing it within the totality of Tradition.\* In this way it opened itself to the challenge brought by the Orthodox churches. According to Vatican II the bishop of Rome is a member of the episcopal college, which, as such and in its entirety, inherits all that is transmissible of the functions which pertained to the apostolic group. The Roman primacy is that of the head *within this college*. Yet for the college as such to have the full and supreme power over the whole church, it must be united with its head, the bishop of Rome. He, however, may not consider himself as above the college even when, by virtue of his special responsibility, he uses his freedom to intervene.

Since Vatican II the Catholic conscience has become more aware that this primacy is, by its very nature, a ministry of communion. The diversity of traditions, circumstances and peoples is the concrete expression of the local churches; and the safeguarding of their communion is the charge of the bishop of Rome acting in accordance with Christ’s will, which was first affirmed in the vocation of Peter.

Koinonia is not confined to a mere “being-together”. It requires unanimity in the profession of faith despite diversity of expression. On major points, it requires someone to point out the errors to be avoided. It needs information to be passed to all the churches concerning the ways some of them seek to resolve common problems. Finally, it calls for the admonition of any groups which seriously depart from the common faith and practice.

In his encyclical letter *Ut Unum Sint*, John Paul II stressed in a new way the necessity for all the churches to “receive” this service of primacy. He also asked the lead-

ers and theologians of all the churches to discuss with him in “a patient and fraternal dialogue” what would be the best way to exercise a real ecumenical primacy. He acknowledged the desire expressed at the fifth world conference of Faith and Order to reconsider seriously this issue, which he considered essential to his ministry.

J.-M.R. TILLARD

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## PRO ORIENTE

FOUNDED in 1964 by Cardinal Franz König of Vienna, the Pro Oriente foundation promotes eclesial relations between the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) and the Eastern churches: the Eastern Orthodox,\* the Oriental Orthodox\* (also called pre-Chalcedonian: Coptic, Syrian, Armenian, Ethiopian, Eritrean and Indo-Syrian), and the Assyrian (pre-Ephesian). PO does so through scientific research, publications and visits which contribute to a better mutual understanding of the Christian East.

PO's first ecclesiological colloquium in 1974 between RC and Eastern Orthodox theologians helped lead to the official theological dialogue between the RCC and the Orthodox local autocephalous churches, with the aim to “advance towards the re-es-

establishment of full communion between the Catholic church and the Orthodox sister churches” (Patriarch Dimitrios I and Pope John Paul II, 1979; see **churches, sister**).

PO initiated relations with the Romanian Orthodox Church by inviting Romanian bishops to ecumenical symposia and conferences and by the visits of Cardinal König to Romania (1967) and the Romanian patriarchs Justinian (1968) and Teoctist (1987) to Vienna. PO improved relations between the Ethiopian Orthodox church and the RCC. Ethiopian Orthodox theologians participated in the five consultations, and Patriarchs Tekle Haimanot (1981) and Paulos (1993) were visiting guests of the RCC in Austria and later of John Paul II in Rome.

PO sponsored five Vienna consultations between RC theologians and those of the Oriental Orthodox (1971, 1973, 1976, 1978 and 1988), which formed the first dialogue with the RCC and whole family of Oriental Orthodox churches since the schisms at the ecumenical council\* of Chalcedon (451). The Vienna agreement on Christology (“Wiener Christologische Formel”) avoided the disputed definition of Chalcedon. Study seminars and regional symposia continue the dialogue.

In 1994 PO started a new round of dialogue with the Assyrian Church of the East\* in the framework of all branches of the Syriac tradition (non-Chalcedonian and Eastern Catholic\*), thereby assembling for the first time all churches concerned from the Middle East and India.

PO has organized over 100 ecumenical symposia in Vienna, as well as theological conferences and scientific symposia; sponsored three exhibitions of icons; published 60 volumes on ecumenical, theological and historical subjects (in German, English, French, Russian, Greek, Arabic and Malayalam); and provided several scholarships to Orthodox students.

FRANZ GSCHWANDTNER

- German publications, 25 vols, Innsbruck, 1975-2000
- *Oikoumene: Dialogue and Problems*, 4 booklets, Salonika, 1998-2000 (in Greek)
- *Syriac Dialogue, 1994-2000*, 4 vols, Vienna, 1995-2000
- *Vienna Dialogue*, 10 booklets, Vienna, 1990-99
- *Wort und Wahrheit*, suppl. issues 1-5, 1972-88 (papers

and minutes of five Oriental Orthodox-RCC consultations).

## PROGRAMME TO COMBAT RACISM

RACISM\* IS denounced as incompatible with the Christian doctrine of the human being and the nature of the church of Christ. But for over 40 years (between the 1925 Stockholm Life and Work conference and the 1968 Uppsala assembly), the churches within the ecumenical movement were not sure how to combat it. In those years over 30 statements had been issued, condemning racial discrimination and racism. But despite some humanitarian programmes to help the victims of racism, there was no success in tackling the problem at its roots.

In the 1960s eminent Christians like Martin Luther King, Jr, Albert Luthuli and Eduardo Mondlane deeply influenced the racism debate, and King’s assassination only weeks before he was to address the WCC’s Uppsala assembly in 1968 gave the matter an urgent focus. The assembly urged the WCC to “embark on a vigorous campaign against racism” and to undertake “a crash programme to guide the Council and member churches in the matter of racism”.

More pressure came in 1969 from a WCC-sponsored world consultation on racism held in Notting Hill, London. In an emotional and often confrontational meeting, representatives of the racially oppressed demanded, among other things, a boycott of all institutions supporting racism, a fund for the payment of “reparations” for the injustices suffered over the centuries, and support for the armed struggle of oppressed blacks in situations where all other means had failed. Though these demands were not met, they certainly influenced the recommendations to the WCC central committee, which set up the Programme to Combat Racism. Out of a heated and emotional debate, a five-year mandate was adopted for the programme. It was renewed in 1974, and PCR’s activities continue under the mandate of the WCC’s team on justice, peace and creation.

PCR’s scope and focus was to deal with racism as a worldwide problem.

However, the coincidence of an accumulation of wealth and power in the hands of white people, as a result of their historical and economic progress during 400 years, made it necessary to give special attention to white racism in different parts of the world. The member churches were called upon to confess their involvement in the perpetuation of racism and to allocate a significant portion of their total resources, without employing paternalistic mechanisms of control, to organizations of the racially oppressed and those supporting the victims of racism.

PCR's mandate stipulated five major emphases: (1) white racism, which in its many forms is by far the most dangerous; (2) institutionalized racism, as reflected in social, economic and political power structures which use racism to enhance their power; (3) the need for a re-distribution of social, economic, political and cultural power from the powerful to the powerless as an essential aspect of combating racism; (4) the absence of a single, universally appropriate strategy for combating racism; (5) the need to analyze and correct the churches' complicity in benefiting from and furthering racism.

A commission on the PCR was appointed to guide its work and to make specific policy and programme recommendations to the central committee. The new sub-unit developed a list of programmatic categories for its work, ranging over the many aspects of worldwide racism, initiated research and published material on different forms of racism and the struggle of the oppressed. It also became responsible for the administration of the WCC special fund to combat racism, from which annual grants are made to racially oppressed groups and organizations supporting the victims of racism. From 1970 to 2001 a total of more than US\$12 million was distributed.

Much of PCR's attention and energy has been focused on Southern Africa. As a result of research and recommendations, beginning in 1972 the central committee made policy decisions on (1) a withdrawal of investments from Southern Africa, (2) an end to bank loans to the South African government, (3) a break in WCC relations

with banks doing business with South Africa, (4) a halt to white emigration to Southern Africa, (5) a rejection of South Africa's bantustan policy, (6) a mandatory arms embargo and a halt to nuclear collaboration with South Africa, and (7) comprehensive sanctions against South Africa.

In addition, PCR sponsored a number of important consultations between church and liberation movement leaders, as in Lusaka 1987 and Harare 1988, which helped to chart the course of international church support for the struggle against apartheid.\* In 1989 an eminent church persons group visited a number of countries that have a high level of economic ties with South Africa, to encourage them to maintain their boycott.

As changes began to come to South Africa in 1989 and 1990, PCR supported preparations for the historic National Conference of Churches in South Africa (Rustenburg\* 1990). The meeting took place 30 years after the Cottlesloe\* consultation, the watershed in WCC relationships with Afrikaner churches and the South African government.

While Southern Africa remained a priority, PCR has also focused on the struggle of indigenous people and land rights in general (see *land*). A 1989 land rights consultation, held in Darwin, Australia, affirmed the inherent right of indigenous peoples to self-determination and control of their territories, as well as the establishment of their governments and the maintenance of their traditional cultural and religious practices.

PCR also developed a programme on women under racism, designed to give visibility to issues and concerns of women who suffer from triple oppression: racism, sexism\* and classism. In 1986 a world consultation was held on the issue in Geneva. Emphasis is placed on indigenous and dalit women (in India) and on the issue of race and tourism, its impact on the rights and the dignity of women as well as the effects on indigenous values and culture.\* Following a global gathering of women in Trinidad and Tobago in 1992, an international network of information and action, called Sisters (Sisters In the Struggle To Eliminate Racism and Sexism), was established.

PCR has been significantly involved in discussions about the resurgence of racism in Europe and has extended its support work with minority groups in Asia and South America. The dramatic increase in institutional and community racism in the USA has meant new PCR efforts in that country, including a 1993 campaign on racism as a violation of human rights.

Over the years, PCR has given considerable attention to racism in education. In 1978 a study was made on racism in school textbooks, and in 1990 PCR organized a consultation in Toronto on racism in education and the media, with emphasis on North America.

After the lifting in 1990 of the bans on the liberation movements in South Africa and the release from prison of Nelson Mandela, the leader of the African National Congress, the WCC, in cooperation with the Roman Catholic Church, started the Ecumenical Monitoring Programme in South Africa in 1992. It became a major joint venture of the churches, both nationally and internationally, to monitor violence, negotiations and the first democratic elections in 1994.

The end of constitutional apartheid drew PCR to include, as a priority, the plight of indigenous peoples. In 1991 the Canberra assembly adopted a statement of commitment to indigenous peoples and to land rights entitled "Move beyond Words". It acknowledged indigenous peoples as the victims of racism and recognized that respect for their spirituality and culture needed to be restored. The WCC's unique contribution on this issue has been to link the issues of land and spirituality.

A dalit solidarity programme in support of the 200 million people of India outside the caste system, who have been victims of discrimination for centuries, became one of PCR's priorities in the early 1990s. In Africa PCR gave considerable attention to the struggle of the Ogoni people in Nigeria, as a part of its involvement in ethnicity work.

PCR, from its beginning, has been one of the most controversial among WCC initiatives. While there was strong support from many member churches, there was also criticism, especially over its sup-

port of liberation movements in Southern Africa. Some of those movements are now legitimate governments, and the WCC and PCR's vision and commitment have been vindicated. Indeed PCR is now often pointed to as one of the ecumenical success stories. All WCC units and sub-units were forced to deal with racism as it affected their respective mandates. Member churches were challenged in an unprecedented way to take a stand and to become actively involved in racial issues. The WCC had taken sides with the racially oppressed; charity was being replaced by solidarity. The WCC became more relevant to the majority of Christians and even to people of other faiths. Concrete action against racism severely tested the ecumenical fellowship, but it did not break.

BALDWIN SJOLLEMA

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## PROPERTY

DEFINITIONS of what constitutes property, as well as attitudes towards ownership, vary with different cultures and epochs. Property is what is owned, but all theories on property depend on the respective economic systems and ideologies (from Proudhon's "property is theft" to the libertarian "taxation is theft", to limitations on water rights, mineral rights, intellectual property, trademarks, design, copyright etc.).

The basic biblical criteria and attitudes towards property are relevant and valid in any society. Because God is the absolute owner of all things, no individuals or groups have absolute ownership of property, but all human beings are responsible

to God as stewards (Ps. 24:1). Limitations are found in the prescriptions of the sabbatical year (Ex. 21:2, 23:10; Deut. 15:12) and the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:10). The prophets of the Old Testament reveal God's bias in favour of the oppressed and the poor, widows, orphans, slaves and foreigners, who need solidarity and help.

Jesus underlines the perils of wealth, although he does not condemn the possession of property or renounce ownership of land, house or money. While he does not condemn rich people as such, Jesus does point out the danger of accumulating earthly treasures (Matt. 6:19-21) and lays down the principle that life does not consist in the abundance of possessions (Luke 12:15). The kingdom of God\* must come first; everything else is secondary and subsidiary (Matt. 6:33).

Property must be shared with others. As God's stewards, we are at the same time everyone's neighbours. Stewardship does not imply mastery over nature, economic forces and society, which would be corruption of neighbourliness. Both the New Testament letters and the history of the early church present examples of sharing (e.g. Acts 4:31-35; 2 Cor. 8:1-5; Phil. 4:10-20; Gal. 6:1-10).

Property is closely related to power.\* The rich have power over the poor because of their economic strength. Although article 17 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) underlines the right of property as an individual and personal right, ownership also means social responsibility, and as a social right it must be socially justified in respect to its acquisition, its effect on the owner and its consequences for the rest of the nation or the world. Here, the question of scale is decisive. As the ownership of property increases (up to the level of the transnational corporation), so responsibility increases for the right use of power.

The ecumenical movement has from its beginning urged the Christian churches to work for greater justice in the distribution of the world's resources in order to narrow the yawning gap domestically and globally between rich and poor. (See various WCC conferences, e.g. Geneva 1966 on Church and Society, and MIT 1979; Justice, Peace

and the Integrity of Creation, Seoul 1990; see also the Lutheran World Federation studies "Christian Ethics and Property", 1981-87, "Christian Ethics and Land", 1985-90; and the US Catholic bishops' pastoral letter on "Catholic Social Teaching and the US Economy".)

The findings of the ecumenical studies can be summarized as follows: (1) the churches need to be prophetic critics of all social, economic and political systems, of personal or systemic injustices; (2) the churches are called to represent their biblical concern for the poor and suffering of this world; (3) the churches should have a concern for life-styles that are simpler and involve less consumption, for ecology of "spaceship earth" as common property of humankind in longer-range planning, and for a balance between private rights to property and responsibility to the world of nations and to the public good.

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## PROPHECY

PROPHECY is found in many religions, but it has occurred most significantly in religions of history\* such as Judaism, Islam and Christianity. In the biblical tradition prophets are messengers of God in times of crisis, i.e. times of ambivalent and eschatological openness. They act out of a deeply felt personal relationship with, and obligation to, God. For their witness

(martyria), they often pay with their lives (see **martyrdom**). They claim to have received special revelations from God ("Thus says the Lord" is a typical beginning of their message) which offer a radical alternative to existing beliefs, ethical standards or established structures, whether religious, societal or political. Since these structures are represented by priests and political leaders, prophets tend to stand in marked opposition to such figures. They are easily accused of being "false prophets", which indicates that prophecy cannot avoid the ambiguities of any partisan involvement in a critical moment of history.

As messengers, prophets belong to God, proclaiming God's glory, righteousness, anger or mercy. They act in the name of the God who is coming, who is ready to do new and unheard-of things. In the light of the advent of God, prophets proclaim and predict new historical developments. According to the nature of the crisis, these may be times of judgment and doom or of comfort and renewal. Prophets are not essentially interested in forecasting doom; they are endowed with the Spirit to see through, to disclose the future impact of present evils in order to call people to conversion. Therefore, prophecy has always a salvific dimension.

Jesus placed his ministry in the line of the great prophets before him, such as Moses, Elijah and Isaiah (e.g. Luke 4:17-21; Matt. 17:2). The early Christians were convinced that prophecy is a gift of the Holy Spirit\* (a charisma\*) as important as teaching, oversight (episcopate), or healing (1 Cor. 12:27-28 and elsewhere). Consequently, the Christian churches have always taught that the prophetic element is essential for the well-being of the church. But owing to the nature of prophecy, it could never be defined or instituted as a constitutive part of the churches' ministry. Mostly in hindsight, churches have come to acknowledge some of their servants and martyrs who had been much contested at their time as true prophets of God.

Similarly, some of the leading persons in the ecumenical movement have been acknowledged as prophetic. Laypersons such as John R. Mott, Robert Gardiner or

Joseph Oldham, or clergy such as Nathan Söderblom, Charles Brent, Dietrich Bonhoeffer or Oscar A. Romero, are now revered as prophetic servants of the universal church in times of trial and persecution.

However, whether the ecumenical movement as such should be called prophetic is open to debate. Certainly it has the role of reminding the churches of their shortcomings (such as lack of unity,\* sharing and solidarity\*). In this way some messages and actions of the WCC have had all the characteristics of prophetic witness.

The Faith and Order\* study on "God in Nature and History" (1967) expressed the hope that the WCC would be able, if necessary, to "pronounce the right prophetic words in the name of the churches". The WCC's 1968 assembly placed itself under a markedly prophetic word: "Behold, I Make All Things New". Its decision to embark on the Programme to Combat Racism\* was greeted by some as prophetic, discarded by others as too worldly. As none dare to call themselves prophets unless they are prepared to carry the terrible burden of such a calling, so no one dare designate or label from outside who or what is prophetic. Prophecy is something awaited in prayer and to be followed in discipleship.

As the churches grow together in their common calling to serve the world and each other, they also owe to each other the elementary charism of prophecy. But to identify this charism with a particular institution or movement is incompatible with the nature of prophecy. It appears more appropriate to describe the role of the ecumenical movement in the words of one of the WCC general secretaries, Philip Potter, who wrote in 1981: "We... are called to be paracletes, to comfort and counsel one another. We are called to be beside each other, helping, exhorting, consoling, strengthening. That is what fellowship within our congregations and churches and between the churches around the world is all about."

See also **revelation, witness**.

GEIKO MÜLLER-FAHRENHOLZ

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## PROSELYTISM

IN THE NEW Testament, *prosēlytos* refers to a convert to Judaism (Acts 2:10). To induce someone towards such conversion\* is to proselytize, and zealous efforts to do so are proselytism. Ecumenically, the term has acquired the negative connotation of the perversion of Christian witness\* through secret or open improper persuasion such as bribery, intimidation or external coercion.

Proselytism became a major interchurch problem through Roman Catholic and Protestant missionary work in countries where other Christian churches were already present – e.g., among the Eastern Orthodox\* and Oriental Orthodox\* churches in the Middle East, Ethiopia and India, and among the RCs in Latin America. Since 1552 the activities of RC Western mission orders in the Middle East and Eastern Europe had helped to form Eastern Catholic churches\* (in full communion with the church in Rome) from Orthodox church members, e.g. Armenian Catholic, Greek Catholic and Chaldean Catholic. In some areas, converts from Orthodox and RC backgrounds formed Protestant churches, e.g. the Presbyterian in Egypt, the Lutheran in Ethiopia, the Anglican in Palestine. The mother community regarded the formation of these churches as an act of proselytism; the missionaries saw them as the inevitable consequence of authentic witness to the gospel and the true church of Christ.

Agreement on the distinction between true witness\* and unacceptable proselytism has thus become an issue of mutual ecclesial acceptance. Significantly, proselytism was studied around the time of increasing Orthodox involvement in the WCC, the integration of the International Missionary Council,\* and Vatican II\* (see **common witness**). The WCC third assembly (New Delhi 1961) commended the

document on “Christian Witness, Proselytism and Religious Liberty”. In 1970 the Joint Working Group\* between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC (JWG) issued a study document on “Common Witness and Proselytism”.

Both documents point to the contrast between true witness and proselytism. The New Delhi statement affirms that mutual witness is an essential part of the ecumenical fellowship, including witness to Christians who have lost contact with their own church and who, through renewal, have been carried from one church into another. It may even lead to a witness against the doctrine and practice in another church believed to be contrary to truth (see the Toronto statement\* of 1950). Equally, the right to change church affiliation on grounds of conscience is affirmed as part of religious liberty.\*

The perversion of witness into proselytism depends on the intention and the means used. Every intention to divide another church or to draw members from it constitutes proselytism as is the offer of material or social advantages.

The 1970 JWG document offers more clarifying detail. “Proselytism embraces whatever violates the right of the human person, Christian or non-Christian, to be free from external coercion in religious matters or whatever in the proclamation of the gospel does not conform to the ways God draws free men [and women] to respond to God’s calls in spirit and in truth.” Proselytism in attitudes and behaviour includes “exploitation of the need or weakness or of the lack of education of those to whom witness is offered”, as well as “unjust or uncharitable reference to the beliefs or practices of other religious communities”.

Although a wide ecumenical consensus condemns proselytism in principle, the distinction between legitimate Christian witness or evangelism\* and negative proselytism is not so easily drawn in practice, especially under circumstances such as intermarriage, competing congregations, immigrant and migrant contexts. The memory of some of the traumatic experiences of the past persists, and not all groups consider themselves bound by the ecumenical consensus.

A 1996 updated JWG study document, "The Challenge of Proselytism and the Calling to Common Witness", lists present tensions: well-intentional evangelistic activities which may often ignore the Christian reality of the "target" churches or their particular approaches to pastoral practices and missionary strategies which aim to re-evangelize baptized but "non-practising" members of other churches, even while there are different interpretations of who is "un-churched" or is a "true" Christian believer. Or in the climate of new religious freedom in some areas, some churches judge that others are pressuring their members to change their allegiance. For example, after the re-opening of Eastern Europe for more overt religious activities, some foreign missionary efforts are aggressively entering that predominantly Orthodox region in order to win adherents from the vulnerable local churches. The region has also witnessed aggravated tensions between the Eastern Catholic and Orthodox churches, e.g. in the Ukraine.

The JWG places these problems of religious freedom and proselytism in the ecumenical framework of church unity and common witness.\* A similar approach is taken in the 1998 report "Evangelization, Proselytism and Common Witness" from the Pentecostal-Roman Catholic dialogue.\*

PAUL LÖFFLER

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## PROSTITUTION, CHILD

CHILDREN HAVE been used in organized prostitution in Europe, Asia and the Middle East from earliest times. The practice

became less common at the beginning of the 20th century, but the last decade has seen an alarming increase in the number of children used in prostitution. Estimates from UNICEF and governments indicate that there could be as many as 2 million children under the age of 16 years in forced prostitution worldwide. The growth has been attributed, inter alia, to fear of HIV/AIDS, a resurgence of patriarchal power, confused morality and the growth of tourism.

In May 1990 the Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism convened an ecumenical consultation on Asian child prostitution in Chiang Mai, Thailand. This meeting received research documents prepared by national councils of churches which pointed to widespread use of children in prostitution in Thailand, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, India and Taiwan. It also concluded that foreign travellers were helping to fuel the demand for children as sex partners. The meeting set up a continuation committee which established an international non-governmental agency to be known as End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT).

The new agency was initially funded by ecumenical development agencies in Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Australia, and headquarters were established in Thailand. The issue soon became international, and within three years ECPAT had 26 offices around the world. Initial success came with the decision of a number of governments to amend their extra-territorial laws to make possible the conviction of child sex abusers for crimes overseas: Germany passed the new law in 1993; France and Australia in 1994; the USA, Belgium and New Zealand in 1995.

Interpol set up a special branch to deal with child prostitution, and for the first time the issue was being seen as an international matter. By 1996 ECPAT had moved beyond Asia to become an international agency and had changed the meaning of its acronym to "End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking in Children for Sexual Purposes", following the three areas of child sex abuse listed in the UN convention on the rights of the child.

The first world congress against the commercial sexual exploitation of children was held in 1996 in Stockholm. The meeting was unique because it brought together government delegates with representatives of non-governmental organizations and churches working on the issue. Official delegations from 119 governments attended and adopted a declaration and an agenda for action which undertook to put in place by the year 2000 strategies which would help end child prostitution. A second world congress was held in Yokohama, Japan, in December 2001, with representatives from 134 governments participating.

RON O'GRADY

■ R. O'Grady, *The Hidden Shame of the Church: Sexual Abuse of Children and the Church*, WCC, 2001 ■ R. O'Grady, *The Rape of the Innocent: One Million Children Trapped in the Slavery of Prostitution*, Bangkok, ECPAT, 1994.

## PROTESTANTISM

JUST AS THE disciples of Christ were only belatedly called Christians, so too those who supported the Reformation were called Protestants only from 1529 onwards. This was the date of the second diet of Speyer, when five princes of the holy Roman empire and 14 free cities "protested" against the decision taken three years earlier which had granted the princes (or cities) the right to decide as sovereigns what the religion of their subjects should be. In support of their stand they affirmed: "In matters which concern the honour of God and the salvation of our souls, every individual must stand alone before God and give an account." Until then the Protestants had been called by different names – Lutherans, Evangelicals, Huguenots. The term "Protestantism" has more than a negative side to it. Rather, it is an affirmation of the freedom of faith.\*

One might think that Protestantism arose out of a challenge to the abuses of the Roman Catholic Church, such as the sale of indulgences, the second-rate quality of the lower clergy or the dissolute lifestyle of the higher clergy. But these abuses

had been denounced already for over a century. Hence, the Reformation would have been original only in succeeding, at least partially, where others had failed. But at a more profound level, the Reformation criticized the importation of the Roman tradition into the gospel, such as the doctrines of purgatory, Mariology, the veneration of saints and the power of the clergy. Even here Protestantism is not wholly original, for it owes something to humanism, which commended a return to the primary documents – in this case, the holy scriptures. Many humanists, however, did not become Protestants; the most famous example was Erasmus (1467-1536).

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROTESTANTISM

The real originality of Protestantism lies in its fresh reading of the Bible, which led Martin Luther (1483-1546), an Augustinian monk and theologian, to claim that Christians are "justified", i.e. they become righteous in the sight of God, not by their works and the merits which derive from these, but by God's grace\* alone, received in faith and not by means of works (see **justification**). Even if human beings or the individual conscience approves these works, God in his holiness cannot accept them as righteous, for human beings are sinners through and through, and their works are evil (see **sin**). Only the redeeming work of Christ is pleasing to God, and in his grace God "reckons to us" the righteousness of Christ. Our righteousness is therefore external (*forensis*), for we are not its source, which does not mean that it is unreal, for God does accomplish what he tells us and promises to us in his creative word. Having become good trees, by grace alone, we bear good fruits, in so far as we continue to have faith in Christ crucified and raised. In turn, this faith is not a work; it is a gift of God, awakened in us by the Holy Spirit.\*

Protestantism thus developed a new understanding of faith. Faith is not primarily intellectual assent to doctrines which the church,\* its councils and the pope formulate. First and foremost, faith is a personal bond of trust in Christ and recognition of the rightness of the judgments

which God pronounces on sinful human beings. At least in the beginning, Protestants unanimously recognized the ancient ecumenical symbols or creeds,\* and even drew up their own doctrinal confessions of faith: Augsburg confession (1530), confession of La Rochelle (1559 and 1571), Scots confession (1560), second Helvetic confession (1560), Westminster confession (1646), etc. But these confessions are not standards with absolute authority. Only holy scripture – in so far as, in Luther's words, it is the bearer of Christ – has the force of the ultimate standard or court of appeal (*norma normans*); the confessions are standards only to the degree that scripture confirms them (*norma normata*).

Polemics naturally accused the Reformation of moral laxity because of its claim that works do not save. This censure is unfounded. While works cannot produce salvation,\* they are nonetheless an essential to demonstrate that we have not received the righteousness of Christ in vain – or as the Heidelberg catechism (1563) says, to give evidence to God of our gratitude. This is the true basis of a rigorous Protestant ethic.

This ethic is all the more rigorous in that while Roman Catholic tradition progressively reduced good works to prayer, pilgrimages, charitable gifts, etc., Protestantism for both Luther and Calvin re-established the dignity of work\* in the world, hence Luther's struggle against monastic vows, in which he saw a flight from Christian responsibilities in the world, the city and the family. Hence also Calvin's doubtless bolder initiatives to encourage trade and industry. Calvin's exegesis of relevant Old Testament passages clearly shows that they condemned loans at exorbitant interest rather than loans at interest rates that were intended to increase production. The clerical profession has no pre-eminent status for Christians; those who work to ensure a livelihood for their family, the prosperity of their town and help for the deprived are as worthy of respect as the minister entrusted with the proclamation of the word of God. One's trade, according to Luther, is also one's calling or vocation.\*

This rehabilitation of secular work led certain sociologists and historians, espe-

cially Max Weber in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904-1905), to look for the origins of the capitalist quest in the Protestant ethic. But one must note, as Weber explicitly does, that it was the puritan spirit which above all provided the religious foundations and created the necessary mental attitudes for capitalist enterprise, at least in its beginnings. This thesis continues to find critics, who so far have managed only to clarify a thesis which in its essentials retains its full value.

Protestantism sought to reform the church from within but failed in this respect because of the intransigence of popes and the holy Roman emperor. The Protestant churches were compelled to constitute themselves as separate churches. But even before the schism\* was completed, they evolved an ecclesiology different from Rome's. For a start, they asserted that the pope and even councils could be mistaken, that scripture remains the supreme arbiter, that it has a clarity of its own and that its obscure parts are clarified by its more self-evident passages. This was in embryo the modern idea – accepted by Protestantism and in large measure by Roman Catholic theologians today – that there is a canon within the biblical canon.\*

Furthermore, while the Roman Catholic Church maintained that there is no church except where there are priests ordained by a bishop who is within the apostolic succession and in communion with the pope as the successor of Peter, the Reformation maintained that the church exists wherever the word of God\* is rightly proclaimed and where the sacraments\* instituted by Christ (i.e. only the two sacraments of baptism\* and the Lord's supper, or eucharist\*) are administered in agreement with the gospel. The church is a community of sinners who have been forgiven and, prompted by the Spirit, are brought together by the word of God.

Patently in its definition of the church, Protestantism gave pride of place to the event by which the people are brought together through the word, as compared with the institution as a socio-historical phenomenon. This is not to claim that Protestantism rejected all ecclesial institutions. As the schism moved towards its

completion, it adopted a variety of institutional forms in its various denominations, but all of these institutions were marked by their collegial character and by the increasing role of the laity\* in the government of the church (see **church order**).

Defining faith as a relation of personal trust in the Lord meant depriving the church of its power as an institution. No longer did the church mediate and dispense salvation, even as a secondary cause. Its one role is to proclaim and bear witness to the salvation which God effected in Christ, and to do so in the most varied ways – by preaching, administering the sacraments and declaring forgiveness (no longer itself doing the forgiving), and by mutual aid, service and the care of souls. Thus the church was made subordinate to the redeeming work of Christ, and ecclesiology depended on Christology. The church is a second reality. But it is not a secondary one, for it is and remains the Body of Christ, and all whom God has justified are brought into the church (in particular, by baptism); this body is called to grow in unity\* and holiness.\* Though the church has a divine foundation, it is not in itself a divine reality, and as an earthly institution it has its limitations. God alone knows who the true believers are; it is not up to the ecclesiastical institution to make this decision. This view explains why the practice of excommunication\* eventually lost a great deal of its significance in the churches of the Reformation.

The ecclesiastical dispute with Rome has naturally been accompanied by a profound difference in regard to the ministry (see **ministry in the church**). That the ministry is an essential is not disputed in churches which resulted from the Reformation. But pastors are not priests, in that they have no special character or power which would distinguish them from laypeople. In principle, although pastors are ordained to their ministry, laypersons can carry out the same activities if the occasion arises and if they are called upon to do so by the constituted authorities. Already in 1520 Luther framed the Protestant doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, stating that all baptized Christians “can pride themselves on already being priests, bishops and pope”.

But he added, “It is not appropriate for each person to fulfill the same office”, because of his concern for order and his respect for each person’s calling.

The question of the nature of the ministry remains a stumbling block in the ecumenical dialogues begun some decades ago between the Protestant churches and the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches. Difficulties over the mutual recognition of ministries remain a serious barrier in the quest for unity. The three confessions have been able to reach agreement on recognizing baptism, which in any case may be validly administered by a layperson, according to the Roman Catholic Church. But in regard to the Lord’s supper (or eucharist), there is no such recognition. According to present Roman Catholic teaching, there are certain values in the Lord’s supper celebrated in the Protestant churches, but the Lord’s supper is defective because it is not presided over by a minister considered validly ordained in the apostolic succession. Hence intercommunion\* and *a fortiori* intercelebration are not possible. Rome does extend, within certain limits, eucharistic hospitality to baptized Protestants, but this is a one-way hospitality.

The current stage of the problem is found in connection with the 1982 WCC Faith and Order document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*,\* prepared by Protestant, Orthodox and Roman Catholic theologians. This document clearly shows that there has been some convergence on questions of ministry, but some responses still pose a continuing deadlock: Protestantism cannot give up its concept of the priesthood of all believers, nor can it acknowledge that its ministers have an intrinsic power to effect sacraments.

To sum up so far, one can define Protestantism in the three classic formulas: *sola gratia* (grace alone), *sola fide* (faith alone), *sola scriptura* (scripture alone) – to which Calvin liked to add *soli Deo gloria* (to God alone be glory).

### THE EXPANSION OF PROTESTANTISM

International communications were not easy in the 16th century, yet the expansion of Protestantism was extremely

rapid. Theologians and the clergy, and merchants too, were significant agents of that expansion. But it was checked by the wars of religion, persecutions (the Inquisition in Spain and Italy, the repressiveness of the monarchy in France, etc.) and the application of the principle in the (German) holy Roman empire that the sovereign in each region would decide the religion of his people, but also by the internal divisions in Protestantism between Lutherans, Calvinists and Zwinglians, especially in regard to the way Christ is present in the Lord's supper.

Nevertheless, Protestantism in its Lutheran form conquered central and eastern Germany, the Rhineland area of Germany and south of the River Main, the Baltic lands and Scandinavia. In its Calvinist form the Reformation spread in France (around 1560 nearly a third of the kingdom was Protestant) and in Switzerland, though there, especially at Zurich, it was also in a Zwinglian mode. In the Netherlands it took a Calvinist and also a Mennonite form.

England is a special case. The break with Rome was the result of a conflict between King Henry VIII and the pope, who refused to annul Henry's marriage with Catherine of Aragon. The schismatic Church of England (1534) was however quickly penetrated by Reformation ideas under the influence of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer of Canterbury, and of the Strasbourg reformer Martin Bucer, as the 1552 prayer book and the articles of religion show. In Jean Baubérot's words, the Church of England is "a theologically Protestant church with an ecclesiastical structure which has remained close to Roman Catholicism", while the Church of Scotland was and remained resolutely Calvinist. Protestantism was making headway also in the direction both of Bohemia, where the Bohemian Brethren had already prepared the ground, and of Hungary. The old church of the Waldensian valleys in northern Italy also rallied behind the Reformation.

In general terms, at the beginning of the 18th century confessional boundaries were more or less fixed, choices had been made, and the period of consolidation had

begun which favoured both the emergence of denominational orthodoxies and a growing inflexibility on their part. This general comment finds two major exceptions: the (seeming) elimination of Protestantism in France by the revocation of the edict of Nantes (1685), and the progressive and continued growth of Protestantism in North America.

The Anglicans landed in Virginia in 1607 and converted certain Indians and blacks. The Anglican church they founded established itself also in the two Carolinas and, in the 18th century, in Georgia. But Protestantism's great triumph in North America was the work not of the Anglicans but of Puritan and Congregationalist Non-conformists from the Netherlands and from England, followed by the Baptists and the Methodists. While no religion is constitutionally "established" any longer there, many in the US saw their country as a great Protestant nation. However, significant immigration has resulted in a strong Roman Catholic presence, and the country has had a Roman Catholic president (John F. Kennedy). The state maintains diplomatic relations with the Vatican.

But Protestantism became divided. The above account has highlighted the reasons for the divisions of the large Protestant churches which stem directly from the Reformation. But from the 16th century onwards, further divisions arose. The Mennonites,\* who continue to this day, reject infant baptism, adopt a principle of non-violence and assume an ascetic approach to the world. Anabaptism also rejected infant baptism and re-baptized adults but exhibited a variety of forms, pacifist on the one hand, violent on the other. The latter tendency gave it an affinity with the movement of Thomas Münzer (1489-1525), who originally supported Luther but later became his opponent. While commending a spiritualized form of Christianity, Münzer supported the peasants' revolt and died with those who took part in it. One can see in him a distant ancestor of present theologies of liberation.

#### MOVEMENTS OF RENEWAL OR AWAKENING

Through the 17th to 19th centuries, movements of renewal or awakening

arose also in the historic Protestant churches. Some evolved within the church, such as pietism. Others, either by accident or design, ended up in schisms and in the founding of new churches which identify themselves as Protestant.

The first is the Baptist movement, with origins at the beginning of the 17th century. It is in fact the heir to Anabaptism, for it rejects infant baptism and considers as members only persons baptized after they make a personal confession of their faith and give signs of their conversion. The Baptists\* are a church of those who personally profess their faith, as opposed to the churches of the masses which directly emerged from the Reformation. Fundamentally the Baptist movement is congregationalist. Only the local congregations are called churches, and they enjoy a great deal of independence. They are linked by conventions. Considered as a sect in many European churches, where they are a very small minority, the Baptists represent large, powerful conventions of churches in some other countries. In the USA, the Southern Baptist Convention is the largest Protestant denomination.

Then comes Methodism,\* initially a movement of awakening which John Wesley (1703-91) led within the Church of England. But his para-church structures eventually led to separation from the national church, while in the newly independent USA Methodism became an autonomous church in 1784. In English-speaking countries Methodism became a strong, powerful and well-organized family of churches. Methodist churches of the American branch retained the episcopal system.

Many more small churches and denominations derive indirectly from the Reformation and maintain some links with the historic Protestant churches.

Despite – or sometimes because of – its divisions, Protestantism, from the end of the 18th century to our own day, has been distinguished by intense missionary activity (see **missionary societies**). Some dates illustrate the vitality of these missions, which had for their main fields of activity Africa and Madagascar, India, Southeast Asia, the Pacific islands and China: in

1792 the Baptist Missionary Society of London was founded; in 1795 the London Missionary Society; in 1799 the Dutch Mission at Rotterdam; in 1799 the (Anglican) Church Missionary Society; in 1810 the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (initially a joint undertaking, then Congregationalist) at Boston; in 1813 the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society at London; in 1814 the American Baptist Mission at Boston; in 1815 the Basel (Switzerland) Mission; in 1822 the Société des missions évangéliques de Paris (Paris Evangelical Missions Society). Many other missionary societies, often fundamentalist in type and of American origin, came into existence during the 19th and 20th centuries.

All these missions had considerable success. For example, French Protestantism, with only 1 million members, started missions in Africa, Madagascar and the Pacific, and brought 1.2 million converts to Christian faith. But they transferred overseas both a very Westernized form of Christianity and their own confessional divisions – with disastrous results. To put an end to this competition, the world missionary conference (Edinburgh 1910) launched an appeal for unity. This conference, which is conventionally reckoned as the start of the modern ecumenical movement, explains also Protestantism's significant role in the organization and personnel of both Life and Work\* and Faith and Order\* and in the creation of the WCC. To a greater degree than Eastern Orthodoxy, which had little overseas mission activity, Protestantism (including Anglicanism) was for long the vanguard of ecumenism.

In the European homelands, Protestantism has made little evangelistic progress. Since the end of the 16th century, confessional barriers between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism have, it seems, become fixed. There were, and still are, many individual conversions in both directions, but they are not statistically significant. Besides, since industrialization and urbanization made their appearance, neither Protestantism nor Roman Catholicism really has succeeded in reaching the de-Christianized masses, despite the nu-

merous efforts which still continue. Except for the 1 million Baptists in the USSR, there has been no expansion of Protestantism in Europe.

In contrast, Protestantism has expanded remarkably in traditionally Roman Catholic Latin America and the Caribbean. In this vast continent there were only around 120,000 Protestants in 1920. In 2000 they numbered more than 35 million. In general, the evangelizing was not the work of the great historical churches but of the Pentecostals;\* offshoots of both Congregationalism and Methodism, they began in North America in the early 1900s. Most often, the more intense Protestant evangelization has been in the small, conservative, often fundamentalist evangelical churches, rather than in the great historic churches, which are firmly established and highly institutionalized.

In 2000 there were about 340 million Protestants among about 2 billion Christians, in a world of 6.1 billion people. Churches do not all record their numbers in the same way. Most include children in their statistics, but churches opposed to infant baptism, such as Baptists, count only baptized adults. And churches vary on the registration of inactive members. Theologically and sociologically linked with the Protestantism of the Reformation as it is, the Anglican communion numbered 80 million members in 2000.

### PROTESTANTISM TODAY

Thus Protestantism represents a relatively significant body of people in a world where Christianity is itself a minority. But the Protestant churches are divided, although they have a very substantial common theological basis and closely related forms of worship. How long will they remain so? This question is hard to answer. The great majority of the Protestant churches belong to the WCC, and the large confessional families such as the World Alliance of Reformed Churches,\* the Lutheran World Federation,\* the Anglican communion,\* the Baptist World Alliance\* and the World Methodist Council\* increasingly undertake common activities and dialogues with a view to unity.

These dialogues have made particular progress between Lutheran and Reformed Christians. In Europe most Lutheran, Reformed and United churches approved the Leuenberg\* agreement (1973), which established a complete "table and pulpit fellowship". In the USA, the Consultation on Church Union\* was under way from the early 1960s. Finally, in many countries most Protestant churches are members either of a federation or of a national or regional Christian council, to which they delegate responsibility for taking certain common measures in ethics or socio-political life, and even, as in France, for some pastoral ministries and chaplaincies (prisons, hospitals, army).

In addition to the various unions of Protestant churches already effected between Reformed and Congregationalist bodies, Reformed and Methodists, etc. (of which the first was the United Church of Canada in 1925), other unions were under discussion in the early 21st century. Many past disputes have been overcome, and as a general rule a clear distinction is drawn in Protestantism between those increasingly fewer problems which still justify a separation of churches and those which reveal a legitimate diversity of theological trends. These latter, moreover, often cut across confessions and, for their part, do not justify retention of the boundaries between the churches.

The legal position of Protestantism in secular society varies greatly, from situations where there is a church-state agreement in the strict sense of the term "concordat" (with church ministers as state officials) to total separation of the churches and the state. Between these extremes are systems which are semi-concordats and forms of separation which do not exclude cooperation with the state and the allocation of various subsidies to the churches. In Germany, for instance, church and state are separate, but the state collects a church tax which is proportional to general taxation and passes it on to the churches. To be excused payment of this church tax, one must give official notice that one has left the church. In addition, regional subsidies (from the *Länder*) can be allocated to the work of the churches,

and they support the university faculties of theology. In the USA church and state are separate, but issues such as prayers in the public schools are resolved in different ways depending on the decisions of the supreme court and of individual states. In all the Scandinavian countries except Sweden the sovereign is in theory head of the Lutheran church, but in practice the churches enjoy a very great deal of freedom. In the Church of England the monarch is legally “governor” of the church, and parliament retains a residual veto in matters of worship and doctrine. In France, to eliminate the grip of the Roman Catholic Church on the schools, a free compulsory secular primary school was established in 1881 (though confessional schools were not abolished), and in 1905, in an atmosphere of violent anticlericalism, a law separating the churches and the state was passed. Protestants had no difficulty in accepting this law, but not until 1923 did Roman Catholics accept it. Since then, relations have become less strained, and through social and medical work, etc. the state indirectly subsidizes the churches.

Since the demise of communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe beginning in 1989-90, churches there have come to enjoy greater independence in relation to the state. Legal restrictions remain in force in several countries, applying particularly to minority religious groups. With the expansion of religious freedoms came an influx of programmes of evangelism\* sponsored by churches and evangelical missions\* based outside these nations. Churches long established in the region protested against this perceived proselytism,\* sometimes to the point of calling for tightened state controls. Growing co-operation among the churches is encouraged by the joint committee of the Conference of European Churches\* and the Council of the Conference of European Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church (see **Europe: Central and Eastern**).

Generally, Protestantism favours a legal arrangement under which it enjoys full autonomy from civil authorities not merely for preaching and teaching but also for its internal organization. This prefer-

ence takes it back to its deepest roots. The Lutheran doctrine of the two “regiments”, or kingdoms (the spiritual and the temporal, which are parallel but essentially independent of each other), is a doctrine which Calvin fully adopted; in fact, it represents an initial form of secularity, clearly designed to be compatible with the political organization of Christendom at the time. When the political authorities and lay society were secularized, it was normal, in Protestant eyes, for secularity to take on new forms to ensure full freedom for the preaching of the gospel. This acceptance of a secularization\* of state, institutions and public life in no way means that Protestantism had given up playing a part in society and withdrawn into itself for the sole task of saving individual souls. This temptation existed, but today it seems to have been removed.

#### THE SOCIAL ASPECTS

Protestantism has recognized that a human being created by God is a whole, that the body is part of the person, that everyone has a social and community dimension, and that the salvation promised in Jesus Christ relates to the whole human being. Under the influence of movements like the social gospel,\* social Christianity, religious socialism, Life and Work, and finally the WCC, Protestantism, for the most part, sees that social justice, fair sharing of wealth and resources, the preservation of peace, and ecological balance in a world entrusted by God to human beings and preserved with a view to future salvation are not secondary tasks but in fact integral to preaching the gospel. This realization has been clearer and quicker in the churches that came directly out of the Reformation than in the individualistic type of evangelical churches, although the latter are also beginning to embrace these concerns.

At all times, indeed, the Protestant churches have pressed their members to practise charity, but they have seen that this personal activity was too limited to be really effective. Hence the emergence, especially from the 19th century onwards, of large charitable diaconal and nursing institutions. Many of these are still active

today and seek to equip themselves with modern technological aids. But while these bodies contribute to healing certain wounds inflicted by industrial and urban society and by wars, they have not tackled the roots of the evil. Initially the Protestant churches paid special attention to preventing these evils, e.g. by setting up, even before states thought of it, organizations such as welfare centres and holiday camps for young people and structures for social workers. Several of these services then became models which inspired the state and lay society. Later on, these same churches thought they ought to contribute to creating a public opinion which would exercise pressure on the state to change unjust laws, encourage industrial concerns to undertake better sharing of profits, give their employees a share of power in decision making and more effectively combat unemployment.

Yet many Protestant churches played a significant part in combating the proliferation of nuclear weapons, in stopping nuclear test explosions – in fact supporting denuclearization. In these struggles the Protestant churches cooperate with other churches, political parties, trade unions, etc. And when cooperating with other social forces, the churches have almost always been concerned to preserve their own identity and not to let themselves be taken over by political parties whose ideology they refuse to accept.

Many qualifications of this description might be made. Members within the Protestant churches are not all of one mind, even on limited individual issues, when it comes to deciding on matters relating to the economy, politics or disarmament. Motions, even when approved by synods with a very large majority, do not have compelling power in Protestantism. Nevertheless, Protestant churches generally sense the need to exercise a watchful politico-social and if possible prophetic ministry, without succumbing to a politicization which would be disastrous both for the unity of the ecclesial community and for the gospel message itself. Protestantism thus treads along a narrow ridge from which it is hard not to stray. What matters is that Protestantism should, in

agreement with scripture (esp. Rom. 12:1-2), remain a power for renewal and for changing the world and not be conforming to it.

Protestantism will be successful in this task only in so far as its theologies are well rooted in scripture, well worked out, and capable of giving substance to its preaching. In no way need these theologies be uniform. A great part of the 20th century, from the 1920s to 1960, was inspired by great theological systems – of a Karl Barth, a Reinhold Niebuhr, a Rudolf Bultmann, a Paul Tillich, a Dietrich Bonhoeffer – and by the vast amount of work done by Old and New Testament exegetes. In this last field Protestant scholars, who were the vanguard, are now joined by their Roman Catholic colleagues, and the work of exegesis\* is now being carried on ecumenically. The great Protestant theological renewal, which eclipsed the traditional conflicts between orthodox, liberal and pietist thinkers, has temporarily come to a halt, as if to draw breath. Many theologians are concentrating on more limited fields. Their work is preparing the way for the very necessary renewals of tomorrow, for the theologies which relate to the indigenization of Christianity are still in their infancy, and the so-called liberation theologies (which are not specifically Protestant) are exciting ethical calls which must be listened to.

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## PROVIDENCE

"PROVIDENCE" is a summarizing concept for God's general ordering of nature\* and caring activity for the particulars of communal life and individual existence. According to traditional doctrine, provi-

dence comprises (1) God's upholding the creatures against nothingness, (2) God's cooperating with their created creativity, and (3) God's directing the worldly events to the fulfilment of their inner aims and God's eternal purpose of salvation.\* This scheme, however, conceals the many faces of Christian belief in providence. While doctrinal theology has focused on God's global structuring of the world, spiritual traditions have rather highlighted the abandonment to divine providence in local situations of trial and temptation, of prayer and lament, of attentiveness or disobedience to divine will.

In the scriptures recognized by the Roman Catholic Church, the word "providence" (Greek *pronoia*, Latin *providentia*) is found only in Wis. 14:3, 17:2. Traditionally, the concept has been discerned also in Gen. 22:8 (Vulgate *Deus providebit*). Nevertheless, the idea of providence is central in the Old Testament: God\* is the Lord of history\* – Israel's and all nations' (e.g. Deut. 4:19; Amos 9:5-7; cf. Gen. 9:8-17). What God plans will be effected (e.g. Isa. 46:9-11). After the exile this idea of God's foreknowledge and all-directing reality was extended to the individual (e.g. Jer. 1:5; Ps. 139; cf. Gen. 50:20) and furthermore generalized (Wis. 8:1). Beside the idea of God's global providence in history, we find the notion of God's design for the local moment (*kairos*). God has made everything to suit its time (Eccles. 3:1-8), and human beings are called to act with timing, according to the God-given moment (Isa. 28:23-29; Prov. 15:23, 25:11; Sir. 4:20).

In the New Testament the active presence in creation\* of the Triune God provides the cosmological background for soteriology (John 5:17; 1 Cor. 12:6; Acts 17:27). God cares for the lowest creatures, and even more for human beings. This statement of belief invites humans to participate in the praxis of faith: living without anxiety and loving without respect of persons (Matt. 5:45, 6:25-34, 10:29-31).

The soteriological interest is predominant in the NT. God's eternal plan (*prothesis*, e.g. Rom. 8:28; Eph. 3:11) extends to the universe as a whole (Rom. 8:19-23;

Eph. 1:10; Col. 1:20). Although God's hidden purpose is revealed to the elect (Eph. 1:7-9), "the wisdom of God in its rich variety" (Eph. 3:10) exceeds all understanding (vv.18-19). The faith that God in everything cooperates for good with those who love him implies no mere optimistic *Weltanschauung* but means rather that no fate or fortune can separate from the love of Christ (Rom. 8:28,31-39; cf. Luke 13:1-5).

In the early church, the fathers very soon (1 Clement 20) elaborated the doctrine of providence by assimilating certain cosmological ideas of Plato, the Stoics and later Platonism. The polemics against the Epicurean doctrine of accident and fortune is unanimous from Justin Martyr (*First Apology* 28) onwards, and the charge of Epicureanism was raised also against the Gnostics (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.24-25). Stoic ideas of a ruling world-soul were corrected, in so far as they denied human freedom (Origen, *On First Principles* 3.1.6), and the dependency of fate on the purpose of God (Augustine, *The City of God* 5.8) was underscored. Nevertheless, providence was generally considered to be accessible to the minds of pious pagans.

Beside the problem of evil, the reconciling of God's omniscience and omnipotence with human freedom\* was essential to the doctrine of providence. Among the Greek fathers, we find the idea of providence as part of divine pedagogy: God does not determine the particular course of events but awaits patiently the appropriate response of human freedom (so Origen, *On First Principles* 3.20). After the Pelagian controversy, the theologians of the West normally took the outcomes of the human free will to be predetermined: the will of the human person is embedded in a causal order, fixed by God; the will, however, does not act under external pressure, but according to its inner compulsion and thus is phenomenologically free (*The City of God* 5.9-10). Boethius formed a theory of a double perspectivity: seen from the point of view of eternity, God's knowledge is not a foreknowledge of future events but is a co-knowledge with any creature, being simultaneous

with past, present and future time (*Consolation of Philosophy* 5.6). This theory was later adopted by Anselm and entered through Thomas Aquinas into Protestant dogmatics up to this day.

In scholastic theology, providence was normally considered as part of God's eternal knowledge and connected with predestination. Protestant dogmatics, inspired by nominalistic voluntarism, underlined the historical activity of God's providence. Consequently, the doctrine of providence was treated under the heading "creation". According to Luther, God cooperates with any creature (WA 18,752-54), using it as his "mask" (e.g. WA 31/I,436). Likewise, Calvin declared any creature to be God's instrument (*Institutes* 1.16.2). Both denied the intelligibility of providence to human reason. In Protestant orthodoxy, the Thomistic distinction between first cause (God) and second causes (the created order) was adopted. Thereby, especially the Lutherans stressed the relative independency of the created order, whereas some Reformed rejected the idea that God merely "permits" the evils that happen. Since Karl Barth (*Church Dogmatics* III/3) this difference is no longer controversial between Lutherans and Reformed.

From early Enlightenment to Romanticism, providence had a double locus. It was part of dogmatics and devotional literature, and part of natural theology. In natural theology, providence was interpreted in the light of an optimistic this-worldly teleology, leaving out the eschatological reservations of classical doctrine. Newton regarded the continual presence in creation of an active Spirit as necessary to explain the order which reigns among the otherwise unrelated atoms. Gottfried Leibniz, in contrast, conceived the world as a pre-established harmony, leaving no reason for God to intervene in a world created once for all as perfect.

In our time, the concept of providence has been vigorously challenged. Scientific determinism, culminating 1850-1920, left no room for God in nature.\* The sense of the tragedies of history since the world wars divested any optimistic immanent teleology of its plausibility. And the abuse of the term "providence" in Nazism

caused traditional theologians (e.g. Carl Heinz Ratschow) to abandon the concept.

Dialectical theology, if not attacking the concept, interpreted providence Christologically, as the paradox of God's gospel in creation (so Regin Prenter). After Vatican II\* the Catholic church has also interpreted providence in the light of the history of salvation (see *Lumen Gentium* 7), although the earlier assertion of the intelligibility of providence by human reason alone is still upheld (so *Humani Generis*, DS 3875).

Almost consensually, modern theology refuses to think God's plan as fixed in details beforehand. God's creation is often seen as a result of God's self-limitation, making room for created creativity. History being open-ended, God always communicates with human freedom throughout the contingencies of history. This perspective has recently given rise to new interpretations of providence which, sensitive to the ambiguities of history, see God as the source of human freedom and novelties in the cosmos, thus underscoring the spiritual dimensions of the Christian faith in providence.

In the same vein, the majesty of God has been interpreted in terms of future rather than in terms of past: God is the attractant power of the future (Pierre Teilhard de Chardin), and the comings of the kingdom of God\* are manifestations of God as the power of the future (Wolfhart Pannenberg, Jürgen Moltmann). Process theology perceives God's presence in history in terms of God's offering still new possibilities to the self-creative agents of the world, persuading them to take over voluntarily God's (objectively best) proposals as their own aim. This Whiteheadian idea of God's luring has been received by Langdon Gilkey, while transforming the Pelagian tendency of self-creativity into the idea rather of created freedom. In the light of science, chance has been re-evaluated as God's providential means to let the matter explore its created, inbuilt possibilities (Arthur Peacocke, David J. Bartholomew, John Polkinghorne).

Paul Tillich concretized the idea of providence with reference to historical kairoi, i.e. situations pregnant with des-

tiny, which nevertheless demand decision (*Systematic Theology* 5.2). Through his struggle with the Nazist Emanuel Hirsch, Tillich realized the necessity of a Christological criterion for reading the signs of the times (Matt. 16:3). Tillich may have inspired the idea of kairos as a God-given time of prophetic critique and resolute action in the South African Kairos document\* against apartheid\* (1985). Likewise, Latin American liberation theology\* stresses that God's will must be "enfleshed in history". But God is more than a provident God in general; he takes sides with the poor\* and invites anybody to follow

him (Gustavo Gutiérrez, Ronaldo Muñoz).

See also **salvation history**.

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# R

## RACISM

RACISM has been a matter of concern to the Christian church from early times. It was J.H. Oldham, in his *Christianity and the Race Problem* (1924), who pioneered a systematic theology against racism. Racism as an issue formally entered the agenda of the fledgling ecumenical movement at the Jerusalem conference of the International Missionary Council in 1928, and then again in Oxford (1937).

The inaugural assembly of the WCC in Amsterdam in 1948 was alive to the issue of racism. It identified “prejudice based upon race or colour and from practices of discrimination and segregation as denials of justice and human dignity”. Amsterdam argued that the church must take action against racial prejudice: “if the church can overcome the national and social barriers

which now divide it, it can help society overcome those barriers”.

Building upon the reports of the world conference on Church and Society (Geneva 1966), the fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968) produced a conceptual and analytical framework for the elimination of racism. More particularly, Uppsala stated that “racism is linked with economic and political exploitation” and then went on to define racism as “ethnocentric *pride* in one’s own racial group and preference for the distinctive characteristics of that group; belief that these characteristics are fundamentally biological in nature... strong negative feelings towards other groups who do not share these characteristics, coupled with the thrust to discriminate against and exclude the out-group from full participation in the life of the community”.

A similar definition of racism had come from the committee of experts commissioned by UNESCO who produced their "Statement on Racism and Racial Prejudice" in 1967. But Uppsala went further and made special mention of white racism as lying at the root of white domination and privilege.

On the basis of such understandings, the WCC central committee in 1969 mandated the establishment of a Programme to Combat Racism\* (PCR) within the WCC. PCR was formed to undertake the churches' crusade against racism. The central committee firmly stated that "racism is not an unalterable feature of human life. Like slavery and other social manifestations of man's sin, it can and must be eliminated." It went on to assert: "There can be no justice in our world without the transfer of economic resources to undergird the re-distribution of political power and to make cultural self-determination meaningful."

In recent years an effort has been made to distinguish between racialism and racism. One can understand racialism to be the use of racial or ethnocentric characteristics to determine value or access or participation and, by the same token, to exclude others. Racialism may not necessarily be value-laden as such. It does not say that one person is better than another because of race but simply that one chooses not to associate with people on account of their race. But racism has become a political ideology, on the basis of which the social reality is being interpreted and political and economic decisions made. In essence a racist ideology attaches value to ethnocentric characteristics and seeks to maintain deterministic relations between biological characteristics and cultural attributes. However, one must not lose sight of the fact that, ultimately, racism is about power. As an ideology\* it is the means whereby the dominant group, as determined by racial characteristics, imposes its will upon others so as to exclude them from effective participation in decision making and to exploit them for economic gain.

Some fundamental questions have been raised about the relationship between race and class. It is necessary to understand that the pattern of inequality at work in the world arises fundamentally from economic exploitation. This analysis attempts to make

sense of the fact that a combination of economic power and racial or cultural characteristics of the dominant group leads to racism. The valuation of the class factors in racism is not to make Marxist analysis a determinant as such but to point to an adequate understanding of racism and the means necessary to develop action to eliminate it. A. Sivanandan argues that it is necessary to maintain this dual consciousness if one is to address the structural inequality on which racism is based. He says that the fight against racism must not be reduceable to "the fight against prejudice, the fight against institutions and practices and to a fight against individuals and attitudes".

The second cluster of issues which is now being challenged centres on the focus on white racism that obscures other and dominant forms of racial ideologies like tribalism, language and caste that are at the root of many conflicts in the world today. In any event, ethnocentrism is not a universally adequate way to characterize racial ideology, as so many people who are victims of racism have characteristics which are hardly distinguishable from those who maintain hegemony over them.

These nuances have been reflected in the work of the PCR. The emphasis on the elimination of white racism can be seen in PCR's support for the liberation movements and in other struggles for decolonization. PCR has become best known for its campaigns against apartheid\* in South Africa and the consequences thereof in the Southern African region. However, the end to constitutional apartheid and the election of a democratic government in South Africa had significant consequences on the programme work of PCR and the ecumenical movement as a whole. For example, the uniquely close cooperation which had developed between the churches and the largely secular anti-apartheid movements began to diminish. On a positive note, the new situation allowed for renewed energy and commitment of resources to areas of anti-racism work which had received a lower priority during the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. It was at this point in the history of PCR that work on the rights of indigenous peoples and the twin oppressions of racism and sexism received more attention.

Sadly, these new developments were not matched by renewed commitment from the member churches. Some commentators spoke of the churches' perception of racism being almost entirely confined to their support for the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. The new challenge was for the churches to look at racism "in their own backyard", a slogan which emerged from WCC's world consultation on racism held in Noordwijkerhout, Netherlands, in 1980.

So the priorities of PCR and other anti-racism programmes began to expand to embrace advocacy for the rights of indigenous peoples and the rights of racially and ethnically oppressed minorities worldwide. The interconnections of race, gender and class were recognized in programmes with a focus on women and caste discrimination, and the situation of Dalits also achieved higher visibility.

More recently, those involved in the struggle for racial justice have expanded their understanding of the dimensions of racism to encompass economic migration and environmental racism. But it was the 2001 United Nations World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban, South Africa, that gave dramatic focus to the issues widely seen as fundamental in the struggle against racism: reparation and compensation for past deeds, such as slavery, slave trade and land dispossession. Even within South Africa the post-apartheid healing process highlighted these issues. These present to the churches challenges in the area of the theology of restorative justice and its ethical dynamics.

PCR's method of operation has been radical in that it has always sought to get at the roots of institutional and structural inequalities. To seek partnerships for effective action remains a fundamental part of PCR's method. PCR has invited representatives of oppressed peoples and communities to develop common strategies and unite their voices in international forums. Once again the churches are drawn into alliances with civil society. Perhaps there may again be a return to the time of close cooperation between churches and secular movements, as during the apartheid era.

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## RADIO

RADIO HAS sometimes served as a catalyst for ecumenical understanding, especially in countries where broadcasting has been a state monopoly and where the various Christian traditions are strongly represented. This role was particularly marked in Britain where, in the early 1920s, the English and Welsh Nonconformist churches still retained some of their 19th-century strength and where Roman Catholicism posed no numerical challenge to the established churches of England and Scotland. Despite initial misgivings by the Roman Catholic hierarchy, the main churches were soon working together in the BBC (which allowed the churches no direct control over programmes). Ecumenism was encouraged by the BBC provision of its own worship studios and even a BBC hymnbook. In 1926 the (ecumenical) "Sunday committee" became known as the central religious advisory committee.

Other European countries took a different route. In the north, until the 1990s, the Lutheran state churches retained control over worship broadcasts, as did the Catholic church in Spain, Italy and Portugal. In the Netherlands, each tradition has been provided with its own self-contained radio channel. Matching funding by the state has been allocated in direct proportion to the number of subscribers. One aspect of the Hungarian system (which has survived for more than 70 years) allows the state to allot religious airtime in proportion to the number of Catholic, Calvinist, Lutheran, Baptist and Methodist adherents in the population – an arrangement that is even-handed but certainly not ecumenical.

Religious programming which answers the needs of specific communities or which reflects local socio-cultural circumstances is finding a niche in countries seeking to reclaim lost histories and re-establish long-suppressed identities. We see this development in the countries of the former Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe. However, it is no less true of Western Europe, where local radio and cable TV stations offer "Christian" channels and where, in some countries, religious broadcasting is for a minority.

In Europe, as elsewhere, current trends towards technological convergence and globalization suggest that religious programming must simultaneously maintain its place in public service broadcasting (with its "open" audience) and pursue alternatives in privately funded channels (with their "closed" audience). Rapid digitalization of both radio and television technologies, together with the expansion of satellite and cable networks, will also offer other possibilities, such as the Internet, where there are numerous contact points for faith groups.

Radio remains the most effective means of communication in Africa. Its importance lies in the fact that it surpasses all other media in terms of audience accessibility and use. None of the churches or Christian councils owns a radio station, although a good number of them do have their own recording studios, where a variety of programmes are produced, then broadcast over the national networks. Mainline denominations have invested in transmitters within Africa, particularly ELWA (Lutheran World Federation). Evangelical radio has long been active. IBRA (Sweden) is active in East Africa.

In most sub-Saharan countries, airtime is given free to churches. The World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) has been supporting programmes in Cameroon, Sudan, Botswana and Congo. In Rwanda, WACC has long supported the radio ministry of the Protestant council, through donating production costs and sponsoring radio producers' workshops.

Radio is particularly important to Christian mission in Asia. In many cases, only short-wave radio has maintained embattled Christian communities. The world service religious programmes of a number of Western countries (conspicuously Britain) have

been widely influential and usually non-divisive. The effects of short-wave Evangelical broadcasts to Soviet Asia and China are still being assessed. Broadcasts from the Seychelles by FEBA (Far Eastern Broadcasting) have become well-known in India and have included a mix of programming. Locally generated Christian radio is heard predominantly in Indonesia. Radio Sion is operated by the Evangelical Christian Church (Reformed background) in Minahasa, Sulawesi province. The station broadcasts in FM on social and development issues in the region, mostly to farmers and fishermen.

Christian radio is strongest of all in the Philippines. The Development Education Media Services (DEMS) in the southern Filipino city of Davao is a non-governmental organization which was successful in broadcasting social issue-oriented dramas as a way of empowering people, especially the peasant community in Mindanao. What is unique in DEMS work is that its programmes were contributed by peasants, church workers of different religious backgrounds, and high school and college students. The production is therefore low-cost but effective.

Christian radio stations in Asia have their own training and technical challenges, as well as limitations on freedom of expression. As the pace of change in terms of both economy and politics increases dramatically in this vast and pluralistic continent, Christian radio continues to play a role in the development and the empowerment of people.

The predominantly Christian Pacific region is characterized by the active involvement of Christians in radio and TV. Kristen Redio in Lae, Papua New Guinea, provides an ecumenical presence of Christian programmes in the largest island nation in the Pacific. A United Church pastor/broadcaster works for the government radio religious programmes section. Many Christians work for the secular EM-TV in all aspects of production. Christian communicators have formed concern groups to monitor TV programmes and educate the public on issues relating to them. *Media Watch* is an occasional newsletter in Fiji which is produced by a group of concerned Christians on media awareness. They hold regular meetings with TV producers and government regulators.

The radio bombardment of Latin America with a radio religion that preaches a highly individualistic version of the Christian message has done little to foster ecumenical understanding. An honourable exception is KCJB Quito ("The Voice of the Andes"), which is involved in local broadcasting and charitable work as well as worldwide broadcasting.

The USA continues to host the single largest concentration of Christian broadcasting interests in the world. With 1328 Christian radio stations, 163 Christian television stations, assorted Christian cable channels and Internet-based Christian radio and television networks, the medium and the message seem to be thriving in a highly competitive, commercial environment.

Religious radio began in the United States. In the 1930s the new coast-to-coast radio networks relied for input from Catholic, mainline-Protestant and Jewish organizations. Under the Nixon presidency (1969-74), a process of government deregulation transformed religious broadcasting. While a commitment to provide religious programming remained a requirement in broadcast-licence applications, these religious programmes would no longer be required to be in company-provided free airtime ("sustaining time"). In other words, companies could now accept payment for religious programming. A number of other deregulatory measures sealed the fate of any special deal between the mainline churches and public broadcasting. From the 1960s, Evangelicals began to dominate American religious broadcasting.

The market for Christian/commercial broadcasting is finite. Large commercially driven Christian stations have begun to encounter the same commercial problems as their secular counterparts. The mainline churches have begun to compete, and all indications suggest that audiences for religious broadcasting are more discriminating in their listening than believed previously.

As the statement of global communication for justice, brought out by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA and approved by the general board in November 1993, affirms: "We understand communication to be basic to community and the right to communicate a basic human right. The right to receive and to provide information is as fundamental to the quality of life as

worship, food, clothing and shelter. Christians, as citizens, have an obligation to exert whatever influence they can to ensure that the mass media in our society operate to serve the public good rather than merely commercial interests or those of individuals."

PETER ELVY

## RAHNER, KARL

B. 5 March 1904, Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany; d. 30 March 1984, Innsbruck, Austria. One of the most influential contemporary Roman Catholic theologians, especially in German-speaking countries but also among Latin American liberationists. Rahner made original contributions to the ecumenical dialogue from his particular Catholic theological perspective. His concept of "anonymous Christian" depends on the offer of grace and salvation to all men and women throughout history. He believed that ecumenism is an achieved reality at the level of ordinary people, though it continues to be discussed and debated at the higher rungs of church authority. He held that, with Vatican II, the church gained a truly universal consciousness. His re-interpretation of doctrines such as the inspiration of the scriptures and human subjectivity as spirit in the world gave them a radical and global perspective. His literary and philosophical idiom was largely influenced by Martin Heidegger, under whom he studied in Freiburg. He joined the Jesuit order in 1922 and was ordained in 1932. He was appointed professor of dogmatic theology, in Innsbruck in 1949 and then in Munich in 1964. He was a main editor of Denzinger's *Enchiridion Symbolorum* (1952), of the new *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* (10 vols, 1957-65) and of the six-volume encyclopedia *Sacramentum Mundi* (1968-70), which was strongly influenced by his outlook.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

- K. Rahner & H. Fries, *Unity of the Churches: An Actual Possibility*, New York, Paulist, 1984 ■
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**RAISER, KONRAD**

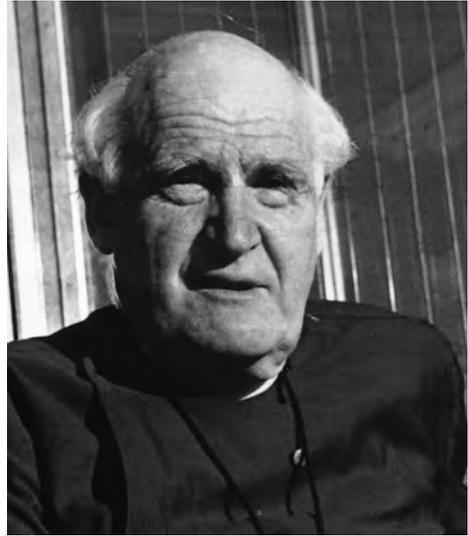
B. 25 Jan. 1938, Magdeburg, Germany. General secretary of the WCC, 1993-. From a first theological degree in Tübingen in 1963 and ordination in 1964, he went on to earn a master's degree in 1965 and a doctorate in 1970. After doing industrial and social chaplaincy in Berlin and Stuttgart, Raiser spent a year at Harvard studying sociology and social psychology. His first period with the WCC was from 1969 to 1983, as study secretary in Faith and Order, then deputy general secretary. He followed this with a professorship in systematic theology and ecumenics at the Protestant theological faculty of the University of the Ruhr in Bochum, Germany, until taking up his current post. Raiser was an adviser and a member of the drafting committees at the European Ecumenical Assembly in Basel, Switzerland, in 1989, and at the WCC's world convocation on "Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation" in Seoul, Korea, in 1990. He also served as vice-moderator of the reference committee at the WCC's Canberra assembly in 1991, where he was a delegate of his church. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Geneva in 1996.

PAULINE WEBB

- K. Raiser, *For a Culture of Life*, WCC, 2002
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**RAMSEY, ARTHUR MICHAEL**

B. 4 Nov. 1904, Cambridge, UK; d. 23 April 1988, Oxford. Archbishop of Canterbury, 1961-74, and a president of the WCC, 1961-68, Ramsey (as did his predecessor, Archbishop Fisher) promoted church union negotiations between the Anglican church and other churches in the third world. In 1962 he visited Patriarch Athenagoras I in Constantinople, he received Patriarch Alexis in London in 1964, and he met with Pope Paul VI in the Sistine chapel in Rome in 1966. He was greatly disappointed by the failure of the Church of England in 1969 and 1972 to approve the plans for reunion with the Methodist church. Educated in Cambridge and or-



ained in 1928, Ramsey was canon of Durham cathedral and professor of divinity at Durham University, 1940-50, Regius professor of divinity, University of Cambridge, 1951-52, bishop of Durham, 1952-56, and archbishop of York, 1956-61.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

- A.M. Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, London, SPCK, 1974 ■ *From Gore to Temple*, London, Longmans, 1960 ■ *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., London, Longmans, 1956 ■ O. Chadwick, *Michael Ramsey: A Life*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1990 ■ R. Gill & L. Kendall eds, *Michael Ramsey as Theologian*, Boston MA, Cowley, 1995.

**RANSON, CHARLES WESLEY**

B. 15 June 1903, Northern Ireland; d. 13 Jan. 1988, Lakeville, CT, USA. From 1929 to 1945 Ranson served as a missionary in India, principally in the Madras area; for the last two years he was secretary of the National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon. General secretary of the International Missionary Council\* from 1948, ten years later he became director of the Theological Education Fund, then president of the Methodist Church in Ireland, 1961-62. From 1968 to 1972 he was professor of theology and ecumenics at the Hartford Seminary Foundation.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT



■ C.W. Ranson, *The Christian Minister in India*, London, Lutterworth, 1945 ■ *A Missionary Pilgrimage*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1988 ■ *Renewal and Advance*, London, Edinburgh House, 1948 ■ *That the World May Know*, New York, Friendship, 1953.

## RECEPTION

DURING the past 30-35 years of the ecumenical movement, "reception" has become a new key-term for the gradual and mutual acceptance by the churches of the results of ecumenical dialogues (see **dialogue**, **intrafaith**). As a technical term, however, it was used much earlier in canonical discussions and regulations regarding the authority or authentication of councils and synods, the validation of legislative action in and among churches, the validity or validation of baptism,\* eucharist\* and ordination\* as practised within heretical communities. And recently, it has appeared in the theoretical context of the history of law, of literature and ideas in general, with regard to the impact and spread of customs, formulas or ideas in a given cultural field. So one can speak of the reception of German law into Roman law from the 6th century onwards, or of the reception of the work of Freud in America.

Reception in its explicit theological meaning, derived from the biblical vocabulary of (*apo*)*lambanein* and (*apo*)*dechesthai*

(receive, welcome), points to one of the main characteristics of faith\* itself. We believe we receive our existence as creatures from God,\* our salvation\* as redemption\* through Jesus Christ,\* a new life as "anointed ones" in the Holy Spirit.\* We receive the word of God\* and the sacraments\* as signs of the new covenant.\* We receive the mission\* to be disciples and ministers, prophets and teachers of the community through the laying on of hands in the Spirit. Such inheritance, handed down through the ages, has been received with differences of form and manner, owing to diversities of genius and conditions of life. Therefore only mutual exchange and reception of various traditions within one communion\* could build up the unity\* and catholicity,\* the holiness\* and apostolicity\* of the early church.\*

In that context, the reception of conciliar decisions by the local churches was more than a process of legitimation alone. It implied the testing and appropriation of such decisions in the life of the churches. The same would be true for the results of the ecumenical dialogues of the last 35 years, even if their canonical weight cannot be compared with the conciliar decisions of the church.

Discussion on reception within the ecumenical movement started in the context of the Second Vatican Council\* (1962-65) through a collection of essays edited by Hans Jochen Margull, *Die ökumenischen Konzile* (1961). The WCC's New Delhi assembly (1961) requested Faith and Order\* to undertake a study on "Councils and the Ecumenical Movement", the result of which was published in 1968. The final report on "The Importance of the Conciliar Process in the Ancient Church for the Ecumenical Movement", adopted at the F&O meeting in Louvain (1971), describes reception as follows: "Reception represents the process by which the local churches accept the decision of a council and thereby recognize its authority. This process is a multiplex one and may last for centuries. Even after the formal conclusion of such a process and the canonical reception of a council's doctrinal formula, usually through a new council, the process of reception continues in some way or other as long as the churches are involved in self-examination on the basis of the question whether a particular council has been

received and appropriated properly and with justification. In this sense we can say that *in the ecumenical movement the churches find themselves in a process of continuing reception or re-reception of the councils*".

Such a wider idea of reception as a spiritual process of appropriation and mutual critical testing of the traditions along the lines of "the faith of the church through the ages" was explicitly discussed further in F&O consultations at Crét-Bérard 1977 ("Towards an Ecumenical Consensus on Baptism, the Eucharist and the Ministry"), at Odessa 1977 ("How Does the Church Teach Authoritatively Today?"), at the third and fourth forums on bilateral dialogues\* (1980 and 1985) and at the fifth world conference on Faith and Order in Santiago de Compostela (1993). In several bilateral dialogues paragraphs on reception urge the churches to take the results of the dialogues seriously and to deal with them at all appropriate levels of authority and of the involvement of their members. A most remarkable test case of reception in this sense was the invitation to the churches to respond to the Lima text on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*,\* sent to the churches in 1982. Over 190 churches responded, which marks a new stage within the ecumenical movement indeed, by involving nearly all churches in a reception process, both at the level of "the widest possible involvement of the whole people of God" and of "the highest appropriate level of authority" (BEM, p.x).

ANTON HOUTEPEN

■ *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, 1982-1990: Report on the Process and Responses*, WCC, 1990 ■ J.T. Ford & D.J. Swan eds, *Twelve Tales Untold: A Study Guide for Ecumenical Reception*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1993 ■ L.L. Gaither, *To Receive a Text: Literary Reception Theory as a Key to Ecumenical Reception*, New York, Lang, 1997 ■ A. Houtepen, "Reception, Tradition, Communion", in *Ecumenical Perspectives on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, M. Thurian ed., WCC, 1983 ■ G. Kelly, *Recognition: Advancing Ecumenical Thinking*, New York, Lang, 1996 ■ U. Kühn, "Reception: An Imperative and an Opportunity", in *Ecumenical Perspectives on BEM* ■ H.J. Margull, *Die ökumenischen Konzile (ET The Councils of the Church)*, Philadelphia, 1966) ■ W.G. Rusch, *Reception: An Ecumenical Opportunity*, Philadelphia, Fortress, 1988 ■ M. Thurian ed., *Churches Respond to BEM*, 6 vols, WCC, 1986-88.

## RECONCILED DIVERSITY

RECONCILED diversity or, more exactly, "unity in reconciled diversity", is a concept of church unity\* that goes back to two conferences of representatives of Christian World Communions\* (CWCs) in 1974 (Geneva). A year before, the Faith and Order\* commission had elaborated its concept of "conciliar fellowship" (Salamanca 1973), requesting also that the CWCs engaged in bilateral dialogues\* "clarify their understanding of the quest for unity by cooperating with the WCC". The CWCs felt unable to endorse the F&O "conciliar fellowship" concept and, instead, developed the concept of unity in reconciled diversity.

Its guiding principle is that "the variety of denominational heritages [is] legitimate" and "remains a valuable contribution to the richness of the life in the church universal". Accordingly, church unity should not necessarily demand the surrender of denominational convictions and identities, as often advocated and usually implied in the concept of organic union.\* Rather, denominational traditions and confessional convictions can have a continuing identifiable life within the one church, provided that in a process of dialogue, living encounter and mutual correction, they have lost their denominational exclusiveness and divisive trenchancy and have thus been transformed into a "reconciled" diversity.

The concept of reconciled diversity condenses into a concise formula concerns which have always been voiced in the ecumenical movement. It is an expression of one of the two legitimate and not mutually exclusive tendencies in the search for unity, the one "whose primary stress is upon the necessity for faithfulness to the truth as it has been confessed in the past and as it is embodied in the received traditions" (Nairobi 1975).

Reconciled diversity in its developed sense includes all essential elements required for unity: a shared faith,\* mutual recognition of baptism,\* eucharist\* and ministry,\* and agreed ways of deciding and acting together. It should be admitted, however, that the last aspect may be the weak point of the concept. Any application of the reconciled diversity concept should show that genuine Christian unity can be a fully committed fel-

lowship only in life, witness and service and that reconciliation of diversity must therefore lead beyond mere peaceful co-existence.

The sometimes heated debate about concepts of unity during the years following 1974 seems to have come to a conclusion in the course of 1978. It was acknowledged that the reconciled diversity concept intends neither to rule out the concept of organic union nor to be a counter-concept to conciliar fellowship, inasmuch as "conciliar fellowship presupposes organic union" (Accra 1974). Its point of divergence from these concepts is the basic conviction that not only contextual (cultural, ethnic, etc.), but also confessional, diversity can be a "legitimate diversity" compatible with and even necessary for the true unity of the church. At the first forum on bilateral dialogues (Bossey 1978), and at the F&O commission meeting in Bangalore (1978), it was affirmed that the concepts of unity under discussion, especially the organic union and the reconciled diversity concepts, are "not to be seen as alternatives. They may be two different ways of reacting to the ecumenical necessities and possibilities of different situations and of different church traditions" (Bangalore).

In many circles the reconciled diversity concept has been very positively received. In 1977 the Lutheran World Federation\* endorsed it as a "valuable help in the present phase of the ecumenical movement". In other instances at least its basic intention was strongly affirmed, or equivalent concepts were developed (e.g. the vision of the one church as a "communion of communions" or as a communion\* of different ecclesial *typoi*\*).

See also **communion; conciliarity; reconciliation; unity, models of; unity, ways to.**

HARDING MEYER

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## RECONCILIATION

RECONCILIATION is the renewal of relationship with the Triune God (see **Trinity**) accomplished for us in Jesus Christ\* and offered to

us in word and sacraments through the church.\* The reality of this reconciliation is what the church proclaims to the world. It decisively shapes the way the church understands itself and its service to Christ. Reconciliation has been understood as (1) a biblical-traditional category of ecclesial discourse, (2) a principle which guides Christian life and service, and (3) a standard which calls the church to unity\* and energizes ecumenical activity.

Central to the biblical witness is the notion that humanity has been reconciled to God by a sheer act of God. This activity of God finds its locus in Jesus of Nazareth (2 Cor. 5:18-21) and its antecedent in the cultic history of the people of Israel (Lev. 16). At the heart of this history is the motif that God has made a covenant\* with Israel and, despite their unfaithfulness, God acts to restore covenant. Reconciliation is first the renewal of covenant with the people of God through Jesus the Messiah of Israel.

Jesus Christ has overcome the enmity between God and humanity and has thereby restored our communion with God (Rom. 5). The church, which understands its own existence to be grounded in the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus, has seen in the scriptures various themes which help illumine the work of Christ. Thus closely related to the concept of reconciliation are the themes of redemption\* and atonement. These themes, understood to indicate the objective condition of our restored relationship with God, re-inforce the fact that salvation\* is based on God's own initiative in Jesus Christ. He is our reconciliation, and humanity is called to be reconciled to God.

The church lives as the reconciled community, which means that the life of the church should display the proper response of humanity to the work of God. To be reconciled to God means to enter into reconciliation with all peoples, nations and tribes (Eph. 2). Therefore the church acts as an agent of forgiveness and love both within and outside its community (John 20:22-23; 1 John 4:7-12). To those outside its community the church proclaims the restoration of all things in Christ and therefore the end of divisions and war and the invitation to live reconciled lives (Col. 1). The church offers the means whereby its members can live per-

sonally reconciled to God. For those who have fallen away, it provides means to re-enter into communion. The renewal of communion, made possible by the presence of the Spirit of Christ in the church, is the ground for the activity of repentance and the repeated gift of forgiveness. Reconciliation issues in sacramental activities in the church because the church lives within the *pax Dei*.

The fact of division in the church stands over against the message of reconciliation that the church is called to proclaim. However, the church can remove the breach in its own life if it allows God to work fully through the word of God\* and the sacraments of baptism,\* eucharist\* and penance (or reconciliation). Through the word and sacraments, the church can partake in the life of repentance it offers to the world. Thus, when Christians rightly celebrate the eucharist and practise their baptism, they have already entered into a fellowship which should move them to acts of reconciliation with their sisters and brothers.

In many places the church is visibly active in witnessing to the reality of reconciliation. In South Africa it was at the heart of the epic movement of the government away from its apartheid\* policies. The church and its leaders remain heavily engaged there in the establishment of justice. Yet with justice the church seeks also the establishment of unity and peace among all the peoples of South Africa. In this difficult and complex situation, the South African church's witness includes bringing to light the whole truth of the horrors and crimes done under evil regimes while at the same time testifying to the power of forgiveness and the call to live reconciled lives before the living God of Jesus Christ. Indeed through ecumenical acts of love the church in South Africa is working to remove the breaches of communion in its own life created in and by South Africa's historic racial divisions.

Entering into actions of reconciliation witnesses to a common commitment to live in obedience to the reconciling God and therefore opens the actors to the possibility of entering into the reality of the healing power of the Holy Spirit. Such sacramental acts are the "medicine of the church" by which the church can let itself be healed and offer to the world the healing that is inherent in communion with God.

See also **penance and reconciliation, reconciled diversity.**

WILLIE J. JENNINGS

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## REDEMPTION

THE CENTRAL biblical theme of salvation\* is conveyed in the Bible in a number of images, one of which is redemption (Greek *apolytrōsis*); others are justification,\* sacrifice and reconciliation.\* Every image is a partial truth, highlighting a particular aspect of a greater whole. Redemption, an image from captivity, highlights the captivities from which redemption is offered, namely, legalism and self-sufficiency (Rom. 8:34; Gal. 3:10), sin,\* death and the cosmic powers (Eph. 6:12; Rom. 8:35). In the history of the church these captivities have tended to be spiritualized. A characteristic of the ecumenical movement has been to call peoples to move from only a personal and individualistic understanding of sin and redemption to embrace also the redemption needed at institutional and corporate levels. Cosmic powers are also a kind of organized disobedience to the will of God, taking the form of self-aggrandizement and independent pride, appearing variously in political, social, economic, personal and corporate forms.

The image of captivity also highlights the costliness of the act of redemption. Specifically, it is at the cost of the life of Jesus Christ\* (1 Cor. 6:20, 7:23). To that extent

redemption is a present reality, almost equivalent to the forgiveness of sins (Col. 1:14). It is, however, not a *fait accompli*, nor is it yet possessed in its fullness (Eph. 1:14, 4:30; Rom. 2:5). The contemporary ecumenical movement has been exploring such themes as costly discipleship and costly obedience.

The larger ecumenical question is, given redemption in the name of Jesus Christ, what is the fate of those who have never had Christ preached to them and those who belong to other faith traditions (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, African Traditional Religions etc.)? Karl Barth's distinction between religion\* and Christian faith\* has long dominated theological thinking: religion, "the concern of the godless man", is abolished through Jesus Christ, who justifies the sinner. Others stress that one cannot have faith without religion (which is rooted in one's cultural context) because all revelation,\* including the Christ-event, is apprehended through one's religion (see **culture**). Other scholars argue that there are intimations of Christ in other religions and that Christian faith is continuous with experience of the *mysterium tremendum et fascinatum* found in other faith traditions – hence such ideas as the "anonymous Christ" or similar concepts in African or Asian theologies. The basic question in ongoing ecumenical debate is how, or whether, God's continuing self-disclosure in the constantly widening experience of human beings can still be rightfully described as "in Christ" (see **uniqueness of Christ**).

If the death of Christ is the means of redemption, then what is the role of the church?\* The church itself is founded on the new covenant\* at Calvary and commissioned to go and preach that offer of redemption in Christ (see **mission**). The ecumenical debate about the role of the church in Christ's saving work, as well as the value of good works and religious practices, has been addressed by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission's statement "Salvation and the Church" (1987) and the Lutheran-Roman Catholic text "The Church and Justification" (1993). The consensus emerging is that salvation may not be restricted to any established institution, not even the church (over which God exercises sovereignty), and that there is Christ without Christianity. Christ's presence transcends the

boundaries of Christendom, even though there can be no Christianity without Christ.

Redemption is not only "deliverance from" but also "freedom for". Two ancient paradigms illustrate this truth: the Graeco-Roman practice of sacral manumission, a legal and religious rite by which a slave became a devotee of a deity in return for someone paying the price of his freedom, and the exodus experience of the Hebrews. Redemption, positively speaking, is for a new life of freedom,\* which is not the same as licence to perform according to self-will. God's action of redemption is to be matched by human beings' keeping their part of the covenant relationship, including making needed changes in the social, economic and political life of each culture.

See also **dialogue, interfaith**.

JOHN S. POBEE

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## REFORMATION

THE ECUMENICAL understanding of the Reformation has been dominated by a re-assessment of Martin Luther. In large part the concentration on Luther has been prompted by Roman Catholic historians who, far more than their Protestant counterparts, have identified the origins of the Reformation with Luther's religious crisis and subsequent career. While Catholic historians like Alexandre Ganoczy, Kilian McDonnell and Jacques Pollet have made substantial contributions to the study of Calvin and Zwingli, the principal energies of Catholic historians engaged in the study of Protestant origins have traditionally been devoted to an evaluation of Martin Luther.

Until the end of the 19th century, Catholic historiography was dominated by the essentially negative portrayal of Luther drawn by the Catholic polemicist Johannes Cochlaeus in his famous book *Commentary on the Acts and Writings of Martin Luther* (1549). Since medieval Catholic theology taught that heresy\* is more a matter of will than intellect, more a defect of character

than a failure of understanding, Cochlaeus attempted to account for Luther's heresy by identifying the defects of his character that prompted his apostasy from Rome. As Cochlaeus saw matters, Luther was a proud and self-centred man, driven by his appetites and utterly lacking in religious seriousness.

The attack on Luther's character was not altogether abandoned by Catholic historians in the early 20th century, as the writings of Jacques Maritain and G.K. Chesterton demonstrate. Nevertheless, the traditional picture of Luther's religious development was modified by the work of two Catholic scholars, Heinrich Denifle and Hartmann Grisar. In 1904 Denifle, a medieval historian then an archivist in the Vatican library, published a two-volume study of Luther's early theology entitled *Luther and Lutheranism in Its First Development*. Luther had claimed that he had been taught to regard the righteousness of God described in Rom. 1:16-17 as the punishing righteousness with which God justly punishes sinners. As Luther later recounted it, his theological breakthrough occurred when he realized that the righteousness of God in this passage refers, not to God's punishing righteousness (*iustitia activa*), but to the righteousness with which God makes sinners just (*iustitia passiva*).

Denifle examined a wide range of medieval commentaries on Rom. 1 and concluded that Luther's claim about the medieval exegetical tradition could not be sustained. Even though Luther alleged that all of his teachers identified the righteousness of God in 1:16-17 with God's punishing activity, Denifle could not find a single Catholic commentator who did so. Without exception they identified the *iustitia Dei* with God's reconciling gift to the sinner. It seemed therefore to Denifle that Luther's critique of Catholic theology rested in large measure on his ignorance of the very tradition he presumed to criticize.

Although Denifle had introduced the question of theological causes for the Reformation, he was not inclined to press his point in such a way as to mitigate the traditional Catholic attack on Luther's character. On the contrary, Denifle was only too happy to catalogue what he regarded as Luther's besetting sins: pride, spiritual negligence, intemperance and unchastity. He was even

willing to accept the scurrilous rumour that Luther, like Francis I, was a victim of syphilis. "Luther," Denifle cried, "there is nothing divine in you!"

Unlike Denifle, the Jesuit historian Hartmann Grisar was less interested in Luther's theological development than in his psychological profile. Grisar argued that Luther was psychologically unbalanced, haunted by an abnormal hatred of good works. The doctrine of justification\* by faith alone, codified in the confessional books of the Reformation churches, originated out of Luther's compelling inner need to offer a theological rationalization for his uncontrolled lechery, drunkenness and gluttony. What Cochlaeus and earlier Catholic critics had attributed to flaws in Luther's character, Grisar was inclined to attribute to abnormalities in his psychological composition.

A new era in the ecumenical re-evaluation of the Reformation was inaugurated by the publication in 1939-40 of the two-volume study *The Reformation in Germany* by the Roman Catholic historian Joseph Lortz. Lortz broke decisively with the older Catholic tradition of scholarship that blamed the Reformation on flaws in Luther's character. He accepted the view, advocated by Luther himself, that, as an Augustinian friar, Luther had been a morally upright and decent man who had followed in scrupulous detail the rules and regulations of his order. Lortz was even willing to defend, against Catholic critics like Denifle, the unpopular proposition that Luther was a profoundly Christian theologian, whose theology of the cross and doctrine of assurance touched on deep themes in the gospel. From Lortz's perspective the tragedy of the Reformation could not be traced to moral grounds, as traditional Catholic historiography had argued, but to theological causes.

Lortz regarded the theology of Aquinas as the finest flowering of the medieval Catholic tradition. Unfortunately for 16th-century Europe, Luther was not trained at Cologne in the authentically Catholic theology of Aquinas, but at Erfurt in the "fundamentally uncatholic" theology of William Ockham. Luther studied the commentaries and writings of Gabriel Biel and Pierre d'Ailly, disciples of Ockham, whose theology, Lortz believed, reflected the unclarity

and confusion that marked the later middle ages. Luther correctly perceived many of the problems inherent in Ockhamistic theology and made a genuinely Catholic protest against its distortions of the Catholic theological tradition. However, because Luther was not schooled in the theology of Aquinas, he went to what Lortz regarded as unwarranted extremes in his theological critique of Ockhamism and so lapsed into heresy. Nevertheless, even as a heretic, he was not guilty of moral turpitude, as Cochlaeus had argued, but only of theological subjectivity. From Lortz's perspective, the schism\* in the Western church might have been avoided if only Luther had studied the balanced, Augustinian theology of Aquinas.

A new note in the Catholic re-appraisal of Luther was sounded by Otto Pesch in his massive study of the doctrine of justification in the theology of Aquinas and Luther. Unlike Lortz, who bemoaned the absence of the stabilizing impact of the theology of Aquinas on Luther, Pesch argued that Luther and Thomas held very similar understandings of grace.\* They differed not so much in what they said as how they said it. Thomas wrote sapiential theology that described in an objective and detached way the unfolding of the creative and redemptive acts of God, whose being conditions, but is unconditioned by, the things he made. Luther wrote existential theology from the perspective of an engaged believer who stands in the presence of a living God of grace and judgment, who has called the believer by name. In Pesch's opinion, differences in theological style and method have led historians to overestimate the differences between Luther and Thomas and to misunderstand and misjudge their substantial agreements. To recover an understanding of the theological agreements between Luther and Thomas, often hidden beneath the real, but far less significant, disagreements in style, would itself represent an important ecumenical step forward for Protestants and Roman Catholics.

Protestant historians, with some notable exceptions, have made fewer contributions to the study of Catholic reform in the 16th century than Catholic historians have to the study of Protestant origins. While Protestant historians have engaged in their own wide-ranging re-assessment of the major Protes-

tant reformers, their principal contribution to the ecumenical re-assessment of the Reformation has centred in their re-evaluation of the theological and religious situation in the Western church on the eve of the Reformation. No longer content with a confessionally biased description of religious life in the later middle ages, Protestant historians from Reinhold Seeberg and Adolf Martin Ritter to Bernd Moeller and Heiko Oberman have attempted to reconstruct a more accurate picture of the milieu in which the Reformation was born. Especially important in this re-assessment has been the study of late medieval scholastic and mystical theology from Ockham and Thomas Bradwardine to Biel and John of Paltz.

Over the last three decades an approach to the Reformation has developed that is neither Protestant nor Catholic, though supported by a wide spectrum of Protestant, Catholic and secular historians. This newer approach regards the Reformation, not as a single unified movement to which a second unified movement, the Counter-Reformation, reacted, but as a complex series of interdependent religious, social and political movements. On this reading, Luther's reformation was one of many reformations occurring before 1600 and may even have been the most important. But the 16th century was marked by multiple religious reformations – Lutheran, Reformed, Erasmian, Anabaptist, Catholic, Erastian, anti-Trinitarian, Chiliastic, Epicurean – that interacted with each other in an intricate pattern of dependence and independence. The principal task of Reformation historians is to understand and explain the originality, individuality and interdependence of these multiple movements of religious reform. The older view that equated the beginnings of the Reformation with Luther's religious experience has now been replaced by a view that situates Luther within the context of his own age, a period impatient with the status quo and stirred by new longings and aspirations. Only within this broader context, Reformation historians now feel, can the achievements and limitations of Luther's Reformation be properly assessed.

Scholarly re-assessments of the Reformation have begun to reach the level of the official ecclesiastical leadership, apparent, for

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example, in the speeches of Pope John Paul II during his visits to the Federal Republic of Germany in 1980 and 1987. The 1990 report of the Reformed-Roman Catholic\* international dialogue commission sought to re-read the history of the 16th century with a view to “the reconciliation of memories”.

DAVID STEINMETZ

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## REFORMED ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

THE REFORMED Ecumenical Council (REC) is a council that in 2000 comprised 38 Reformed and Presbyterian churches located in 24 countries. Its member churches, which represent about 5 million Christians, have come together for closer fellowship on the basis of a shared confession of faith.\*

The REC was formerly called the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. Founded in 1946 by ethnically Dutch churches in the Netherlands, North America and South Africa, it was created out of a desire to speak of God’s grace\* to a fragmented, post-war world. The adopted confessional unity\* was the basis on which the founding churches established their witness\* to each other and to the world. Today member churches work to-

wards the unity of the Reformed faith, to contribute to the unity of the whole church.

The REC meets in general assembly every four years. Between assemblies, an interim committee makes decisions on council matters. A permanent secretariat handles the daily business of the council. Three permanent commissions in theological education, mission and diakonia, and youth and Christian education serve the council. Problems such as racism and sharing of resources receive special attention. The REC has publications arising from its conferences, committees and official meetings. Through three periodicals, *News Exchange*, *Theological Forum* and *Mission Bulletin*, the council communicates to its members and other churches outside the council.

The REC regularly sends delegates to other Christian ecumenical meetings, but it is limited and cautious about such contacts. Its members, generally, have relations with both Evangelical and ecumenical organizations.

RICHARD L. VAN HOUTEN

## REFORMED/PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES

ALTHOUGH “reformed” often refers to all churches which were shaped by the Reformation of the 16th century, there were already by the end of that century *ecclesiae reformatae* which distinguished themselves under that name from the Lutheran churches. The distinctions were both in doctrine and in form of church government.

These churches were often described as Zwinglian or Calvinist, names the churches themselves resisted, declaring that they sought to be reformed according to the word of God.\* While grateful for the witness of the reformers, they were convinced that a reformed church is also *semper reformanda* (always to be reformed) in accordance with the divine purpose.

When the Swiss reformation spread to Scotland, great emphasis came to be laid upon achieving a polity which was both scriptural and effective for continuous reformation (see **church order**). Presbyterianism was held by many to be such a polity, while courageous minority groups opted for a Congregational order, over against the authority of either bishop or council. From this

historical development there emerged the churches of continental Europe called Reformed and those of Great Britain and Ireland called Presbyterian or Congregational/Independent.

Along the paths of exile and in the settlements of trade and empire, the European movement steadily expanded throughout the world. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches\* reported, in 2001, 215 churches with well over 70 million members and adherents in 107 countries.

The distribution of these millions around the world is very uneven. The centres of strength, with numbers over a million each, are Australia, Canada, Germany, Hungary, Indonesia, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, South Africa, Scotland and Switzerland. Yet strength is not only in numbers, and minority churches have a proud record. In Mediterranean countries, in Latin America, in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, churches with total membership only of thousands have endured under persecution and repression, often winning the respect of other Christians and of the surrounding community. One of the frequently used symbols of Reformed/Presbyterian churches is the burning bush; though burning, it was not consumed.

## THEOLOGY

These churches did not intend at the Reformation or in their more recent foundings to begin a new church\* or to teach new doctrine. They commonly affirm the doctrines of the Apostles'\* and Nicene\* Creeds; their confessions are attempts to expound the central themes of the scriptures. They have disagreed among themselves about the use of creeds\* and confessions to test the orthodoxy of members and ministers, but they have always emphasized the importance of declaring the truth through word and sacrament.

Main emphases of Reformed teaching have been the sovereignty and authority of God,\* the lordship of Jesus Christ\* as the divine Saviour, and the centrality of scripture\* as the rule of faith and life. In relation to these positive doctrines of divine rule and revelation,\* many theologians of this tradition have also emphasized the total dependence of created humankind upon God, the

utter lostness and depravity of sinners and the consequent need of a saving action by God which by prevenient grace\* draws the sinner back to a right relationship with the Creator and Redeemer. If these emphases then become the basis for a logical extrapolation of doctrine, a harsh predestinarian view of salvation\* and damnation can emerge. The developments within the Reformed family of churches have tended towards a return to the primary emphases on divine lordship and grace, but past doctrinal controversies are by no means over. They are often revived when ecumenical discussion takes place.

## POLITY

The polities of the Reformed churches were consciously developed to enable a return to what was held to be the discipleship of the early church. The main features of the Presbyterian polity are the parity of ministers, the participation of all members in church government and the authority of councils (see **conciliarity**).

While exceptional needs call for the exercise of a special authority, as in the case of the first apostles, the regular ministry of word and sacrament is exercised by ministers who have an equality of standing. If one of them (or indeed a layperson) presides over a meeting or a council, it is as a moderator elected for a fixed period of service. In meetings of the local church or councils of representatives of local, regional or national churches, the ministers are conjoined with lay elders; the voting is not carried out in separate groups of ministers and laity. In the local church some meetings are open for the participation of every member. Regional and national leadership and decision making belong to councils, not to individuals.

This polity is open to considerable variations. The most important is that which produced Congregationalism\* by a fusion of elements from the Reformed tradition and from the radical wing of the Reformation. Here the wider councils are only advisory to a local church, in which the presence of the risen Christ gives full authority to the deliberations of the church meeting. A second variation affects the relation between ministers and elders in terms of the New Testament offices: are only ministers presbyters,

with elders as helpers and administrators (see 1 Cor. 12:28), or are both ministers and elders presbyters, some being preachers and teachers as well as ruling (see 1 Tim. 5:17)? Third, there may be additional offices, e.g. church professors of theology, deacons in community service and, in the Hungarian-speaking churches, bishops with a long-term role of presidency and oversight.

### REFORM, UNITY AND DIVISION

From their beginnings Reformed churches have had a vision of a reconstituted Christian unity.\* In the view of the Reformed leaders, the failure to achieve consensus\* with the Lutherans was a tragedy, which Lutheran-Reformed dialogue\* in the 20th century has sought to overcome. Calvin and Farel succeeded at least in turning three Protestantisms into two by the historic consensus of Zurich (1548) with the Zwinglians. In succeeding centuries such very different men as Richard Baxter in England and Friedrich Schleiermacher in Germany have struggled to realize a unity based in reform.

It is sadly evident, however, that Reformed churches have also shown a tendency to division. It is difficult even to draw a chart of the many divisions among Presbyterians in countries as varied as Scotland and Brazil. Admittedly there are comings together as well as fallings apart to complicate the charting, but the overall impression is of a splitting trend.

Those who have anxiously considered the reasons for this trend have found them both in features accidental to the church's life, such as national characteristics of stubbornness or impetuosity, and in negative consequences of the positive features of Reformed doctrine and polity. To stress the right of all to ponder the scriptures, each in their own language, may lead to dispute over interpretations; to give to all a participation in church government may turn dispute into schism,\* when a defeated minority leaves a council to establish a purer reform in its own assembly. The conviction that God's truth is to be known is turned into the belief that a particular church or group or individual knows it better than anyone else.

Within their own life and through their interchurch relations, the Reformed

churches have often been notably self-critical, sometimes with penitent recognition of the divisive tendencies just described. This feature, coupled with the vision of unity inherent in scriptural reformation, has led Reformed churches in the modern era to make a strong contribution to the ecumenical movement.

### ECUMENICAL CONTRIBUTION

The foundation of Presbyterian (1875) and Congregational (1891) worldwide confessional bodies was seen by the participant churches as a step towards wider relationships. At its formation, the Alliance of Reformed Churches throughout the world holding the Presbyterian system declared: "In forming this alliance, the Presbyterian churches do not mean to change their fraternal relations with other churches, but will be ready, as heretofore, to join with them in Christian fellowship." This policy has been repeatedly endorsed by subsequent gatherings of the alliance and of the International Congregational Council.

Reformed churches were among the first to respond to the initiatives which led ultimately to the founding of the WCC. While many of the conservative churches grouped in the Reformed Ecumenical Council\* have distanced themselves from the WCC, the majority of Reformed churches have continued to be deeply involved in ecumenical developments. Most united churches (see **united and uniting churches**) have had a Reformed church among those which formed them.

As churches of Presbyterian and Congregational polity sought union, in 1970 the 11th assembly of the International Congregational Council and the 20th general council of the Alliance of Reformed Churches united, to form the World Alliance of Reformed Churches\* (Presbyterian and Congregational). Its 23rd general council was held in Hungary in August 1997 with the theme "Break the Chains of Injustice" (Isa. 58:6).

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## REFORMED-ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUE

AFTER LONG hesitation the Reformed churches in 1968 followed others by engaging, especially through the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC),\* in international, interconfessional, bilateral conversations (see **dialogue**, **bilateral**). Their policy had previously always been to favour multilateral conversations, in particular those conducted through the WCC (see **dialogue**, **multilateral**). They nevertheless decided to take this new step in order to avoid duplications on the national level, or indeed to make up for the lack of dialogue there, but above all with the worldwide constituency of the Roman Catholic partner in mind. It was on this authoritative level that the WARC sought to achieve dialogue, and their aim was effective common witness.\*

Reformed-Roman Catholic dialogue, however, did not await the outcome of Vatican II and the changes it introduced before making a start in several European countries and the US and Australia. Over the centuries very few dialogues were undertaken, such as the Poissy Colloquium in France (1561) or the correspondence between Bossuet and Leibniz in the 17th century, but these efforts failed because of the intolerance of the times, such as the wars of religion or the revocation of the edict of Nantes (1685). Not until the rise of the ecumenical movement were talks revived on a fresh basis, particularly by pioneers such as Yves Congar or Paul Couturier, who organized the Groupe des Dombes\* in 1937. Bilateral dialogue was not so much a deliberate choice as a convergence of various historical circumstances. On the European continent the Reformation had primarily produced only the two major traditions – Lutheran and Reformed – with their churches covering more or less distinct geographical areas, which led to bipolar con-

frontations between Roman Catholicism, on the one hand, and either Lutherans or the Reformed, on the other.

Doctrinal divergence on the nature, place and role of the church\* in relation to God and to the world had been a cause of Reformed hesitation to enter into dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church, which appeared to have a different set of priorities. The question of the central position of the church or its displacement from such a position determined the theme of the first series of bilateral conversations on “The Presence of Christ in Church and World” (1970-77), and this topic was pursued in the parallel and trilateral conversations (bringing in also the Lutherans) on “The Theology of Marriage and the Problem of Mixed Marriages” (1971-77). The second phase of the bilateral dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church, “Towards a Common Understanding of the Church” (1983-89), continued under firmly Trinitarian colours.

The first series of conversations in the bilateral Reformed-Roman Catholic dialogue resulted not so much in the working out of a consensus\* as in the listing of points of agreement and divergence which had been noted while it was proceeding. The final report goes no further than to follow the sequence of the successive phases of the dialogue and the themes tackled in them: “Christ’s Relationship to the Church” (1970), “The Teaching Authority of the Church” (1971), “The Presence of Christ in the World” (1972), “The Eucharist” (1974) and “On the Ministry” (1975).

Throughout, importance was attached to hermeneutical problems, as regards scripture, the relation between the Testaments and covenants, the status of the canon, the relation of scripture and Tradition, the meaning of metaphors for the church in the New Testament, the diversity of NT models for the church, the recognition of the normative among relativities, the universal in the particular, the importance of the confession of faith, the nature of interpretative authority in the church and the role of the Holy Spirit as both giver and gift in the church. Second, the dialogue accorded real value to the world and its history as being (1) the immediate object of the saving plan of God in Christ through the Holy Spirit,

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and (2) the ethical domain of a church which is itself a historical entity endowed with the gifts, or charisms, of the Holy Spirit and appropriate structures for its missionary work.

Third, Christ is in the world and in the church, which witnesses to him and points to him; Christ is present because of his lordship as the glorified and risen One: the church as guide, model and herald of the coming kingdom for the world proclaims and celebrates him in that world. Hence, ecclesiology is that of the "pilgrim people", whose eucharistic memorial bears witness to a communion with the glorified Christ through the Holy Spirit, a communion founded on fellowship with Christ in his glory rather than on the substitutionary nature of his expiatory sacrifice on the cross, which is seldom referred to. The resultant ecclesiology is along the lines of the true presence of Christ as Lord in the Holy Spirit and not of continuous incarnation. Fourth, an ecclesiology of service to the world takes shape implicitly, fluctuating between a more "ontological" Roman Catholic and a more "relational" Protestant conception (André Birmelé), between the idea of a church which is a sanctifying sacrament and of a church which is a sign and a witness. Finally, there are still questions which relate primarily to the ministry – to its form and scope, the conditions for its fullness and mutual recognition, its character as a sacramental sign, the internal relation between ministry and charism and between order and power, and the primacy of the legal or the liturgical sphere.

The same facts and questions were noted in the dialogue on marriage and mixed marriages in the pastoral and practical fields and were similarly presented. This dialogue took into consideration an extra partner, at least in the West: secularization,\* which raises questions about what circumstances make a church marriage indissoluble and sacramental. The ecumenical question remains about the sacramental nature of marriage and the conclusions to be drawn for pastoral work, especially as to marriages which fail or are renewed (i.e. the re-marriage of divorced persons). Is marriage in the same category as baptism, with its unrepeatable character as an avowal of God's enduring covenant, or is it like the condition of the sinner who is forgiven? Is marriage sanctified because of the

inherent sacramental nature of the mystery of salvation, or is it because of the extension of forensic justification through grace and faith?

Under the title "Towards a Common Understanding of the Church", the 1990 report of the international dialogue between Reformed and Roman Catholics is a more mature and cohesive document than the product of the first phase. The first chapter aims to serve as a "reconciliation of memories" which may become possible through new and self-critical perspectives on the separate and mutual histories of the two communities over the past 450 years. Then a "common confession of faith" by the dialogue commission shows what is already taken to be agreed Christologically, soteriologically and ecclesologically: Christ is the only mediator between God and humankind, and his work reveals that he is the Son within the Trinity; justification is received by grace through faith, "a faith embraced with a freedom restored to its fullness", so that the justified "can henceforth live according to righteousness"; and the church is confessed as the community of all who are called, redeemed and sanctified through the one mediator and in the one Spirit.

In the more directly ecclesiological third chapter, there is re-consideration of the relation between the gospel and the church as the chosen "place, instrument and minister" of the grace it receives in the sovereign liberty of God. Difficulties reside largely in different understandings of the relationship between what is confessed concerning the church and the concrete forms of its historical existence. Two rival conceptions of the church are discerned to be potentially complementary: the church is both "the creation of the Word" and "sacrament of grace"; the church is the servant of Christ's unique mediation, although never either its source or its mistress. Yet divergence, incompatibility, or at least tension appears to remain concerning the questions of continuity and discontinuity in church history, of the visible and invisible nature of the church, and (in these contexts) of the forms and significance of ecclesial structures and ministerial order.

In pointing the way forward, the fourth and final chapter envisages that increasingly common testimony, joint action and mutual

challenge should become part of a deepening fellowship as remaining differences are settled or accepted (there remains a difference about what issues are serious enough to be church-dividing), and as exploration is made of the kind of unity needed for the ultimate goal of full communion in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship.

In 1992 a consultation within the World Alliance of Reformed Churches recommended among themselves a “frank analysis” of the changed and changing relations between Roman Catholics and Reformed since Vatican II, reflecting the variety of situations and positions of the Reformed churches around the world and the critical issues facing them. Before a new agenda should be set for dialogue, there was need to clarify the issue of the reception\* of existing work as well as that of the wide range of opinions and traditions within the Reformed family. Nevertheless, in 1993 a joint consultation with Roman Catholic and Lutheran partners on “Christian Fundamentalism Today” initiated a new type of issue-oriented collaboration. In 1998 a third round was started in the WARC-Roman Catholic dialogue with the general theme “Church as Community of Common Witness to the Kingdom of God”, thus pursuing conversation between the two communions amid acknowledged tensions.

ALAIN BLANCY

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## REFUGEES

FROM THE VERY beginning, service to refugees has been an important part of the diaconal ministry of the World Council of Churches. In fact, during the second world war, when the WCC was “in the process of formation”, churches were actively cooperating to assist Jewish and other refugees to escape Nazi persecution. During its first 20 years of existence, the WCC’s attention was largely directed to European refugees who had been displaced during the second world war. However, by the 1970s, the programme had become global in nature and decentralized in structure. Rather than being centrally administered from Geneva, local, regional and national churches and ecumenical agencies assumed primary responsibilities.

In 1981 the WCC central committee adopted a public statement on “The Churches and the World Refugee Crisis”. The introductory paragraph states that refugees, as victims of social, economic and political injustice and armed conflicts, who are struggling for survival and for the recognition of their human dignity, “have a natural claim on the churches”.

Refugees fleeing their home country are in need of protection and assistance. The creation in 1951 of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) provided an important instrument for the international protection of refugees and the promotion of durable solutions. The 1951 UN Convention on Refugees defined refugees as individuals outside their countries of origin who are unable or who, because of well-founded fear of persecution on the basis of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, are unwilling to return. Individuals found to be refugees under the convention are accorded certain rights – most notably the right not to be returned to their country of origin against their will.

Traditionally UNHCR has identified three durable solutions for refugees – voluntary repatriation (returning home once the conditions which led to flight are resolved), local integration in the country of asylum and resettlement to a third country. All three of these solutions are becoming more difficult. As wars last longer and are increasingly characterized by the widespread use of landmines, it is more difficult for refugees to return home in safety and dignity. Experiences in Rwanda, Bosnia and a dozen other places reveal that refugees are increasingly being returned before the wars are over. In terms of local integration, the reality is that no government wants refugees. Most refugees remain in countries of the South, where large-scale refugee influxes raise economic, political, cultural and social questions. Increasingly governments are allowing refugees to remain only on a temporary basis. Finally, the traditional resettlement countries – the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand – have all reduced the number of refugees they will accept. Beginning in the mid-1980s, the number of refugees arriving on borders of northern countries increased significantly. As a result, Western governments began not only to adopt more policies designed to deter asylum-seekers from arriving in the first place but also to coordinate these restrictive policies with each other.

The churches have long been in the forefront of assisting refugees and immigrants. From emergency relief to long-term support, churches have worked to find lasting solutions. Over the last decade, they have increasingly been drawn into a more active advocacy role, protesting restrictionist policies of their governments and advocating humane treatment of particular groups, such as women and children, with UNHCR. The WCC has been particularly active in urging UNHCR to assume a more active and visible role in the protection of refugees. Thus in 2001, the WCC was an active participant in UNHCR's Global Consultations on Refugee Protection (Geneva). However, the churches' concern has never been limited to those officially recognized by the UN or by governments as refugees. Growing numbers of people have been displaced within their own countries' borders. These internally displaced people – who in 2000 numbered more than officially

recognized refugees – flee for the same reasons as refugees and are often more vulnerable to violence. However, there is no international system to provide protection and assistance to them. Moreover, the line between migrants (those who leave their countries for essentially economic reasons) and refugees (those who leave because of war or persecution) has become increasingly fuzzy. Recognizing that refugees are not the only ones forced to leave their communities, churches are increasingly using the term “uprooted” to refer to those forced to leave their homes – whether they are internally displaced people, refugees, or migrants displaced for environmental or economic reasons.

In addition to its work in mobilizing assistance to uprooted people through ecumenical partners, the WCC plays an essential role in convening global and regional meetings of churches and ecumenical agencies to coordinate strategies. An international refugee reference group, now known as the Global Ecumenical Network, meets regularly to share information on regional developments, analyze global trends and formulate common advocacy and information strategies. In November 1995 the WCC, together with Caritas Internationalis and the Lutheran World Federation, convened a global consultation in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to develop coordinated church perspectives on service to uprooted people.

While refugee ministry has always been important in the life of the WCC, emphasis is shifting towards a more prophetic interpretation of the meaning of refugee service. In September 1995 the WCC's central committee adopted a major policy statement entitled “A Moment to Choose: Risking To Be with Uprooted People”, in which it challenged churches worldwide “to re-discover their identity, their integrity and their vocation as the church of the stranger. Service to uprooted people has always been recognized as diakonia – although it has been peripheral to the life of many churches. But we affirm that it is also an ecclesial matter. *We are a church of the stranger – the church of Jesus Christ the stranger.*”

See also **migration, sanctuary.**

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## RELIGION

RELIGION is a phenomenon which is experienced directly. No people or tribe is without it, however variously it finds expression and even if it has not been specifically identified by name. It has not everywhere been defined by a special term because in some cases it permeates the whole life of a group. There is no such thing as religion in abstraction; we can experience it only in religions that actually exist. But these go back to the appearance of a God or the breaking through of transcendence – of the holy – in meditation and ecstasy. Human beings respond to this experience in worship and ethics; they give it form and make it reproducible. Three types of religion can be distinguished.

*Tribal religions.* The worship of such religions focuses on the cycle of the year and on the life-cycle. Rites take the form of festivals covering hazards and high points in everyday life. They emphasize veneration and not doctrine. In many instances ancestor veneration is central, linking together tradition, identity and tribal unity. The piety made available in them continues to underlie all other religions, especially ethnic (“folk”) religions which have actually been founded and have superimposed themselves on this piety and adapted themselves to it.

*Religions with a founder.* Here the new element is that these religions originate in historical times and have a rigorously ethical approach which claims worldwide validity. Doctrine is central in such religions. The rites of the existing tribal religion are mostly integrated in the new cult but are symbolically re-interpreted in accordance with the latter’s own doctrine (e.g. the Christmas festival in Christianity and pilgrimage in Islam). New festivals are introduced which focus on the life of the founder or on other important historical events.

*Mysticism.* Often this type of religion is not at all sympathetic to ritual. Mysticism\* can break through the distinctive features of religions and seeks to lead them back to the unity behind them, which is accessible in meditation and ecstasy.

Every religion carries within it the germ of its own degeneration or perversion. For this reason soothsayers, prophets or reformers appear, seeking to take a religion back to

its origins or to change it by leading it forward to something new. Thus criticism of religion is actually inherent in it. But in our own day this criticism has taken on a new dimension in that it stands outside religion and seeks to triumph over it as a whole.

Christians believe that God as Jesus’ Father, the Creator, stands behind all religions and that through them God wants to protect human beings in their life and in their humanity. Religions are thus part and parcel of God’s work of preservation in the world. To what extent they are also part of God’s saving activity is variously answered in Christian churches and teachings. But there is no lack of unanimity in the conviction that God’s saving activity in Christ is for all human beings and must be made accessible to all (see **uniqueness of Christ**).

See also **dialogue, interfaith; God; theology of religions**.

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## RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

THE FIRST steps towards monasticism and other forms of religious communities occurred in the 2nd century, when many virgins and widows in the cities followed a distinctive pattern of life. Then in the deserts of Egypt and Syria, hermits (anchorites) followed a strict asceticism, and gradually most of them gathered around a master, such as Anthony of Egypt (c.251-c.356). In Upper Egypt Pachomius (c.290-346) developed this experience into a stable common life (cenobites), and in Cappadocia Basil of Caesarea (329?-79) wrote a rule for his several monasteries, with a pastoral concern for the poor and for defenceless strangers. The council of Chalcedon\* (451) provided the first official

church recognition of religious institutes, by that time well flourishing in cities and rural areas. Both desert traditions developed in Palestine, which boasted of over 10,000 “single ones” by the mid-500s – a “city in the desert”.

Renouncing marriage and family, profession and wealth, the monks devoted themselves to prayer and contemplation and to such activities as painting and making religious articles and serving others by medical aid and teaching. Monasticism began as a movement of laypeople but gradually was transformed into a more official calling, so that only monks could become bishops in later Byzantium.

In the West, John Cassian (c.360-435), after leading a monastic life in Bethlehem and Egypt, established a monastery for men and another for women in Marseilles, France. Later in Italy Benedict of Nursia (480-546), considered the founder of Western monasticism, constructed several autonomous monasteries. His rule of *ora et laborare* (prayer and work) gives absolute priority to worship, around which study, especially of the scriptures, and work revolve almost inseparably. It became the guide for Benedictine monks and nuns and for those in several similar communities. To them more than to any other groups one can credit the preservation of Graeco-Roman culture and the missionary advance, establishment and consolidation of the church in northern and central Europe.

The 13th century saw the rise of mendicant orders, such as the Franciscans, Dominicans and Carmelites; by rule they were freed from the monastic obligation of stable residence for the sake of engaging in more flexible apostolic activities. At the dawn of the Reformation, new orders arose, such as the Jesuits (1540). Then appeared congregations of women and of men who took no vows and dedicated themselves to education, health care and foreign missions, such as the Brothers of the Christian Schools (1680), a lay fellowship.

Foreign missions in the 19th century attracted dozens of new Roman Catholic communities founded solely for that work, such as the Mill Hill in England (1866), Verona in Italy (1867), and in France the White Fathers and Sisters (1868). The same period

saw two new RC communities for explicit ecumenical work, as that was then understood: the American Paulist Fathers (1858) and the Franciscan Atonement Friars (1890).

In the 20th century, another RC model of consecrated life developed – secular institutes. By private vows and promises, men and women –single and married, lay and ordained – live “in the world”, alone, in families, or in groups; they strive for the perfection of charity and work for the sanctification of the world. Such are, for women, the Grail (1921) and the Catechists of the Virgin Mary (Japan, 1980), and (for both sexes) the Focolare\* (1943).

The Second Vatican Council (see **Vatican Councils I and II**) urged all these forms of religious life to renewal and adaptation by a continuous return to the sources of Christian life, especially the study and meditation of the gospel, and to the original inspirations that brought the communities into being. Vatican II asked all religious institutes to embrace “the ecumenical initiatives and objectives of the Council”.

## THE REFORMATION AND PROTESTANT COMMUNITIES

One of the many factors leading to the Reformation was the loss of monastic integrity in too many religious houses and the immoral lives of too many monks and nuns. Martin Luther entered the Augustinians in 1505, in his belief that this vocation would most nearly assure salvation. In 1519 he commended vowed celibacy as a good exercise of one’s baptismal pledge of lifelong struggling with sin. But by 1521 he rejected vows as tantamount to seeking righteousness and salvation outside of Christ and faith. John Calvin was far harsher in his condemnations; for him monks were papal minions who represented idleness, pride, hypocrisy and ignorance.

Although the reformers rejected religious vows and suppressed monasteries, in northern Germany six communities of nuns did survive in the Lutheran tradition. And some forms of religious life as attempts to replicate the first Christian community in Jerusalem (see Acts 2:42-43) revived in the Moravian Brethren and in the German Herrnhuter (1700s). Other examples are the

many Lutheran deacon and deaconess "charity communities" in Germany (1800s); the (Reformed) Sisters of Charity in France and, in the USA, the Society of the Women in the Wilderness and the Ephrata cloister (1800s); the Swedish Lutheran Society of St Bridget, the Danish Theological Oratory and the Norwegian Order of the Cross (early 1900s).

In Europe after the first world war, Lutheran and Reformed brotherhoods and sisterhoods gathered men and women, theologians and laity, around a common spiritual rule and discipline as they continued to live single or family lives "in the middle of the world", e.g. the Humility Order (1925) and Michaelsbruderschaft (1931). In India the Christian ashram movement began, and in the USA, the Koinonia farm.

In the Church of England, Elizabeth I (ruled 1558-1603) finally suppressed all religious orders. During the next three centuries some Anglican religious houses were established, although none have survived. The modern Anglican revival began in 1845 (Sisterhood of the Holy Cross, London). By the 1960s there were over 100 female communities in Great Britain and Ireland, devoted to teaching, charitable and social work or for contemplative prayer in cloistered life; during this same time, 40 Episcopalian sisterhoods were active in the USA. Anglican male communities are less numerous. The most noted are the Society of St John the Evangelist (1866; Cowley Fathers), now in England, USA and Canada; the Nashdom Benedictines (1914); the Franciscans (1921); and the Society of the Holy Cross (1881, USA). Anglican communities of men and of women, with foreign and indigenous members, are in Africa, Australia, New Zealand, India, Japan and elsewhere.

After the second world war a more obvious revival took place in new Protestant communities such as the Marian Sisterhood of Darmstadt (1947), the Swedish Sisterhood of Mary (1954), and the Sisters of the Church of South India (1964). The Taizé community\* in France was originally composed only of Reformed brothers (1949) but now has also Anglican and Roman Catholic members.

Since the mid-1960s in Western Europe and North America, male and female voca-

tions\* to most forms of structured religious life have been drastically fewer, alike in Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant communities. The reasons for this swift reduction are unclear. But elsewhere, with decolonization and indigenous consciousness of new nations, there has been a sharp increase of new members in older communities and in new indigenous ones: in Asia, Augustinian Sisters of Our Lady (Philippines) and the male Missionaries of the Blessed Sacrament (India); in Africa, Daughters of Mary (Nigeria) and Bazozefiti St Joseph Brothers (Rwanda).

### ECUMENICAL WITNESS

Despite aberrations and extravagances, monasticism, in East and West, preserves two truths for all Christians: without discipline there can be no holiness,\* and discipline which costs nothing (which lacks renunciation in any form) is valueless. For the monks and nuns themselves, renunciation is neither condemnation nor denial of the world; rather, in Christ God reveals the glory of the coming kingdom, and in its light "the image of this world passes".

The monastic approach to theology has developed recognizable characteristics. It stresses a contemplative unity between scriptures, patristics and liturgy, and a union between spiritual reflection and experience. The word of God\* is prayed and experienced more than analyzed and systematized. This authentic core of monastic theology and spirituality is finding a home in the ecumenical arena.

Through his writings and personal spiritual pilgrimage, the Trappist monk Thomas Merton (1915-68) still introduces thousands of Christians to the relation of contemplation to social justice ("solitude and solicitude"), helps them to see "the monk in each of us", and reaches out to other monastic traditions, especially the Buddhist.

Cloistered communities of contemplatives give quiet witness by using their monasteries and convents also as retreat centres, where clergy and laity of all communions can participate in regular liturgies and meditation and can seek spiritual counsel. Most RC, Anglican and Protestant religious communities regard an ecumenical spirit as essential to their vocation of prayer, study and

activities; in fact, they are usually more ecumenical than the general clergy. Taizé in France, Benedictine monasteries, such as Chevetogne\* and St John's (Collegeville, MN, USA), the Cittadella Ecumenica Taddeide and the Bose community in Italy are praying, intellectual centres for ecumenical gatherings. In the early 1980s an ecumenical council of religious began to network RC and Anglican communities, holding that the promotion of Christian unity is "an integral part of our life and mission".

Some pronouncements from monasteries of Mt Athos appear anti-ecumenical, perhaps reflecting a fear that Orthodoxy may be compromised and the churches may be too accommodating to the vagaries of modern times. Other monks have been active bridge-builders in their witness of prayer and dialogue, such as the Armenian Orthodox in Jerusalem and the Russian Orthodox at Zagorsk (Moscow) and St Serge (Paris). Many Orthodox leaders in the ecumenical movement, both bishops and others, have arisen from the monastic tradition.

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## RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

"RELIGIOUS FREEDOM" and "religious liberty" are generally synonymous in common usage, though some view the former as a broader concept and the latter as a specific term to denote a political or legal right.

Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948) states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion: this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice,

worship and observance." This article reproduces virtually verbatim the proposal made by the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) of the World Council of Churches when the declaration was adopted in Paris in 1948. It does not constitute a complete definition of religious liberty, but it is widely accepted as universal basis for the protection of this right.

The question of religious liberty was first raised at the Edinburgh meeting of the world missionary conference in Edinburgh in 1910, generally regarded as the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement. Ever since then there has been a progressive evolution in ecumenical understanding of religious liberty influenced by historical and political changes, the diversity of situations in which the churches live and the expansion of the constituency and concerns of the WCC.

The first assembly of the WCC (Amsterdam 1948) described freedom of religion as an essential element in any good international order. "This is an implication of the Christian faith and of the worldwide nature of Christianity." Amsterdam laid down four basic principles: (1) the right to determine one's own faith and creed; (2) the right to express one's religious beliefs in worship, teaching and practice and to proclaim the implications of those beliefs for relationships in a social or political community; (3) the right to associate with others and to organize with them for religious purposes; and (4) the right of every religious organization, formed or maintained by action in accordance with the rights of individual persons, to determine its policies and practices for accomplishing its chosen purposes.

The statement on religious liberty adopted by the third assembly of the WCC (New Delhi 1961) re-affirmed the Amsterdam principles and made significant advances especially in the theological and social aspects. "Holding a distinctive Christian basis for religious liberty, we regard this right as fundamental for men everywhere," it said. "Christians see religious liberty as a consequence of God's creative work, of his redemption of man in Christ, and his calling of men into his service. Accordingly human attempts by legal enactment or by pressure of social custom to coerce or eliminate faith are violations of the fundamental ways of

God with men. The freedom which God has given in Christ implies a free response to God's love and the responsibility to serve fellow men at the point of deepest need." The New Delhi statement highlighted the freedom to manifest one's belief through religious witness and practice in political and social life as an essential element of religious liberty for Christians in the light of the demands of the gospel.

During the 1970s new perspectives on religious liberty were developed by the WCC within the broader framework of Christian responsibility and human solidarity. The CCIA consultation on "Human Rights and Christian Responsibility" (St Pölten 1974) recalled that the WCC has frequently declared that religious liberty is a basic human right and went on to insist: "This right is required so that the full responsibilities of Christian faith may be undertaken. This right is not a privilege or an exclusive freedom for the church. Human solidarity demands that we should be aware of the inter-relatedness of all rights, including the rights of those of other faiths or no faiths... The right to religious liberty exists in order to serve the community according to the commands of the gospel." The fifth assembly of the WCC (Nairobi 1975) affirmed the findings of the St Pölten consultation, saying that human rights cannot be effectively treated in isolation from the larger issues which lie at the root of human rights violations. It affirmed the indivisibility of civil and political (individual) rights and economic, social and cultural (community or peoples') rights, and that religious liberty was inseparable from other enunciated fundamental human rights. It noted that human rights violations occur in specific and different contexts of society and their social structures. Struggles to protect the human rights even of the individual requires participation in the wider struggle for justice and the liberation of the entire community.

The sixth assembly in Vancouver in 1983 identified the threat to religious freedom that came from the growing climate of religious fanaticism and the rise of political fundamentalism. During the period leading up to the seventh assembly, the CCIA's Human Rights Advisory Group addressed the concern for religious liberty against the background of ten-

sions and conflicts which increasingly reflected religious factors, stressing the important role played by Christians in several parts of the world in political and social struggles as part of their faith-based commitments.

### THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

From the time of the Edinburgh conference the ecumenical movement was concerned about "discrimination and repression exercised by dominant religious majorities against minorities". In Toronto (1950) the WCC central committee spoke of "serious infringements of religious freedom in certain countries in which the Roman Catholic Church is the dominant religion and in regions in which the Muslim faith is the dominant religion".

Before the 1960s the Roman Catholic Church's views on religious freedom oscillated between the thesis that those "in error" had no claim to religious liberty and the hypothesis that religious liberty can be provisionally granted to non-Catholics when the common good makes it advisable and complete repression of erroneous belief is not practicable.

The Vatican's understanding of religious liberty and human rights changed radically as a result of the Second Vatican Council\* in the mid-1960s. In its document *Dignitatis Humanae* the church provided, in the words of the WCC central committee in 1966 that welcomed the Declaration on Religious Freedom, a "clear statement proclaiming full, civil, religious freedom, both individual and collective, for everybody everywhere". The second report of the Joint Working Group\* between the RCC and the WCC in 1967 concluded that "though the theological justification may still differ from one church to the other, there is basic agreement on what the principle of religious liberty requires in practice".

Vatican II's\* declaration on religious freedom limited itself to clarifying one particular, but vital, aspect of religious freedom in civil society, speaking more in juridical than theological terms to society as a whole. Every person, it said, has a right "to immunity from coercion" in religious matters. The church thus repudiated coercion in matters of religion. Christians must respect religious freedom even more conscientiously than others. The human response to God in faith\*

must be free, no one may be coerced into faith, nor can anyone be subject to coercion to prevent them from leaving the church.

Subsequent statements from the Vatican on religious freedom were very similar to the views expressed by the WCC in earlier times. In his World Day of Peace message (1 January 1988) Pope John Paul II said, "In the first place, religious freedom, an essential requirement of the dignity of every person, is a cornerstone of the structure of human rights. It follows that the freedom of individuals and of communities to profess and practise their religion is an essential element for peaceful human existence." This emphasis on the uniqueness of religious liberty and its place in the international order coincides with the Amsterdam declaration to which reference is made above.

### RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AT THE UN

The UN general assembly in 1981 adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. With the declaration, it reminded the nations that it is in the higher interests of humankind to put an end to persecution based on religion or belief and related forms of prejudice. In some respects, however, the declaration constitutes a reduction rather than an enlargement of existing standards. The freedom to change one's religion or belief (Universal Declaration of Human Rights) is not explicitly reiterated in the declaration, and the right to freedom of religious practice, is conspicuously absent.

According to the declaration religion or belief, for those who profess them, is a fundamental element in believers' conception of life, and therefore freedom of religion or belief should be fully respected and guaranteed. Freedom of religion or belief should also contribute to the attainment of the goals of world peace, social justice and friendship among peoples.

The UN Human Rights Commission named a special rapporteur to monitor compliance with the declaration, as a means for holding governments accountable to the international community for breaches of religious tolerance in their countries.

### SOME CURRENT TRENDS

As it has done over the years, the ecumenical movement has to take into account

the emerging global situation in dealing with religious liberty today. Several new developments are worthy of note. The transformation in former socialist countries that has led to the abandonment of the official atheism of former communist lands has considerably widened religious liberty. However, these changes have also brought with them new issues and problems in the area of human rights and religious liberty. One of these has been the proliferation of internal conflicts in the former socialist societies that reflect old national, ethnic and religious tensions. Forms of religion-based nationalism in many countries here and in other lands have created situations in which the religion of the majority becomes the primary identity of the nation. Adherents of religions other than the dominant one may find themselves relegated to second-class status in society and in the eyes of religious-based legal systems.

At the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna (1993) another new challenge appeared that showed a widening gap between the North and the South on the understanding of rights. Some countries of the South expressed reservations about the universality of human rights, claiming that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent international human rights instruments were products of Western, Christian culture, philosophy and tradition and therefore could not be considered applicable in parts of the world with other histories, traditions, cultures and religions.

Another noticeable feature of the post-cold war period has been the process of globalization. It has led to a widening gap between rich and poor nations and the rich and poor within nations. Expanding poverty breeds violations of human rights and increases pressures on the state and the international community to protect them. Another feature of globalization, however, has been its tendency to weaken the powers of the state to promote and defend the rights, including the right to religious liberty, of its own citizens. The exercise of religious liberty depends in large part on effective guarantees for other human rights. This extends to the third generation of human rights that includes that includes the rights to development, peace and a healthy natural environment. Religious liberty occupies a unique

and distinctive place among human rights. The statement of the eighth WCC assembly challenged the churches to remain constantly active and vigilant with respect to the universality, indivisibility and especially the implementation of the full range of human rights.

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## RENEWAL

THE WORD "renewal" did not come into vogue in ecumenical circles until the publication of W.A. Visser 't Hooft's book *Renewal of the Church* (1956). This was followed by an ecumenical consultation on renewal held in 1957 in New Haven, Connecticut (USA), under the sponsorship of the WCC Departments of Laity and the Cooperation of Men and Women in Church and Society. "The Missionary Structure of the Congregation",\* an influential WCC study programme arising out of the New Delhi assembly (1961), focused to a considerable degree on renewal in and for mission.

During the 1960s the impact of the charismatic renewal was being felt in many churches, and the outcome of the long years of liturgical study and renewal became crystallized in many new liturgical texts and revisions (see **liturgical reforms**). Within the

WCC, the magazine *Risk*, founded in the Youth department in 1965, became an instrument of explanation and discovery in the context of the renewal agenda. Over the years, its issues on a range of subjects – from development\* to liturgy,\* from black theology\* to cinema – were widely read.

Renewal was given greater ecumenical currency in the 1960s by use of the term in Roman Catholic circles. Pope John XXIII's use of the word *aggiornamento* (lit. "bringing up to date") in calling the Second Vatican Council\* was echoed in the documents of the Council as renewal: "In this assembly, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we wish to enquire how we ought to renew ourselves, so that we may be found increasingly faithful to the gospel of Christ".

The theme of the WCC's fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968) – "Behold, I Make All Things New" – foreshadowed considerable ecumenical attention to renewal in the subsequent decade. This newness was the subject of much debate. Some spoke of "new situations, demanding new forms of life and new structures for the church". Communities of renewal such as Corrymeela, Taizé, East Harlem Protestant Mission and Emmaus House were established.

Orthodoxy claimed a holistic view of renewal, of recovery of the valid Tradition\* and experience. On such terms, renewal had a certain ambiguity about it. It was represented not only as a response to rapid change but also as the recovery and re-endorsement of the basic and ancient truths of Christianity.

With the re-structuring of the WCC in the early 1970s, attention to renewal was centred in its unit for education and renewal. Consultations in the period between the Uppsala and Nairobi assemblies (1968-75) reflected the renewal theme, with sharp tension between those who advocated active and radical participation in the post-1968 student groups and youth movements and those who believed that renewal is essentially a churchly matter for the edification and nurture of congregational life. The essence of much of the most stimulating renewal activity was its transience; as a plurality of "theologies" developed, the legitimacy of any single spirituality came to be questioned more and more.

A workshop on spirituality\* at the WCC's fifth assembly (Nairobi 1975) tried to identify some useful criteria for spiritual renewal. The term "spirituality for combat", coined by M.M. Thomas, enjoyed some currency. But in subsequent years, a re-invigorated retreat movement, re-discovering techniques of Ignatian spirituality, for example, has become even more influential. More and more writers are exploring the question of a style for contemporary spirituality in which ecumenism is almost taken for granted.

By its very nature, the work on spirituality does not lend itself to general treatment in large conferences, but specific aspects of spiritual life have been explored in more intimate WCC workshops such as the one on monasticism in 1986. The role of iconography and of symbolism in nurturing spirituality was explored in a workshop held in 1987 at the time of the celebration of the 1200th anniversary of the seventh ecumenical council (Nicea II), which in the Orthodox tradition restored the veneration of icons\* after a period of iconoclasm. And in the growing dialogue with people of other faiths, experiences are shared across the faiths of the insights of mysticism\* and ways of contemplative meditation.

Worship workshops, held in regional centres, have encouraged the exchange and circulation of local music and lyrics, and substantial international collections of such liturgical materials have been published. A worship resource centre has been established at the ecumenical centre in Geneva. Thus, worship shared across the traditions and cultures becomes an element not only of renewal but also of experiential ecumenism.

The growth of church base communities,\* of house churches\* and of charismatic groups may be ways of bringing renewal to church congregations but may also become stumbling blocks in the way to a fuller ecumenism. In 1989 a WCC team visit to Brazil published its report under the title "Renewal from the Roots" and described the base communities as "providing a model of grassroots ecumenism".

In all such processes of ecumenical renewal, the laity\* have a key role to play.

See also **education**.

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## RESPONSIBLE SOCIETY

THE ECUMENICAL movement has widely regarded "the responsible society" as a goal for political action. This social-ethical criterion made possible a critical evaluation of both communism and capitalism.\* Amsterdam 1948 defined the concept as follows: "A responsible society is one where freedom is the freedom of men who acknowledge responsibility to justice and public order, and where those who hold political authority or economic power are responsible for its exercise to God and the people whose welfare is affected by it."

The "responsible society" was regarded as a free and democratic society, where all citizens are guaranteed freedom and where those holding political authority are responsible to the electorate. It was also regarded as a society where the individual and the state aspire to social and economic justice.\* The Amsterdam assembly stated that the responsible society was to be neither communist nor capitalist. Communism was criticized for guaranteeing neither political nor economic freedom, and capitalism was criticized for the state's not taking responsibility for a just distribution of welfare.

The WCC assembly in Evanston (1954) emphasized that the responsible society is not a specifically "Christian" social system, a third alternative to communism and capitalism. Rather, it is "a criterion by which we judge all existing social orders and at the same time a standard to guide us in the specific choices we have to make". However, the responsible society was regarded to be a democratic society with both private ownership and public economic initiative.

During the Rapid Social Change study (1954-59), the responsible society was given as a social ideal for the developing countries. At the world conference in Salonika in 1959, the aim of social change in developing countries was stated to be a society where "men are called to accept responsibility to God and their fellow men for the choices and decisions on which the life of their societies is based; and responsible participation in social and political life can only be achieved where each national group or unit can express itself in freedom". The responsible society now included a demand for the national independence of developing countries and their liberation from the colonial powers.

As a social ideal, the responsible society has been based on two different theological traditions. The Barthian tradition is represented by J.H. Oldham, W.A. Visser 't Hooft and Roger Mehl. They advocate a "pure theological" social ethics, according to which the criteria for a right political action can be known only through revelation in Christ. Their ethics is *deontological*, i.e. the criterion for a right action is not good consequences but the will of God. The natural-law\* tradition is represented by William Temple, John C. Bennett and Heinz-Dietrich Wendland. They advocate a "humanely grounded" social ethics, according to which we can understand what is right independently of revelation\* in Christ. Their ethics is *teleological*, i.e. an action is right if it produces better or less evil consequences than alternative actions.

According to Oldham, who introduced the concept of the responsible society (see *middle axioms*), an action is right if it is carried out as a response to the guidance of God. Human beings are "responsive persons", in the sense that they should act in response to the call of God in every new situation, and society ought to be formed in such a way that every human being can be responsive in this sense. A responsible society is a free society, where human beings, by their freedom to control, criticize and replace the government, are respected as responsible persons with freedom to obey God.\*

According to Bennett, certain moral convictions could be embraced by both Christians and non-Christians. The responsible society is a social ideal which is universally hu-

man in this sense. It is a democratic society, where the government is controlled by those governed. It is also a mixed economy, where a market economy is combined with both public and private ownership of the means of production. This political and economic system is desirable, since it promotes such intrinsic values as freedom, justice and welfare.

The responsible society was used as a social-ethical criterion at the WCC assembly in New Delhi (1961) and at the Church and Society world conference in Geneva (1966). However, in Geneva this social ideal was also criticized, mainly by theologians from the third world. The alternative was regarded to be a socialist society with both political and economic democracy. In the 1970s the responsible society was replaced by other ecumenical social ethical criteria, such as "the just, participatory and sustainable society".\*

See also *society*.

CARL-HENRIC GRENHOLM

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## RESURRECTION

THOUGH beliefs about the resurrection were certainly vital to the Christological and Trinitarian dogmas of the early councils, the resurrection itself was never comparably defined. We find instead what Gerald O'Collins calls "a living consensus" grounded in the New Testament witness to the resurrection and maintained by the common creeds of the churches.

Yet, in the midst of this ecumenicity, there has also been controversy, primarily over the relationship of the resurrection to the cross. It has often been asserted that the East worships the risen Christ, the West the crucified Christ. This generalization is unfair

to both traditions, but it does point to a historic tension between them. The resurrection, writes Kallistos Ware of the East, "fills the whole life of the Orthodox church". The Orthodox see the cross from the perspective of the empty tomb. Even in his suffering, Jesus is "indestructible life" (Heb. 7:16), the Incarnate One of God who vanquishes the power of death by his death. "On the tree he triumphed over the powers which opposed him," proclaims the Orthodox baptismal liturgy. Orthodox hymnology exalts the cross itself as "life and resurrection" and "life-bearing".

For the West, the cross is more a sign of human godlessness. That we would crucify the Lord of glory shows the extent to which we have fallen in sin.\* Yet it also reveals the depth of God's love: God sacrifices his own Son so that we sinners may be reconciled to God. Since Luther, Protestant theology has considered the cross to be the standard of all Christian preaching: only through the crucified Christ does God save us (1 Cor. 1:18-25). The West fears that the East does not allow the cross to stand on its own horrific terms but too easily subsumes it under the triumphant glory of the resurrection. The Orthodox reply that Christ offers not only forgiveness of sin but new life, prefigured by his resurrection, for all creation. In their view, the West has not sufficiently appreciated the cosmic scope of salvation\* achieved by Christ but has focused too narrowly on the justification of the sinner.

These contrasts need not be divisive, for there are numerous points of contact between East and West for constructing a common faith. The Eastern fathers hardly neglect the forgiveness of sins as part of Christ's total work, sometimes even speaking of the cross, like the West, in juridical and penal terms. Anselm, who is often charged with focusing the West on atonement, understands the ultimate end of the cross to be the resurrection of the dead, when God will perfectly "complete what he began with human nature" (*Cur Deus Homo?* 2.4).

Most important, however, the 20th-century liturgical movement\* has helped to recover the unity of Christ's death and resurrection found in the paschal celebration of the early church. The Jewish passover (Hebrew *pesach*, from which is derived the

Greek *pascha*) remembered the central saving event of the old covenant,\* God's deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage. The Christian pasch celebrated a new exodus, God's redemption of humanity from sin and death through Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 5:7-8). The service originally proceeded as an all-night vigil from Saturday evening to Easter\* morning. Through a series of lessons and psalms, Christ was proclaimed as the fulfillment of Old Testament salvation history.\* Then, at dawn, the darkness of the cross yielded to the light of the resurrection, and fasting and expectation gave way to joy. Worshippers passed with Christ from death to life, as in the words of Paul: "We were buried with him, and lay dead, in order that, as Christ was raised from the dead... we shall also be one with him in a resurrection like his" (Rom. 6:4-5, NEB). In one continuous service, ending appropriately with baptism\* and eucharist,\* the paschal celebration kept together cross and resurrection, suffering and victory. Only around the 4th century, did this single celebration start to divide, with eventually Good Friday commemorating the cross, and Easter the resurrection.

There is now a growing ecumenical consensus that the paschal mystery prohibits any opposition or competition between a "theology of the cross" and a "theology of the resurrection". The two cannot be isolated from each other or from the great sweep of salvation history remembered in the pasch. While some modern theologians have sought to deny the centrality of the resurrection or reduce it to the genesis of faith in the life of the disciples, the paschal mystery asserts the fullness of resurrection belief in unity with the cross: God's act in raising the crucified Jesus from the dead re-creates the whole of creation – personal, social, historical, cosmic. Dying and rising with Christ is the mystery of redemption\* itself. The old, sinful life is crucified with Christ; new life comes through the risen Lord's gift of the Spirit.

All Christians, Eastern and Western, can claim the paschal celebration of the early church as their common heritage and theological norm. The ecumenical significance of the paschal mystery cannot be overstated. Through it, Christ would purify and renew his church for service to God and to the

world. Indeed, the paschal mystery is the very means of our union with Christ and, as we faithfully struggle to overcome our divisions, the basis of our union with each other.

See also **Jesus Christ, life and death.**

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## REVELATION

THE 20TH CENTURY has witnessed the slow reconstruction of the doctrine of divine revelation in the aftermath of the Enlightenment. In particular, it has been realized again that God\* is not simply another being in the universe whose existence, essence and self-expression may be assessed on purely naturalistic grounds. This reconstruction is not complete, and in fact progress towards it has been marked as much by the raising of new perplexities as by the resolution of old ones. Nevertheless, a trajectory within these newer revelation theories is discernible.

The doctrine of divine revelation begins (as do all doctrines) with an observation concerning human beings: we are open to experiences which disclose God. The God thereby revealed is thus not solely the object of the experience but in fact the very ground of its possibility (i.e. the gracious self-revealer). Thus the doctrine of divine revelation is ultimately concerned not so much with *what* is revealed or discovered about God as it is with *how* any such self-transcending revelatory discovery is possible in the first place. We shall return to this description after summarizing the major features of 20th-century discussion of the doctrine.

Regardless of how one defines "20th century" in this context, by all accounts its fundamental Protestant expression begins

with Germanic neo-orthodoxy's rejection of theological subjectivism, the idea that knowledge of God was immanent within creation and thus fully accessible to the human rational subject. "General revelation", it appeared, had largely done away with the need for any "special" revelation ("additional" revelatory acts of God necessitated by human sin\*). But now, with Protestant neo-orthodoxy, we find the complete (Karl Barth) or virtually complete (Emil Brunner) rejection of the possibility of general revelation and hence of natural theology.

For Barth, divine transcendence means that God is wholly other than human beings and as such is utterly unknowable by humans except through the self-disclosing acts of the preached word, the biblical word and the living Word (Christ). Were any sort of degree of knowledge of God possible apart from these acts, each would be attenuated. Specifically, this means that no genuine (much less saving) knowledge of God is discoverable within creation itself by means of human reason. Barth insisted that the two realms or categories of the divine and the created are mutually exclusive, hence only dialectically related. Human finitude, radically compounded by and ultimately indistinguishable from human sinfulness, completely annihilates the possibility of discovering God from below. God's self, identical with Christ, can be revealed only through Christ (see **Jesus Christ**).

Brunner maintains the distinction between the divine and the created realms as seriously as Barth in all areas except for personal encounter. The God of the Bible clearly desires personal encounters with sinful human beings and brings them about. For this to be possible, there must be something in pre-saved human nature that in and of itself can receive the divine initiative and thus complete the divine intention of human salvation.\* Apart from some such postulate, there could be no way to distinguish between human beings, whose efforts towards God (*ex hypothesi*) always fail, and animals, who make no such efforts at all. In particular, there could be no way to distinguish their respective responsibilities towards God, especially for the person who really believed Barth and consequently gave up even trying to think about God. Instead, Brunner

said, God's sovereign transcendence is shown in the operations of the human conscience,\* whose accusing and excusing functions point beyond themselves precisely to God, who both judges and pardons. And it is in the encounter with the personal God, seen most clearly in the special revelation of Jesus Christ, that humans become confident that God would rather excuse than accuse. Contrary to Barth, Brunner held that sin is in fact a form of relationship with God, albeit a negative one. From that ground, then, God encounters human beings in grace\* and redemption.\*

Germanic neo-orthodoxy culminated as an ecumenical expression in the 1934 Barmen declaration (see **Confessing Church**). Barmen rejected the historical immanentism of Nazi theology – in particular, its identification of Nazi policies with the kingdom of God.\* In place of such theology, it advocated a return to a supernatural and Christocentric revelation as the only sufficient guide for personal faith\* as well as social morality. But some in the Confessing Church nevertheless stopped short of Barth's dialectical brick wall, preferring instead Dietrich Bonhoeffer's axiom that "God is the beyond in our midst".

Roman Catholic theories of revelation during the 20th century tended, not surprisingly, to focus more on the corporate encounter with God than on the individual one, which led to the reduction of revelation to salvation in much Protestant thought. This is said without ignoring Catholics such as Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, whose notion rested ultimately upon "contact between two centres of consciousness" rather than any form of external verification such as reason, miracle, ecclesial authority or the like.

In general, Roman Catholic theories have followed, and at times provoked, the evolution from Vatican I's\* *Dei Filius* (1870) to Vatican II's *Dei Verbum* (1965). In the former, the Roman Catholic Church saw itself as the sole and terminal sign of revelation, in that it alone bears the verifiable marks of unity,\* holiness,\* catholicity\* and apostolicity\* in their concrete entirety. This self-description resulted historically in the anti-modernist entrenchment of the early 20th century, whose internal characteristic was rejection of the critically new and whose

external characteristic became virtual ecclesial sectarianism. More particularly, anti-modernism insisted that revelation is transcendental as well as immanent, that it proceeds from miraculous divine intervention, that it has a predominant doctrinal or intellectual aspect and that it is gracious and hence not naturally present within the human person. The traditionalists in this controversy were eventually impressed with the incompatibility of their theology, according to which God continues to be revealed to and through the church\* within history,\* with their historiography, according to which the meaning of history is found in its primitive and pristine origins. The first official recognition of this incompatibility is found in Pope Pius XII's encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (1943), whose signal effect was to allow Roman Catholic biblical scholars to resume their use of historical criticism in exegesis because it was no longer perceived as a necessary threat to divine revelation (see **exegesis, methods of**).

*Dei Verbum* made the church rather the *sacrament*\* of revelation. This modification located the concept of revelation in a historical rather than a strictly dogmatic context, seeing it as both word and deed, dynamically creative, universal as well as particular, calling for obedience by all (including the magisterium), and finally as critically grounded within scripture rather than fully parallel to it.

Among contemporary Protestants, Wolfhart Pannenberg also affirmed encounter as the mode of divine revelation, as Brunner and Bonhoeffer had done. For Pannenberg, though, the encounter is with God through history rather than through conscience – in particular, the qualitative "end" of history brought about in the resurrection\* of Jesus. The resurrection of Jesus certifies our own future resurrection and reveals God by showing that both private and corporate history depends for its fulfilment upon the God "who gives life to the dead and calls into existence [i.e. everlasting life] the things that do not exist [i.e. the dead]" (Rom. 4:17). What is revealed here is God's power and love, first for Jesus and thus for us as well, which makes the death and resurrection of Jesus, and reflexively his historical life, salvific and not merely exemplary. The

faith which estimates the resurrection in this way lives today in view of the ultimacy of the kingdom of God,\* which in turn both testifies to God's presence in the revelation and helps to bring about that kingdom in history. But because this revelation is of God's own self, only the Christ-revelation is directly valid; all other "revelations" are but indirect divine "manifestations". Hence Pannenberg rejects as fatally circular the concept of salvation history,\* according to which a determinate segment of history critically evaluates the remainder by means of an ongoing tradition of partial self-disclosures culminating in Christ. Both the presupposition (a super-revelatory word-disclosure guaranteeing the critical distinctiveness of *salvation* history) and the effect (all other history is merely profane) of this concept are unsatisfactory. Pannenberg prefers instead a *universal* history in which the whole is evaluated, proleptically yet rationally, by the singular and climactic resurrection-disclosure.

The Roman Catholic Avery Dulles objects to Pannenberg's theory of "revelation as history" because it posits events, rather than words, as primary to divine revelation. This position is unsatisfactory because events are by definition meaningless apart from interpretation, and interpretation is by nature cognitive or verbal. We should instead view revelation as both deed and word. Dulles suggests the use of "symbolic revelation" as a proper category here, in that symbols are cognitive entities (words) which have evocative and hence participatory effects (events) within human life and history. "Word and deed thus participate in one another. Speech is at once an operation of the intelligence and a motor phenomenon."

It is not entirely surprising to discover Pannenberg's preference for history over word affirmed within liberal (or ethical) Protestantism, represented here by F. Gerald Downing. Downing contends on biblical grounds that the category of revelation is subservient to that of salvation, that it was largely unknown to the biblical authors because it implies a full and complete personal disclosure which *ex hypothesi* we cannot expect of God, and that the term is fraught with ambiguity because its primary modern usage is epistemological rather than religious (i.e. it served as the warrant for theological

argumentation against those who thought such a possibility simply incoherent, rather than serving for actual saving encounters with God). Therefore, says Downing, the only "revelation" of interest to the Christian community is what will come at the end. What the biblical tradition has instead of present revelation is salvation, a form of "commitment [which] is essentially love in response to... the 'myth' of the prior love of 'real God in Christ'". What counts here is not the historical verifiability of the myth but rather the agapic quality of the obedient commitment which flows from it.

The notions of revelation within liberation theologies resist easy systematization, at least in part because liberationists are not much concerned either with denominational borders or traditional methodologies. Generally they fall within this same ethical or praxis-oriented construct. Central to all is the insight that Christ's death revealed God precisely as victim. Hence God's word reaches us today as a summons to participate in the struggle to liberate today's victims. Gustavo Gutiérrez says: "History is the scene of the revelation God makes of the mystery of his person. His word reaches us in the measure of our involvement in the evolution of history."

For Karl Rahner, revelation is the self-disclosure of God, not in an extrinsic (and especially propositional) sense, but instead as the loving and hence radically personal mystery presupposed by the existence of material beings capable of loving self-transcendence (i.e. human beings). Transcendentally considered, revelation is the dynamic ground of the coming-into-being of humans, in that humanity constitutes the "other" which God lovingly posited as the ultimate possibility of the acceptance of self-transcending divine love. Historically considered, revelation centres in Jesus of Nazareth, in that he was the obedient and receptive person by whom God's love (ultimately inseparable from God's self) was accepted and thus became most fully evident within the conditions of history. Far from being a mere communication of propositional information from heaven to earth, an encounter between persons of merely different ontological value, divine revelation is seen by Rahner as the condition absolutely presupposed by the ex-

istence of humanity. And since humanity does exist precisely as material reality capable of spirit, i.e. the dynamic exchange of self-transcending love (one notes the difference between this and Downing's agapic or uni-directional love), then the divine self-communication must be its ground both in particular and in general. Jesus Christ is at once the real God as communicated, the fully human acceptance of this communication, and the historically definitive manifestation of this offer and its acceptance.

Because (still according to Rahner) there is no *human* being who is not essentially constituted by the dynamic love of God, divine revelation is universal in scope (see **universalism**). What were traditionally considered its outer limits are better thought of as demarcating the boundary between explicit and implicit reception of God's self-communication. This position better accounts both for the universality of the notions of faithfulness and sin, and for the presence of genuine truth among the various world religions and philosophies. Apart from some such expression of universality within revelation theories, it is impossible to say with precision either how sin is against God, or how truth can exist within non-biblical religions.

Rahner's transcendental method has been criticized as overly psychological, hence insufficiently relational or communal. This weakness may be met by further clarifying his notion of spirit as the fundamental locus of dynamic self-transcendence. The activities of spirit may be specified as knowing, loving and hoping. Each of these shows the human person in self-transcendence, historically and incrementally progressing beyond ignorance, autonomy and anxiety. Each is grounded within the dynamic category of goodness, which functions as a power beckoning the human spirit from ignorance to knowledge, from autonomy to love and from anxiety to hope. Furthermore, each is communal, necessarily relating the spiritual subject with other such subjects in the common pursuit of their goals. Finally, especially in view of the latter, these activities are collectively grounded within the Triune God: Father as mysterious ground of knowing, Son as object of the Father's love and hence the prototype of human love, and Spirit as creative appropriation of this love, and thus

the possibility of dynamic intentionality and progress (see **Trinity**).

This account of divine revelation overcomes two characteristic weaknesses within many traditional ones: (1) the uncritical presumption of the meanings of "God" and "human beings" in theories which intended to relate them, and (2) the seclusion of divine revelation within the biblical religions. But it does not fail to address their intentions, especially those relating to the possibility of a relationship between God and humans, on the one hand, and the gracious (i.e. inescapably responsible and ultimately good) character of that relationship and consequent possibility of sin, on the other.

Revelation did not often figure explicitly as a principal theme in ecumenical discussions during the last decades of 20th century. An exception is the "statement on revelation and faith" which the Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue\* published as its 1996 report under the title *The Word of Life*. The joint commission sought "commonly acceptable ways of expounding the historical self-disclosure and indeed self-gift of the Triune God, focused in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh and brought home to successive generations of believers by the Holy Spirit, released in power at Pentecost" and "a common account of how men, women and children, opened to the gracious presence of God, are enabled to commit themselves, body and soul, heart and mind and will, to their Maker and Redeemer and, in communion with him, become renewed in the divine image, in the holiness and happiness which is God's intention for humankind". With 1 John 1:1-3, the statement "starts from the particularity of the God of Israel's self-revelation in Christ: the divine Word, who was in the beginning with God and has led the history of the chosen people, has been made flesh in Jesus. That sheer self-gift of God is a word of life to humankind... In Christ, in his words, his deeds, his entire existence, God has been revealed in audible, visible, palpable form; God has been received by human ears, eyes and hands. What the first believers have taken in, they then bear witness to and transmit, for the message spreads the offer of a life shared with God. The modes of the announcement will appropriately reflect, echo and hand on what was seen, heard and

touched in the embodied manifestation of God in Jesus Christ. Accepted in faith, the words, signs and actions of the gospel will become the means of communion with the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The divine life into which the Spirit introduces believers will be a common life, as each transmits and receives what is always the gift of God.” This ecclesial text brings together much, through by no means all, of what had been achieved in theological reconstruction of the topic in the 20th century.

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**REVOLUTION**

THE VARIOUS meanings of “revolution” include the idea of radical change, the overthrow of an old order and the introduction of a new. Usually it means abrupt, self-conscious change, although occasionally historians will discover, in retrospect, a “silent revolution” that took place over a period of time. A revolution is not necessarily violent, but most of the famous revolutions of history have been violent, either because revolutionaries attacked an old order or because the old order sought violently to repress the new movement.

Traditionally the term, used in both astronomy and human history, referred to the

restoration of an order\* that had been disturbed. Just as the heavens made their apparent annual revolution around the earth, human history moved to restore a given order. In ancient China, for example, when evil rulers violated “the mandate of heaven”, a revolutionary movement was justified in overthrowing the past regime and re-establishing an order that could again claim the mandate.

In societies influenced by the Bible, revolution often aimed to introduce a genuinely new era. The God of scriptures was capable of doing “a new thing” (Isa. 43:19). That belief had many expressions. In the late middle ages and Renaissance, it took on a broad historical meaning. The Franciscan monk Joachim of Fiore (c.1135-1202) developed the doctrine of the three ages (of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and contributed to a vivid expectation of the future. The Enlightenment secularized the theme. The 17th-20th centuries saw the English, American, French, Soviet and Chinese revolutions, along with many revolutions against colonial powers. Fascists and Nazis claimed to be revolutionary, partly to avoid the stigma that went with identification as “counter-revolutionary”.

The earliest modern revolutions were avowedly political, although economic factors were important, too. In Marxist revolutions the primary emphasis was economics, but politics, although theoretically subordinated to economics, played a major part. The vocabulary of revolution extended to art, architecture, and much of cultural life – but it remained for Mao Zedong to popularize the term “cultural revolution” in a total sense.

**THEOLOGY AND REVOLUTION**

Historically, religion\* often functions to legitimize existing structures of power,\* for most rulers have claimed some kind of divine right or sanction for their authority.\* All who object are then put in the position of resisting divine order. A priest-king can combine religious and military power against foes domestic or foreign. When offices of king and priest are separate, the two may work out a partnership convenient to both.

A religion and its followers may criticize the existing order in the name of a transcendent God\* who judges all human systems. In the biblical record Moses confronted Pharaoh, demanding freedom for a people.

Later, Nathan challenged David, Elijah challenged Ahab. In a classic confrontation the priest Amaziah tried to stifle the prophet Amos, telling him to leave Bethel, which was “the king’s sanctuary” (Amos 7:13), but Amos refused to be silenced (vv.14-17). These cases are not quite revolutions, because old orders persisted, but the revolutionary impulse is clear.

Three contemporary theological meanings of revolution may be distinguished: (1) *metanoia*, the New Testament term usually translated “repentance”, has been described by theologian H. Richard Niebuhr as “permanent revolution”, the ceaseless transformation of faith and ethics; (2) in the NT the Magnificat\* testifies that God puts down the mighty from their thrones and exalts those of low degree; the beatitudes of Jesus portray the kingdom of God\* as a revolutionary reversal of existing society, bringing blessing to the poor,\* the meek, the persecuted; (3) “revolution” most commonly means an organized political movement overthrowing an oppressive government.

Theology almost universally recognizes the kingdom of God as a radical transformation of historical societies. In much of Christian history, however, that kingdom has been located in an other-worldly heaven or at the end of history, where it has little meaning for present political and economic life. Thus Christendom could be understood as a divinely ordained social order (often with reference to Rom. 13) – certainly imperfect, but God’s will for a sinful world.

However, protests were possible. John of Salisbury in the 12th century and Thomas Aquinas in the 13th recognized a carefully qualified right of tyrannicide in extreme cases. John Wycliffe (d.1384) and Jan Hus (d.1415) joined biblical fervour and the cry for social change.

Karl Mannheim in *Ideology and Utopia* saw a decisive turning point in modern history at the point when the expectation of the imminent kingdom of God “joined forces with the active demands of the oppressed strata of society”. Thomas Münzer (d.1525) identified NT eschatology\* with social revolution, earning the enmity of political rulers and Roman Catholic and Protestant church leaders. Martin Luther, who had earlier called on the princes to recognize the just de-

mands of the peasants, responded in furious anger to Münzer’s revolutionary theology.

Yet Luther late in his career called on the princes to resist the emperor, “even though it mean a revolution”. Calvinists and Puritans (including Theodore Beza, John Milton and others) more frequently justified revolutionary acts against kings. Many modern revolutions have invoked some religious or theological vindication. The American Declaration of Independence (1776) appealed to “the laws of nature and of nature’s God”. But all these examples diverge from Münzer’s identification of eschatology and revolution.

### THE CONTEMPORARY SITUATION

Social revolution has become a frequent, if controversial, theme in ecumenical theology. On a world scale, Christians have supported many revolutions of peoples seeking self-government and independence from colonial powers (see **colonialism, decolonization**). Ironically, the prior colonization had often claimed Christian sanction; in some revolutionary conflicts (most conspicuously in South Africa), both sides have given theological justifications, although the world church has resolutely opposed apartheid.\*

In the anti-colonial revolutions of the 20th century, the chief actors have been people of many faiths. Some have been Christians, specifically guided by theological concerns. For example, T.B. Simatupang, a hero of the Indonesian struggle for independence and later a president of the WCC, acknowledged the influence of Reinhold Niebuhr in his own participation in the revolution (*ER*, 1985). Niebuhr, who worked out his theology of conflict primarily in relation to the Nazi threat, characteristically found justification for coercion in a sinful world, both to maintain government against anarchy and to resist tyranny. The break-up of the old imperial systems has not always brought freedom.\* People have continued to struggle against oppression by national despots and by foreign powers (nations and business corporations) that maintain economic dominance, often called neo-colonialism.

In the 1960s revolution broke into ecumenical discussion on a new scale. In 1966 the WCC called a conference in Geneva on

the theme “Christians in the Technical and Social Revolutions of Our Time”. The addresses and discussions showed a wide recognition of a revolutionary spirit in the Bible and a revolutionary ferment in the contemporary world. Some speakers called for a “revolutionary theology”. There was recognition of vast injustice in the world and the need for some kind of social revolution. The report of section 2, “The Nature and Function of the State in a Revolutionary Age”, urged non-violent methods of change but raised the question “whether the violence which sheds blood in planned revolutions may not be a lesser evil than the violence which, though bloodless, condemns whole populations to perennial despair”.

In 1965, Vatican II\* produced its pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (The Church in the Modern World), with its attention to large-scale social injustices. In 1967 Pope Paul VI, building on Vatican II and prior papal teachings (esp. of Leo XIII, Pius XI and John XXIII), issued his encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (On the Development of Peoples). It pointed to grave social ills, including the economic bondage of some newly independent nations. The pope advocated “a new humanism”, with property rights subordinated to justice\* for all peoples, freedom from imposed servitude, land re-distribution, international debt relief and international re-distribution of wealth. While warning against illusory messianism and “totalitarian ideologies”, he said: “A revolutionary uprising – save where there is manifest, long-standing tyranny which would do great damage to fundamental personal rights and dangerous harm to the common good of the country – produces new injustices, throws more elements out of balance and brings on new disasters” (para. 31). That statement was noteworthy, both for the warnings against revolution and for the exception that justified revolution.

In 1967 some 16 bishops of the third world (from Latin America, Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Oceania) issued the statement “Gospel and Revolution”. They affirmed that revolutions are part of history, not always good, but sometimes necessary and productive of good fruits. Christians, they said, “should know how to recognize the hand of the Almighty in those events that

from time to time put down the mighty from their thrones and raise up the humble, send away the rich empty-handed, and fill the hungry with good things” (para. 12).

In 1968 the fourth assembly of the WCC (Uppsala), receiving the report of the Geneva conference of 1966, authorized re-structuring of some programmes. Coincidentally, 1968 was the year of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr – a reminder that revolutionary activity, even when committed to non-violent methods, may meet violence. The next year the WCC launched the Programme to Combat Racism,\* one that led to controversies when it made grants for non-violent educational activities to organizations that in other activities might resort to violence (or counter-violence against existing violence).

In 1968 the Latin American bishops conference (CELAM) at its historic second meeting in Medellin, Colombia, issued landmark statements on justice and peace.\* It held that both liberal capitalism and the Marxist system “militate against the dignity of the human person”. It called for political and economic reforms, with liberation from neo-colonialism. Affirming that justice is a prerequisite for peace, it strongly urged non-violent change but pointed out the reality of “institutionalized violence” in existing systems.

The next decade saw an outpouring of “theologies of liberation”, including Latin American (both Roman Catholic and Protestant), feminist and black theologies. Although these include great variety in detail, all can be called revolutionary in the broad sense of the term.

The story is far from finished. The non-violent protests of Chinese students, crushed by government troops in 1989, evoked expressions of support in Chinese churches. The people’s movements of Eastern Europe in 1989-90, predominantly non-violent, marked revolutionary protests against purportedly revolutionary, entrenched governments. The break-up of the Soviet Union might be seen as several revolutions against a system that itself came out of revolution. The Middle East is filled with potential revolutions, some against traditional feudal absolutisms re-inforced by modern technology, others against modern governments them-

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selves the products of revolutions. All signs are that the age of revolution is not ended.

### ECUMENICAL THEOLOGICAL-ETHICAL ISSUES

The theological appraisal of revolution is complex because conflicting values are involved. The biblical tradition recognizes that some kind of government and order are essential to social life and well-being but does not sanctify every system of authority. The records of the exodus and the crucifixion are testimonies that governments can do criminal acts. Cries for justice often demand radical social change, but not every discontent with government is an occasion of revolution.

The first theological-ethical issue raised in most discussions is usually violence (see **violence and non-violence**). All Christians indeed can be reluctant to engage in violence. But the objection to violence involves, in many cases, a pseudo-argument. Since most people, including most Christians, justify violence on at least some occasions, even though with regret and restraint, the special rejection of revolutionary violence requires explanation. In situations of radical injustice, enforced by violence, it is hard to refute the argument that revolutionary violence is more justifiable than the institutional or systematic violence it opposes. The Russian Orthodox theologian Nicholas Berdyaev maintained that class war is an "irrefutable fact", that the greater violence is exercised by the privileged, that war may sometimes be "a good" – even though the church should seek to "spiritualize" the struggle.

But other theological-ethical issues remain. *Is revolution, in intention and action, truly aimed at justice?* Some revolutions, like most coups d'état, are simply grabs for power. They substitute one oppressor for another. The proverbial statement about revolutions devouring their own children deserves close attention. Even well-intentioned revolutionaries may, in the exercise of power and the fanaticism of struggle, betray their aims and become tyrants.

*Does the revolution maximize the possibilities of non-violent action and restrain violence as far as possible?* Just as the classic doctrine of just war\* imposes restraints on violence, a doctrine of "just revolution" must do the same. In the heat of conflict,

these restraints are often forgotten, but they remain ethical responsibilities. Guerrilla warfare, one characteristic form of revolutionary war, has special temptations. Juan Luis Segundo has pointed out that such war is especially destructive of what he calls the social ecology.

*How does ideology\* impinge on theology?* In every social order, the privileged are likely to value the existing order and magnify the perils of change. The oppressed are likely to depreciate the order and magnify the benefits of change. Thus ideology influences theology and ethics. The Bible often says that the poor and humble are more likely to recognize reality than the rich and haughty. That perspective is a help in correcting ideological bias. It does not of itself tell us that every proposed overthrow of the social order is good.

*How does the revolutionary relate eschatology and ethics?* Thomas Münzer, as noted above, virtually merged revolutionary ardour with apocalyptic expectations. Most contemporary Christians agree with CELAM's Medellín document that temporal progress and the kingdom of Christ are not the same. But they may also agree that the kingdom of Christ requires action for justice in the temporal sphere. Christians are called simultaneously to distinguish between their ultimate loyalty to God and their immediate political causes, yet to keep a lively dialogue between the two.

Only an idolatry of the status quo can discourage all revolution. Yet revolution can itself become an idol. The distinction between God and idols is a constant issue for the ecumenical church throughout its history and into the foreseeable future.

See also **totalitarianism**.

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## ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

WHERE ONE begins the history of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) is itself a matter of theological judgment, fraught with serious ecumenical implications. Is Roman Catholicism (RC) a post-Reformation phenomenon, or is it the original form of the church?\* Is "early Catholicism" to be found already in the New Testament, or is it an entirely post-biblical development? Catholic scholars, even very liberal ones such as Hans Küng, insist that Catholicism is present from the beginning, that the history of the RCC has its starting point within the NT rather than in the post-Reformation period.

If, indeed, one holds that RC is not simply a denomination within Christianity but its original expression, how does one deal with the historical fact that the earliest community of disciples gathered in Jerusalem, not in Rome? Indeed, the see, or diocese, of Rome did not even exist at the very beginning, nor did the Roman primacy.\*

For many Catholics, the adjective "Roman" tends to obscure rather than define the reality of Catholicism. For them, the history of the Catholic church begins with Jesus' gathering of his disciples and with the eventual post-resurrection commissioning of Peter to be the chief shepherd and foundation of the church. Accordingly, it is not the *Roman* primacy that gives Catholicism its distinctive identity within the family of Christian churches but the *Petrine* primacy.

## HISTORY

For the Catholic tradition, the classic primacy texts are Matt. 16:13-19, Luke 22:31-32 and John 21:15-19. Given their symbolism, the conferral of the power of the keys on Peter suggests an imposing measure of authority.\* Yet this authority was not to be exercised in any absolute way, since from the beginning Peter is presented as consulting with the other apostles (see *apostolicity*) and even being sent by them (Acts 8:14), and he and John act almost as a team (Acts 3:1-11, 4:1-22, 8:14). Nevertheless, the biblical im-

ages concerning Peter (fisherman, shepherd, elder, proclaimer of faith in Jesus, rock) continued in the life of the church and were enriched by additional ones: missionary preacher, great visionary, destroyer of heretics, receiver of the new law, gatekeeper of heaven, helmsman of the ship of the church, co-teacher and co-martyr with Paul.

According to tradition Peter was martyred and buried in Rome, the centre of the empire and eventually the centre of the RCC. During the first five centuries the church of Rome gradually assumed pre-eminence among all the churches. It intervened in the life of distant churches, took sides in theological controversies, offered counsel to other bishops on doctrinal and pastoral questions and sent delegates to distant councils. The see of Rome came to be regarded as a kind of final court of appeal, as well as a focus of unity\* for the worldwide ("ecumenical") communion\* of churches. The correlation between Peter and the bishop of Rome became fully explicit during the pontificate of Leo I (440-61), who claimed that Peter continued to speak to the whole church through the bishop of Rome.

In the view of some other Christian communities, the RCC has its origin in the Edict of Milan (in 312, also known as the Edict of Constantine), whereby the church, now free from persecution, came to enjoy the status of an imperially protected and favoured religion. Thus we have the term "Constantinian Catholicism".

By the beginning of the 5th century, German tribes began migrating through Europe without effective control. This movement, somewhat inaccurately called the barbarian invasions, lasted some 600 years. It changed the institutional character of Roman Catholicism from a largely Graeco-Roman religion to a broader European religion. The influence of Germanic culture on Catholicism was especially pronounced in the areas of devotion, spirituality and organizational structure. Church office became more political than pastoral, and imagery for Christ, the church and its leaders became increasingly militaristic.

When, at the beginning of the 8th century, the Eastern emperor proved incapable of aiding the papacy against the Lombards in northern Italy, the pope turned for help to

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the Franks. This new alliance led to the creation of the holy Roman empire, which began dramatically in 800 with the crowning of Charlemagne. The line between church and state,\* already blurred by the Edict of Milan, was now practically erased.

With the collapse of the Carolingian empire, however, the papacy fell into the hands of a corrupt Italian nobility. Only with the reformist pontificate of Gregory VII (1073-85) was the papacy's reputation restored. Papal prestige was even more firmly enhanced during the pontificate of Innocent III (1198-1216), who fully exploited the Gregorian teaching that the pope has supreme, even absolute, power over the whole church.

By the middle of the 13th century the classic papal-hierarchical concept of the church had been securely established, and the pope's power was said to embrace both church and state alike (the so-called two-swords theory). Newly elected popes were crowned like emperors, a practice that endured until suddenly discontinued by Pope John Paul I in 1978. Emphasis on the juridical, over against the communal, aspects of the church did not significantly subside, however, until the Second Vatican Council (1962-65).

The historical bond between the church of Rome and the church of Constantinople came apart through a series of gravely unfortunate and exceedingly complex political and diplomatic manoeuvres, starting with the excommunication\* of Michael Cerularius, patriarch of Constantinople in 1054, and culminating in the fourth crusade (1202-1204) and the sack of Constantinople by Western knights. Two attempts at bringing the two sides back together – at the councils of Lyons in 1274 and of Florence in 1439 – did not have lasting results. Indeed, the climate began to change for the better only with the election of Pope John XXIII in 1958, with the Second Vatican Council\* and then with the historic pilgrimage of Pope Paul VI in 1964 to meet Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras in Jerusalem,\* the mother church of all churches.

By the beginning of the 14th century, other events had introduced a period of further disintegration of unity, reaching a tragic climax in the Protestant Reformation\* of the 16th century (see **Protestantism**). The con-

frontation between Boniface VIII and Philip the Fair over the latter's power to tax the church opened a wide breach between the papacy and the imperial authority. Then there were the scandalous financial abuses during the subsequent Babylonian Captivity of the papacy at Avignon, France (1309-78). There followed a rise in nationalism and anti-clericalism in reaction to papal taxes, and then papal authority itself came to be challenged on theological grounds by Marsilius of Padua and others. Conciliarism rose as a challenge to the prevailing monarchical concept of the church.

The Western schism\* of 1378-1417 (not to be confused with the more serious and more enduring East-West schism between Rome and Constantinople) produced at one point three different claimants to the papal throne. The council of Constance (1414) turned to the new principle of conciliarism to end the schism, by asserting that a general council, not the pope, is the highest ecclesiastical authority. One claimant was deposed, a second resigned, and a third eventually died. Martin V was elected on St Martin's Day, 11 November 1417.

There were other, more immediate causes of the Reformation of the 16th century: the corruption of the Renaissance papacy of the 15th century, the divorce of piety from theology and of theology from its biblical and patristic roots, the negative effects of the Western schism and the rise of the national state – not to mention the powerful personalities of Luther, Calvin and Zwingli. The Reformation itself took different forms, so different that one should perhaps speak more precisely of reformations in the plural. The reformers of the right (Lutherans and Anglicans) retained essential Catholic doctrine but changed certain canonical and structural forms. The reformers of the left (followers of Zwingli and the Anabaptists) repudiated much of Catholic doctrine and sacramental life. The reformers nearer to the centre (Calvinists) modified both Catholic doctrine and practice but retained much of the old.

The Roman Catholic response, belated but vigorous, was given at the council of Trent\* (1545-63), which was itself part of a broader movement known as the Counter-Reformation, conducted principally under

the leadership of Pope Paul III (1534-49). The council proved to be the single most important event in the history of the RCC during the four centuries between the Reformation and the Second Vatican Council. By and large, the post-Tridentine RCC emphasized the doctrines, devotions and institutions that were most directly attacked by the Protestants: veneration of the saints,\* Marian piety, eucharistic adoration, the authority of the pope and the bishops (see **episcopacy**) and the essential role of ordained priests in the sacramental life of the church (see **priesthood, sacraments**). Other important elements tended to be downplayed precisely because of their favourable emphasis by the Protestants: the centrality of Christ in theology and spirituality; the communal participatory nature of the eucharist\* (“priesthood of all believers”) and the responsibility of the laity\* in the life and mission\* of the church.

Because of the Reformation, Catholic missionary activity was reduced in those countries where Protestantism began to flourish, but Catholicism was carried abroad by Spain and Portugal, who ruled the seas and who sought new gains for the church to offset losses throughout Europe. Religious orders such as the Dominicans, Franciscans and Jesuits were instrumental in bringing the Roman Catholic faith to India, China, Japan, Africa and the Americas. The Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith was established in 1622 to supervise all of these new missionary undertakings.

By the beginning of the 17th century, the church faced another crisis from within. Jansenism, an Augustinian-inspired movement in France that emphasized the corruption of human nature, generated a new form of Catholic life that was excessively rigorous, even puritanical. When Rome moved against Jansenism, many in France saw Rome’s action as a threat to the independence of French Catholicism. Gallicanism, by which this nationalistic reaction was to be known, held that all papal decrees are subject to the consent of the entire church, as represented in a general council. This view was later condemned by the First Vatican Council (1869-70), which declared, against Gallicanism, that the infallible teachings of the pope are irreformable, that is, not subject to the subsequent consent and approval

of any other ecclesiastical body or authority, including a national church.

In the 18th century the Enlightenment offered the next challenge to the RCC. Exalting reason at the expense of authority and the natural at the expense of the supernatural, the Enlightenment touched RC primarily in the Catholic states of Germany, stimulating advances in historical and exegetical methods (see **exegesis, methods of**) and catechetical reform and promoting popular education for clergy and laity alike. Although the Enlightenment did not influence Catholicism (so much of which flourished in southern Europe) as early or as profoundly as it did Protestantism, it did mark the beginning of the end of an unhistorical, classicist Roman Catholic theology.

The French revolution (1789) had a much more immediate and decisive impact on the RCC, bringing about the definitive end of medieval Catholicism. The feudal, hierarchical society of the middle ages was simply swept away. And so was Gallicanism, as the Enlightenment uprooted the clerical system upon which it had been based.

In France and Germany the Enlightenment produced a counter-reaction in the form of Romanticism, a movement that extolled RC as the mother of art and the guardian of patriotism. Thousands of European intellectuals returned to the church with new enthusiasm. With few exceptions (Cardinal Newman’s work being a shining one), RC theology at this time was restorative rather than progressive – restorative not of the biblical and patristic witnesses but of a scholasticism of a generally decadent kind. A rigid traditionalism arose in France, the forerunner of the post-Vatican II movement led by the excommunicated Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre. The practitioners and partisans of traditionalist theology were said to look “beyond the mountains” (the Alps) to Rome for papal direction and support, hence the name “Ultramontanism”. The popes of these decades, Gregory XVI and Pius IX, were entirely sympathetic with this new reactionary trend, and nowhere was this papal defiance of modern developments more sharply stated than in the latter pope’s *Syllabus of Errors* (1864).

The 19th century also witnessed the rapid development of industrialism and of

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concomitant social problems. Marxism provided one answer to the new challenge, taking advantage of the growing alienation of the workers not only from the fruits of their labour but also from their RC heritage. The church's response, however belated, came in an encyclical\* letter of Pope Leo XIII in 1891, *Rerum Novarum*, which defended the rights of workers to unionize, to receive a just wage and to work under humane conditions (see **encyclicals**, **social**).

By the first years of the 20th century, the RCC faced yet another major problem. A new ecclesiastical movement known as modernism proposed that dogmatic truths (see **dogma**), as well as truths contained in the Bible, are neither absolute nor unchanging but are affected and shaped by historical conditions and circumstances. Pius XI condemned modernism in 1907, an action that profoundly affected Catholic biblical and theological scholarship until just before the Second Vatican Council. The anti-modernist spirit in the RCC intimidated particularly seminary faculties, but not even bishops were immune from unsympathetic scrutiny. Some of the positions that had once been denounced as modernist, however, were later embodied in the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and even in certain decrees of the Roman curia\* as they touched upon such controverted topics as the historical truth of sacred scripture and the development of dogma.

The period between the two world wars was especially important for RC, if only because many of the developments occurring then were to find fruition at Vatican II: the liturgical movement,\* the biblical movement, the social action movement, the lay apostolate movement, the missionary movement and, finally, the ecumenical movement. The last, however, had the most difficult path to follow, given the negative tone of Pope Pius XI's encyclical *Mortalium Animos* (1928) and assorted curial directives against any kind of participation by Catholics in ecumenical conferences. But even against this official resistance, pioneering Catholic theologians were ecumenically alive, such as, for example, Yves Congar (see **RCC and pre-Vatican II ecumenism**).

No other person or event more profoundly affected modern RC, however, than

Pope John XXIII (pope 1958-63) and the Second Vatican Council that he conceived and called. His first major encyclical was devoted to the problem of unity, *Ad Petri Cathedram* (1959), in which he greeted non-Catholics as "separated brethren", and his last, *Pacem in Terris* (April 1963), addressed "to all people of good will", advocated human dignity and freedom as a basis for a world order of peace and justice.

The Second Vatican Council taught, in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church and the Decree on Ecumenism,\* that the church is the whole people of God\* and that it includes non-Catholic Christians as well as Catholics, all united by a common baptism\* and a common faith in Jesus Christ and his gospel. Christian unity requires on the part of all sides renewal and reform, both institutional and spiritual. Indeed, the disintegration of Christian unity was a tragedy for which all involved parties must accept blame.

The Council's landmark Declaration on Religious Freedom declared that no one is to be forced in any way to embrace the Christian or the Catholic faith (see **religious liberty**), and the Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to non-Christian Religions insisted that God speaks and works also through other religions. The church, therefore, should engage in dialogue and other collaborative efforts with them (see **dialogue**, **interfaith**). The Jews, finally, have a special relationship to the church, one that should not be soured by the false belief that the Jewish people bear blame for the death of Jesus (see **antisemitism**).

Vatican II adjourned in December 1965. The history of the RCC since the Council – through the pontificates of Paul VI (1963-78), John Paul I (1978) and John Paul II (1978-) – has been a story of the church's efforts to come to terms with the various challenges, opportunities and crises that the Council generated, directly or indirectly. The principal challenge remains the same as it has always been: How can the church be faithful to its historic identity and mission and at the same time adapt itself to each new social, political and cultural milieu?

At the end of the second millennium, the RCC numbered 1045 million persons, or 17% of the world's population (*Annuario Pontificio* 2000). Of these millions, 11.4%

were in Africa, 10.5% in Asia, 27.8% in Europe, 49.5% in North and South America and 0.8% in Oceania.

### THEOLOGY, DOCTRINE AND SPIRITUALITY

As the name “catholic” itself suggests, the RCC is characterized in principle by a radical openness to all truth and to every authentic value (see **catholicity**). It is comprehensive and all-embracing. It is not linked with any one culture, nation or region. It is as African as it is European, as Slavic as it is Latin, as Mexican as it is Irish, as Indian as it is Polish.

Every list of “Catholic fathers” or “Catholic mothers” includes the great theological and spiritual writers of the period before, as well as after, the division of East and West and then the divisions within the West. Irenaeus and Gregory of Nyssa are as much Catholic fathers as are Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. Catholics continue to read Ignatius of Antioch and Clement of Alexandria, Athanasius and Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory of Nazianzus and Augustine, Anselm of Canterbury and Bernard of Clairvaux, Abelard and Hugh of St Victor, Aquinas and Bonaventure, Robert Bellarmine and John Henry Newman, Karl Rahner and Hans Urs von Balthasar.

The RCC is open to *The Cloud of Unknowing* and the *Introduction to the Devout Life*, to the way of Francis of Assisi and of Bernard of Clairvaux, to Ignatius Loyola and John of the Cross, to Abbot Marmion and Thomas Merton. Catholics are guided as much by the council of Nicea\* as by Vatican I, as much by Chalcedon\* as by Lateran IV, as much by Trent as by Vatican II. They read Gregory the Great as well as Paul VI, Clement of Rome as well as Leo XIII, Pius XII as well as John XXIII.

The RCC is characterized by a both/and rather than an either/or approach. For the Roman Catholic tradition, it is not nature\* or grace\* but graced nature; not reason or faith\* but reason illumined by faith; not law\* or gospel but law inspired by the gospel; not scripture\* or Tradition\* but scripture as both the product and norm of Tradition; not faith or works but faith issuing in works and works as an expression of faith; not authority or freedom but authority in the service of freedom; not unity or diver-

sity but unity in diversity. Holding this tradition together in creative theological tension are three central Roman Catholic principles: sacramentality, mediation and communion.

**Sacramentality.** In its classic (Augustinian) meaning, a sacrament is a visible sign of an invisible grace. Pope Paul VI provided a more contemporary definition: “a reality imbued with the hidden presence of God”. A sacramental perspective is one that sees the divine in the human, the infinite in the finite, the spiritual in the material, the transcendent in the immanent, the eternal in the historical. God is present to people, communities, movements, events, places, objects, the world at large, the whole cosmos. The visible, the tangible, the finite, the historical – all these realms are actual or potential carriers of the divine presence. Indeed, for the Roman Catholic it is only in and through these material realities that God can even be encountered. The great sacrament of encounter with God is Jesus Christ,\* and the church is the sacrament of encounter with Christ.

For the Roman Catholic the world is essentially good, though fallen, because it comes from the creative hand of God (see **creation**), and it continues to be sustained by God’s providential presence (see **providence**). The world, though fallen, is redeemable because of the redemptive work of God in Jesus Christ (see **redemption**). The world, though fractured and fragmented, is capable of ultimate unity because of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit.\*

Over against this sacramental vision is the view, strengthened by memories of past excesses, that God is so “totally other” that the divine reality can never be identified with the human, the transcendent with the immanent, the eternal with the historical. The abiding Protestant fear is that Catholics take the sacramental principle to the point where they are just short of, if not actually immersed in, idolatry.

**Mediation.** A kind of corollary of the principle of sacramentality is the principle of mediation. A sacrament not only signifies but also causes what it signifies. For the Catholic, God is not only present in the sacramental action, as an object of faith, but actually achieves something in and through

that action (*ex opere operato*, the council of Trent taught). Thus, created realities not only embody the presence of God, they make that presence effective for others. The encounter with God is a mediated encounter.

Catholicism's commitment to the principle of mediation is evident, for example, in the importance it has always placed on the ministry of the ordained priest and on the intercessory role of the saints, especially of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Again, the Protestant raises a word of caution. Just as the principle of sacramentality edges close to the brink of idolatry, so the principle of mediation moves one along the path towards magic.

*Communion.* Finally, the RCC affirms the principle of communion: our way to God, and God's way to us, is not only a mediated but a communal way. The encounter with God is a communal encounter. For the Christian, it is an ecclesial encounter. The word is proclaimed by the church, and we respond within the church.

For this reason the mystery of the church has always had a significant place in RC theology, doctrine, pastoral practice, moral vision and devotional life. The church is the sacrament of Christ, mediating saving grace through sacraments and various ministries. It is the people of God and the Body of Christ, an integral part of the communion of saints. Indeed, it is here, at the point of RC's understanding of itself as church, that one comes to the heart of the distinctively RC understanding and practice of Christian faith. For in ecclesiology we find the convergence of sacramentality, mediation and communion, which have always been so characteristic of the RCC.

The Protestant again raises a word of caution. If we emphasize too much the principle of communion, we run the risk of endangering the freedom of the individual. If sacramentality can lead to idolatry, and mediation to magic, the principle of communion can lead to a collectivism that suppresses individuality and an authoritarianism that suppresses freedom of thought.

The ecumenical encounter addresses all such concerns. Only through dialogue based on mutual respect can each tradition, including the Roman Catholic, come to know itself better, purify itself of imperfections and

distortions, and contribute finally to the fullness of unity for which Jesus prayed.

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## ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND PRE-VATICAN II ECUMENISM

THE ORGANIZERS of the 1910 Edinburgh world missionary conference\* intentionally did not invite Roman Catholics or Eastern Orthodox. But in 1914 the commission of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA, which was initiating efforts to bring about a conference on faith and order questions for "all Christian communions throughout the world which confess our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour", invited the holy see of Rome to participate (November 1914). Within seven weeks Cardinal Gasparri, the secretary of state to Benedict XV (pope 1914-22), vaguely answered with neither an acceptance nor a rejection. The door may have been opened, but the first world war (1914-18) discouraged further probes.

In May 1917 Benedict XV promulgated the Code of Canon Law, containing 2414 canon laws, which took effect in 1918. Canon 1325 forbade "Catholics from holding disputations or meetings, especially public ones, with non-Catholics, except with permission of the apostolic see or in urgent cases, with the local ordinary". Nevertheless, in renewed efforts to enlist participants in the proposed world conference on faith and order, the US Episcopal deputation met Benedict XV in the Vatican in May 1919.

His prepared written response was an unambiguous no.

Because of the RC understanding of “the unity of the visible church of Christ”, the RCC could not take part in such a congress. The pope promised his prayers that “if the congress is practicable, the participants may, by God’s grace, see the light and become reunited to the visible head of the church, by whom they would be received with open arms”. In 1921 Benedict XV declined also an invitation to send RC participants to the first conference on Life and Work (Stockholm 1925).

Shortly after the first Faith and Order conference (Lausanne 1927), Pius XI (pope 1922-39) promulgated *Mortalium Animos*, the encyclical\* on “fostering the religious union”. By “participation in assemblies of non-Catholics”, both the RCs and others would easily have confirmed that one religion/church is as good as another, that ecumenical gatherings were negotiations of revealed truths through compromise and that the RCC would be tacitly accepting some of the Protestant ecclesiologies of the day. The very foundations of the Catholic faith would be “subverted by the desire of other Christians to treat the Catholic church as one among many churches”. Therefore, if Catholics were allowed to encourage such gatherings, “they would be countenancing a false Christian religion quite alien to the one true church of Christ”. The pope concluded: “There is only one way in which the unity of Christians may be fostered, and that is by promoting the return to the one true church of Christ of those who are separated from it; for from that one true church they have in the past unhappily fallen away.”

RC ecclesiology and pastoral solicitude that any ecumenical efforts may be misunderstood by Catholics and other Christians thus determined the church’s non-involvement. Ever since Leo XIII (pope 1878-1903) the RCC was earnestly seeking the reunion of all Christians, especially with the Eastern churches. But that reunion was one-way – return to Rome, the only home. The RCC believed that it was co-extensive with the one church of Christ. For its members to mix with others who were not clear on what the ecumenical movement is, or where it should move, would compromise witness to

this belief. The basis of the fledgling movement should be more credal by incorporating RC ecclesiology before Catholics could join others in the venture.

*Mortalium Animos* blocked other ecumenical involvement. For example, the Vatican closed down any follow-up to Belgian Cardinal Mercier’s directed “Malines conversations” (1921-26), which had proposed the union of the Church of England with Rome while preserving the Anglican tradition, discipline and hierarchy – “united but not absorbed”. And in 1948 the Vatican asked the Netherlands bishops to forbid RCs to be present in any role, no matter how unofficial, at the WCC’s founding general assembly in Amsterdam.

Meanwhile, the “outside” ecumenical movement was clarifying its own visions and intents for Christian unity, and it was becoming more visible in the life of the churches – enough for Rome to take a second look.

The shift in RC evaluation and policy began in the 1950s. After Amsterdam, the defender of Catholic faith (called the holy office) in the Roman curia\* issued *Ecclesia Sancta* (Dec. 1949). It positively evaluated the ecumenical movement “among those who are dissident from the Catholic church” and “believe in Christ the Lord” as “an inspiring grace of the Holy Spirit”, and thus “for the children of the true church [Catholics] a source of holy joy in the Lord”. Other Christians do care deeply for church unity, and RCs should take their efforts seriously, in charity and in prayer. Under strict guidelines, RC experts, approved by the local hierarchy, can participate in discussions “on faith and morals” with other Christians, but all religious indifferentism should be avoided. Even though the RCC still stood firmly in its ecclesiology of “return”, it now accepted the basis for that dialogue-in-fellowship which had been serving of other Christians.

The WCC Toronto statement (1950), aided in its formulation by a small group of RC theologians (e.g. Yves Congar), recognized that membership “does not imply the specific doctrine concerning the nature of church unity” or that “each church must regard the other member churches as churches in the true or full sense of the word”. This

clarification eased RC unofficial contacts with the WCC, especially through the new Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Questions\* (1952), which prepared its own responses to WCC Faith and Order issues. Its secretary, Johannes Willebrands, met frequently with fellow Dutchman W.A. Visser 't Hooft, WCC general secretary. But more public direct activities were still in the future. The Vatican forbade RC active presence at the 1954 WCC second general assembly (Evanston).

Pope John XXIII established the Secretariat (now Pontifical Council) for Promoting Christian Unity\* (1960) and approved an official delegation of its observers to the WCC New Delhi assembly (1961). But the qualitative change or "defining event" still had to be in RC ecclesiology and the principles which would flow from it. Such was the 1964 Decree on Ecumenism\* of Vatican Council II.\*

See also **encyclicals, Roman Catholic.**

TOM STRANSKY

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## ROMAN CURIA

LARGELY the creation of Pope Sixtus V in 1588, who sought to implement the Counter-Reformation more effectively, the Roman curia (essentially the Vatican bureaucracy) carries out, under direct authority of the pope, his governing responsibilities for the institutional, pastoral and missionary needs of the worldwide church. Paul VI legislated curial reforms in 1967, as did John Paul II in 1988.

To clarify often popularly interchangeable identifications: the *apostolic see* (of Rome) or *holy see* (of Rome) applies not only to the pope or "Roman pontiff" but also to the Roman curia. *The Vatican* is the 106 acres on one of the seven Roman hills (Vaticanus) that includes the present papal residence, some offices of the Roman curia and St Peter's basilica.

The curial departments (dicasteries) of various ranks have assigned tasks, supervised overall by the secretariat of state. These are *congregations* (among the 9: for the doctrine of the faith, for the Oriental [i.e. Eastern Catholic] churches, for bishops, for the clergy, for the evangelization of peoples, for catholic education); *pontifical councils* (among the 11: for the laity, for promoting Christian unity, for inter-religious dialogue, for culture [including dialogue with non-believers], for justice and peace, "Cor Unum" [i.e. for Catholic aid and human development projects], for social communications); and *commissions* (among the 11: for theology, for the Bible, for archaeology, for Vatican finances). Attached to the Roman curia are institutions such as the Vatican Radio, *L'Osservatore Romano*, the TV Centre, Vatican Polyglot Press, the Vatican library and papal charities.

The cardinal head of a department is a member of others with overlapping concerns. For example, the cardinal president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity\* is an ex officio member of the congregations for the doctrine of the faith, the evangelization of peoples, the Oriental churches, and divine worship and the discipline of the sacraments, and he is a consultant to the council for inter-religious dialogue. Most of the congregations, councils and commissions conduct plenaries every one to two years, with members and consultants attending from around the world.

In 2000 the Vatican spent US\$194.4 million for curial salaries and operations, plus the cost of maintaining and operating St Peter's, the library, the radio and TV stations, diplomatic embassies, and the special jubilee events. The Vatican also subsidized many overseas seminaries, other educational institutions, and health and social development facilities. In the same year, the Vatican took in about US\$203 million, primarily from investments and donations from local churches, foundations and individuals.

Tensions remain between the Roman curia and national episcopal conferences over the degree of freedom deserved by the latter in decision making, and the consultative role of the occasional synods of bishops in Rome. Behind these tensions are various understandings and practices of collegiality.\*

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■ J. Lahey, "Roman Curia", in *The Harper-Collins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, R. McBrien ed., San Francisco, HarperCollins, 1995 ■ P. Nichols, *The Pope's Divisions*, London, Faber, 1981 ■ T. Reese, *Inside the Vatican*, London, Oxford UP, 1996. The offices and officials of the Roman curia are listed in the yearly *Annuario Pontificio*, Vatican Polyglot Press.

## ROMERO Y GALDAMES, OSCAR ARNULFO

B. 15 Aug. 1917, Ciudad Barrios, El Salvador; d. 24 March 1980, San Salvador. Of poor rural origins, Oscar Romero was theologically trained at the Gregorian University (1937-42) in Mussolini's Rome. The new priest returned to El Salvador in 1943, became the bishop's secretary and pastor of the cathedral in San Miguel, the executive secretary of the Central American bishops secretariat (1968) and finally archbishop of San Salvador (1977). Fragile and no "hero", the new archbishop was at first politically cautious, but then after the murder of a close Jesuit friend he slowly began publicly to condemn the violent activities of both the leftist guerrillas and the rightist military government of General Carlos Romero (no relation) and his national guard; he also championed the rights of the poor and powerless amid their efforts for land reform. He refused to support a new military-civilian junta; its "reforms are worth nothing if they are stained with so much blood". Faced with repeated threats to his life, Romero declared: "I am prepared to offer my blood for the redemption and resurrection of El Salvador. If God accepts the sacrifice, I hope it will be a seed of liberty and sign of hope." During each Sunday's celebration of the eucharist, he read the list of that week's deaths by violence. At the altar of a San Salvador hospital, an unknown assassin shot the celebrating archbishop. His tomb has become a holy site of prayer and pilgrimage.

TOM STRANSKY

■ O.A. Romero y Galdames, *Assassiné avec les pauvres* (ET *The Church Is All of You*, Minneapolis, Winston, 1984) ■ J.R. Brockman,

*Romero: A Life*, Maryknoll NY, Orbis, 1983 ■ M.T. Porcile Santiso, "Oscar Romero", in *Ecumenical Pioneers*, I. Bria & D. Heller eds, WCC, 1995.

## RUSTENBERG DECLARATION

THE RUSTENBURG declaration emerged from a consultation of churches in November 1990. The most representative such event in South African history, the conference was attended by representatives of the African Independent Churches, evangelical churches, the Gereformeerde Kerk, the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK), the Roman Catholic Church, member churches of the South African Council of Churches, and observers from the WCC and other ecumenical partners. The Nederduitse Hervormde Kerk and Afrikaanse Protestantse Kerk, which broke away from the NGK in 1986, declined an invitation to attend.

At the heart of the declaration stands a confession of guilt, acknowledging the different ways in which different churches have legitimated and supported apartheid.\* It rejects the theological support of apartheid as a heresy\* and sin,\* and calls for concrete forms of restitution.

Facing pressure from the various constituencies represented, a key sentence of the declaration reads: "Some of us are not in full accord with everything said in this conference, but on this we are all agreed, namely the unequivocal rejection of apartheid as sin." A press statement after the conference by the moderator of the NGK re-affirmed this church's confession of guilt, while disassociating it from some aspects of the declaration. The Rustenburg declaration has brought the churches in South Africa into a closer relationship than ever before. Full ecumenical unity has, however, not yet emerged. "We have started a process," said SACC general secretary Frank Chikane. "I only hope the NGK will be able to move ahead with us. Time will tell whether they can."

See also **Kairos document, kairos documents, Stuttgart declaration.**

CHARLES VILLA-VICENCIO

# S

## SACRAMENT(S)

DIFFERENCES over the understanding and practice of sacraments have been the cause, symptom or result of some of the deepest and most stubborn divisions among churches. Knowledge of centuries-long developments in the understanding and practice of the sacraments will help to clarify persistent difficulties encountered in ecumenical dialogue concerning them.

Almost all the various Christian churches identify a number of sacramental rites which represent the continued work of the Saviour in his church.\* “Sacrament” is the name given to actions by which believers receive a share in the salvation\* effected by God in Christ. The action of each sacrament has some substantive basis in the biblical revelation, although the Bible has no generic term for them.

Christendom managed for a whole millennium without a general doctrine of the sacraments, although the foundations for such a doctrine were laid in the patristic period. As is made sufficiently clear by the New Testament accounts relating to baptism\* and the Lord’s supper (see **eucharist**), but also to the laying on of hands, anointing with oil and the giving of the Spirit, it does not mean there were no sacraments in the earliest church.

In the development of sacramental thinking in the early church, Jewish and Hellenistic influences certainly cannot be excluded. Baptism and the Lord’s supper, as Paul shows in 1 Cor. 10:1-22, were already given parallel status in the primitive church as saving events, against the background of the Old Testament mediations of salvation. And

Rudolf Schnackenburg sees the emergence of sacramental ideas influenced by Hellenistic modes of thought in the conception that eternal salvation and life were mediated by a material element and word (see Eph. 5:26) and by earthly gifts bestowed by the Lord (John 6:53-58), and that in these rites the mystery of a regeneration (Titus 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:23, 2:2; John 3:3-8), a sanctification (Heb. 12:9-11) and permanent union with the Lord (John 6:56-57) took place ("Sakrament", in *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 1964).

Subsequently such saving rites were described generally as sacred actions. Baptism and the Lord's supper were given special importance, and the former also included chrismation\* or confirmation.\* Nevertheless, individual churches laid different emphases on the value of each of the so-called sacred actions.

God's saving work in the sacred actions is directed through the church to believers. God's saving power makes use of specific material elements such as water, oil, the altar, church buildings. As the means of salvation have been entrusted by Christ to the church, these actions are normally administered by church functionaries specially authorized to do so. This authorization in many churches rests on a corresponding ordination,\* which likewise counts as one of the sacred actions.

In view of the mysterious working of God's grace,\* the sacred actions have been described as *mystēria*. In the LXX, *mystērion* simply means something hidden and refers neither to the Greek mystery religions nor to any rite. In the NT, *mystērion* is used for God's eschatological purpose, now revealed in Christ, and stretching beyond Israel to include the nations (Mark 4:11; Rom. 11:25, 16:25-27; Col. 1:25-27, 2:2-3, 4:3; Eph. 1:9-10, 3:1-12, 6:19; Rev. 10:7). The apostolic ministry is to be "servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries" (1 Cor. 4:1).

From the standpoint of the Greek church fathers, each *mystērion* is a reflection of the prototype, an *antitypon*. "This is called a mystery because we look at one thing and believe another" (John Chrysostom, *Homilies on 1 Cor.*, 7.1). In Neo-platonic thinking, which left its imprint very clearly on

early Christianity and still affects the Eastern churches today, the *mystēria* represent a link between Creator and creatures, between the prototype and the antitype, the former being mysteriously present in the latter and effective in it. The *mystēria* are therefore symbols which efficaciously represent realities.

As Tertullian translated the term *mystērion* by *sacramentum*, the Western interpretation subsequently changed considerably. *Sacramentum* actually meant not only an act of consecration but also the oath taken by soldiers and confirmed by an outward sign. In the Latin regions, instead of the symbolic and representational character intrinsic to the word *mystērion*, what now came into prominence was the sacrament as a *sign*.

Augustine above all placed emphasis on the sacrament as a visible sign. "A sign is a thing which, over and above the impression it makes on the senses, causes something else to come into the mind as a consequence of itself" (*On Christian Doctrine* 2.1). For this reason the invisible God too has in the course of salvation history\* revealed himself constantly to human beings by means of signs (visible *significationes*), and these visible signs (*signa*) point to an invisible divine reality (*res*) to which they bear a resemblance. "Signs... are called sacraments when they are applied to divine things" (*Letters* 138). But as the visible sign does not have a saving effect without being linked to the word of God,\* in Augustine's view "the word is added to the element, and there results the sacrament as if itself also a kind of visible word" (*Homilies on the Gospel of John* 80.3).

Although Augustine was also quite attached to Neo-platonic ideas, the shift of emphasis from mystery to sign, which began in Tertullian, acquired its theoretical basis with Augustine. But into the second millennium the Western church continued to use *sacramentum* in the two senses of "sacred sign" and "mystery". Likewise there was still no rigorous restriction of the term to the seven sacraments listed by the council of Lyons in 1274. As long as the Neo-platonic idea of prototype and antitype was followed, it was clear that the former was present in the latter. When, however, in the West from the 9th century onwards, the old Latin idea established

itself of a pictorial representation which regarded the antitype as no more than a *similitudo*, something with a similarity to the prototype, then the question began to be more and more pointedly brought up of how the real presence of Christ was to be explained. Thus the issue of causality was raised.

To the extent that the emphasis in the West was definitively shifted in early scholasticism to the sign, the mystery lost importance, and the Eastern and Western views of the sacrament began to diverge. In the West, the view of Berengarius of Tours (d.1088) was that Christ was represented in the eucharist “only symbolically”, and the need to respond to this heretical view perhaps prompted the development of a doctrine of the sacraments.

The decisive definitions were provided by Hugh of St Victor and Peter Lombard. Hugh of St Victor (d.1141) proceeded from the natural symbolism of a corporeal reality which, when dispensed by a recognized officiant, becomes a sign of grace on the basis of an institution by Christ (which for the 12th century as yet raised no problems). The defect of this definition lay in the fact that not all sacraments contain a material sign. Peter Lombard (d.1160) therefore stated that the specific character of a sacrament lay in its efficacy, thus paving the way for a new shift of emphasis away from the sign and onto the nature of sacramental efficacy. “For that is properly called a sacrament which is a sign of the grace of God and a form of invisible grace, so that it bears its image and works as its cause” (*Sentences* 4.1.2). It was Lombard who fixed the number of the sacraments as seven, the usual number in the Roman Catholic Church.

Then came the distinction between the action of the officiant (*opus operantis*) and the action accomplished (*opus operatum*). The sacrament is a work of God’s, not of the officiant’s, and it therefore causes grace by the work performed (*ex opere operato*). But this conclusion does not leave out of account the subjective frame of mind of the officiant and the recipient. If someone does not intend to administer a sacrament or to receive one, then no sacrament is administered or received!

To the second half of the 12th century belongs also the formulation of the doctrine

of sacramental character. Already in William of Auxerre (d.1231 or 1237) there is a hint of the view that baptism, chrismation (confirmation) and holy orders give the soul an ineradicable character by which those so marked out are united for ever with God or Christ and are distinguished from those who do not possess this character.

The appropriation of Aristotelian thought by the high middle ages also continued to affect the further development of the doctrine of the sacraments. From the 13th century onwards the outward sign of the sacrament is defined by the concepts of matter and form. And at the same time a clear description is now provided for causality in the sacramental event.

Thomas Aquinas (1225-74) classifies the sacraments as sacred signs. He thinks human beings, as spiritual and corporeal creatures, can attain to knowledge of supersensory things only through those that are sensory (*Summa theologiae* 3.60.4). Because of their ambiguity the sensory objects must be more closely defined by the word – more precisely, by God’s word – because the sacraments are for the sanctification\* of human beings, and God alone bestows sanctification and therefore also the means of sanctification. Here the Aristotelian distinction between matter and form comes into play. “In the sacraments the words are as the form, and sensible things are as the matter. Now in all things composed of matter and form, the determining principle is on the part of the form, which is as it were the end and terminus of the matter” (*ibid.* 3.60.7). According to Aquinas, therefore, the word (which is an interpretative sign) has precedence over the visible element in terms of significance. For Aquinas the sacraments are not only vessels of salvation but instruments of grace in the hand of God, and they have an effect independently of the worthiness of the officiant or of the recipient. “The sacraments of the new law are both cause and signs; hence, too, is it that, to use the common expression, *they effect what they signify*” (*ibid.* 3.62.1.1).

In the Reformation the development that began when scholasticism was at its zenith was taken to its strictly logical conclusions by consistent absolutizing of the significance of the word (i.e. the word of God). For

Luther the sacrament was already closely linked with the word of God, but on the basis that the same effect properly belonged to the sacrament as to the word proclaimed in preaching. Both were vehicles of grace leading to the forgiveness of sins, the indwelling of Christ and finally eternal life.

Luther considered, not the nature of the sacraments as such, but the way they related to believers. For him, three elements constitute a sacrament: God's word of promise, the sacramental sign, and faith.\* Since such a word of promise from God can be directly derived from holy scripture only in the case of baptism, the Lord's supper and penance, Luther finally accepted only two sacraments, the Lord's supper and baptism (to which he subordinated penance as its renewal). Luther derived the efficacy of the sacraments from the divine word of promise. For him the sacraments are indeed genuine means of grace, but the sacramental sign can never lead to faith or salvation without the word of promise. The real object of faith is not the sign but the word of promise, for which reason the importance of the sacramental sign diminishes.

This tendency can be seen even more markedly in Zwingli and Calvin. In their view God's effective work of salvation becomes accessible only through preaching. For Zwingli the sacraments have meaning only as symbols relating to Christ and the saving events of the past, and they are of service to believers as a memorial action or a public confession in the community. Accordingly they depict, but do not bestow, salvation (see F. Blanke, "Zwingli's Sakramentsanschauung", *Theologische Blätter*, 1931).

Calvin occupies an intermediate position between Luther and Zwingli. For him the sacrament is "a testimony of divine grace towards us, confirmed by an outward sign, with mutual attestation of our piety towards God" (*Institutes* 4.14.1). The sacramental signs receive a new definition and meaning through the word of God, without becoming the vehicles of a spiritual power. They are only a concession by God to human nature, which depends on the senses, a figurative expression of the divine promise; in this way they undergird faith.

The council of Trent\* reacted in 1547 with 13 canons which were directed prima-

rily against Luther. Canon 1 postulated seven as the number of sacraments. Relatively often the view is taken today in Roman Catholicism that the number seven does not relate to anything fixed in numerical terms so much as it points to the completeness of all the means of salvation taken together. It is striking that none of the other Christian churches agrees completely as to the number or identity of the sacraments, apart from baptism and the Lord's supper. In canon 2 Trent admitted that there is an order of precedence among the sacraments. Originally all the sacraments flowed into the central event of the eucharist and were therefore also administered within its context.

New approaches to a theology of the sacraments did not appear till around the middle of the 20th century. With the Second Vatican Council\* the ecclesial dimension of the sacraments was again brought into the foreground in the Roman Catholic Church, as opposed to the more individualistic and seemingly "objectifying" view of them. We owe this development to theologians like Henri de Lubac, Otto Semmelroth, Edward Schillebeeckx and Karl Rahner. In the dogmatic constitution *Lumen Gentium* we read that "the church, in Christ, is in the nature of sacrament – a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity among humankind" (1). From the Christ-church relationship Rahner drew the conclusion that there is also a church-sacrament relationship. By founding the church, Christ established a primal or basic sacrament and so also its actualization in the seven sacraments. Wherever the church meets human beings in a specific salvation situation, it actualizes the appropriate sacrament of the seven.

Protestant theologians express reservations about a view of the church as the primal sacrament. For Eberhard Jüngel, Christ himself is the sacrament of the church, and baptism and the Lord's supper are the two ways of celebrating this sacrament (see Jüngel & Rahner). In both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism there is now a quest for new approaches aided by an interpretation in terms of salvation history and by anthropological and semiotic criteria.

Generalizing, we may give the following description of the differences between the

major Christian confessions as to their view on the sacraments *tēr* differences originating in the Western departure from the idea of *mystērion*:

First, following the tradition of the ancient church, the Orthodox and Oriental churches stress the mysterious saving action of God in the sacred actions, which they describe as *mystēria*.

Second, in the sacraments, the Roman Catholic Church emphasizes seven means of salvation which are efficacious as signs, but it regards the church as the primal sacrament.

Third, the Protestant churches (which have no uniform concept of the sacraments) place the accent instead on the divine word of promise and limit the sacraments to baptism and the Lord's supper, understood in different ways as symbolic actions.

Some of these characteristic differences continue to be characterized in the churches' responses to the Lima text (*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\*). Several Orthodox responses, for example, find the use of the term "sign" inadequate in connection with the sacraments, understanding it as a "pointer" to something external rather than as embodying the reality itself. Or again, many Protestant responses reject any mediatory role for the church in the communication of divine grace to believers. In its 1990 report on the churches' responses to BEM, however, the Faith and Order commission offers a clarification that takes up positive suggestions from the churches and that sets "sacrament" within a context that is fully Trinitarian, Christological, anthropological, soteriological and eschatological:

"In the incarnation, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has communicated effectively the mystery of his saving love to the world. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the risen Christ continues this saving action of God by being present and active in our midst. For this purpose God continues to act through human persons, through their words, signs and actions, together with elements of creation. Thus God communicates to the faithful, and through their witness to the world, his saving promise and grace. Those who receive in faith and trust this gracious action of God are thereby liberated from their captivity to sin and transformed in their lives. Those who receive

this gift respond to it in thanksgiving and praise and are brought into a *koinonia*\* with the Holy Trinity and with each other and are sent to proclaim the gospel to the whole world. Through this divine action, communicated through words, signs and actions, this community, the church, is called, equipped and sent, empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit to witness to God's reconciling and re-creating love in a broken world. And so all who in faith long for fullness of life in Christ may experience the first-fruits of God's kingdom – present and yet to be fully accomplished in a new heaven and earth" (*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, 1982-1990, 143-44).

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## SAINTS

AT THE BEGINNING of his epistle to the Romans, Paul wrote: "To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1:7). This name "saints" is one given to the members of the first Christian communities (e.g. Eph. 1:1). It may signify the Christians who constitute the "church of God" in a particular place (2 Cor. 1:1; Heb. 13:24-25; Col. 1:2), or it may signify the whole Christian people (Eph. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:2). Its most frequent equivalent is "brothers (and sisters)", as in Col. 1:2: "To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae" (cf. Phil. 4:21-22). Saints form a new community coming both from the Jewish community in Jerusalem (Acts 9:13; Rom. 15:25) and from gentile Christianity (Rom. 1:7). The apostle is one of them: "I am the very least of all the saints" (Eph. 3:8). Later, they were called Christians (Acts 11:26).

### SAINTS AND THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH

The notion of saints should be seen as part of the mystery of the church,\* "those who are sanctified [i.e. the holy people] in Christ Jesus" (1 Cor. 1:2), the people of the New Testament. It includes certain basic affirmations.

"One only is holy, One only is the Lord, Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father." This is a very ancient liturgical exclamation which echoes the hymn of the Lamb (Rev. 15:3-4), acclaimed as Kyrios (Eph. 4:5; Phil. 2:11) and as "the Holy One of God" (John 6:69; cf. Luke 4:34). Jesus Christ\* is holy both as the Son of God and as bearer of the Spirit when at his baptism the Holy Spirit\* descended on him (Luke 3:22). With this authority and power he destroyed the unclean spirits (Luke 4:33-37). Christians "have been anointed by the Holy One" (1 John 2:20), being called to become "a temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 6:19). The identity itself of the saint is to be bearer of the Spirit.

The faithful are called saints because of their participation in the holiness of God, who is holy by his own nature (Isa. 6:3). Christians are saints in God's holiness (1 Pet. 1:15), in Christ (Phil. 4:21). They are "God's chosen ones, holy [or saints]" (Col. 3:12). One aspect of the mystery of the church is

this new consecration in Christ of a "priestly kingdom", "holy nation", "royal priesthood" (Ex. 19:6; 1 Pet. 2:9; cf. Isa. 43:20-21), which is not exclusive or restricted. An essential criterion of the new people is that "you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone" (Eph. 2:19-20).

It is part of the mystery of the church to be the manifestation of God's glory and holiness, for God "has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love" (Eph. 1:3-4). He presents to himself a glorious church "without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind – yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27). Christ sacrificed himself for her to make her holy (Eph. 5:25-26). Christ made the church his body, in spite of the sin\* of its members. Hence, the church must always be in a state of renewal, of repentance.

Scripture refers also to the communion of saints,\* the friends and fellow heirs of Christ (see Eph. 4:1-6), the "inheritance among all who are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). He will come "to be glorified by his saints and to be marvelled at... among all who have believed" (2 Thess. 1:10). The kingdom of God\* is promised to them and includes "the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints" (Eph. 1:18). The book of Revelation recalls those who, having finished their earthly pilgrimage, enjoy God's presence in the heavenly city (Rev. 7:9-17). "To be 'in Christ' is to be in his body, a member of a fellowship which transforms the local neighbourhood, which overleaps boundaries of nation and race and whose own boundaries are lost to sight in the infinite horizons of the eternal communion of saints" (Oliver Tomkins, *Youth in the World-Church*, 1947).

Belonging to a community is a sign of the new condition (see 1 John 2:19). Conversion\* means, then, "to share in the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. 1:12). It implies equally "the service of the saints" (1 Cor. 16:15).

As a holy people, the church has the capacity to discern, to sort out, to reveal the light that “darkness did not overcome” (John 1:5). The church of God received the power to bind and to loose (see John 20:23) and the power to judge (1 Cor. 6:2).

### THE VOCATION OF SAINTS

Saints’ vocation\* is to hallow the name of God: “The name of God is in its own nature holy, whether we say so or not; but since it is sometimes profaned among sinners, according to the words, ‘through you, my name is continually blasphemed among the Gentiles’ (Rom. 2:24), we pray that in us God’s name may be hallowed; not that it becomes holy from not being holy, but because it becomes holy in us, when we become holy; and do things worthy of holiness” (Cyril of Jerusalem, *Mystagogical Catechesis* 5.12).

“You shall be holy, for I am holy” (1 Pet. 1:16). This verse teaches that the saints have their own way of life, a distinctive spirituality – a radical orientation of life, not in a legalistic sense, but in an incarnational sense: “Clothe yourselves with the new self, created according to the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness” (Eph. 4:24). The emphasis is here on the cleansing of the inside so that the outside may also be clean (Matt. 23:26).

The life of a saint is the most valid exposition of Christ himself. The disciple can speak of “Christ who lives in me” (Gal. 2:20) or of Christ “speaking in me” (2 Cor. 13:3). In fact, the saints gain later the special connotation of those who reflect the likeness of Christ (2 Cor. 3:18), who have “become participants of the divine nature” (2 Pet. 1:4), and who develop into “maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ” (Eph. 4:13).

In the saints’ experience, Christ comes to offer the gifts of his kingdom, and they themselves become the first-fruits of it. “I chose you and I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last” (John 15:16). The saints worship God by offering their living bodies as a holy sacrifice (Rom. 12:1). In fact, the discipline of the saint implies a continuous ascetic combat. The struggle of the saint is primarily not to lose sight of Jesus, who leads us into our faith and brings it to perfection (Heb. 12:2).

### SAINTS AND THE ECUMENICAL COMMUNITY

The theme of saints has its own value for ecumenical concerns. For ecumenical spirituality, for example, one cannot separate or confuse sanctification\* and social transformation. Those who are more active socially do not have the right to exclude those who place a special emphasis on conversion, renewal, holiness\* – and vice versa. Both disciplines should be experienced and preserved in their distinctiveness. Therefore “let... the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy” (Rev. 22:11).

The theme of saints is also essential in order to keep the search for visible unity\* deeply rooted in the life of prayer, of mutual intercession among the churches. The practice of continued intercession for one another, and for *all* the churches, keeps before every Christian something of the catholicity\* of the church of Christ. It enables the churches to see one another not with the eyes of confessional appraisal and historical assessment but as joint petitioners before the throne of God. It opens one not only to give but also to receive within the fellowship of prayer and service.

In the ecumenical community the churches bring their particularities of life, worship and witness. From the “saints” tradition we learn about the extraordinary power of the Christian life (“holiness as witness”) for the proclamation of the gospel. The churches have arrived at a more active appreciation of what we might call the common priesthood of all the baptized (see 1 Pet. 3:15; Rev. 1:6, 5:9-10), of the gifts of grace, vocations and ministries found in the communities; they devise new life-styles which commend the gospel in today’s world; they have reconsidered the lives of saints, martyrs and mystics as real spiritual nourishment for the communities.

It is highly important for today’s ecumenical spirituality and liturgical renewal to recognize the saints as encouraging examples on the pilgrim journey and as symbols of the church universal: “Confessing the apostolic creed in our worship, we affirm our belief in the community of saints. Thus we are reminded that we live together with the martyrs of all times. Christians who give their lives for the sake of the kingdom are martyrs. We remember them in our worship

as encouraging examples. They are symbols of the total church. They give us inspiration as to how 'worship and work must be one'. We have learned that the unity between worship and daily Christian life needs urgently to be recovered" (*Gathered for Life*, 1983). Commemoration of all saints and martyrs of the church universal is observed on the first Sunday after Pentecost in the Orthodox churches and on 1 November in the Western tradition.

### SAINTS AND THE LITURGY

The tradition of mentioning the names of saints before God and of making intercession for each other is apostolic (see Eph. 1:15-23). The commemoration of saints is a liturgical act. Some saints are venerated only in certain places, in certain local churches; the names of other saints appear in the calendar of the church universal.

"We worship him, the true Son of God. We honour our martyrs as teachers and followers of the Lord" (*Martyrdom of Polycarp* 17.3). The second council of Nicea (787) made the distinction between the true worship due to God (*latreia*) and proper devotion accorded to the sacred images and to the saints. (The council also decided that each new church should contain a relic of a saint on the altar table.) The veneration given to the saints in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox tradition goes to the only Holy One, Jesus Christ. In the liturgy of this tradition, Christians invoke saints as intercessors and protectors, not as mediators. Saints make supplication for the pilgrim church (Eph. 6:18). They render thanks to God for those who enter the glorious church and do not cease to offer prayers for the historical church.

"The church has always believed that the apostles, and Christ's martyrs who had given the supreme witness of faith and charity by the shedding of their blood, are quite closely joined with us in Christ. She has always venerated them with special devotion, together with the Blessed Virgin Mary and the holy angels. The church too has devoutly implored the aid of their intercession. To these were soon added those who had imitated Christ's virginity and poverty more exactly, and finally others whom the outstanding practice of the Christian virtues and the di-

vine charisms recommended to the pious devotion and imitation of the faithful" (Vatican II, Constitution on the Church, 50).

Owing to some excesses in the reverence of saints in the development of the liturgy, Protestants in particular felt that the uniqueness of Christ as mediator was threatened. This fear led to reactions against the invocation of saints and the suppression of their commemoration in the liturgy and the liturgical calendar. In today's ecumenical context, it is perhaps necessary to beware of excesses leading to deviations in Christology and at the same time to pay serious attention to the presence in some Protestant liturgies of the notion of the "communion of saints". It is also necessary to consider seriously what it means to be a saint in today's world, in the light of the Christian belief that the Spirit "blows where it chooses" (John 3:8).

See also **martyrdom**.

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### SALVATION

THE OLD TESTAMENT view of salvation appears in passages which recount events of deliverance and liberation\* and speak of blessings granted and promised, of peace and life. Two basic features set the pattern here.

First, salvation is not only deliverance and peace\* for the individual, but primarily affects the people as a whole. The fundamental paradigm is to be found in the exodus from Egypt and the entry into the promised land so that life can be lived without hindrance in the service of Yahweh. Here we have a total process which directly includes both physical and social well-being. In particular, the idea of all-embracing shalom gives the OT view of salvation its character.

Second, the issue is one of promise and fulfilment occurring within the existing

world and therefore not oriented as a rule to the Beyond. Only in late OT passages – and especially in apocalyptic texts – do we find evidence of a vision of salvation that goes beyond the bounds of this world, characterized as it is by death (e.g. Isa. 25:6-8).

In its various groups of writings, and in varied terminology, the New Testament also sees salvation (*sōtēria*, e.g. Acts 4:12) as an act of deliverance and consequently as the condition of a fulfilled life into which deliverance leads. Such a deliverance, however, is now wholly and exclusively bound up with the name and person of Jesus Christ\* as the deliverer – the Saviour (*sōtēr*, e.g. Luke 2:11). Essentially such a deliverance through Jesus Christ is from the powers of sin\* and death (see **life and death**), and primarily each individual participates in such a deliverance or salvation on the basis of repentance, conversion\* and faith.\* Salvation is ultimately a future event in which death will be overcome (Rom. 8:23-24; Rev. 21:4-7), but at the same time it is a gift granted and obtained in the present (Luke 17:19; Rom. 5:1-5; John 5:24-26), though accompanied by the continuing challenge from sin, suffering\* and dying. But it would be a mistake to attribute a purely individualistic view of salvation (“the salvation of souls”) to the NT. Instead, it takes up OT promises which describe salvation in physical and social terms (e.g. Luke 4:18-19).

The cures Jesus performs epitomize and point to his saving activity. The individual and his or her salvation are bound up with the community of those welded together by baptism\* into the congregation of the new covenant\* of salvation (Acts 2:38-47; Gal. 3:27-28; Eph. 2:19-22). The salvation which is yet to come can be described as eating and drinking in fellowship in the kingdom of God\* (Luke 22:30). And we hear of a new heaven and a new earth, the new city of God (Rev. 21:1-5). Paul thinks of the whole creation\* waiting for redemption\* (Rom. 8:19-21).

The NT also describes salvation in a variety of images. In Jesus’ preaching, the message about the kingdom of God – as a religious and communal, individual and social, present and future reality – has pride of place. After Easter the saving work of Jesus Christ is interpreted as reconciliation,\* re-

demption, priestly ministry, sacrifice, etc. This kind of salvation coming from Jesus Christ is encountered by the individual as liberation, justification,\* renewal,\* sanctification,\* light, life and so on. The different NT writings and groups of writings thus prepare the way for the many ideas and conceptions of salvation that have been subsequently worked out in the history of theology and the church.

### ASPECTS RELATING TO THE HISTORY OF DOGMA

In the history of theology the meaning of salvation has primarily been considered in regard to the person and work of Jesus Christ. Following Gustav Aulén, we may distinguish three fundamental types of interpretation.

The first was given its shape in the early church and still determines the way salvation is viewed in the Orthodox churches. In it, Christ appears as the one who frees human beings from the power of death and sin. Basically this liberation happens through God’s assumption of full humanity in the incarnation\* and the healing work of God accomplished thereby. But it happens also through the victory of the risen Christ over the power of death and of the Prince of this world (see **resurrection**). Thus through Christ we are granted salvation in the sense of being restored in the image and likeness of God (*theōsis*).

As opposed to this basic type, a second view of salvation received its imprint in Western theology and particularly in the Latin middle ages, focusing especially on the interpretation of Christ’s death, which it understands as an expiation of human sins. Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) in his teaching on satisfaction – the most famous example of this type – interpreted the death of Jesus as the destiny (originating in God) of the God become flesh, through which God’s honour, offended by human sin, is satisfied, thus making reconciliation, justification and forgiveness possible. The reformers in particular remained committed to this model of how salvation is to be understood.

Third we find – above all in modern European theology – an interpretation of Jesus Christ’s saving activity which turns our attention wholly to the person of the earthly Jesus – his preaching, action and religious at-

titude. Thus the Protestant theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) identified what was special in Jesus of Nazareth as the strength of his awareness of God. Thus human salvation results in so far as human beings let themselves be embraced in Jesus' basic religious attitude, sharing in the self-surrender he made for them and thus following him.

While the first type of understanding continues to characterize the Orthodox churches' view of salvation, the Latin type has been more at home in the Roman Catholic and large Protestant churches. This difference, however, has never caused division in the churches but indicates rather a legitimate diversity of descriptions – foreshadowed in the NT – of the one mystery. In fact, in the belief held by all the churches on salvation, we find elements of all three paradigms for interpreting Christ's saving activity. Common to all three models of interpretation is Christ's being regarded as the one who has come "for us" (in the two senses of "in our stead" and "for our sake"). They also share the understanding this act gives of God\* as the One who from God's very nature is active on behalf of us human beings. This view was worked out in the Trinitarian idea of God, according to which the Father is at work for our salvation through the Son in the Spirit (see **Trinity**). Because of the crisis in metaphysics and the rise of historical awareness, the third type of interpretation strikes a chord in present-day thinking and can therefore be found in a wide variety of modern theologies, including the theology of liberation, which has discovered the liberating, subversive Jesus of Nazareth.

The controversies of the Reformation period produced opposing views of (the appropriation of) salvation, which caused division in the church. Central to the controversy was the teaching on justification inherited from Paul: How do human beings profit from the salvation made available in Christ? Roman Catholic theology which derived from the middle ages saw justification as a supernatural pardoning of the sinner, implying his or her re-creation as a person who has been dedicated to God in faith, love and hope\* and has been freed in principle from the dominion of original sin. The Reformation feared that this was a wrong way of

defining the freedom\* and intrinsic worth of human beings in God's sight and that it directed them into the path of good, pious, meritorious works, thus robbing them of their true consolation. "Justification by faith alone", in contrast, was understood by the reformers to mean the sinner's acquittal by grace\* (salvation as the speaking of a word), an acquittal received in trusting faith, which also results in good works. But here the justified sinner exists in a tension between the sin which remains and the righteousness which results from the acquittal (*simul iustus et peccator*). On the Roman Catholic side it was feared here that due justice would not be done spiritually and theologically to the power of the re-creating grace of the Holy Spirit\* (as in Rom. 8).

### ECUMENICAL DISCUSSION

In contemporary ecumenical discussion the question of salvation is being pursued primarily in three directions.

*Re-thinking of the 16th-century controversies.* Analysis has been undertaken showing that we no longer have to regard these controversies about how salvation was to be viewed as ecclesiastically divisive. In its final report, the second world conference on Faith and Order\* (Edinburgh 1937) produced joint statements on the significance of grace, on justification and sanctification, and on God's action and human responsibility in regard to the sovereignty of God's action. Justification and sanctification, God's action and the human will are not alternatives but are necessarily complementary in the description of the process of salvation.

The 16th-century's contrasting views of salvation have more recently been the subject first and foremost of Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue,\* in which many insights from research in the history of dogma and of theology have found a place. Alongside the results of the North American dialogue (*Justification by Faith*, 1985) may be mentioned in particular the document *Lehrverurteilungen – kirchentrennend?* (1986), produced in the Federal Republic of Germany. The way is prepared for specific comments on the theme by hermeneutical reflections (e.g. on the time-bound nature of certain statements of the problems and modes of expression, and on the significance of a common understand-

ing of the biblical witness). No premature harmonization of general ideas is made, but the consolation of the sinner and the re-creating power of the Spirit of God are two parallel concerns, formulated in the 16th century as opposites, each of which is necessary, although they cannot be reduced systematically to a single formula. On the basis of the American and German work, representatives of the Lutheran World Federation and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity were in 1999 able to sign a Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, in which historically controversial matters were subsumed as different emphases under a fundamentally agreed understanding. The Orthodox concept of *theōsis* as the epitome of God's saving activity should be brought more fully into this discussion.

*The idea of salvation as for today.* Completely new dimensions of a possible contemporary understanding of salvation began to emerge at the beginning of the 1970s, when salvation, in the slogan "Salvation Today", was the theme for an entire ecumenical conference – the world conference on mission in 1973 in Bangkok, which responded to the promptings from the WCC assembly at Uppsala in 1968. It is stressed that "salvation for the whole person" is meant, as in Luke 4:18, and especially also a new social justice\* and liberation from oppression and exploitation: Christ shows us the unity of body and soul, individual and society, humanity and creation. God's all-embracing salvation for the whole person frees us for our own total salvation. By our commitment to liberation from the oppression and exploitation of others, we procure "in fear and trembling" the salvation bestowed by Christ. In the European theology of the 1960s (e.g. that of Jürgen Moltmann) and at the same time perhaps in Latin American liberation theology,\* it was increasingly recognized that salvation is a total event which embraces society and social structures too. Here history as a whole is seen as a process of salvation (see **salvation history**), and the OT idea of shalom plays its part as a prospect of hope. The world conference on mission in Melbourne in 1980, with "Your Kingdom Come" as its theme, also clearly stressed the social dimension of salvation (esp. with regard to the world's poor).

This highlighting of the horizontal and social dimension of salvation did provoke opposition from various churches (e.g. from the Russian Orthodox Church and among Evangelicals). In the WCC it was felt necessary to talk in more nuanced, balanced terms, without abandoning the horizontal trend (see M.M. Thomas's speeches at the meetings of the central committee and the Nairobi documents, 1975). It proves necessary to distinguish between (earthly) well-being and (eschatological) salvation. Does holy scripture not record situations of outward well-being which are nevertheless devoid of saving grace? And conversely, must not the reality of salvation be proclaimed where earthly, social well-being has not yet been achieved? In this context mention must be made of discussion on the meaning of mission,\* which also regards the simple equation of salvation and earthly well-being as problematic.

*Salvation for non-Christians?* A third cluster of questions has been brought into ecumenical discussion by the documents of Vatican II,\* which raise the question of salvation for non-Christians. The constitution *Lumen Gentium* speaks of the grace of God even among members of other faiths and even among unbelievers, but at the same time it underlines the relation of such grace to its centre in the (Roman Catholic) church of Christ. Since then, the possibility of the salvation of non-Christians has also been discussed in various ways in Protestant theology and within the WCC's programme of dialogue, in regard to other faiths and world-views (see the Chiang Mai consultation, 1977). Some theological models (which naturally also meet with hesitant or disapproving reactions) suggest an implicit or "anonymous" Christianity. The possibility of the salvation of non-Christians is thus combined with the tying of salvation to Jesus Christ in line with the witness of the NT (see **uniqueness of Christ**). Here again the question of the meaning of mission is raised. On this point the reality and problem of salvation require considerable thought at a deeper level.

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## SALVATION ARMY

THE SALVATION ARMY (SA) movement began in 1865 when William Booth founded the Christian Mission. Originating in Booth's revival meetings in the slums of London's East End, the mission quickly spread throughout the British Isles by the effective use of recent converts to evangelize others in a language familiar to them. In 1878 the name "The Salvation Army" was adopted. Expansion in Great Britain immediately leaped forward.

The SA speedily took root overseas, first in the US and then Australia (1880), followed by France (1881), Canada, India, Switzerland and Sweden (1882) and other parts of the world. When Booth died in 1912 (in SA terminology, "was promoted to Glory"), the Army was established in almost 50 countries. As of 2000, the SA operated in 107 countries, using 173 languages in preaching the gospel. It had 15,669 corps (churches) and 25,475 officers (full-time ministers).

The objects of the SA are "the advancement of the Christian religion... of education, the relief of poverty, and other charitable objects beneficial to society or the community of mankind as a whole". Salvationist doctrines, following mainstream Christian beliefs, include acceptance of the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as "the divine rule of Christian faith and practice"; be-

lief in the Triune God (see **Trinity**), the atoning work of Christ, the necessity for repentance and faith\* in claiming salvation,\* and the call to live a holy life. Every SA soldier is required to subscribe to an 11-point statement of doctrines. SA worship is non-liturgical. Extemporaneous prayer, personal testimony of members and preaching of the word by the leader are important features. Often a brass band leads the singing.

Salvationists are taught that they are "saved to serve" – they are soldiers in their spare time, without remuneration. Officers, trained in SA training colleges, devote their whole lives to the cause and receive a modest salary. All Salvationists are expected to live a disciplined life of high moral standards, including abstinence from alcohol and tobacco.

From the beginning the SA was involved in schemes to help the poor. From simple soup kitchens to feed the starving of London's East End, the movement's social work has evolved to meet modern needs with modern methods. Centres for the homeless, the alcoholic, and deprived children cater annually for thousands of people. Hospitals and clinics provide healing and hope, schools and institutions provide education, with all being done in the name of Christ. Salvationists believe, however, that people cannot be made whole by the ministry to the body and mind alone.

The SA claims to be an "integral part and element of the Great Church, a living fruit-bearing branch of the True Vine". The SA was a founding member of the WCC, but since 1981 the Army has been in a revised adviser status as a recognized Christian World Communion, a change initiated by the SA. This status is more suited to the Army's polity of a single international headquarters representative for all its worldwide constituents. The SA continues to play a significant role in the WCC, including attendance at meetings of its central committee, as well as in other movements such as the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization.\* It is an associate member of the World Evangelical Fellowship\* internationally, with many of its territories full members of WEF-related national bodies. Many of its territories are also full members of WCC-related national councils of churches.

The SA has one international leader, the general, elected by the movement's leading officers, who form the high council. The general directs all SA operations from the world headquarters in London, though he or she spends much time in necessary travel, reviewing the work, preaching the gospel. In 2002 the SA was led by General John Gowans, elected in 1999.

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## SALVATION HISTORY

CHRISTIANS believe that God\* is at work in history,\* hence this divine work has its history. Since salvation\* is a historical reality, the notion of salvation history presents itself as an appropriate way to perceive and interpret history.

This approach can be found in the Bible. The covenant\* tradition in the Hebrew Bible, for instance, affirms the particular history of God with the people. The testimonies of the Hebrew prophets are connected with different readings of Israel's history. Similarly, when Luke writes his gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, his aim is to give an account of God's saving work in and through Jesus Christ,\* which continues in the ministry of the apostles. Throughout the history of Christianity efforts have been undertaken to interpret the past in terms of salvation history, i.e. to show that the present is in line with God's all-embracing design and purpose.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the emergence of the ecumenical movement should have been accompanied by attempts to place this new historical phenomenon in the perspective of God's great purpose. The founders of the modern ecumenical move-

ment were convinced that God willed them to struggle for this new task. They saw the past history in terms of divine preparation. Referring to John R. Mott, George Bell, Eivind Berggrav, Donald Baillie and others, W.A. Visser 't Hooft declared in 1961: "They felt constrained to work for the unity of the church of Christ, simply because that unity is an essential part of God's design."

Neither is it surprising that a similar tone was struck at Amsterdam 1948. Its theme, "Man's Disorder and God's Design", reflects a salvation-history approach, as clearly evidenced in the section 1 report: "God's redeeming activity in the world has been carried out through his calling a people to be his own chosen people. The old covenant was fulfilled in the new when Jesus Christ, the Son of God incarnate, died and was raised from the dead, ascended into heaven and gave the Holy Ghost to dwell in his body, the church. It is our common concern for that church which draws us together, and in that concern we discover our unity in relation to her Lord and Head."

We can see here a three-stage concept of salvation history: (1) God's story with Israel, (2) God's story with Jesus Christ, (3) God's story with the churches leading up to the one church\* universal. In the oikonomia of God the oikoumene\* has a providential place (see **providence**).

The third assembly of the WCC (New Delhi 1961) underscored and widened this approach. Christ, the "light of the world", is proclaimed in cosmic dimensions (see the contributions of Joseph Sittler and Paul Devanandan). Under the world-ruling Christ there can be but one church and one history of salvation, into which all histories of the world must ultimately flow.

The Second Vatican Council\* (1962-65) took a similar approach, describing the history of our globe through its evolutionary stages as God's creative history leading to God's self-disclosure in the Son. It regarded the world's religions as agents in humanity's search to grasp the meaning of this great history but affirmed that the real meaning is revealed through Christ in the Holy Spirit\* to the (Catholic) church as that sacramental institution in which God's purpose is most adequately manifested. This approach was also significantly influenced by the work of

Protestant scholars, especially Oscar Cullmann.

The Bristol document "God in Nature and History" of the Faith and Order\* commission (1967) can be regarded as a summary of ecumenical thinking on history. It seeks to combine secular evolutionary thinking with the notion of salvation history. It describes the global evolutionary process as God's creation history, which culminates in Christ's ministry and finds its fulfilment in God's ultimate reign (see **kingdom of God**).

With the Uppsala assembly (1968) a shift from reflection to action takes place. God is confessed as the Lord of change and renewal,\* hence the church is called to be an agent of change and renewal. Since God is at work, his disciples must work also. Salvation history is not something to think about but something to work out in concrete solidarity for the poor\* and oppressed. This approach comes very close to the affirmation of the Latin American Roman Catholic bishops conference at Medellín\* (1968) concerning God's "preferential option for the poor". Since then, salvation history has been looked at less in terms of a hermeneutical clue to understand history than as a prophetic tool to change it.

In both versions, however, the concept of salvation history remains ambiguous and requires effort to understand its character. Salvation history is a way in which faith\* sees and interprets the vast expanse of history and should never be mistaken for an objective account of what history is. Properly understood, salvation history has a *doxological* meaning, i.e. it is a way of celebrating God's creative and redemptive presence in this world. It will at times also have a *prophetic* meaning, i.e. it must elucidate ethico-political options and challenges (see **prophecy**). Whenever this limited perspective is overlooked, systems of salvation history stand in danger of harmonizing the deep contradictions of history, of simplifying the mystery of Christ's cross and resurrection, and thus of turning into triumphalism.

GEIKO MÜLLER-FAHRENHOLZ

■ H. Berkhof, *Christus de zin der geschiedenis* (ET *Christ the Meaning of History*, London, SCM Press, 1966) ■ O. Cullmann, *Heil als Geschichte* (ET *Salvation in History*, London,

SCM Press, 1967) ■ "God in Nature and History", *Study Encounter*, 1, 1965 ■ G. Müller-Fahrenholz, *Heilsgeschichte zwischen Ideologie und Prophetie*, Freiburg, Herder, 1974.

## SAMARTHA, STANLEY JEDIDIAH

B. 7 Oct. 1920, Karkal, South India; d. 22 July 2001, Bangalore. First director of the WCC Sub-unit on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies, 1970-81, Samartha was able to secure wide acceptance for dialogue as an important ecumenical concern. He studied at Madras University; United Theological College, Bangalore; Union Theological Seminary, New York;



and Hartford Seminary Foundation (PhD), and did post-graduate studies at the University of Basel, 1951-52. From 1947 to 1960 he was connected with the Basel Mission Theological Seminary (later Karnataka Theological College), Mangalore, from 1947-49 as lecturer and from 1952 as principal. Ordained to the ministry in 1952, he became principal of Serampore College, West Bengal, and consultant to the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, Bangalore. Samartha was visiting professor at United Theological College, Bangalore, and also connected with the South Asia Theological Research Institute.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ S.J. Samartha, *Courage for Dialogue*, WCC, 1981 ■ *The Hindu Response to the Unbound Christ*, Madras, CLS, 1974 ■ *One Christ*,

*Many Religions: Toward a Revised Christology*, Maryknoll NY, Orbis, 2000 ■ C.D. Jathanna ed., *Dialogue in Community: Essays in Honour of Stanley J. Samartha*, Mangalore, Karnataka Theological Research Institute, 1982 ■ C.S. Soans, *Dialogue and/or Mission: An Approach to the Theology of Stanley J. Samartha: Dissertation*, Ann Arbor MI, UMI Dissertation Services, 1999.

## SAMUEL, BISHOP

B. Dec. 1920, Cairo, Egypt; d. 6 Oct. 1981, Cairo. Bishop Samuel attended the WCC's Evanston assembly in 1954 and afterwards was a member of the WCC central commit-



tee. An interpreter of the Coptic church to the churches in the West, he helped to establish a basis of understanding and dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church. He was also instrumental in theologically reconciling the different Orthodox churches. Educated in Cairo and at Princeton University, USA, in 1949 he chose the monastic order known as Makary El Souriany. Consecrated as bishop in 1962, he served many villages in Egypt, explaining the Bible, starting a group for Coptic education, and establishing the rural diakonia. He was director of the churches' department of social studies. Appointed by President Anwar Al-Sadat to administer the church in terms of its state relationships, he was among those assassinated together with the president.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

## SANCTIFICATION

THE CHRISTIAN faith\* includes the confidence that God wills the sanctification of all who are one body with Christ (see **holiness**). As "participants of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4), disciples are to lead holy lives. "As he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct" (1 Pet. 1:15). All Christian traditions teach sanctification, with various emphases.

Eastern Orthodox Christianity understands participation in the life of the risen Christ as "divinization" (*theōsis*), which transforms not only the human person but the whole cosmic order. In the West, the Augustinian spiritualization and individualization of the "new creation" prevented sanctification from being seen in the framework of a cosmic process of divinization. Sanctification became a progressive cleansing of the person from sinfulness, by the gift of grace.\* Medieval theologians taught the power of human nature to cooperate with grace. Notwithstanding our total need of grace in regard to salvation\* and the absolute priority of God's sanctifying initiative, they stressed the compelling call to grow in sanctity through meritorious works.

"Perfection" in the sense of sinlessness was the prevailing outlook on sanctification when Luther's despairing conscience found relief in the gospel of justification\* by faith, "without the works of the law". Justification as imputation of Christ's righteousness to the sinner through faith makes all notions of growth in sanctity irrelevant: Christ's righteousness is imputed totally as the Holy Spirit\* works faith in the soul. Christ alone is the holiness of his disciple, who is "simultaneously a sinner". Roman Catholicism fosters more optimistic views of righteousness: "We are truly called just, and we are just" (council of Trent\*). According to Vatican II,\* faith, hope and charity equip us "to bear increasingly rich fruit of the Holy Spirit".

Following the Reformation breakthrough on the issue of justification, new patterns of sanctification arose, opposing (1) the idea of the persistence of sin in the righteous, and (2) Luther's idea of "faith alone", which seemed to ignore the role of moral conversion. German pietism saw justification as the beginning of "rebirth", with an emphasis on the growth of the "new man". Calvin related sanctification to God's elec-

tion. For him, the fear of God's judgment, in firm reliance upon his mercy, leads to a life obedient to divine law and church discipline. In Methodism, "Christian perfection" (entire sanctification) is the goal of initial conversion: penitents who are forgiven for their sins retain a "residue of sin within" which calls for a "second work of grace". In discipline, methodical devotion, avoidance of worldly pleasures, "growth in grace" and victory over sin are then sought and may be achieved. The international Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue\* was able to reach extensive agreement on the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit (Honolulu report, 1981). Contemporary Holiness movements\* value the personal experience of the Spirit, including "baptism in the Holy Spirit", which gives power to live an effective Christian life.

The yearning for sinlessness in today's discussions about eschatological transfiguration – in the Roman Catholics' insistence on the "objective" agency of the church's ministry and sacraments in salvation, and in the Protestant concern for ethical righteousness – makes it worth recalling the rich man's lesson (Mark 10:17-22): sinlessness avails little, God alone is good, and holiness comes through following Christ. Forgiveness of sins, rather than sinlessness, is God's truth for sanctified sinners.

DANIEL OLIVIER

■ *Histoire des saints et de la sainteté chrétienne*, 11 vols, Paris, Hachette, 1986 ■ R.N. Flew, *The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology*, London, Oxford UP, 1934 ■ C. Lindberg, *The Third Reformation? Charismatic Renewal and Lutheran Tradition*, Macon GA, Mercer UP, 1983 ■ J. Meyendorff & J. McLelland, *The New Man: An Orthodox and Reformed Dialogue*, New Brunswick NJ, Angora, 1973 ■ M. Opočenský & P. Réamonn eds, *Justification and Sanctification in the Traditions of the Reformation: Prague V*, Geneva, WARC, 1999 ■ K. Ware, "Salvation and Theosis in Orthodox Theology", in *Luther et la réforme allemande dans une perspective oecuménique*, Chambésy, Eds du Centre oecuménique, 1983.

## SANCTUARY

SANCTUARY is traditionally offered by the church as a protective community to refugees\* whose basic human rights are be-

ing violated. It is a faith practice which reaches back to the earliest memories of the people of Israel, and a movement of the ecumenical church in response to the current plight of refugees throughout the world. In January 2000 an estimated 22.3 million persons were listed as of concern to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (11.7 million refugees, 1.2 million asylum-seekers, 2.5 million returned refugees, and 6.9 million internally displaced persons and others of concern). These are people who cross borders without documents to flee war and persecution, or they are displaced within their own country. In all cases these are the most vulnerable and suffering people imaginable.

The name "sanctuary" has been given in the USA to the movement for the protection of refugees from Central America whom the US government has been sanctioning or deporting since 1980, claiming that they were not bona fide political refugees but had crossed the borders for economic reasons. A number of Catholic and Protestant churches have challenged this interpretation of the refugee act of 1980, have organized themselves to provide transportation, reception, protection and re-location of these refugees in what has been called (recovering a term from the times of slavery) the underground railroad, and have declared themselves "sanctuary churches". The US government has arraigned and indicted a number of people involved in these actions. The ethical and legal debate and the processes continue. Churches and individuals engaged in this task have made explicit the theological, biblical and ethical grounds of their action.

The Bible is replete with stories and instructions on sanctuary, asylum\* and the treatment of refugees. The Hebrews, displaced from their own land by famine, are enslaved in Egypt. God hears their cry and liberates them from their suffering and bondage. Therefore, Israel is to remember that they were once aliens or sojourners and that special care must be taken of the stranger in their midst (Lev. 19:33-34; Deut. 10:18-19). The God who saved Israel from bondage is the protector of the poor and suffering (Ps. 145; Num. 35:9-11).

Within the Old Testament we find both the tradition of cities of refuge and altar

sanctuary, both for the purpose of saving human life from blood vengeance until judicial safeguards can be employed. Jesus begins life as a refugee child fleeing from Herod. He identifies with the poor and persecuted (Matt. 25:43). The early church is instructed to receive the stranger (Heb. 13:2).

The community of faith often affords the only possible protection to people fleeing for their lives. Seeking safe haven from death squads, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture,\* or conditions of war, desperate people throughout history – those fleeing internal persecution in their own countries as well as those who find themselves to be strangers in a strange land – have sought the church as a place of sanctuary. When one has nowhere to turn, the door of the church is a beacon of hope and refuge in a dark and desperate world.

The practice of sanctuary is again emerging as a movement within the ecumenical church, which assumes responsibility for the non-violent protection of human rights. Sanctuary is more than a matter of individual conscience. It is the church entering into communion with the violated and oppressed and building together a community of solidarity and love. The refugee becomes a gift from God, the presence of Christ to the sanctuary church. The refugee becomes not the object of charity or paternalistic ministry but, rather, the spiritual guide for congregations to help the protective community read the Bible as much of it was written – through the eyes and hearts of refugees.

When the protective community of faith adds a public witness to its practice of sanctuary, then the state is held accountable for its violations of human rights and the church becomes prophetic. Often the church must practise sanctuary in silence in order to protect those who need refuge. But even in these instances, the church provides documentation of human rights abuses so that the truth can be spoken with authority at a later time. When a church cannot speak publicly of severe repression, it must depend on other communions within the international community to assume the prophetic role.

Refugees who cross international borders without documents, exposing the root causes of their flight into exile, can become a part of the witness of the sanctuary

church. Refugee rights are directly linked to issues of military intervention, pacification, low-intensity conflict, arms sales, foreign-aid programmes and police training.

As more and more countries adopt highly restrictive policies to prevent the admission of refugees, prophetic witness may risk aiding refugees to cross borders safely. Many nations are trying to deal with the refugee problem by closing borders to applicants for asylum, intercepting boats at sea, and requiring individual proof of refugee status under more restrictive terms. The public resistance of faith communities to these violations of human rights has extended the prophetic role of the church across national borders.

In many instances, the refugee becomes the prophetic voice within the faith community, speaking truth to political powers about the causes of their suffering and exile. In the case of internally displaced people, the church is often the only voice documenting gross violations of human rights,\* torture, bombing or starvation of civilian populations in counter-insurgency military strategies. Through this solidarity and communion with the suffering and violated, the sanctuary church becomes one Body in Christ.

JOHN FIFE

- I. Bau, *This Ground Is Holy: Church Sanctuary and Central American Refugees*, New York, Paulist, 1985
- H. Cunningham, *God and Caesar at the Rio Grande: Sanctuary and the Politics of Religion*, Minneapolis, Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1995
- P. Golden & M. McConnell, *Sanctuary: The New Underground Railroad*, Maryknoll NY, Orbis, 1986
- J. Schaeffer ed., *Sanctuary and Asylum: A Handbook for Commitment*, Geneva, WARC, 1990.

## SANT'EGIDIO COMMUNITY

IN 1968 ANDREA RICCARDI, an Italian high school student, launched a new lay community from the small Roman church of Sant'Egidio (St Giles). It sought to implement Second Vatican Council demands in the light of the gospel by a common spirituality in providing service to the poor of Rome, "the forgotten people". Its ministries include soup kitchens, "popular schools" for disadvantaged children, and care for neglected elderly and AIDS victims. At the beginning

of the millennium this fast-growing new movement, a favourite of John Paul II, lists 15,000 lay members in more than 20 countries worldwide.

In October 1992 Sant'Egidio brokered a peace accord in Mozambique, ending a brutal civil war that had left over one million dead over almost two decades. In December 1996 the community negotiated an end to the civil war in Guatemala and paved the way for a truth commission to document 26 years of horrors. Former UN secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali coined the phrase "the Rome formula" in reference to the "powerless" Sant'Egidio's careful and honest approach with the politically powerful.

The commitment to peace led the community also to ecumenical and inter-religious relations. In the 1990s it began to sponsor annual inter-religious gatherings. In September 2000 a Lisbon summit of 250 leaders of 10 religions from 52 nations was sponsored by Sant'Egidio and the cardinal archbishop of Lisbon. The summit, called Oceans of Peace, agreed that struggles against poverty, war and the death penalty "create zones for inter-religious cooperation without tripping anyone's theological wires".

Every evening in Rome's Santa Maria in Trastevere, the community offers public vespers, drawing large numbers of young Romans and pilgrims who witness the clear connection between liturgy and life.

TOM STRANSKY

## SCHISM

THE WORD "SCHISM" comes from the Greek *schisma*, meaning "split, rent, division". In the New Testament it refers to divisions and quarrels of all kinds which had developed in the church.\* Later, the word came to be used solely for divisions of a lasting nature, not over questions of doctrine but because of disagreements over questions of discipline. Schismatics therefore were people who, though still agreeing with dogmas, split away from the church, refusing to obey its hierarchical authorities because of differences of opinion over questions such as the legitimacy of this or that hierarchy, or a particular disciplinary measure, or problems

concerning rites or organization (see canon 1 of Basil the Great).

One of the most famous schisms in the ancient church was that created by Donatus (d.355), the bishop of Casae Nigrae, in Numidia, North Africa, against the bishop of Carthage, whom he accused of having surrendered the holy books during the persecutions. Donatus led a schismatic church in opposition to the latter, drawing on the support of the rural Berber population. Attacked by Augustine, Donatism was finally condemned at the council of Carthage (411). Mention may also be made of the schism at Antioch caused by the banishment of the bishop of Antioch, Meletius, and the consecration of Paulinus as bishop against canon law (363).

The church suspends eucharistic fellowship with schismatic groups, but according to canons 10 and 11 of the council of Carthage the priest who creates a schism is liable to excommunication.\* Canon 33 of the council of Laodicea forbids prayer with schismatics. However, canon 1 of Basil prescribes that baptism\* received among schismatics be recognized.

Other schisms have likewise left their mark on the history of the church. One of these was the schism between the East and the Roman West which culminated in 1054 (see *Athenagoras I, Paul VI*). As a result of this division, Roman Catholic theology characterizes the Orthodox as schismatics because of their refusal to recognize the universal authority and jurisdiction of the pope. Another noteworthy schism is the great schism in the Western church which divided the Roman Catholic Church from 1378 to 1417, when there were two popes at the same time, one in Rome and one in Avignon; in 1409 there was even a third pope in Pisa before the council of Constance (1414). The election of Pope Martin V (1417) put an end to the division.

One should not forget the schism of the Old Believers (*Raskol*), which has divided the Russian Orthodox Church since the second half of the 17th century. It was caused by the stubborn opposition provoked by the reforms introduced by Patriarch Nikon, who made changes in the service books and in ritual. The adherents of the old ways were condemned and excommunicated at the great council of Moscow of 1666-67 (condemna-

tions which were lifted at the council of Moscow in 1971). Their movement continued, however, divided into sects, and still counts its followers in the millions.

This last schism highlights the dangers of hasty and abrupt liturgical reforms. It also shows that schisms arising out of disagreements over questions of rite or discipline can in the long run engender heresies\* in matters of faith\* and doctrine, opening the way for ecclesiological errors and quarrels over the sacraments,\* the nature of the church\* and even the means of salvation.\* Schisms as well as heresies obviously represent serious obstacles to the unity\* of the Christian world.

ALEXIS KNIAZEFF

■ 1054-1954, *L'Eglise et les Eglises: Neuf siècles de douloureuse séparation entre l'Orient et l'Occident: Etudes et travaux sur l'unité chrétienne offerts à Dom L. Beauduin*, 2 vols, Chevetogne, Eds de Chevetogne, 1954-55.

### SCHMEMANN, ALEXANDER

B. 13 Sept. 1921, Revel, Estonia; d. 13 Dec. 1983, Crestwood, NY, USA. Professor of church history and liturgical theology at St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, Crestwood, 1951-83, Schmemann was dean of the seminary, 1962-83. Under his guidance St Vladimir's became the centre of a liturgical and eucharistic revival and was an academic institution much respected in ecumenical circles.



His theological world-view was shaped during his studies at the Orthodox Theological Institute of St Sergius in Paris, 1940-45, where he then became professor of Byzantine church history until 1951. In the 1950s he was vice-chairman of the WCC Youth department and member of the Faith and Order commission. Schmemann lectured as adjunct professor at Union Theological Seminary, General Theological Seminary and Columbia University. He favoured Orthodoxy in the USA and the establishment of the autocephalous Orthodox Church in America in 1970.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ A. Schmemann, *Church, World, Mission: Reflections on Orthodoxy in the West*, Crestwood NY, St Vladimir's Seminary, 1979 ■ *The Eucharist, Sacrament of the Kingdom*, Crestwood NY, St Vladimir's Seminary, 1988 ■ *The Historical Road of Eastern Orthodoxy*, New York, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963.

### SCHUTZ-MARSAUCHE, ROGER

B. 12 May 1915, Provence, Switzerland. Brother Roger is the founder and prior of the ecumenical community of Taizé,\* near Cluny, in France, which today has 90 brothers. In 1940 he went to Taizé alone, and in 1942 he was joined by a few other brothers. In 1949 seven of them took monastic vows. In 1952 Brother Roger wrote the *Rule of Taizé*. When the *Office of Taizé* was published ten years later, its careful balance of old and new aroused the attention of many who were concerned for the renewal of Christian worship around the world. In 1958 Brother Roger was received in audience by Pope John XXIII, and he was an observer at the Second Vatican Council. In 1970 he announced a worldwide council of youth (which opened in 1974) and in 1982 led to a "pilgrimage of trust on earth" which includes European meetings (20,000 youth each year in a European capital), intercontinental meetings (Madras, India) and East-West meetings (Yugoslavia). He received the Templeton prize (1974), the peace prize in Germany (1974), and the UNESCO prize for peace education (1988).

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ R. Schutz-Marsauche, *Le dynamique du provisoire* (ET *The Dynamic of the Provisional*, London, Mowbray, 1981) ■ *Fleurissent les déserts du coeur* (ET *And Your Deserts Shall Flower*, London, Oxford, Mowbray, 1984) ■ *Violence du pacifique: Etonnement de l'amour* (ET *Afire with Love*, New York, Crossroad, 1982).

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

IN 1926 THE philosopher Alfred North Whitehead described science and religion\* as “the two strongest general forces” that influence human life. Inevitably, then, the ecumenical movement has had an interest in science.

Historians frequently make the case that the development of science owes something to the biblical tradition. Polytheism and animism discourage efforts at unified explanations of nature,\* and religions that teach the unreality of the physical world devalue scientific exploration. Belief in divine creation implies a unity and authentic reality to all nature, the presuppositions for most scientific inquiry. Even so, scientific discoveries have often clashed with traditional beliefs and have threatened ecclesiastical authority,\* leading to sporadic, sometimes dramatic conflicts between science and theology.

In the ancient and medieval church the clashes were usually not severe. Christians understood that no human language was adequate to the mystery of God and that much of the Bible was to be read symbolically. Scientists were a small elite, and scientific methods had not come to dominate culture.\* Platonism diverted human attention from nature (a shadow-world) to the eternal “real” world, and Aristotelianism assumed a teleology in nature that theologians could relate to their understanding of divine creation. So it was not until the great modern advances of science that the problems of relating science and theology became critical for society at large.

Catholicism met the challenge of new scientific cosmologies by condemning Galileo (1633), a condemnation that was revoked by Pope John Paul II in 1992. Learning from that experience, the Vatican did not make a similar mistake with the scientific theory of evolution. Protestantism sometimes rejected evolution, insisting that Gen. 1-3 gave a lit-

eral and accurate account of creation\* – a belief that still causes conflicts in public education in some parts of the world (see **creationism**). A quite different Protestant response, typical of some liberal theology, was to make a theology of development and progress out of evolution. Today theologians are engaged in new efforts to relate contemporary scientific cosmologies and evolutionary concepts to Christian belief.

Technology has often been a quite different enterprise from science. Science seeks understanding. Its motivation is both intellectual and aesthetic; it loves a comprehensive and “elegant” theory. It is a work of imagination joined with realism. It traces connections of cause and effect; its methods include observation, development of theories that explain the evidence, and verification of those theories by further observation and experimentation, thus expanding the boundaries of knowledge. Technology seeks to cope with and sometimes control physical nature and society. Its motivation is practical. It is less concerned with grand theories, more concerned with effectiveness. In some cases technology is the application of science; thus the scientific theories of Albert Einstein led to the technology of nuclear energy and weapons. But technology has also preceded science; the lever, the wheel, the first ancient steam engine and the magnifying glass probably came long before the theories that explain them.

In some societies, including the ancient Greek, science was mainly an interest of intellectuals, who disdained physical labour and therefore technology. Both class structure and metaphysics separated theory from practice, science from technology. Christian faith,\* remembering the carpenter of Nazareth, drew the two closer. Monasteries, though often unsophisticated intellectually, became the centres for the preservation of scientific knowledge and the development of crafts and technologies. The Benedictine monks have been called the first intellectuals to get dirt under their fingernails.

In the modern world science and technology are interdependent, sometimes almost indistinguishable. Ever since Francis Bacon (1561-1626) declared that “knowledge is power”, the sharp separation between science and technology has been

blunted. In pragmatic theories of knowledge, in which all inquiry is problem solving, science and technology are closely akin. Contemporary science often leads to technological innovations; just as often its experimentation depends upon elaborate technological apparatus. Frequently it is funded by government and industry interested in military and economic pay-offs.

Even so, the distinction between science and technology remains important. Science with its understanding of the world presents issues to theology concerning the truth claims of Christian faith. Technology presents issues to ethics,\* as its new powers require human direction and evaluation.

### ECUMENICAL ATTENTION IN THE 20TH CENTURY

The WCC from its beginnings has taken an interest in the social impact of scientific technologies. The first assembly, meeting in Amsterdam in the aftermath of the second world war (1948), called attention to the relation between technology and modern secularism and to the ways in which technology acquires a momentum of its own that has a powerful effect on society (see *secularization*). It warned against the technological depersonalization of life and its wasteful exploitation of natural resources. However, delegates from Asia and Africa (a very small minority in the WCC at that time) saw the potential of technology to “lessen the burden of toil and alleviate poverty”. They thought the Europeans and North Americans were overly pessimistic about technology.

The second assembly (Evanston 1954) launched a study project on the “Christian Responsibility towards Areas of Rapid Social Change”, with special attention to Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. The discussions emphasized political, economic and cultural change, but with constant awareness of the impact of technology on all these. The climax of the project was a conference in Salonika (1959) on “Christian Action in Rapid Social Change: Dilemmas and Opportunities”.

The third assembly (New Delhi 1961) brought major changes in the WCC. The merger of the WCC and the International Missionary Council, along with the entrance of the Russian Orthodox and other churches

from Africa, Asia and Latin America, changed the predominantly Western European-North American character of the WCC’s earlier years. The Asian setting influenced the assembly’s concern for the responsible uses of technology.

The years 1962-65 were the years of the Second Vatican Council.\* Pope John XXIII, who had authorized the presence of Roman Catholic observers at New Delhi, invited Protestant and Orthodox observers to Vatican II. Roman Catholicism had a strong legacy of papal encyclicals\* and addresses dealing with the modern political-economic world, including its technologies. These usually endorsed the benefits of technologies, urged believers to use them in accord with Catholic moral teachings, and warned against the depersonalizing effects of modern social change. If these documents sometimes showed nostalgia for medieval Christendom, Vatican II changed that – above all, in its Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*.

This influential document recognized the importance of industrialization and urbanization in shaping the modern world. It acknowledged the impact of the physical and human sciences upon the understanding of the world and upon human self-knowledge, and it took account of the technology that it saw “transforming the face of the earth”. It addressed issues of marriage\* and family,\* culture, economic organization, political life, world peace and the community of nations – seeking to understand all these in their scientific as well as their moral aspects. It welcomed science and technology when these are directed towards human dignity and equality, while warning against their dehumanizing effects when ethical issues are neglected.

During Vatican II, the WCC was making plans for a world conference on “Christians in the Technical and Social Revolutions of Our Time” (Geneva 1966). This was the first major WCC conference devoted solely to issues of social ethics. It was in many respects an heir of the Oxford conference of the Life and Work movement (1937), prior to the organization of the WCC. But Oxford had been a conference of church leaders, mostly clergy and mostly from Western Europe and North America. At Geneva a ma-

majority of the 420 delegates were laypeople, and a majority came from outside the old geographical nexus. Roman Catholics had prominent roles as speakers and observers.

The conference had a wide impact. Its four preparatory volumes of essays were studied around the world. It was the first global platform for emerging Latin American and African theologies of liberation. Its findings won major attention among member churches and among critics of the WCC.

The delegates, when they addressed the topic of the conference, were more adept at talking about social than technological revolutions. Despite some major addresses on technology, the conference centred its attention on political, social and cultural issues, and it considered technology primarily as a form of power with social impact. Some of the participating scientists objected that their concerns had been neglected, and the report of the conference contained recommendations that the WCC find ways for continuing work involving scientists and technologists.

Following Geneva, the WCC and the Vatican cooperated in the founding of the committee on Society, Development and Peace (SODEPAX\*), which for a few years pursued vigorously some of the concerns shared by Vatican II and Geneva. Within the WCC, the department of Church and Society carried out the recommendations for continued work involving cooperation of scientists and technologists with theologians.

This process took an unexpected direction when the issues of ecology leapt into prominence in several parts of the world. The Geneva reports had stated: "The churches should welcome the development of science and technology as an expression of God's creative work. They should also welcome the economic growth and social development which it makes possible." That confidence was balanced by warnings that technological power can be an instrument of injustice. But the new accent, neglected at Geneva, was on the destructive consequences of present technologies and economic development, as they consume unrenewable resources, pollute the environment and endanger human life and ecosystems. Some scientists involved in the programme of the WCC made this point with great

power. The fifth assembly of the WCC (Nairobi 1975) endorsed continuing work on the theme, and the central committee adopted a programme emphasis on the struggle for a "Just, Participatory and Sustainable Society".\*

Within the WCC there was some resistance to the new theme. To nations suffering poverty, a warning against economic growth seemed to be a message of despair. Others feared that well-intentioned people, weary of strenuous conflicts for justice,\* welcomed a turn to a gentler environmental interest. Ecologists answered that if the dream of overcoming the gap between rich and poor by making everybody rich was illusory, the concern for distributive justice was all the more urgent. They also pointed out that existing patterns of economic growth usually widen the gap between rich and poor and that pollution harms the poor far more than the rich. The department of Church and Society, often gaining the cooperation of eminent scientists, sought to define the kinds of economic growth and distribution that are not destructive. It sponsored regional conferences in Africa, Asia and Europe. It gave special attention to problems of energy and justice in a world in which the poor societies that lack fossil fuels are especially disadvantaged. On another front, it arranged international conversations on the new genetics and the ethical issues it presents (see **bio-ethics**).

In 1979 the WCC convened a world conference on "Faith, Science and the Future" at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (see **ecumenical conferences**). About half of the 405 delegates (including 91 students) were physical scientists and technologists; the other half were church leaders, theologians, social scientists, people from government and industry. In recognition of the worldwide nature of the issues, the conference heard Buddhists and Muslims, as well as Christian theologians, speak out of the insights of their faith. Other speakers, chosen for their technical competence, included Christians, Jews and agnostics. Two of the ten sections dealt specifically with themes of science and faith, one with science and education, seven with various aspects of technology and Christian ethics.

The major surprise of the conference came when some of the physical scientists

asked to change the agenda in order to give more attention to the issue of war and nuclear weapons. Original plans had not given adequate importance to the topic, only because of another WCC programme on militarism.\* The scientists argued persuasively that any understanding of contemporary technology is radically incomplete without attention to weapons. One recommendation of the conference was that the WCC sponsor an international hearing on nuclear weapons. That took place in Amsterdam in 1981.

The preparatory book and the two volumes coming out of the MIT conference had wide distribution and influenced theological education and programmes of churches in various nations. Spin-offs from the conference include further programmes in many parts of the world. Some of the themes of the conference entered into the programme of the sixth assembly of the WCC (Vancouver 1983) and the world convocation on justice, peace and the integrity of creation\* (Seoul 1990).

### CONTINUING ISSUES

Out of this ecumenical history have emerged several issues that continue to engage the churches. Five of them are listed here. In keeping with the historical record, these centre more directly on technology and ethics than on science and theology. The reason is that the issues of science-theology permit extended discussion; the issues of technology-ethics often require urgent decisions. Ecumenical Christianity can choose to move slowly on some theological issues rather than foreclose discussion by premature decisions, but on many ethical issues it must throw its weight into the struggle or stand by and watch others direct the course of history. Even so, all the ethical issues mentioned here have theological grounding and implications.

*Humanity within God's creation.* The report of Geneva 1966 includes these words: "Christians believe God expects man to exercise dominion over the earth, to name the creatures and to cultivate the garden of the world... Man is both the master and the steward of nature. His dominion over nature, considered as God's creation, is that of a keeper and transformer, not of a conqueror."

The delegates who formulated and adopted those sentences could not guess how great a controversy would soon arise over the concept of human dominion. A few months later medieval historian Lynn White, Jr, delivered an address to the American Association for the Advancement of Science on "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis". White, himself a Christian and later a participant in the programme of the WCC, charged that Christianity, especially in its Western form, had destroyed the sacral quality of nature and encouraged its predatory exploitation to a degree that now threatened the integrity of nature and of humankind. A little later Arnold Toynbee made similar accusations. But whereas Toynbee advocated a return to a pre-Christian pantheism, White asked for a recovery of the insights of Franciscan Christianity. Others found resources in Eastern Orthodoxy.

At New Delhi in 1961, Joseph Sittler had urged a theological concern for "the realm of nature as a theatre of grace". But other Christian writers were exulting in Christianity's "desacralization" of nature and the secularization of society. There was even bold talk of the "humanization" or "hominization" of the universe. White, without mentioning these writers, took up their challenge and condemned exactly those elements in the Christian tradition that they had acclaimed.

The growth of ecological consciousness has made humanity more aware of its dependence on a nature that it did not create. Geneva 1966 emphasized both dominion and stewardship. Human beings survive and build civilizations by modifying the course of nature; they immobilize or eradicate some forms of life (the polio virus and smallpox bacillus) for the sake of human values. But in stewardship they are caretakers of an earth that was created before them. Furthermore, the mystery of creation extends far beyond human dominion or stewardship, as Job and some of the prophets knew well. The Pleiades and Orion were surely not created for human convenience.

At what point does the human use of nature become both irreverent and destructive to human aims? At what point do new biological sciences including genetic engineering become irreverent intrusions? When does a

God-given "dominion" become an arrogant exercise in "playing God"? The ecumenical discussion continues.

*Evaluations of technology.* A closely related issue is the contrasting evaluations of technology. Some welcome technology as a product of human creativity, a force that liberates people from poverty and drudgery. Others, notably Jacques Ellul, the French lawyer-sociologist-theologian, see it as a dehumanizing power that subjects persons to an impersonal fate that is remarkably similar in all social systems. A third group see it as a neutral force that can be used for good or evil, depending on the purposes of its users or the social system in which it functions. The telephone, for example, is quite indifferent to the good or bad messages it transmits. A fourth group see it as inherently ambivalent, as all power is ambivalent. Power\* is not evil; the purpose of much Christian action is the empowerment of people. Yet in a sinful world power is almost inevitably misused (see *sin*).

*Power and inequality.* Technology increases some human powers to cope with and make use of nature. But as C.S. Lewis pointed out, the new powers that people win over nature become powers of some people over other people. There are exceptions to that generalization: the victory over smallpox has been a human victory. But most technological advances, obviously in weapons and almost as obviously in economic productivity, enhance the power of some people to dominate other people.

The unequal distribution of technologies accentuates inequality. Research is directed primarily towards the projects of the rich and powerful, only slightly towards the problems of the poor. The international transfer of technologies, even when it purports to help the poor, often serves the interests of wealthy corporations and governments.

Similarly technology enhances the power of elites who understand and control it. The participatory society, often advocated by the WCC, may be frustrated when wise decisions depend on expert skills possessed by a few, who can use those skills for their own advantage.

Technology is a contributor to globalization. The WCC, like the UN, is greatly dis-

turbed by the concentrations of power wrought by globalism, yet – again, like the UN – puzzled by the problems of coping with such power.

*High risk.* Scientists sometimes estimate that the human race is living in an era of higher risk than at any time since people first established their precarious existence in the face of hostile animals and natural forces. Through the centuries of history, people have exercised new powers in a trial-and-error method. They built upon experiments that succeeded; they abandoned experiments that failed. The new situation is that the failure of some experiments could mean disaster for humankind. The most obvious risk is the use of weapons that could destroy civilization. Less immediate is the risk of changing the climate of the earth through human interventions in the ecosystem. To cease experimentation would be to cease to be human; but rash experimentation is more portentous than in past eons.

The increase in risk comes at a time when political organizations are inadequate to cope with the issues. Acid rain, nuclear radiation, fluorocarbons, atmospheric carbon dioxide and a host of similar concerns have no respect for national boundaries. The unity of humankind,\* long a matter of Christian faith, has new programmatic implications for science and technology.

*Unprecedented ethical questions.* In a world of high technology, individuals and societies face ethical decisions for which there are no direct precedents. The Bible, the theological tradition and the philosophical tradition have no commands: thou shalt (or shalt not) re-arrange DNA, prolong the lives of permanently comatose patients, use nuclear energy, contribute to vast climatic change by burning fossil fuels. The contemporary world must develop new ethical codes to deal with new problems and possibilities. Technology itself does not answer questions about the evaluation and direction of technology. Scientists frequently talk of problems for which there is "no technical fix"; but we must recognize there is likewise "no moral fix" in the sense of simply repeating rules from the past.

In some cases science and technology raise serious questions about the very nature of selfhood. Descartes (1596-1650) saw the

human body as a mechanism, with the soul as a discrete entity lodged in the body. This dualism, in the tradition of Plato, contrasted with the Hebrew-Christian belief in the unity of body and soul. Further scientific discoveries tended to undermine it. Twentieth-century discoveries in genetics sometimes led to assertions of biological determinism. The WCC entered into studies of the theological and ethical aspects of genetics with a conference in Zurich, sponsored by Church and Society and by the Christian Medical Commission, in 1973.

Church and Society continued discussions and publications, which in some cases led to statements from the central committee and from world conferences and assemblies. Many member churches took up the subject. The chief issues included the relation of genetic determinism to freedom, warnings against racial and other prejudices in the history of eugenics, and the many ethical problems involved in the exercise of new scientific powers.

The ecumenical movement is developing methods of ethical inquiry in which people of diverse skills (technological, theological, cultural), diverse social situations and diverse ideologies can interact in assessing unprecedented ethical issues. The agenda extends far into the future.

See also **globalization, economic; scientific world-view.**

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**SCIENTIFIC WORLD-VIEW**

THE TERM "scientific world-view" represents an imprecise but influential concept, arising from the modern revolutionary scientific developments originating in western Europe and spreading throughout the world. It is associated with such famous figures as Copernicus (1473-1543), Galileo (1564-1642), Descartes (1596-1650), Newton (1642-1727) and Darwin (1809-82). Their discoveries do not, of themselves, constitute a world-view, but the cultural reverberations of their work have contributed to a widespread and comprehensive understanding of reality.

There is no single scientific world-view, but the more ambitious formulations include some or all of the following propositions: (1) the universe can be understood as a mechanism of matter in motion, acting by strictly causal laws or some combination of causality and chance; (2) accurate understanding requires quantification of evidence; qualitative distinctions can be reduced to quantitative; (3) the earth, rather than being the centre of the universe, is only a satellite of one star within one of innumerable galaxies; (4) geographical and astronomical evidence shows that the earth is billions of years old; (5) the human race is the result of an evolutionary process, operating through random variations of genetic material and survival of the fittest; (6) persons are mechanisms; freedom, soul and responsibility are illusory; (7) many ethical principles, once thought to be immutable, are in fact cultural habits, rooted in particular histories.

Historically, the rise of the scientific world-view had various implications for theology. It presented obvious difficulties for those theologies that understood the Bible as a literal, scientific account of the world and history. But it then took several directions. *Deism*, popular in the 18th century, accepted God\* as the first cause of the universe, but God was now remote and irrelevant to human affairs. *Pantheism* understood God as equivalent to nature\* or (as in Spinoza) the

basic rational principle in nature. *Atheism*\* took science to be a refutation of God. *Radical agnosticism* found the idea of God irrelevant, as in the astronomer LaPlace's reply to Napoleon that he had "no need of that hypothesis". *Positivism* defined truth in terms of empirical verification and found all propositions about God, metaphysics and ethics to be neither true nor false but meaningless and nonsensical.

The modern scientific world-view is not entirely new. Ancient astronomers had rejected the geocentric view of the solar system. Democritus had taught that the world is constituted of matter and motion, operating deterministically according to causal laws. Epicurus added to the materialism of Democritus a factor of chance, a curious anticipation of modern theories of indeterminacy. But modern scientific world-views involved new comprehensive syntheses, influencing not only intellectual elites but also popular culture.

Theology responded in a variety of ways. Christians showed that exegetes through the ages had rarely interpreted all of scripture as a literal, scientific record. Kantians and neo-Kantians accepted science as an account of phenomena but not of the deeper noumenal reality of selfhood and God, a position akin to Platonic and some Oriental philosophies. Others, accepting the theological significance of science, have held that no world-view can be complete if it ignores such obvious elements of human experience as the ethical, the aesthetic and the religious. They have moved to a revision both of theological traditions and of science – a move helped by scientific developments that emphasize the relational character of all scientific understanding.

A 20th-century controversy about the scientific world-view centred in the work of Rudolf Bultmann, who argued that modern science requires a radical revision (a "demythologizing") of the Bible and traditional doctrine. Accepting a "scientific philosophy", he reinterpreted Christian faith as an expression of the Christian experience of freedom, anxiety and faith, eliminating "objective" and metaphysical interpretations. The Swiss philosopher Karl Jaspers replied that science "does not provide a total world-view" and that much of the scientific world-

view is simply "modern scientific superstition".

Recent studies in the history of science emphasize a plurality of scientific world-views, thus relativizing monopolistic views of the past. Most influential of all has been the work of Thomas Kuhn, who has shown that science develops not by strict linear progress but by a series of "scientific revolutions", involving a change of "paradigms" and a reconstruction, often radical, of old knowledge. No paradigm (and consequently no scientific world-view) can claim absolute truth. Some philosophies (e.g. deconstruction and post-modernism) go much further, understanding science to be a matter of ideology or preference, more like changing styles of art than like claims to objective truth. Most practising scientists resist these tendencies in their more radical forms.

Both the Vatican and the WCC have given attention to the implications of science for theology. In general, they have endorsed scientific endeavours and affirmed the verified findings of science, while challenging some aspects of various scientific world-views and asking for further inquiry into others.

See also **science and technology**.

ROGER L. SHINN

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## SCOTT, EDWARD WALTER

B. 30 April 1919, Edmonton, Canada. Scott became primate of the Anglican Church of Canada in 1971 and from 1975 to 1983 was moderator of the WCC central committee. Educated at the University of British Columbia and the Anglican Theological College in Vancouver, he was active in the Student Christian Movement, of which he was for five years the general secretary at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg. In 1960 he became director of social service for the diocese of Rupert's Land and priest in charge of Indian work. He was associate secretary of the National Council for Social Services un-

til his election as bishop of Kootenay in 1966. As an active supporter of ecumenical concerns, with pastoral gifts for prayer and reconciliation, he strongly believes that Christians must work across denominational lines on a variety of issues, although in no way denying the right of self-determination.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## SCRIPTURE

SCRIPTURE is for Christians the Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments. From the viewpoint of the history of religions, the Bible may be compared for content and function with the scriptures\* of some other faiths. Within Christianity, scripture is normally taken as the permanent written witness to God's history with the world and humankind, particularly with the elect people of Israel, and more particularly still with Jesus confessed as the Christ, Son of God and Lord – these particularities opening up again to the universal perspective and ultimate prospect of God's kingdom\* and the completion of the human calling in it.

In the context of some such broad general agreement, many important issues concerning scripture have been the object of controversy within Christianity: the precise limits of scripture; the understanding of its divine inspiration; the methods of its interpretation; its relation to oral, practical and institutional tradition; its authority and use in the life of the church.

See **Bible**, its role in the ecumenical movement; **canon**; **exegesis**, **methods of**; **hermeneutics**; **inspiration**; **New Testament and Christian unity**; **Old Testament and Christian unity**; **Tradition and traditions**; **word of God**.

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT

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## SCRIPTURES

SCRIPTURES are written texts, believed to be of supernatural revelation and preceded by oral traditions of varying lengths, found in the major historical religions. The scriptures are used in public and private rituals and are interpreted by professional priests or scholars, providing standards of faith. A canon\* (or "rule") indicates the books accepted as authoritative.

Christianity is unique in incorporating in its Bible the scriptures of its parent religion, Judaism, as an Old Testament, or covenant, preparatory to the New Testament. It is also unusual in providing detailed accounts of the life of its founder (in the four gospels) in its sacred canon. The earliest Christians were Jews, but the NT was written in Greek, and its authors normally used the Greek Septuagint version of the OT. Partly in response to 2nd-century Marcionism, which rejected the OT and some of the Christian writings which had already gained authority, the church established a NT canon, with the gospels and 13 epistles of Paul as the core; there were doubts for some time, however, about books such as Hebrews and Revelation. Reading of the scriptures has always formed part of public worship, with law and prophets alongside epistle and gospel in the liturgy.\* Readings in the West long continued in Latin, even when the modern languages had developed. At the Reformation, many vernacular translations were made, and public and private Bible study flourished. The United Bible Society reported that, in complete or partial form, the Bible was available in the year 2000 in 2261 languages.

Jews usually prefer to speak of the Hebrew Bible, rather than the OT, Hebrew being the language in which all except a few chapters were written. The canon traditionally consists of 24 books, but with sub-division such as the "minor" prophets there is a total of 39. These fall into three sections: *torah*, "teaching", or "law", also called the Pentateuch, or "five books"; *nevi'im*, "prophets", including early historical books

and major and minor prophets; *ketuwim*, “writings”, including Psalms, Proverbs, Job and some later history. It is an article of faith among Orthodox Jews that the *torah* was written by Moses, but liberal Jewish and Christian writers see it as coming from various hands and dates. The written *torah* was the sole authority for priestly Sadducees, but Pharisees used an oral *torah* to complement it, which was developed in the Mishnah (“repetition”) and in vast commentaries of the Talmud (“instruction”), revered and studied next in importance to the Bible. The Bible, especially the *torah*, is read in Hebrew in public worship, with some use of the vernacular today.

The Qur’an (“recitation”) is the basic scripture of Islam, in 114 *suras*, or chapters. After an opening prayer these are arranged roughly with the longest first (similar to the Jewish arrangement of the prophets or the Christian ordering of the Pauline epistles). The Qur’an is regarded as the very word of God (Allāh), and commentators quote it as “God said”. Fiqh Akbar II, a creed of the 10th century, declared that “our pronouncing, writing and reciting the Qur’an is created, whereas the Qur’an itself is uncreated”. It is believed that the Qur’an was revealed to the prophet Muhammad by the angel Gabriel from A.D. 610 to 632 in Mecca and Medina, that the prophet was illiterate, and that the book was written down later from “scraps of parchment and leather... and the breasts of men”. The Qur’an recognizes that Moses received the Torah from God, David the Zabūr, or Psalms, and Jesus the Injil, or Evangel. Although there are many biblical stories in the Qur’an, it is held that the versions in the Qur’an are perfect and final. Recitation of verses from the Qur’an in Arabic forms the basis of the five ritual daily prayers (*salāt*) required of all Muslims and used in communal mosque worship, especially Friday prayer. The Qur’an contains religious and moral teachings, but biographies of Muhammad came much later and are not canonical. Next to the Qur’an are Hadith, lengthy “traditions”, which provide guidance for many aspects of life but which are debated today, while the Qur’an remains uncriticized.

The Bahā’is also recognize that previous revelations were given to Moses, Jesus,

Zoroaster and Buddha, but by placing their own leaders as prophets after Muhammad, they aroused fierce persecutions from Muslims, and again recently in Iran. Bahā’i scriptures comprise Arabic and Persian writings of the Iranian Bāb (1819-50) and Bahā’ Allāh (1817-92) as verbally inspired revelations, followed by infallible commentaries of “Abd al-Bahā” (1844-1921). Much remains in manuscript, but short selections have been translated into many languages.

Zoroastrianism, from Iran but chiefly now represented by small communities of Parsees in India, had a long tradition of oral texts, but like the Hindus they were loath to use the alien art of writing for sacred purposes. The dates of Zoroaster (Zarathushtra) are debated, perhaps before 1000 B.C., and the Avesta scriptures were set down in a special alphabet about the 5th century A.D. All the Avesta are anonymous except for 17 hymns attributed to Zoroaster himself, called Gāthās (“songs”). The texts have long been employed as mantras (“sacred words”) used in prayers and rituals five times daily. Zand (or Zend) commentaries on the Avesta are secondary. Many of the texts have been translated, but some translations need revision.

Hindu scriptures are vast and amorphous, after the manner of Indian religion itself. Ancient texts were composed and recited by a Brahmin priestly elite but, like the Zoroastrian, not written down for over a millennium, and there were a great many other works. Distinction was made between *shruti*, or “heard” by sages from gods (i.e. direct revelation), and *smriti*, or “remembered”, traditional religious and legal teachings. The oldest texts were hymns of the Vedas (“knowledge”) – Rig, Sama, Yajur and Atharva – followed by Brahmanas with priestly rituals and myths. Important philosophical speculations followed in Upanishads (“sessions”), which are Vedānta, or “Veda’s end”. This title is also applied to one of six schools of philosophy which includes great thinkers like Sankara and Rāmānuja, who clinch arguments by quoting Vedic texts as “scripture declares”. Then came two great epic poems, Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata, the latter including the short Bhagavad-Gītā, or “Lord’s Song”, the revelation of Krishna, best known of all translated

Hindu texts in the West. Priests performed rituals three times daily, with recitations of mantras, and for other Hindus there are countless texts and hymns for communal and private worship. Vedas and epics are in Sanskrit, and other texts are in many of the Indian languages, small portions of which have been translated into European languages.

The Sikhs, or “disciples” of the Indian Guru Nanak and his successors, have as scriptures the *Adi Granth* (“first book”) or *Guru Granth Sahib* (“revered book”). The latter comprises religious teachings in metrical form of the ten Sikh gurus, or “teachers”, the first collection made by the fifth guru Arjan in 1604, and the last recension by the tenth and last guru, Gobind Singh, in 1706. The *Adi Granth* includes verses of some Hindu and Muslim teachers of comparable outlook, but not from Hindu Vedic scriptures. Lives of the ten gurus are in later, popular hagiographies. A *Dasam Granth*, “book of the tenth [Guru]”, includes teachings and legends. The *Adi Granth* is written in Gurmukhi, the script of modern Punjabi; it is chanted in temples by congregations led by musicians and is read in homes daily.

Numerically small but ancient, the Jains of India have extensive canonical scriptures differing between the *Shvetāmbara* (“white-clad” Jains) and the *Digambara* (“sky-clad”). The former claim 45 collections, and the *Digambara* have two older texts and dispute the language and form of the canon. Of the 45 texts, 8 have been translated into European languages. Jain monks and nuns recite texts and engage in study, meditation and physical discipline, while the laity take part in communal worship and pilgrimages.

Buddhism was roughly contemporary with Jainism, also arising in India in the 5th or 6th century B.C. and rejecting Hindu scriptures. Among innumerable schools and texts broad distinction is made between *Theravāda*, or “doctrine of the elders” (also called *Hīnayāna*, “small vehicle”, by opponents), and *Mahāyāna*, or “great vehicle”; these schools roughly correspond to the geographical regions of southern and northern or eastern Asia. The *Theravāda* canon is in *Tripiṭaka* (or *Tripitaka*, i.e. “three baskets”); the first is *Vinaya* (“discipline”), and the

third is *Abhi-dhamma* (higher “dhamma”, or doctrine of philosophical analysis). The second “basket” is the most important and popular, comprising the *Sutta* (“texts”), long discourses about the Buddha and other subjects, of many dates, but with no detailed life of Gautama Buddha. *Mahāyāna* canons, in China, Korea and Japan, include versions of the *Tripiṭaka* with many other texts from different schools. The most famous is the *Lotus Sutra* (*Saddharmapundarika*), which has been called “the gospel of half Asia”, and whose 24th chapter of devotion to a personal lord is recited by Zen and Nichiren adepts even when they reject other scriptures. Tibetan Buddhism has two great canonical collections, translations of Indian works, and an enormous corpus of its own, much untranslated and unpublished.

Buddhism so pervaded Chinese and Japanese life that its scriptures provided texts for many occasions, notably funerals. Of native Chinese writings there was a canon of five so-called Confucian Classics, though the teachings of Confucius were mostly in a short work, the *Analec*s (*Lun Yü*). The Classics were for centuries the basis of Confucian learning, and examinations on them gave entrance into official positions. After modern revolutions the *Little Red Book* of Mao Tse-Tung (*Zedong*) was used with almost religious awe by his followers. A Chinese Taoist canon of sacred texts served for ritual and festal purposes, as well as for exorcisms and alchemy. The *Lao Tzu*, or *Tao Te Ching*, inspired thinkers; its short 81 chapters have been widely translated.

Japanese native Shinto had ancient mythology, but it was not written down till the 8th century A.D., and then in Chinese, the *Kojiki* and *Nihongi*. These were not canonical scriptures comparable to the *Tripiṭaka* or Classics, so that in Neo-Shinto in the 19th century attempts were made to canonize not only the oldest annals but also ancient hymns and prayers. New Shinto groups also, such as *Tenri-kyo*, produced modern scriptures for use in worship, which are widely popular.

In cultures where writing was unknown, there were nevertheless traditional rituals accompanied by oral verses which often dated back centuries, and some have been rescued and preserved in modern studies. To some

extent religious art was a form of scripture, representing beliefs and hopes.

Scriptural religions have great advantages: canons of texts, ancient history, and international influence. These factors partly account for the modern success of Christianity and Islam, in particular in Africa, and to a lesser extent of Hindu and Buddhist thought in Europe and America.

See also **dialogue, interfaith.**

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## SECTS

THE WORD "SECT" (Latin *secta*, from *sequi*, to follow, i.e. a teacher or teaching; a translation of the Greek *hairesis*, originally a choice – see **heresy**) has acquired a special meaning and force in Christian language, particularly in the context of ecclesiology. From the outset, although it sometimes meant simply a particular school or party (see Acts 5:17, 24:5, 26:5) without conveying disapproval or stigma, its dominant reference was to a group which either broke off from the church\* or formed independently as a separatist body within the traditional Christian world, in opposition to the church.

Sects were accused – and the accusation still clings to the word – of falsifying the gospel, apostasy from the church's faith, separation from the Body of Christ, arrogance, and leading souls astray, even to damnation. In countries where Christianity became dominant, "sectarians" were accused also of endangering the unity of the nation and of undermining prevailing standards. Thus the term is clearly negative. Those who belong to a sect have been written off in church and society, especially in Europe. The accusatory term should no longer be used, however, es-

pecially by Christians and churches which consistently advocate freedom of belief, civil religious liberty, and the unrestricted formation of religious groups.

The sociology of religion has tried to employ the term in a neutral sense, e.g. to refer to a relatively small religious group which has split off from a larger one; a new lively community as opposed to an inactive traditional community; a voluntary association of individuals with a personal faith, as opposed to the church as an establishment for salvation into which one has been born (Max Weber, Ernst Troeltsch); an alternative group as opposed not to the church but to society as such (Gerardus van der Leeuw). These sociological attempts, however, remain within the academic sphere. They carry little conviction, because none of these terms can do justice to the variety of phenomena. But above all, one cannot disregard the history of the term; it carries such heavy negative connotations that it cannot again be understood in a neutral sense.

Historians of religion look at secondary formations of religious groups within the sphere of influence of a dominant religion and should choose a general term such as "religious communities". These groups are then differentiated according to their origins, age, size, influence; their relation to the parent religion, to other religious groups, and to the surrounding culture which sustain them; and their effects on individuals and society. In all these points groups may change throughout their history and then must be assessed differently.

A "sect" is not simply removed from the world because of changed terminology. Phenomenologically, one can speak of a sectarian attitude and mentality (Joachim Wach) also within the churches. The marks of such a sectarian mentality are: some traditional articles of faith are so over-emphasized that they squeeze Christ and his gospel out of the central place in the faith; new doctrines and forms of belief, which are beyond the Bible and church tradition, acquire central importance and they become a means of distinguishing the members from all other Christians; the religious and spiritual horizon is narrowed. The sectarians are detached from the world and exclusive, and their group-related self-understanding makes church fel-

lowship impossible and often creates social isolation. Accordingly, the “sectarian” and the “sectarian group” is a *type* of religious adherence.

In the context of ecumenical ecclesiological studies, the following distinctions should be drawn (allowing for overlaps and constant changes).

(1) Churches in the Christian tradition which have more or less fellowship with each other: the historical churches, those in traditionally Christian countries that have detached themselves from the dominant (often a state) church, and “mission” or “young” churches; (2) Christian denominations and congregations which have separated from the church fellowship or have newly come into existence alongside the churches and live independently or as separatist groups (e.g. Adventist, Apostolic and many Pentecostal communities, African Independent Churches); (3) groups whose approach to faith and whose doctrines and practices are alien to the biblical Christian tradition and in some circumstances are directed against it (e.g. spiritualist and gnostic-esoteric communities and those which believe in a new revelation, as the Latter-Day Saints [Mormons]); (4) syncretistic formations where the non-Christian element predominates (e.g. Christian Science, communities of Christians characterized by anthroposophy) and tends to the establishment of new religions.

Religious groups which originate outside the Christian tradition do not count as “sects” but as offshoots from other religions. In the USA the term “cult” has appeared in the last few decades for those new groups with a high conflict potential which stand outside the mainstream of Christianity and are in fact hostile to the prevailing society and its cultural values. In general, one notices an increasing religious pluralism even in countries with an established Christian tradition, and this trend is obliging the churches to strengthen their efforts for giving a Christian response as they encounter other types of belief.

HANS DIETHER REIMER

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## SECULARIZATION

THE LATIN WORD *saeculum* denotes a limited but extended period of time: a human generation, a century (French *siècle*), or simply an age. It is still so used, e.g. in speaking of the secular appearance of a comet or the secular cooling of the earth.

The word entered Christian vocabulary as the consistent Vulgate translation of the Greek New Testament word *aiōn*, “age” (sometimes confusingly translated “world”), in all the variety of its meanings. It is this age, created by God (Heb. 1:2), when we marry and are given in marriage (Luke 20:34), in which we are to do good to our neighbours (1 Tim. 6:17), but whose cares can steal our minds from the promise of God (Mark 4:19). It is an age ruled by powers blind to God’s promise in their false wisdom (1 Cor. 2:6-8), to whose values and standards we are not to be conformed (Rom. 12:2) and which will end in the judgment of God (Matt. 24), to be followed by an age to come in which the faithful will have eternal life (Luke 18:30). The *saeculum* in the NT is the history\* which God has created, the time in which God works in judgment and grace.\* It is also the history of human sin\* and rebellion, of powers that exalt themselves, of wisdom that is ephemeral because it is not rooted in faith\* and obedience. But the kingdom to which the faithful look forward, and according to which they live, is also a *saeculum*, a redeemed, everlasting (*aiōnios*) age to come, but still an age.

The Vulgate, however, did not so translate. The Greek *aiōnios* became the Latin *aeterna*, obscuring its relation to the word “age”. Justification for this translation could be found in Plato’s *Timaeus*, where *aiōn* means not time but timelessness, the un-

changing reality of true forms, with an eye to which imperfect things of this world have their time (*chronos*) and decay.

Subtly, never completely but nevertheless dominantly, the *saeculum* came to be identified with the temporal, and the eternal with the timeless and unchanging. The *saeculum* was no longer the sphere in which discipleship could be most fully learned and practised; now it was reserved for the religious discipline of the monastery. It was no longer the historical time that lived in expectation of the coming of the Redeemer, realizing the promise of that coming in the events of the present age. Rather, in medieval Christendom, a hierarchical relation developed between secular estates of human life and work, affirmed as God's good creation, and the religious life in the service of the church, whose goal is the eternal contemplation of God.

This distinction is preserved in the Roman Catholic Church to this day. The code of canon law reserves the term "religious" or "consecrated life" for those who "profess the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience by vows or other sacred bonds" and who live "in institutes of consecrated life canonically erected by competent church authority" (canon 573). "Secular" clergy serve the church in normal parish situations while still practising a religious discipline. For the rest, secular activities are commended to the laity as their mission (canon 225) and strictly forbidden to clergy as "unbecoming to their state" (canon 285). Secularization is mentioned only once: the unfrocking of a priest for due cause. The *Catholic Encyclopedia*, however, uses the term also for the removal of property or of functions, in themselves quite secular (lands, schools, hospitals, orphanages et al.), from the control of the (Roman) church.

In Latin America the term has been used in this sense, particularly in the 19th century, when liberal governments, with the support of freemasons, positivists and Protestant minorities, challenged the control of the Roman Catholic Church in the field of education and certain civil functions (e.g. the record of births and the celebration of marriages). This issue was understood by Protestants as a struggle for religious freedom and equal rights for all, and the debate about some still-remaining limitations (chaplain-

cies, eligibility for some public offices) still produces tension and continues as a subject of dialogue in ecumenical relations.

## THE PROCESS

The meaning of "secular" for the present time, however, is determined by two other factors: the mid-20th-century discovery of how deep and broad the process of secularization has become among not only structures and powers of the common life but also methods of thought and ways of perceiving reality, and the theological recovery of the biblical meaning of the word as a context of the work of God and the mission\* of the church.\*

Dietrich Bonhoeffer described secularization, in a letter from prison in 1944, as a movement "towards the autonomy of man, in which I would include the discovery of the laws by which the world lives and deals with itself in science, social and political matters, art, ethics and religion". The world has reached adulthood; it no longer needs the working hypothesis "God" to make sense of reality and to solve the problems of human life. Secularization is, in the words of an Ecumenical Institute (Bossey) report in 1959, "the withdrawal of areas of life and thought from religious – and finally also from metaphysical – control and the attempt to understand and live in these areas in the terms which they alone offer".

Secularization is not a world-view but a process. Its essence is a change in the method of human thought and action. Total coherence is no longer sought. Various sciences concentrate on specialized areas in which their findings can be experimentally validated. Various technologies aim at the working effectiveness of their operations (see **science and technology**).

Universal structures of meaning, whether religious or otherwise, are irrelevant to this enterprise. Human beings no longer live in embracing communities that determine their values and judge their actions; rather, they live in the anonymity of the city (Harvey Cox), where they are free to move about, to choose their own associations and the direction of their lives. Even religion,\* where accepted, is validated by its usefulness for social coherence (Emile Durkheim), for psychological health or for good human relations.

## THE IDEOLOGY

Secularization is a habit of mind and a way of life, a trend of human events, not a philosophy. Not surprisingly, however, it has been accompanied by repeated efforts to give it a world-view which would show its powers and tendencies to be hopeful and liberating and which give them a particular direction (see **ideology**). These forms of secularist humanism have been many and varied, ranging from idealism to pragmatism to materialism; from economic liberalism to revolutionary Marxism to anarchism. One such philosophy defined by the British writer G.J. Holyoake took the name "secularism". It was a system of ethical principles based on four premises: (1) primary emphasis on the material and cultural improvement of humanity; (2) respect for and search for all truth, from whatever source, which can be tested in experience as leading to human betterment; (3) concern for the improvement of this world and not for another; (4) an independent rational morality.

Utilitarian in its ethics, idealistic in its optimistic view of human nature, and pragmatic in its radical epistemological relativism, Holyoake's secularism was a moral-humanist reaction against the Christianity of his time. It was a good example of the secularism which concerned the Jerusalem conference of the International Missionary Council in 1928, defined there by Rufus Jones as "a way of life and an interpretation of life that include only the natural order of things and that do not find God or a realm of spiritual reality essential for life or thought". The Jerusalem conference treated secularism as one of the religions of the modern world with many positive values – freedom, idealism and devotion to the common good – which needs to find its fulfilment, as do all other religions, in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

But this theology of continuity between humanist ideologies and Christian faith ran counter both to the insights of dialectical theology (Emil Brunner, Karl Barth, Hendrik Kraemer) and to the process of secularization itself. Bonhoeffer recognized that his non-religious colleagues in the struggle against Hitler retained no humanist illusions. Confidence in natural human morality and progress has been undermined by the

success of science and technology itself in releasing nuclear energy and in manipulating the human environment. Political economic formulas for human salvation, both socialist and capitalist, have lost credibility by their performance in power. Secularized methods of thought and action produce phenomena that defy all attempts – religious or secularist – to incorporate them into a total system of meaning and hope.

## THE THEOLOGY

By what faith and in what hope, then, can secularization be endured without falling into nihilism (Helmut Thielicke) or into a practical polytheism (H.R. Niebuhr)? Some maintain that it is not possible. "Secularization, as religionless neutrality, exists not as an end product but only as a process, that is, only in contrast to Christian religion or in its reflected light. If the latter is lacking, a vacuum arises which sucks in religious or pseudo-religious powers" (Wilhelm Hahn). Barth is ambivalent on the subject. On the one hand, his critique of human religion (*Church Dogmatics I/2*) and his affirmation of secular inquiry concerning both nature and humanity outside the context of faith, just in so far as it does not erect new world-views (*III/2*), seem to affirm secularized existence in the context of divine grace. On the other hand, Barth explicitly rejects Bonhoeffer's understanding of humanity as mature in its secularity apart from faith (*The Humanity of God*).

A clear positive theology of secularization owes its origin to Bonhoeffer and to Friedrich Gogarten. For Bonhoeffer, Christ confronts the world not in its weakness and dependency on religious or other world-views but at the strong points of human health and responsibility. "It is not the religious act that makes the Christian but participation in the sufferings of God in the secular life. That is *metanoia*, not in the first place thinking about one's own needs, problems, sins and fears, but allowing oneself to be caught up in the way of Jesus Christ." Bonhoeffer is clear that a sinful, godless world must still be brought to repentance and new life in Christ, but the sins of which it must repent are first of all those of its powers and vigour amid the responsibilities where human problems are faced and dealt

with. Christ, the ultimate reality of the world, takes form in the world in order that the world, in its penultimate secularity, may move towards its ultimate redemption in him (*Ethics*).

Gogarten links secularization directly to the faith of the Reformation. Justified by grace alone, the Christian is free to participate in the sonship of Jesus Christ. This participation is the manner of human creatureliness, and with it human beings receive the world to rule over responsibly. In Christ the world is known not in the wholeness of its structure and destiny but historically, in the promise of its participation in God's creative and redemptive work. The church's secular attitude in faith "knows the limits of its reason yet does not give up the question which God has planted in the human mind about the wholeness of all things. It lives in expectant relativity." The scientific technological development of modern times is not only acceptable in God's sight; in its relativity it is called to strive for wholeness under God's blessing, threatened with God's judgment when it erects its own myth or ideology, but affirmed in its secularity.

The ecumenical influence of this theology has been widespread. In 1959 a conference of university teachers at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, examined the process of secularization in various disciplines of the university – philosophy, the physical sciences, sociology, and the humanities – in an effort to discern the form of Christian responsibility and theological insight with relation to them. One interesting fruit of this conference was testimony from Japan and from India that secularization is also a phenomenon in those religious contexts as it is most radically in China.

The implications of this fact for the mission of the Christian church are large. They were given full expression by A.T. van Leeuwen in his *Christianity in World History* (1964). In van Leeuwen's view, the whole of Western and now of world history should be understood in terms of the historicizing impact of Christian mission rooted in the biblical history which preceded it. The rule of structures of being (ontocracies), whether mythological or rationalistic, which understood the world as divided between eternal order and shifting

time, has been continually challenged by God's choice of a people with a secular message of redemption and fulfilment for the world. The historical promise of the gospel continually breaks through sacred structures, Christian and non-Christian, which limit human history and hope. It foments revolution against these structures in the name of the promise of God. Western history, and now world history, in van Leeuwen's view, is the story of this interaction. Thus the gospel of the kingdom both judges and inspires secular history with its promise. Cox in his immensely popular *Secular City* presented the same message in the US. Ecumenical studies in evangelism were preoccupied in the 1960s with the question of the form of the church as witness to the secular promise of God.

Recent events raise questions about van Leeuwen's confident prediction that secularization, challenged and inspired by the gospel, is the wave of the future. Religious revivals of varying intensities have arisen in reaction to the ongoing technological logic and power of the secularizing process. Ideologies have become more popular as rallying cries, even as their power to explain reality disintegrates. Theologically, however, the question bequeathed to us by the NT text itself, properly understood, remains: What is the significance of the *saeculum* – of this age – as the time and place of God's revelation in Christ? And then, what is its relation to the age to come?

See also **church and world, unity of humankind.**

CHARLES C. WEST

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## SEDOS

THE SERVICE of Documentation and Study facilitates Roman Catholic religious and missionary institutes of men and women in combining their resources for more effective service to the church in its missionary activities. SEDOS was founded after Vatican II\* (1966) by superiors general whose congregations are committed to mission work, e.g. Jesuits, Society of Divine Word, Society of African Missions, Franciscan Missionary Sisters, Medical Mission Sisters, Christian Brothers. In 2002, SEDOS included 108 member congregations – 47 of men, 61 of women. The combined total membership is over 250,000. In most cases, the general headquarters of these groups are in Rome, as is the SEDOS secretariat.

SEDOS maintains a documentation library on trends and experiences in mission, holds an annual missionary week, organizes research seminars and study sessions, and collaborates with other research centres and international agencies specializing in missiology and related disciplines. SEDOS and its member communities closely collaborate with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity\* and the WCC's Mission and Evangelism team. The secretariat receives Catholic, Anglican, Protestant and Orthodox mission leaders and specialists who pass through Rome. It publishes the monthly *SEDOS* (bilingual, English and French). The book *Trends in Mission* (Maryknoll NY, Orbis, 1991) presents SEDOS conference and seminar materials on developments in mission theology and practice.

See also **missionary societies, religious communities.**

TOM STRANSKY

## SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

THE SDAC IS the largest Adventist denomination which came out of the early 19th-century advent awakening in North America. Though their immediate roots are found in Millerism and its emphasis on the second coming of Christ, SDAs see themselves as being in apostolic succession with the doctrines and message of the New Testament church and in harmony with the basic principles of the Protestant Reformation.

The SDAC is a conservative Christian movement, largely evangelical in doctrine and professing no creed but the Bible. Nevertheless, SDAs affirm 27 fundamental beliefs, many of which they share with other Christians, such as the Trinity,\* salvation by faith in Jesus Christ alone and the unconditional authority of the Bible. They also observe the biblical seventh day of the week as the sabbath. They practise believer's baptism by immersion and include foot washing as part of the communion service (Lord's supper). They also believe in eternal life as the gift of God. The saved receive immortality at the time of the resurrection, which takes place at the second coming of Christ, prior to the millennium (see **millennialism**). Adventists believe also in the priesthood of Jesus as Intercessor and Judge.

Because the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, SDAs believe they are to care intelligently for both their spiritual and their physical health. In aiming at the most healthful diet, they abstain from certain foods, alcoholic beverages and other drugs, including tobacco. The modern packaged breakfast-cereal industry owes its origin to the SDAC and its emphasis on health.

In its polity, the SDAC has a blend of representative and congregational forms of government. The local church\* determines membership. Several churches in an area form conferences (or missions), several conferences form unions, and the almost 100 unions form the SDA general conference. Between constituency meetings, the church on each level is administered by executive committees, officers and departmental directors.

The conference meets every five years. Delegates (now approximately 2000) come from every part of the world, and observers from Christian World Communions\* are invited to attend. This meeting "synthesizes and implements church organization on a world scale" and elects conference and division officers and departmental directors for the ensuing period. Only the sessions can change the general conference constitution and the *Church Manual*, which includes the fundamental beliefs, standards of church membership and matters regarding the operation of local churches.

According to SDAC statistics for 1999, the adult baptized membership numbered

10.9 million (92% outside of North America) in 47,000 local churches, 490 conferences, just under 6000 schools (elementary through university level), 684 health-care institutions, and organized church work in 204 countries or political areas. To support their worldwide pastoral ministry and evangelistic outreach, SDAs give free-will offerings and practise tithing, although it is not a test of fellowship.

Though the SDAC is not a member of the organized ecumenical movement, it recognizes those church agencies that lift up Christ as a part of the divine plan for the evangelization of the world and holds in high esteem fellow Christians in other communions who are engaged in winning souls for Christ. The SDAC is regularly represented through observers or advisers at WCC and other church meetings. For many years, a Seventh-day Adventist was a member of the WCC Faith and Order\* commission in a personal capacity. The SDAC has participated in dialogues with the WCC and various religious bodies and since 1968 has been represented at the conference of secretaries of Christian World Communions.\* More recently, the SDAC has been represented at the annual conference of US church leaders. Christian World Communions and various churches have responded to the SDA invitation and sent observers to sessions of the general conference.

Seventh-day Adventists recognize that true religion is based on conscience and conviction. No selfish or traditional tie should hold any church member to one's communion, except the belief that in this way he or she finds true connection to Christ. Because of its understanding of the gospel commission's mandate, the SDAC acknowledges the rights of all religious persuasions to operate without geographical restrictions. The SDAC wishes to preach the "everlasting gospel" to every nation and people in the spirit of Christian courtesy, frankness and fairness.

BERT B. BEACH

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## SEXISM

THE TERM "sexism" was introduced into the ecumenical debate mainly through the 1974 consultation in West Berlin on "Sexism in the 1970s: Discrimination against Women". Both before and after that time, women (and men) in the ecumenical movement have addressed the problem of sexism within the churches and the WCC. Sexism, an ideology\* of male supremacy and superiority which deprives women of their equal status with men, is defined as discrimination of a person on the basis of sex (as racism\* discriminates on the basis of skin colour). Some controversy exists within the women's movement about the inter-relationship of sexism and other forms of oppression like racism or classism (Is sexism more fundamental than racism or classism? How do white middle-class women express solidarity with black poor women?). Sexism, combined with racism or classism, clearly puts women at the lowest end of the social ladder and subjects them to double or triple oppression. Women themselves can also act as agents of oppression of other women.

Sexism is a manifestation of patriarchy, a system in which highest value is given to the father. All others are subordinated to a hierarchical order (roughly, from men down to women, children, slaves, animals and finally nature. Women are seen as weaker than and inferior to men, needing male protection and (esp. spiritual) guidance (i.e. "paternalism").

In a process of growing awareness, women discovered that sexist thinking is created, supported and maintained by law,\* culture\* and religion.\* Sexist thinking is also deeply ingrained in many women's self-perception as helpless, incapable and weak. Feminist scholarship "discovered" that the Bible was written within the patriarchal context of Palestine and the Roman empire. The Judaeo-Christian tradition is accused of, consciously or unconsciously, perpetuating sexism by its symbol systems (e.g. an all-

male Trinity: Father, Son and [male] Holy Spirit), its patriarchal structure (headed only by male popes and bishops); its teaching, language, art and so on. All of these elements imply women's inferiority or unworthiness. This critique emerged in a systematic way beginning only in the middle of the 20th century since the time women gained access to learning and teaching theology in the universities and theological colleges.

Sexism has raised several objections to patriarchal theology. The Bible, being itself shaped by patriarchal values, has over the centuries been interpreted exclusively by men, i.e. from a male perspective. Female participation in shaping cult and theology has been marginalized, suppressed, even denied altogether in church history, although the role of women was prominent in the Jesus movement and the early church. From the early church fathers to today, women are presented as possessing less of the image of God than males (note that they were created only from "Adam's rib"), therefore they are non-normative, belonging to the realm of nature or flesh over against the realm of the spirit. Patriarchal theology has blamed women for the first sin and justified their subordination under men as God-given punishment. It has stressed women's bodily "impurity" in menstruation and childbirth and equates women with sexual temptation ("eternal Eve"), while Mariology presents Mary as an unobtainable role model ("Virgin mother").

The church has excluded women from the representation of the divine and of Christ in church leadership and thus perpetuated male superiority and male power. It has barred women's access to the ordained ministry. It has excluded women from the language of liturgy, confessions, hymns and prayers (referring to "men", "fathers", "brotherhood" only) and has encouraged women to be "silent in the church" and rendered them invisible in church history. The church has given women no access to theology and spiritual formation and has discriminated against girls in baptismal rites (in some Orthodox churches a baby boy, but not a baby girl, is laid on the altar). It re-enforces subordination of women through marriage liturgies and has applied Christian values like humility and self-denial mainly to women.

Finally, the church sustains stereotyped role models for women by stressing their subsidiary role as "helpmate", commonly appealing to Martha (Luke 10:38-40).

The most radical critique from post-Christian feminists accuses the churches of being the ideological backbone and stronghold of sexist practices ("If God is male, then the male is God", Mary Daly). Against such accusations and in the interest of restoring the truth of the gospel as expressed in Gal. 3:28 ("there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus"), many programmes and initiatives have emerged within the WCC: the women's forum in the fifth assembly (Nairobi 1975); the "Community of Women and Men in the Church"\* study and the Sheffield consultation (1981); the strong participation of women in all areas of the sixth assembly (Vancouver 1983) as drafters, speakers, preachers, leaders, and the pre-assembly women's meeting; the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women.\*

In all these meetings and programmes it was stressed that sexism in the churches needs to be eradicated through (1) advocacy for women's full access and participation in the leadership of the churches; (2) the ordination of women\* to the priesthood (which is not accepted mainly by the Orthodox member churches of WCC); (3) elimination of sexist language and practices; (4) re-reading of the Bible and the Tradition from women's perspective; (5) equal opportunities for women in all fields of life (employment and pay, education and health, esp. within the structures of the churches).

The discussion about the extent of sexism in the churches and its abolition, however, has proved to be one of the most controversial issues in the present ecumenical movement. The ordination of the first black woman as Episcopalian bishop (Barbara Harris of the USA in 1989) was welcomed by many women in all denominations worldwide as a historic breakthrough; at the same time, some interpret it as endangering the ecumenical dialogue between Anglicans, Orthodox and Roman Catholics.

Sexism touches deeply the matrix of the churches' existence, but it will not go away

by itself. Many women leave the churches, as they see no signs of change. There is the danger that the churches will lose their most faithful members if they do not deal seriously, self-critically and creatively with the challenge.

The Ecumenical Decade process and the team visits to the member churches of the WCC have made visible the many manifestations of sexism both in the church and in society. They have provided a framework for women to take directly to the churches their concerns about some of these expressions of sexism that are still alive today. At the same time it became visible how much women have taken initiatives and given new leadership to their churches. Women are calling for a new church where gender hierarchy will be replaced by a new non-sexist value system where the voices of all will be heard and respected.

See also **feminism**.

BÄRBEL VON WARTENBERG-POTTER

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## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

THE TERM "sexual harassment" originated in the USA, where in 1975 the courts were the first to recognize it as a form of sex discrimination. But by now awareness of the extent of sexual harassment in the work-place and in other social contexts has become an issue of concern all over the world. Sexual harassment has been defined as "several kinds of behaviour with a sexual connotation, unsolicited and unwanted, and especially repetitive". It could also include "discrimination on the basis of gender, causing stress or humiliation to the victim". In the early 1990s a brochure entitled "When Christian Solidarity Is Broken" was produced by a WCC staff group of women and men which acknowledged that sexual harassment can take place even in ecumenical gatherings.

The group also drew up a set of guidelines to deal with cases of sexual harassment within the WCC itself.

More recently the concept of "mobbing" has been added, refining the definition further. Mobbing refers to hostile and unethical communication, directed systematically by one or more individuals mainly at one individual, who is pushed into a helpless and defenceless position and held there by means of continual mobbing activities. Because this maltreatment is persistent and long-lasting, it can have serious negative mental, psychosomatic and social effects.

There is also an increasing awareness among churches that clergy abuse in pastoral relationships is another serious and widespread form of sexual harassment prevalent in the churches. The issue became a focal point for action by women's groups in the major churches as they began to recognize the frequency and seriousness of this phenomenon. Churches which have either done extensive studies or adopted statements and policies on sexual harassment include, for example, the United Methodist Church [USA], the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the Anglican Church of Canada, the Canadian Council of Churches, the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, the Uniting Church in Australia, the Church of Norway, and the Roman Catholic Church in the Netherlands.

The issue has lent itself more easily to discussion in the churches in North America and Europe than elsewhere. However, women's groups in many countries have successfully lobbied for the enactment of legislation covering sexual harassment in the work-place and in other contexts, so as to ensure legal redress.

In the reports of the team visits to WCC member churches carried out between 1992 and 1995 within the framework of the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women,\* the question of sexual harassment was rarely the subject of spontaneous conversation, even in women's groups. While its existence was recognized, it would appear that the problem is accorded secondary importance when compared to

other forms of violence against women which seem to have a more dramatic effect on their lives. As a result of the Decade visits, church leaders in many countries have been challenged to address all forms of violence against women, including sexual harassment, and to see its roots in the unequal power relationships between men and women. The contribution of the WCC process has been on the need to address both the theological underpinnings of the persistence of sexual harassment in church and society and the pastoral and other kinds of responses necessary in dealing both with perpetrators and victims, so as to ensure reconciliation and healing.

JEANNE BECHER and  
ARUNA GNANADASON

■ *When Christian Solidarity Is Broken: A Pastoral and Educational Brochure Addressing the Issue of Sexual Harrassment*, WCC, 1991.

## SIMATUPANG, TAHI BONAR

B. 20 Jan. 1920, Sidikalang, Sumatra, Indonesia; d. 1 Jan. 1990. A WCC president, 1975-83, and central and executive committee member, 1968-75, Simatupang was educated at the Dutch royal military academy. After Indonesia's proclamation of independence (1945), he was involved in organizing the war to defend the Republic of Indonesia and later in the peace negotiations with the Netherlands. After early retirement from the post of chief of staff of the armed forces, he was active in the ecumenical movement at regional, national and world levels as, for example, president of the Christian Conference of Asia, 1973-77, and president of the National Council of Churches in Indonesia, 1967-84. For a number of years he wrote regularly for the influential Indonesian newspaper *Sinar Harapan*. He is the author of numerous books and articles on political, military and ecumenical concerns in Indonesia, some of which have been translated into English, Dutch, German and Japanese.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

## SIN

ANTHROPOLOGY (see **anthropology**, **theological**) and soteriology (see **salvation**) are inter-

woven in the doctrine of sin. It is common Christian teaching that God originally created human beings in his image and likeness. This nature enables them to reveal, but also to betray, their Creator, because it gives them the opportunity of suppressing the distinction between Creator and creature (creation\*) and of dangerously identifying themselves with, or mistaking themselves for, God (see Gen. 6:1-4, 11:1-9). The worship of God the Creator turns into self-worship and demonic idolatry. The Bible depicts this mistake as sin, thereby using a vocabulary (*hata'* and *hamartanein*) and an imagery that stresses the failing in, and falling short of, one's intention, the missing of the mark. Because human beings in their failing and pride are prevented from establishing the communion with God and one another to which they are originally called, sin can also be defined as the destruction of the totality, the breaking of positive relations – indeed, of the human community – revolt against and violation of covenant,\* alienation between God and humankind. To this effect the Old Testament denounces sin as idolatry and interprets it as adultery against Yahweh. The prophets also vehemently condemn social injustice as sin and take sides in the struggle for the weak and poor against the mighty and powerful.

The New Testament continues this line of thought when expounding sin as the human attitude and act directed against Christ and the Holy Spirit\* and at the same time emphasizing the failure to exercise love towards one's neighbour as sinful. In the last analysis, sin results in death (Rom. 6:23; see **life and death**). In short, the Bible as a whole condemns any human approach and any mentality directed against God and humankind as sinful transgression of the boundaries and limits inherent in divine creation and human createdness.

This sin (singular) against God becomes concrete in the sins (plural) against his creatures. The alienation between God and God's creation is, however, part of the human condition, from which we cannot escape (Rom. 3:23). Humankind does not just *act* sinfully; it *is* sinful. This teaching is meant when Christian tradition throughout the centuries has spoken of original sin. This doctrine expresses the conviction that sin,

though universal, is not necessary, holding human beings, who have committed the breach of solidarity with their Creator and one another, paradoxically responsible in united solidarity of sin and guilt. It prevents us from misinterpreting sinfulness in moralistic terms and qualifies it as having primarily to do with human relation to God and only derivatively with interhuman contacts. It asserts the idea of a free will, inherent in humankind's being created in the image and likeness of God, as the necessary prerequisite for individual and collective responsibility for sin, while at the same time claiming that human beings cannot but be sinful (Rom. 7:18-19), because they fall victim to the temptation to be like God and thus lose the freedom that they were from the beginning destined to enjoy. The free will implies, negatively as it were, the possibility of distorting the likeness with our Creator into its demonic contrast and the potential of orienting ourselves towards the idols, whom we, treacherous to God and ironically enough, serve in an unending faithfulness. We commit adultery with other gods and distrust our own Creator. Thus sin can basically be understood as unbelief.

Because this radical faithlessness draws humankind away from God, the gospel calls it back to communion with God by urgently inviting conversion and promising redemption\* and forgiveness of sins. This offer is made possible because Jesus Christ\* on the cross took upon himself the guilt of humankind and was punished in its place. In spite of its failure and betrayal, God remained in solidarity with his creation, and his Son's death on the cross brought reconciliation\* between God and the world. Christ did what human beings ought to have done – bore the divine condemnation merited by human sin – and thus through dying in their place, he won the righteousness required from them. Through faith\* in Jesus Christ humankind now participates in his justice, bestowed upon them and sealed in the sacrament\* of baptism.\* Through faith, believers have developed from having been instruments of and slaves to sinfulness into becoming instruments of and slaves to righteousness (Rom. 6:12-13). Out of sheer grace\* God declares them righteous and accepts them as his sons and daughters; as a

consequence, they leave death behind and start to walk in newness of life. The baptized are cleansed of their past sin and are expected to live henceforth in purity of heart, although this teaching does not mean that sinfulness has been totally overcome or that post-baptismal transgressions are unknown.

From the angle of *justification\* by faith*, this view of sin seems theologically awkward but is nevertheless an empirical fact. Every human being is *simul iustus et peccator*, at once righteous and a sinner. This (originally Lutheran) phrase is interpreted in a somewhat different way in the various confessions and even within the Lutheran tradition itself. The Reformation churches normally stress that justification does not only imply the forgiveness of sins but also brings a person into the newness of life. On the one hand, God *declares* a person to be righteous (forensic, imputative justification); on the other, God *makes* him or her righteous (effective justification). Justification and sanctification\* imply one another, the latter always being the result of and never the prerequisite for the former. Because believers, therefore, *are* just, they do good works, which, however, can never form the basis for their justification and redemption. People can never be saved on account of their works; without these works, however, they perish (Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, art. 3).

Justification does not protect the justified person from still committing sins, because his or her righteousness remains a righteousness of another (*iustitia aliena*) or a righteousness outside of us (*iustitia extra nos*). Through justification the attitude of a sinful person to God has been, to be sure, totally changed, but the person has not at all changed ontologically (on a Lutheran view) and therefore remains, though totally justified, what he or she ever was, i.e. totally a sinner. Yet Martin Luther himself can also speak about the faithful as *partially* sinful and *partially* justified, so that sanctification is seen as an ongoing learning process and the factual situation of the person as not being changed all at once. But from the beginning, Lutheran theology has indisputably tended to over-emphasize the *simul iustus et peccator* in terms of a paradox indicating that the human person is totally righteous

and totally sinful and that post-baptismal sin is inevitable. This view may under unhappy circumstances prepare the way for antinomianism and ethical indifference and thus neglect the importance of good works as the necessary fruits of faith.

This is exactly the point on which Roman Catholic criticism intervenes and attacks. Because the Reformation so strongly underlines the unconditional divine grace as the sole agent of justification, it runs the risk of rejecting the transforming and creative power of that same grace and is exposed to underestimating sanctification. The council of Trent\* maintains that when God justifies, sinners not only are declared to be justified but are ontologically changed, so that from now on they are a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15). As such, they are no longer totally sinners, although their righteousness flows from God because of Christ (*propter Christum*) and in this sense also in the Catholic tradition can be seen as a *iustitia aliena*. Individuals, however, are still living in the realm of sinfulness and under the impact of original sin. They are prone to sin and hence in the last analysis uncertain of their own salvation and totally thrown upon God's grace, which makes a growth in sanctification possible and allows an interpretation of the justified believer as both righteous and a sinner.

The Western polemic as described here has never really touched the Eastern Orthodox tradition, in which the theological point of departure is taken in the incarnation\* rather than in justification. God "became man that we might become divine" (Athanasius, *Incarnation* 54). God's incarnation is interpreted to imply the deification of humankind (*theōsis*) and thus the final reconciliation between Creator and creation.

Today the traditional controversy between Rome and the Reformation churches may be said to be overcome to the extent that the Lutheran concern for the promise of God (*promissio Dei*) and the Catholic interest in the merit according to grace (*meritum ex gratia*) can be regarded as compatible; but tensions still remain, not least with regard to the understanding of the human person and the radical character of sin (Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue,\* Malta report, 26; Justification by Faith [USA Lutheran-Ro-

man Catholic dialogue], 112; Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, 28-30).

In ecumenical texts of recent decades the issue of sin is mostly debated in a rather traditional manner (e.g. the Leuenberg\* agreement [Lutheran-Reformed dialogue\*], 10-12; The Presence of Christ in Church and World [Reformed-Roman Catholic dialogue\*], 49,87), though there are also quite a few examples of dogmatically and ethically actualizing the reality of original sin that draw conclusions to the sinfulness of unjust, venial and selfish structures and institutions (Dublin report [Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue\*], 18, and numerous documents from the socio- and economico-political discussion in the WCC and related bodies). Recent trends such as liberation theology\* and political theology\* show an unprecedented tendency to give more weight to the issue of structural and institutional sin, as they describe sinful economic, social, political structures.

It can also be maintained that the whole ecumenical movement is nurtured by the basic insight that ecclesiastical and confessional divisions are sinful violations of inalienable Christological principles (see John 17:21; 1 Cor. 1:10-13). This sin of disunity (see *unity*) demands reconciliation that expresses itself in eucharistic sharing, which in turn represents a constant and radical challenge to "all kinds of injustice, racism, separation and lack of freedom" (*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, E20). Thus all individual and structural sin is overcome by Jesus Christ, giving himself to his followers in the eucharist\* as the meal of reconciliation.

PEDER NØRGAARD-HØJEN

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## SKYDSGAARD, KRISTEN EJNER

B. 15 Nov. 1902, Fünen, Denmark; d. 9 Feb. 1990, Copenhagen. Skydsgaard was a member of the WCC's commission on Faith and Order, 1952-68, and in 1957 was appointed to the commission of ecumenical research of the Lutheran World Federation\* (LWF). Actively involved in the creation of the Institute for Ecumenical Research at Strasbourg, and in its programme for several years, he was vice-president of its board, 1964-74. He was an observer for the LWF at the Second Vatican Council and, as representative of the non-Catholic observers, spoke on the need to examine Christian doctrine in its historical dimension. He participated in the long ecumenical debate on the relation between scripture and Tradition and made a contribution to the Roman Catholic-Protestant theological dialogue. He was also a member of the official group of dialogue between the Lutheran churches and the Roman Catholic Church.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## SOBORNOST

THE TERM *sobornost* made its appearance on the ecumenical scene during the 1920s. The closest English equivalent is perhaps "conciliarity"\* or "ecumenicity"; the dictionary defines *sobornost* as "the principle of spiritual unity and religious community based on free commitment to a tradition of catholicity interpreted through ecumenical councils of the Eastern Orthodox church".

In the first flush of the post-revolutionary Russian emigration to Western Europe, there was no reluctance among host nations to accept such an untranslated Russian word. At the Faith and Order\* conference of 1927, Sergius Bulgakov (1871-1944) tanta-

lized his audience with the thought that "Russian theology expresses the fundamental essence of church unity in a word for which no other language has the equivalent". *Sobornost* was a neologism born out of the 19th-century Slavophile movement, and in particular out of the writings of Aleksey Khomyakov (1804-60). Khomyakov himself did not necessarily coin the term; it makes its first appearance in print only in a posthumous translation of his *Lettre au rédacteur de l'Union chrétienne* (1860), and even there only once. The *Lettre* itself involved a polemical defence of a related term, *sobornaia*, the medieval Slav translation of "catholic" in the Nicene Creed. It was a translation to which the Russian Jesuit priest Gagarine had taken exception in 1859.

Both Khomyakov and his successors were convinced that *sobornaia* was not only a correct translation but one that enhanced and enriched the original, proceeding as it did beyond the quantitative aspect of catholicity\* and universality to an emphasis on quality, on the idea of a love-inspired "unity in multiplicity". For the root of the Slavonic word (*sobor*) relates to gathering together, togetherness, mutuality. Furthermore, noted Khomyakov, the root, taken by itself, implies assembly and is the very word for "council". But this meaning in turn points beyond councils and assemblies proper, important as they are. Khomyakov held that the church possesses an essential togetherness over and above any actual gathering; "her very essence consists in the agreement and unity of the spirit and life of all the members who acknowledge her throughout the world". Such can exist even without their "formal reunion".

The abstract noun *sobornost* therefore pointed beyond the hierarchical and formally conciliar nature of the church.\* In 1932, in his work *L'Orthodoxie*, Bulgakov ventured the translation *conciliarité*. But he also offered *symphonie* and *unanimité*. Such were the ineffable attributes of the body as a whole, whose truths were ultimately guarded by "the totality, by the whole people of the church", terms which Khomyakov had eagerly adapted from the encyclical of the Eastern patriarchs to Pope Pius IX (1848). All the more eagerly did he borrow them, since they were so congruent

with the ecclesiology of Johann Möhler (1796-1838), a Roman Catholic theologian whom he had undoubtedly read and admired.

Even when the church did gather in council, however, such unity\* should as much or even more abundantly prevail. Conversely, it could be argued that in the absence of a properly constituted council, *sobornost* might well be at risk, and so the integrity of the body as a whole. Such was the concern of those who prepared for the long-delayed council of the Russian Orthodox Church in the early 1900s. Vladimir Zavitnevich's article of 1905 "On the Restoration of Sobornost in the Russian Church" was one of many to express it. The article was firmly based on Khomyakov, to whom the author devoted an extensive study (1902). At no stage was this restoration nearer or more needed than at the turbulent time of the council itself (1917-18).

The very constitution of this all-important council demonstrated that any serious restoration of *sobornost* had to involve a re-assertion of the importance of the laity\* in Orthodox church life. It was all the more natural for Bulgakov (himself a member of that council) to stress that "the laity, no less than the clergy, has its place and value in the church as a whole" when he came before the Faith and Order conference of 1927.

No doubt this position eased the mind of many a Protestant in his audience, faced with what had been expected to be a highly clericalist body. But the apparent lessening of rigorous canonical standards and demands which the concept of *sobornost* seemed to herald in debates between Orthodox Russians and their fellow Christians in the nascent ecumenical movement served only intermittently and superficially to further interchurch convergence. The very vagueness of the term could lead so seasoned an ecumenist as Oliver Tomkins to associate it in due course with "charity of the Spirit" as an essential mark of the church ("an idea that is perfectly expressed in the untranslatable Russian word for catholicity, *sobornost*"); this comment in turn conjured up the vision of an obscure partner to the historical Orthodox church, "a charismatic church in which the Holy Spirit of love constitutes members of those who are outside the

canonical church" itself (*A Time for Unity*, 1964, 36).

In the event, no more than a small and decreasing number of ecumenists were to labour under such illusions, nor did each and every Russian Orthodox theologian help to provoke them. A fertile ground for would-be promoters of *sobornost* in the furtherance of Christian unity was provided – under the aegis of Bulgakov and the direction of his follower, Nicolas Zernov (1898-1980) – by the Anglican-Orthodox Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius,\* founded in 1928. The very journal of the fellowship was renamed *Sobornost* in 1935.

The subject of its conference in the preceding year had been "The Church of God", which included a paper entitled "Sobornost: The Catholicity of the Church" delivered by Georges Florovsky (1893-1979). The second part of the title was addressed in an exemplary way, but the first part was studiously ignored. Indeed, *sobornost* was not even mentioned. Thus did Florovsky turn his back on post-Khomyakovian Russian religious thought, the better to address himself instead to a perceived pan-Orthodox tradition and to its patristic base.

In subsequent ecumenical debate Florovsky's bypassing of the use of *sobornost* generally prevailed. Nevertheless, largely in Russian circles, the term *sobornost* still commands respect. When he addressed the inter-Orthodox symposium on "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" (1985), Archbishop Kirill of Smolensk took it for granted that members of the Orthodox church invariably "maintain the principles of conciliarity (*sobornost*)". He invoked *sobornost* to justify the substance and the spirit of the statutes he had drafted for the Russian church in its millennial year (1988).

SERGEI HACKEL

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## SOCIAL GOSPEL MOVEMENT

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL movement was a movement in American Protestantism that sought to Christianize social, economic and political institutions as well as the family and individual life. Convinced that the kingdom of God\* embraces the whole of human life, social gospel proponents believed that the church's\* task is to be the conscience and guide for "the Christian transfiguration of the social order".

Stimulated by ideas from England and Europe, the movement originated in the 1870s. But advocates were unable to arouse the Protestant churches to embrace it broadly until 1907-12, when denominations and the new Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America (1908) endorsed it. This ecumenical body adopted the Social Creed of the Churches (1908), which symbolized Protestantism's commitment to social responsibility and expressed its social conscience. Early emphasis on economic conditions of workers expanded to family life, urban problems and social justice. The most significant impact of this clergy-dominated movement occurred between 1907 and 1917.

Primary leadership was provided by Baptists Walter Rauschenbusch and Shailer Mathews, Congregationalists Washington Gladden and Josiah Strong, Episcopalians W.D.P. Bliss and Richard Ely, Methodists Frank Mason North and Harry Ward, and Presbyterians Charles Stelzle and John McDowell. Gladden has been called the father of the social gospel, but Rauschenbusch became its most famous advocate.

Much of the social gospel's success resulted from its strong ecumenical commitments and cooperation. The Federal Council of the Churches' commission on the church and social service became the social gospel's most active agency, enabling denominational leaders to avoid competition, effectively use limited funds, and develop mutual programmes and publications. By this means the cause exerted influence beyond its actual size, for it never enjoyed more than minority support in the denominations.

Theologically, the social gospel was a product of liberalism before the first world war. Its biblical basis emphasized the Hebrew prophets and the social teachings of Jesus. Inveterately optimistic about human potential and social possibilities, the movement found its "spiritual centre and unity in the idea of the kingdom of God on earth" (Rauschenbusch). Its doctrine of God recognized divine activity in all of creation,\* not just in the church, which led proponents to regard reforms advocated even by muckraking journalists and progressive politicians as redemptive. Consequently, social gospel leaders interacted with other movements for reform and social improvement. The two most influential books which represent this theology are Rauschenbusch's *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907) and *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (1917).

Social gospel theology aroused negative responses from divergent Protestant wings. Fundamentalists\* attacked its assumptions that God's kingdom could be attained on earth prior to the millennium and that the church should become directly involved in politics (see **millennialism**). Neo-orthodox writers argued that the movement had a naive understanding of human nature and social change. With the combined impact of these attacks, the economic depression, and the second world war, the optimism inherent in the cause crumbled. However, a more realistic social action took its place, revised and sustained by permanent boards for social action in denominations and the National Council of Churches of Christ (1950). By such means the basic social responsibility expressed in the social gospel continues to work in the church today.

DONALD K. GORRELL

- D.K. Gorrell, *The Age of Social Responsibility: The Social Gospel in the Progressive Era, 1900-1920*, Macon GA, Mercer UP, 1988 ■
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## SOCIALISM

SOCIALISM, a term of disputed and often imprecise meaning, refers to a socio-economic

formation which exists for the benefit of most members of a society, particularly working people. Perhaps the most acceptable characteristic of socialism is the collective ownership of at least the major means of production in a society operated by workers in the interest of the entire society. Another useful approach is to view socialism as an alternative social theory or system to capitalism and exaggerated individualism in which existing class antagonisms would be gradually resolved. Currently a wide range of socialisms have been described, such as utopian, scientific (or Marxist-Leninist or communistic), democratic, nationalist, “really existing”, developed or advanced, Euro-communist, Latin American, Arab, African, religious (Christian), or “socialism with a human face”. Because of the many ideological conflicts, including those among socialists, the term “socialism” has become frequently only a slogan without concrete content.

Both socialism and communism are pre-Marxian concepts upon which a definitive Marxist interpretation was stamped. Pre-Marxian thinkers such as More, Babeuf, Saint-Simon, Fourier, Proudhon, Owen and Weitling criticized the evils of the industrial revolution and *laissez-faire* capitalism and proposed or organized idealized communities in which the interest of all members of the community would be respected and oppression and exploitation would be removed. These authors were inspired by their understanding of the message and mission of Jesus and considered these socialist projects as the expression of true Christianity of Jesus.

Such schemes were resolutely rejected as utopian socialist by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. In order to make socialism “scientific” they combated all other interpretations of socialism, which they regarded as unreal, and thus gradually promoted the Marxian understanding of socialism as “the necessary outcome of the struggle between the two historically developed classes – the proletariat and the bourgeoisie” (Engels). The notion that Marxism was an objective, scientific world-view allowed for little discussion not only about the inevitability of socialism but also its constitutive elements. Socialism came to be seen as a transition between capi-

talism and communism, marked by the state as a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, but in which such conditions would exist that would erode the need for the state. In socialism the distribution of abundant material goods produced by everyone’s unselfish contribution is supposed to correspond to a person’s contribution to society. In communism, consumption would be based entirely on one’s “real” needs. Taking his clues from the experiences of the Paris commune (1870), Marx believed that socialism would bring about the free association of producers, who would take power into their hands by revolutionary, though not necessarily violent, means. It would happen first in the most advanced capitalist countries, where labour is already sufficiently socialized to be able to carry out this take-over effectively.

While Marx believed that religion\* would wither away along with many other super-structures of class society, he was not overly concerned about its existence in socialism, though he believed that freedom of religion and separation of church and state\* would be features of socialism. The financial support of churches would be based upon the unpressured commitment of believers.

Marx’s relation with his contemporaries, the Christian socialists, was conflictual. Generally he was scornful of Christianity and the churches, and they reciprocated this animosity. The French socialists Lammenais, Blanc and Cabet were all believers and could not accept Marx’s atheism. The socialist divorce with religion arose from Marxist materialist metaphysics, and hence only a small number of Christians espoused socialist ideas and engaged in organizing the working class. They included Friedrich Naumann, Christoph Blumhardt, Hermann Kutter, Leonhard Ragaz, Keir Hardie, the Society of Christian Socialists, the Church Socialist League, and Pope Leo XIII’s support to the organizing of Catholic labour unions. Christian socialists employed a fairly large number of Marxist concepts, with less emphasis on conspiracy and violence, although Marxists rarely adopted Christian insights.

After the death of Marx and Engels, the socialist movement gradually split into two antagonistic movements: democratic socialist and Leninist or Bolshevik. The demo-

cratic socialists believed that it was possible to take control of the state apparatus by legal means, namely the ballot, while the Leninists held that power could be wrested from the capitalists only by revolution, such as the great October revolution of 1917.

Unanticipated by Marx and Engels, the first country to become socialist was Russia, a country more feudal than capitalist. Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov-Lenin was able not only to control the seething dissatisfied masses but also to give Marxism his own stamp, hence "Marxism-Leninism". Originally the Bolsheviks and their sympathizers expected world revolution, but they were later satisfied to hold power in one country, the Soviet Union. This situation lasted until the end of the second world war; since then other countries became socialist. In the Soviet Union the building of socialism entailed central political and economic state monopoly, nationalization of industry, collectivization of agriculture and an increasing grip by the Communist Party not only on political life but also on cultural, educational, recreational and spiritual life. The dictatorship of the proletariat became the dictatorship of the Communist Party.

Under Lenin's successor, Josif Visarionovich Djugashvili-Stalin, the process of concentration of power continued until the dictatorship of the party was replaced by dictatorship of the central committee, then of the politburo, and finally of the general secretary, Stalin himself. The transformation of the Soviet Union into a socialist country was exceedingly bloody, and the demand was made that the socialist movement around the world blindly conform to the dictates from the Kremlin. The state became nearly all-powerful; its government, statist and totalitarian. Ruling was in the name of the working class; however, a new bureaucratic ruling class monopolized power internally and dominated the communist movement internationally.

Not until the 1950s, and in many instances much later, did any Communist Party develop an alternate road into socialism. Although many splinter movements arose within this branch, they were combated relentlessly. Bolsheviks promoted the impression that no other form of socialism was legitimate. In those countries in which a

communist take-over was successful, there was at the outset a slavish copying of the USSR model. The Soviet Union, to distinguish itself from other Marxist socialist countries, declared itself to be a country of developed or advanced socialism, even proclaiming that it had reached the communist stage of socialist development. The other countries declared themselves as countries of "really existing socialism".

Only in the 1950s, especially after the death of Stalin, did any alternate roads emerge. The greater diversity was primarily in the form of nationalistic socialism, such as the Titoist mould in Yugoslavia, Chinese Maoism (which later, like Yugoslavia, transformed into a reformist socialism), socialism with a human face during the Prague spring in 1968 in Czechoslovakia, the Polish model, Castroism, and Sandinista socialism in Nicaragua. Under Mikhail Gorbachev, such variants were finally accepted by the Soviet Union, which attempted a restructuring (perestroika) and liberalization, or openness (glasnost), of its own form of socialism. By the late 1980s a large number of socialist countries experienced a profound economic, political, social and ideological crisis which caused a number of unanticipated but profound changes affecting these countries internally and internationally.

The Leninist and Stalinist approach to religion was almost uniformly restrictive and oppressive. Instead of waiting for religion to wither, administrative means were employed to root out religion. Actual religious policies varied from tactical cooperation to greater degrees of toleration or overt manipulation of churches, but the overall strategy and expectation was that religion would die out. Generally it was asserted that religion always plays a reactionary role. Only a small group of humanistic Marxists from socialist countries asserted the usefulness of a dialogue with Christians and other religious people, but only since the 1960s was there a grudging official admission that religion is capable of motivating some people for "progressive" goals. In some socialist countries (e.g. Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary and East Germany) a Christian-Marxist dialogue\* took place, mostly among a small, but relatively influential, group of intellectuals.

Originally the churches opposed the communist take-over, and many Christians remained in passive opposition. But gradually other forms of relations developed. Christians often became passive objects of the processes of socialization, and some churches attempted to find a non-confrontational niche in socialism. A small but vocal minority of Christians became advocates of socialism and attempted a Marxist-Christian synthesis. The most creative response was the attempt by some Christians to define themselves as a "church in socialism", whereby they sought to be loyal yet critical in their attempt to contribute to building the kind of socialism which respects human and moral values rather than destroys them.

It was different with democratic socialists, and even with the so called Euro-communists (primarily communists of Italy and Spain) in the West. The totalitarian and repressive practices of Leninism, Stalinism and Maoism were rejected, and a commitment was made to preserve and advance the humanistic heritage. Socialistic political parties entered the political arena, sometimes won elections, and influenced their society by establishing policies for the welfare and protection of the rights of workers and of the entire society. They committed themselves to pluralism in society, parliamentary democracy and a mixed economy. This movement took place in nearly all Western European countries.

A number of Christian theologians in the 20th century sharply criticized advanced capitalist forms of human denigration but also distanced themselves from the terror in Marxist-Leninist socialism. The most prominent such critics of the older generation were Walter Rauschenbusch, Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, Reinhold Niebuhr, Jacques Maritain, Emmanuel Mounier, Joseph Hromádka, and former Russian Marxists exiled in the West such as Nicholas Berdyaev, Sergei Bulgakov and Piotr Struve. The theologians most significant in the second half of the century in reacting to socialism were Karl Rahner, Charles West, Jan Milic Lochman, Johannes Metz, Jürgen Moltmann, Giulio Girardi and Dorothee Sölle. In different ways they all took Marxism and socialism seriously and believed it to be a Christian responsibility to

espouse the values common to both Christianity and socialism.

The World Council of Churches became concretely involved with the issue of socialism because member churches operated in both socialist and non-socialist countries. But in a more general sense socialism impacted the ecumenical movement on account of its striving for social justice and equality, issues that from the beginning concerned the ecumenical movement. "Christian socialists" participated actively at the Stockholm Life and Work conference in 1925 (see **ecumenical conferences, capitalism**). Amsterdam 1948 tried to steer an independent course by rejecting "the ideologies of both communism and laissez-faire capitalism", as if "these two extremes were the only alternatives". The notion of "a responsible society"\* was offered as a tool of assessing both the values and shortcomings of various social systems. Evanston 1954 deplored the totalitarian practice of communism while also rejecting sterile anti-communism. The Geneva Church and Society conference in 1966, influenced by third-world concerns, was the first to give a positive meaning to "ideology" as a mobilizing force and to raise the revolutionary challenge to the level of a Christian option. The programme on Dialogue with Men of Different Faiths and Ideologies concentrated on inter-religious dialogue. But emphases like "the church and the poor" or the Programme to Combat Racism have raised fundamental issues of economic and social conflict which could not ignore the socialist challenge.

In the late 1960s liberation theology took a favourable attitude towards revolution and socialism. Here a number of theologians such as Gustavo Gutiérrez, Camilo Torres, José Míguez Bonino, José Miranda, Leonardo Boff, Enrique Dussel and Hugo Assman, as well as grassroots movements such as Christians for Socialism, viewed Marxism as a socio-economic analysis which might help the masses of Latin America and the rest of the third world to end the poverty and domination caused by capitalism. Liberation theologians are not uncritical towards Marxism but seek a positive reinterpretation of Marxism which would foster a socialism friendly to religious concerns. While the Cuban socialist experiment is not

negligible, greater interest was manifested in the brief experience of building socialism in Chile, and in the Nicaraguan Sandinista socialism.

Other forms of liberation theology exist in the Philippines, Sri Lanka and South Korea, where various attempts are made both independently and under Latin American influence to create Asian liberation theologies. Similarly in Africa (e.g. in Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Senegal and South Africa), some theologians are espousing African socialism. The nature of much of third-world socialism is highly unclear. The rhetoric is often Marxist, but the content is frequently traditional local collectivism coupled with the desire for development and independence.

Socialism is both divisive and unitive for Christians. It is divisive because many Christians clearly favour it and even claim that, of all social systems, it is the most Christian, while others vehemently oppose it. It is unitive because there is a tendency of Christians to collaborate across denominational, theological, and other lines of separation when it comes to working together in supporting or opposing socialism. Either way, socialism is a serious ecumenical concern.

In the second half of 1989, encouraged by the process of democratization and restructuring fostered by Mikhail Gorbachev, a mostly bloodless revolution (except in Romania) took place in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union which affected other socialist countries. The impact of this transformation may be equated with the Bolshevik revolution, which came to be rejected so thoroughly that a new period was ushered in for which there is as yet no better name but "post-Communist". Some trends of that revolution are democratic socialist, but others are frankly anti-socialist. The end result is not entirely discernible, but by the second half of the 1990s Stalinistic communism was dismantled in all but a handful of countries (e.g. North Korea and Cuba), and the idea of multi-party democracy had been accepted in all former communist countries except in China, where the political system of communism continued to function but the economic system underwent major reforms in the direction of a mixed economy.

The greatest changes took place in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In

those countries a monumental political and economic transformation took place. The Soviet Union was formally dissolved in December 1990, dividing itself along the lines of the former federal states of the USSR. The largest successor state was Russia. In some instances countries were partitioned (Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia). In others extensive, bloody wars were waged (e.g. between Armenia and Azerbaijan; in Chechnya, a federal unit of Russia, with the federal government; in Yugoslavia a series of wars between 1991 and 1995 led to the disintegration of that country), in others to demonstrations and riots (Serbia, Bulgaria, Albania), and in all huge economic displacements followed. The classic features of Marxist-Leninist socialism were abandoned, even by political parties that previously embraced such concepts dogmatically. Most Communist parties collapsed and lost all political impact; others changed their name to a socialist variant and were either freely elected to govern or continued to maintain themselves in power by non-democratic methods. The impact of those monumental changes are not yet clear in the third world, but there too the appeal of socialism became considerably reduced (e.g. in Ethiopia and Nicaragua Marxist-led governments were replaced), but some fringe extremist guerilla groups (e.g. in Peru) continued a violent struggle.

For the churches in former Marxist socialist countries, the changes generally meant that they obtained true religious freedom. Many churches were able to return to social prominence and even considerable social and political influence. In large parts of the former Marxist countries, the major churches and religions became identified again with nationalism – re-establishing an ethno-religious symbiosis characteristic of the pre-Communist period. In a few instances this return to powerful identification between church and nation became a contributive factor for the outbreak of wars and for the attempted repression of smaller religious communities. Yet, in at least some of the countries religious people were in the forefront of the movement for democratization.

The world ecumenical movement is adjusting to these profound transformations of

socialism, particularly the transition from communism to post-communism. In several former Communist countries a large number of religious leaders and people became explicitly anti-ecumenical; an era of less, rather than more, cooperation between religious communities characterized the 1990s, while some religious communities relished their ability to re-enter full and unhindered participation in the world ecumenical activities, institutions and programmes. Whether ecumenism or anti-ecumenism will prevail in the short run is not yet clear.

PAUL MOJZES

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## SOCIETAS OECUMENICA

THE EUROPEAN Society for Ecumenical Research, founded in 1978, comprises Roman Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox members from departments for ecumenical studies at European universities, church-related institutes, and individual theologians in ecumenics. Its meetings, usually every two years, discuss current ecumenical themes and research work being undertaken by its members, and sometimes supplement and deepen ongoing WCC theological programmes. It publishes consultation proceedings and the newsletter *Signalia*.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

## SOCIETY

TO THE DESPAIR of sociologists, the term "society" is variously used in Christian literature on social ethics as synonymous with world, culture,\* civilization, community,\*

political and economic life – a shorthand label for the fabric of social phenomena in general. However, this general use also reveals the broad range of ethical, ideological and historical forces and processes which arouse Christian interest and which draw the churches into encounter with every facet of society, with practically all the social sciences and, increasingly, with the physical and natural sciences.

Since New Testament times, there has been a continuous Christian reflection on issues of society, used in this general sense, as the transcendent claims of the faith\* have encountered the historical contingencies and changes of organized society, illustrating what H. Richard Niebuhr called the "enduring problem of Christ and culture". The Christian response has ranged from "Christ against culture", as expressed by 1st- and 2nd-century Christians and the millennialist Christian sects of all ages, to "Christ the Transformer of culture", as interpreted by such diverse theologians and disciples as Augustine of Hippo and the Christian socialists of more recent times.

In his pioneering historical study *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, Ernst Troeltsch concluded that, alongside the extreme, though not uninteresting, social ideas of the Christian sectarians and the Christian mystics, there were only two main historical church teachings about social order: (1) the social philosophy of medieval Catholicism, based on the institutions of family, guild and class, on personal relations of authority and reverence in the relatively simple pre-capitalist economy, and the old solidarities involved in being bound to the soil or linked to some ancient family; (2) the social philosophy of ascetic Protestantism, resulting from a kind of Free church pietistic Calvinism, inwardly related to modern utilitarianism and rationalism, which glorified work as a calling and developed links with political democracy and liberalism; it was able to neutralize the ethically dangerous ideas of modern life (in utilitarianism and liberalism) by the religious ideas of individual and communal responsibility and by heroically "serving the cause of Christ all over the world".

By the 18th century, however, the churches had to face the "entirely new" sit-

uation created by the rise of modern science and liberal ideas of the Enlightenment, with its rational secular criticism of the state and other institutions of society. The new situation posed the problem of capitalism\* and the new industrial classes it created, rapid technological change and enormous growth in material productivity, the rise of revolutionary social protest movements (esp. Marxism), the growth of giant militaristic and bureaucratic states, the enormous increase in population, the spread of European colonialism and New World outlooks linking up and mobilizing the whole world for the purpose of trade. In these circumstances, the two main types of Christian social teaching were impotent, despite the development of new forms of diakonia.\*

Troeltsch's analysis opened the way for a new approach to Christian social thinking, combining the Christian ethical concern for justice and community with the insights of scientific social inquiry. (Troeltsch's impact on non-German-speaking Christianity came only after 1931, when his book was translated into English.) He was extremely critical of the Christian moral idealism which prevailed at the end of the 19th century: "Nowhere does there exist an absolute Christian ethic which only awaits discovery; all that we can do is to learn to control the world situation in its successive phases just as the earlier Christian ethic did in its own way. There is also no absolute ethical transformation of material nature or of human nature; all that does exist is a constant wrestling with the problems which they raise. Thus the Christian ethic of the present day and of the future will also only be an adjustment to the world situation, and it will only desire to achieve that which is practically possible... Only doctrinaire idealists or religious fanatics can fail to recognize these facts" (1013).

#### **CHURCH AND SOCIETY IN THE ECUMENICAL ERA**

The first world war and the worldwide economic crisis of the 1930s stirred the Western churches to re-examine their witness to society. An "ecumenical approach" was necessary to overcome the nationalist outlook which dominated Christian political and social thought. Inspired by church leaders like Archbishop Söderblom of Sweden

and challenged by social movements like Christianisme social in France, the social gospel in the USA and Christian socialism in the UK, Protestant and Orthodox churches gathered for the first universal Christian conference on Life and Work (Stockholm 1925). This meeting, however, lacked the theological and social insight to analyze developments in the modern world and was unable to resolve theological-ethical differences among its members.

In these years the churches were also baffled by the growth of secularism (see **secularization**), to which attention had been called in a much-debated paper on "Secular Civilization and the Christian Task", presented by the American philosopher Rufus Jones to the world missionary conference in Jerusalem (1928). He argued that the advance of secular culture, "a fruit of modern science", was the principal world rival of Christian faith.

The second Life and Work conference (Oxford 1937) considered the theme "Church, Community and State". Aided by the theological renewal which had taken place in Western Christianity in the intervening years, it produced creative new approaches to these and other pressing social issues. Theologians like Karl Barth, Reinhold Niebuhr, Emil Brunner, William Temple and Nicolas Berdyaev (and other Russian Orthodox theologians-in-exile in Paris) addressed the social and political crisis from their various theological-ethical perspectives, but all generated new Christian concern for what was happening in society. The Oxford conference was particularly successful in suggesting new approaches in three key areas.

First, in considering the function of the church in society, it provided a new methodology (an approach using so-called middle axioms\*) for Christian witness in relation to contemporary social issues, going beyond the affirmation of general ethical principles while avoiding the churches' becoming identified with particular economic and political programmes (Visser 't Hooft & Oldham, 209-10). This method also emphasized the need for the churches to depend less exclusively on clerical leadership and to draw upon their "best lay minds" with knowledge and experience in social affairs. The model

continues to have the support of many contemporary social ethicists and moral theologians (Preston).

Second, in its concern for economic order, the conference identified the points at which modern capitalism and communism challenged the Christian understanding of life. In the post-war years, this analysis and understanding became the basis of Christian support for the welfare state\* and social democracy.

Third, the conference clarified the principles which should guide Christian thinking about church and state\* (see also *state*), especially in view of "the widespread tendency of the state to control the totality of human life". The conference declared: "Since we believe in the holy God as the source of justice, we do not consider the state as the ultimate source of law but rather as its guarantor. It is not the lord but the servant of justice. There can be for the Christian no ultimate authority but very God" (report, 67).

The second world war interrupted but also intensified Christian reflection on these issues, emphasizing the need in the post-war world for increased social security and social democracy for the populations of modern industrial societies.

### CHRISTIANS AND THE CONFLICT BETWEEN CAPITALISM AND COMMUNISM

After the defeat of Hitler the conflict between the capitalist and Communist systems intensified, leading to the cold war (see *socialism*). This conflict provided the first test of the ecumenical movement – how to help its member churches transcend the rival claims of two self-righteous political-economic systems. At the first assembly (Amsterdam 1948), the newly established WCC addressed this "disorder of society" and proposed the idea of the responsible society\* as the criterion by which churches in Communist and non-Communist countries should determine their responsibility in the East-West conflict. This idea was substantially reaffirmed and expanded in a second statement adopted by the second WCC assembly (Evanston 1954), emphasizing the need of churches in all societies to examine critically their ideological assumptions. Evanston said: "Responsible society is not an alternative social political system, but a criterion by

which we judge all existing social orders and at the same time a standard to guide us in the specific choices we have to make. Christians are called to live responsibly, to live in response to God's act of redemption in Christ, in any society, even within the most unfavourable social structures." The assembly also stressed the importance of maintaining dialogue between churches in the Communist and non-Communist countries.

### "RAPID SOCIAL CHANGE" IN AFRICA, ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA

After the second world war, the churches largely supported the decolonization\* process, one that involved revolutionary social change as well as new ethical problems. The concern was how to encourage nation-building and rapid economic and technological development without further weakening the traditional societies and cultures of these lands. In this context it was first suggested that the churches needed a "theology of revolution" (Keith Bridston, 1956) to explain the immense cultural and social consequences of the rapid secularizing-modernizing process which accompanied decolonization and nation-building, a process all the more disturbing because it was so largely guided by Western secular ideas of nation-building, economic development, education and social welfare. Ten years later at the world conference on Church and Society (Geneva 1966), the WCC debated the same term, but on this occasion (as presented by Richard Shaull) insisted that the churches should be more active in promoting a worldwide revolutionary opposition to the capitalist political and economic system being imposed on the new nations by the Western industrial countries, which was leading to new types of colonialism and oppression.

Geneva 1966 was the first genuinely *world* Christian conference on social issues, including equal numbers of representatives from the so-called first, second and third worlds and a large group of observers from the Roman Catholic Church. The discussion of the theme "Christians in the Technical and Social Revolutions of Our Time" produced many new ideas on economic justice, political responsibility, racism,\* the relation of men and women in community, and the problems of rapid technological change. The

attempt to define a pluralist approach to the three competing economic systems and ideologies (market economy, mixed economy, and centrally planned economy) did not satisfy those who believed that the basic conflict was between Western capitalism and proposals for a revolutionary new political and economic order in the world.

A follow-up consultation on theology, social ethics and revolution (Zagorsk 1968) confirmed the refusal of the 1966 conference to provide a theological endorsement of a specific revolutionary ideology. However, Christian opinion was increasingly divided on this point, and after the fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968), the new WCC action-oriented programmes on economic development,\* racism and problems of rapidly growing cities in the developing countries tended to support proposals for revolutionary change. Throughout this period there was increasing cooperation with Roman Catholic scholars in relation to social questions, and the publication of the constitution by Vatican II\* on the Church in the Modern World (1965) showed that the social thought of the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church was on converging lines.

### THE SEARCH FOR A NEW ECUMENICAL CONSENSUS ON SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

In the continuing debate about the theology of revolution, re-defined in 1971 by Gustavo Gutiérrez as liberation theology,\* its advocates have maintained that earlier ecumenical social thought had been based on the capitalist system and its supporting economic and political rationale. They held that in the new situation of political and social oppression and the need for solidarity with the poor,\* the churches should accept the Marxist world-view and its "scientific" explanation of world economic injustice and the need for new economic structures. This view was accepted by many Christian groups throughout the 1970s, as the cultural revolution in China, Vietnam's victory over the USA and the various national revolutions in Southern Africa seemed to provide the criteria and a model for the kind of radical socio-political change needed not only in the third world but also in North America and Western Europe.

This hope for worldwide revolutionary change has seemed less credible since the collapse of Maoism in China and the demise of Soviet-style communism throughout Central and Eastern Europe. Many developing countries, especially in East Asia, have mastered modern technology and free-market methods of production and trading. At the same time, ethnic fragmentation in some post-colonial and post-Communist societies has resulted in repression of minorities, military conflict, attempted genocide and destruction of infrastructure leading to poverty, unemployment and homelessness. Meanwhile, South Africa's post-apartheid experience with the issues of impunity and reconciliation is only beginning to be tested as a possible model for re-building community in shattered societies.

Another factor upsetting the calculations of promoters of change, regardless of their ideologies, has been a new awareness of the limits of world resources and the impact of modern technology on the natural and human environment. Individual churches and the ecumenical movement have expressed concern for issues of faith, science and the future (the theme of the 1979 WCC world conference at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA). Yet ecumenical efforts to integrate this concern with the older themes of social justice and social democracy (or participation) proved difficult. A first attempt, the WCC study programme on "Just, Participatory and Sustainable Society" (1976-79), failed to find an agreed theological-ethical basis for such an integration. In accordance with a call from Vancouver 1983, the WCC launched a programme emphasis on "Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation",\* which included a 1990 world consultation in Seoul, South Korea. Despite disagreements at Seoul over a theological basis from which to address such concerns, the Pontifical Council on Justice and Peace focused on issues similar to those discussed at Seoul and Canberra, including racism, the world debt crisis and the relationship of such systemic reasons for poverty to the potential for a just and balanced human ecology.\*

Following the 1992 United Nations conference on environment and development in Rio de Janeiro, the WCC began to refine the concept of a sustainable society into that of

“just and sustainable communities” nurturing equitable relationships within the human family but also between humanity and the rest of creation. Churches and ecumenical bodies joined a coalition of international organizations, civil society organizations, trade unions and other activists in the Jubilee 2000 movement for a moratorium as a solution to the debt crisis.\* Harare incorporated these and other concerns in its call for a more coherent approach to challenges arising from globalization.\*

Since 1975, increasing attention has been given to the issue of sexism,\* which resulted in the WCC programme on the role of women in church and society as well as the Ecumenical Decade on the Churches in Solidarity with Women\* (1988-98). Many churches have participated in the development of feminist theology\* and its insights into justice, overcoming violence, community and ecology. The larger implications of women’s programmes for Christian social thought are becoming apparent but have yet to be spelled out in detail and in relation to the range of ecumenical views on specific economic and political systems.

Clearly, for some time it has been difficult for Christians to agree on a common theological and ethical approach to society. The surge of “new theologies” fostered by new social concerns has added to the problem. Theologies of liberation, of neo-liberalism or neo-conservatism, of feminism, of people’s participation, of racial and ethnic justice, of human sexuality, of eco-justice or eco-feminism, theologies claiming to embody traditional dogma – all tend to vie for pride of place. As John Cobb pointed out, all these “theologies of” make claims to be complete theological systems, offering more than Christian ethical doctrines on one particular human or social problem. This helps to explain why the WCC’s efforts since Vancouver to achieve “a vital and coherent” theological basis for ecumenical witness and action in society have met with limited success.

At a time when so many Christian groups are confident that they have the only theological-ethical answer to the horrendous problems of modern society, it may be sobering to recall an observation of an earlier ecumenical prophet, Ernst Lange. Reflecting on a Faith and Order conference (Louvain

1971), Lange made this judgment on the large claims of the churches to work for their own unity and the unity of humankind: “Stored up in the realities of (world social) interdependence is a potential for conflict of such grotesque dimensions that any large claims for the church simply die on our lips” (*And Yet It Moves*, 95).

Today the main task facing churches in their relation to society may be to encourage these many self-confident social theologies to undertake a more incisive dialogue with each other. Its aim would be to clarify common theological perspectives and more effectively to relate their varying perceptions of peace, justice, social order, and the natural creation and also to clarify methods and strategies Christians may use in the struggle for human betterment and reconciliation.\*

See also **church and world**.

PAUL ABRECHT

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## SOCIOLOGY OF ECUMENISM

WHEN THE academic discipline of ecumenics was institutionalized in the form of professorships, lectureships and ecumenical institutes in the 1960s and 1970s, specialists were generally appointed from the disciplines of dogmatics, church history and biblical studies. This history explains why the sociology of ecumenism is still a rather under-developed discipline. Recent developments in the sociology of ecumenism also tend to be overlooked by ecumenists. For ex-

ample, neither the *Classified Catalogue of the Ecumenical Movement* (1972) nor the first edition of this dictionary includes an entry on the sociology of ecumenism. Berger's seminal article "A Market Model for the Analysis of Ecumenicity" (1963) is not listed in the WCC catalogue, while Currie's historical-sociological analysis of British Methodism (1968) appears under "Methodist positions in the ecumenical movement". Nevertheless, Robert Towler (a sociologist of religion) rightly insisted in 1974 that "an ideology as strong and persuasive as ecumenism deserves careful study".

The general neglect of the sociology of ecumenism in ecumenical circles can also be attributed to the fact that scholars in this relatively new sub-discipline usually discuss their findings rather with other sociologists. For example, the programmes of the Religious Research Association, the Association for the Sociology of Religion (in the USA) and the sociology of religion section of the British Sociological Association now feature at least some papers on ecumenical issues. Social scientists operating in this field also tend to publish their work in sociological journals, which are not always read by ecumenists trained in (biblical) theology and church history.

There have indeed been some contacts between ecumenists and social scientists. As early as 1929, H. Richard Niebuhr (who was profoundly influenced by the socio-theology of Troeltsch) published *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* to show that such "sociological factors" as race and social class could well explain the persistent tendency in Protestant churches towards schism and denominationalism. Hence the long debate in the ecumenical movement on "The Non-Theological Factors in the Making and Unmaking of Church Unity" which began in Edinburgh (1937) and continued until 1963 (Montreal). Niebuhr, however, thought that he had overstated his case in 1929, and thus he wrote *The Kingdom of God in America* (1937). There Niebuhr no longer treats the "non-theological factors" as the independent variable in the ecumenical equation but, rather, "the power of theology". In short, theology is not always an epiphenomenon of the sociological factors. Sociologically speaking, however, it is still

not clear whether theological or non-theological factors function as independent or dependent variables in the ecumenical process.

C.H. Dodd reopened this debate during preparations for the meeting of Faith and Order in Lund (1952) with his letter on "Unavowed Motives", which explains why Nils Ehrenström and W.G. Muelder prepared a report on *Institutionalism and Church Unity*, discussed at Montreal (1963). It is still the only explicitly sociological report ever commissioned by F&O. Between New Delhi (1961) and Uppsala (1968), sociologists such as H.J. Margull organized the project entitled the "Missionary Structure of the Congregation"\* at the request of the WCC Department on Studies in Evangelism. Since the 1960s, most of the work in this field (esp. the generation of "market models of ecumenism") has been done in departments of sociology and/or departments of religious studies and is usually reported in sociological publications.

One of the most promising approaches is based upon the theory and practice of historical sociology. It begins with the ideals of the ecumenical pioneers, which gave rise to "unofficial trans-denominational protest movements" (YMCA, YWCA, SCMs, inter-faith peace movements etc.). Some of their members subsequently rose through the ranks of their own denominations, hence the emergence of an "official ecumenical elite" which was able to "officialize" such ecumenical institutions as the IMC and organize the classic ecumenical conferences (F&O and L&W) to which denominations sent officially appointed delegates. Their continuation committees were amalgamated in 1948 (IMC in 1961) in order to "socially construct" the WCC. Meanwhile, the "ecumenical elite" has also socially constructed a worldwide network of councils of churches from the global to the local level, whose "hubs" gradually transformed themselves into ecumenical bureaucracies in the process.

Meanwhile, the application of the Lund principle\* (1952) seems to have shifted the focus of ecumenical action from the social movements and international conferences towards ecumenical negotiations (dialogue), and the evaluation of "consensus" texts.

Hence the growing gulf between the “officials” and the “social movements” which Willaime describes in terms of “disjointed ecumenism” (*oecuménisme écartelé*). In short, the ecumenical process has transformed itself into “a species of ecumenical diplomacy practised by experts”, and the historical phase characterized by “social movements” seems to have ended (ch. 1). Although some ecumenical social movements did become weaker in the 1960s (the Dutch SCM later disbanded), their alleged demise is more apparent than real; ecumenists do not always familiarize themselves with descriptions of (new) ecumenical movements in the sociological journals. Nevertheless, there are signs of a growing lack of communication between the elite and the grassroots. For example, the consensus texts of the elite are not always received at local or intermediate levels (reception\*), while officials sometimes refuse to sponsor (new) ecumenical movements such as those concerned for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

PETER STAPLES

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## SODEPAX

THE JOINT committee on Society, Development and Peace – transcending languages by its acronym SODEPAX – was from 1968 to 1980 the sole co-responsible agency between the Vatican (through its Commission on Justice and Peace, established by Paul VI in 1967) and the WCC (first through the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development, then in 1970 through the more embracing unit on Justice and Service). Jointly announced as “an ecumenical experiment” with three-year mandates, SODEPAX was well supported by the WCC Church and Society conference (1966) and the WCC Uppsala assembly (1968), John XXIII's social encyclicals\* on Christianity and social progress (*Mater et Magistra*, 1961), and on peace (*Pacem in Terris*, 1963), Paul VI's encyclical on development (*Populorum Progressio*, 1967), and above all, Vatican II's document on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*, 1965).

A WCC/RCC-sponsored conference on development\* in Beirut (1968) brought together theologians and church leaders from “developed and developing” countries, representatives from international organizations, and leading experts in world politics and economics. The success of this interdisciplinary conference and its widely circulated report were a major impetus to the formation of SODEPAX.

Headquartered in Geneva with competent staff and generous funding from foundations and trusts, SODEPAX quickly responded to the widespread local and national initiatives by helping them to set up their own SODEPAX groups. It launched six programmes: social communication, education for development, mobilization for peace, development research, theological reflection, and working with people of other faiths. It organized several large international conferences, notably on the theology of development (1969), on the communications media in the service of development and peace (1970), on peace and the international community (1970), on the churches' role in the development of Asia (1970) and on peace in Northern Ireland (1973). In 1976 SODEPAX launched a programme of encouraging local and national ecumenical collaboration on the issues of the New International Economic Order, the church and the poor, the environment. Its quarterly *Church Alert* (1973-80) published the positions of the holy see and the WCC, as well as stimulating articles on development, peace and human rights.

Within a decade SODEPAX became the victim of its own vigorous successes. It needed more staff to respond to demands from so many areas but found less outside funding. The parent bodies were under pressure to bear almost all the costs, at the very time when they were worrying about SODEPAX becoming an almost independent third entity because of the somewhat diffuse character of its programmes and its free style of operation. And SODEPAX was coming up against the limits of the whole relation between the RCC and the WCC – a world-organized church with central authority, and a council of churches which is one step removed from the decision-making structures of the member churches.

By 1980 the two most effective, visible symbols of RCC/WCC collaboration were the full RC participation in Faith and Order and SODEPAX, and the latter even more so because of its close contact within the network of similarly structured national and regional organizations. Many on both sides interpreted the demise of SODEPAX (31 December 1980) as a weakening or even a withdrawal from a shared commitment to active collaboration. On the contrary, the WCC/RCC Joint Working Group\* (JWG) emphasized that what "ultimately matters... is the will to work together effectively" and to find realistic, visible, "flexible forms of collaboration on the international as well as on the national and local levels"; for example, in common witness for peace, for the defence of human rights, including the right to religious freedom (JWG fifth report, 1983). But current visible WCC/RCC joint structures have so far failed to replace the original aims, activities and studies of SODEPAX. Even the post-SODEPAX joint consultative group for social thought and action (1982), composed of staff from related offices in Geneva and the Vatican, collapsed in 1989. During the 1990s only regular information exchanges took place between the Vatican Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and the WCC staff.

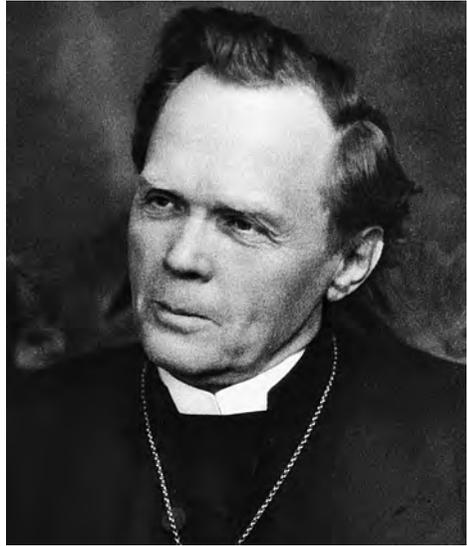
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## SÖDERBLOM, NATHAN

B. 15 Jan. 1866, Trönö, Sweden; d. 12 July 1931, Uppsala. Archbishop of Sweden, historian of religions and pioneer of the 20th-century ecumenical movement, Söderblom did more, according to George Bell, than any other Christian leader or teacher of his time "to unite Orthodox and evangelical churches of all nations and communions in a common fellowship".

Söderblom grew up in a pietistic parsonage, and he remained rooted in its deep re-



vivalist spirit throughout his entire life, even if his scientific investigations and encounter with liberal Protestant theology allowed him to grow far beyond it. After studying theology in Uppsala, Söderblom served as chaplain to the Swedish legation in Paris from 1894 to 1901. There he received a doctorate in theology with a dissertation on ancient Persian religion. He was professor of the history of religion in Uppsala from 1901 to 1914 (and simultaneously in Leipzig from 1912 to 1914). His numerous writings in this field earned him an international reputation.

Involvement in the student movement had brought him early contacts and experiences with Christians from other churches and continents. Already at the age of 24, while attending the 1891 Northfield student conference in the US, Söderblom had written in his diary words that could well stand as the motto for his entire life: "Lord, give me the humility and wisdom to serve the great cause of the free unity of your church."

His surprising choice as archbishop of Uppsala in May 1914 (he was third on the list of three presented to the king) gave him unexpected scope for exercising such responsibility, and this came to expression in the first instance in his repeated initiatives for peace during the first world war. To be sure, his appeal "for peace and for Christian fellowship" at the beginning of the war – signed only by churches in neutral countries

– turned out to be as unsuccessful as the three efforts (in 1917 and 1918) to bring church leaders in the belligerent countries together in an international church conference (which also in the end drew participants only from several neutral countries).

Söderblom's renewed efforts after the war at founding an ecumenical council of the churches, which would seek to bring Christian principles to bear on international relations and social, industrial and economic life while deferring consideration of differences of doctrine, issued eventually in the universal Christian conference on Life and Work, held in Stockholm in 1925. The successful preparation and follow-up of this milestone in ecumenical history were due almost exclusively to Söderblom's personal initiatives and surpassing breadth of vision. After Stockholm 1925, it was no longer possible to ignore the fact of common Christian responsibility for humanity living together in peace, freedom and justice.

Although working out the consequences of the Life and Work conference was Söderblom's most urgent priority, he also took part in the parallel Faith and Order\* movement. In 1927, at its first world conference in Lausanne, he chaired the important section on "the unity of Christendom and the relation thereto of existing churches".

His life work was given worldwide recognition and honour in 1930 when he was awarded the Nobel peace prize.

See also **ecumenical conferences, Life and Work.**

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## SOLIDARITY

IN THE MAIN, two basic conceptions of solidarity can be distinguished in present-day discussions of this term: solidarity as (comprehensive) interdependence and solidarity as covenant\* or alliance.

In Roman Catholic social doctrine the term "principle of solidarity" denotes a basic conception of political order\* regarded as opposed both to middle-class individualism and to social collectivism, and as em-

phasizing not only that the individual is dependent on other human beings but also that society exists for people. Opinions are divided as to what importance the principle may still be thought to have for contemporary discussions of social theory and practical politics. While some regard it as serving as a critical corrective, others point to the problems raised by its appeal to neo-scholastic arguments of natural law and its consequently abstract character. On this account, it is said, the principle is not sufficiently relevant to situations of oppression and threat. While this principle of solidarity is based entirely on a conception of solidarity as mutual interdependence, the papal encyclicals of recent years (e.g. *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*) increasingly refer also to a conception of solidarity as alliance (with the poor\*), though apparently without linking the two conceptions.

In view of the growing awareness of worldwide problems affecting everyone, in particular the nuclear and ecological threats, a concept of *universal solidarity* is becoming increasingly important, emphasizing general involvement in the sense of global interdependence. This view of solidarity complements an increasingly popular conception of politics that transcends the limits of the nation state, analyzing particular problems in the perspective of wider contexts.

The theory and practice of *party* or *partisan solidarity* were promoted in particular by the labour movement. Such solidarity denotes, on the one hand, the coming together of people suffering under the same unjust structure in order to campaign against it and the interest groups defending it and, on the other hand, the practical action of other people who join in active sympathy with the victims and their fight for liberation. Party solidarity has become a major historical driving force, channelled by people's awareness that they themselves can shape their social conditions.

A specific danger of party solidarity is clearly that of pressure or coercion to conform within the group. In situations of conflict, outspoken self-criticism often looks like treason. To that extent, morally reinforced party solidarity needs to be counterbalanced by deliberately cultivated openness and participation.

The phrase *solidarity with the poor* may be taken to sum up the comprehensive challenge which confronts Christian churches at the present time. At the same time it expresses an outlook strongly influenced by the traditions of party solidarity (solidarity as self-organization by the poor and as a challenge to the churches, esp. those of the first world, to join in and help).

It is theologically explosive to adopt the Old Testament covenant theme, according to which God made an alliance with the poor as a defence against their adversaries, thus assigning the poor a special role in the history of redemption. To stand in solidarity by their side is not merely an expression of a faith already constituted beforehand but concerns the essence of faith,\* church\* and theology.

This solidarity has a universal tendency because it extends to all who are poor. In a certain sense it even goes beyond normal solidarity, in that the latter envisages the individual in his or her immediate social environment (e.g. in a particular state), whereas solidarity with the poor moves towards a solidarity with those who are outsiders in terms of existing societies.

In a somewhat modified sense *solidarity with others* means those who are culturally different, especially people of other ethnic groups. This attention to people of other cultures is of recent date in the churches. If in face of the threat from a standardized Western civilization, poor people and people who are different come together, the nature of such a solidarity must not be overlooked. In so far as it includes differences, it possesses an inherent corrective to the pressure for uniformity stemming from party solidarity. The tenacity of cultural difference and its claim to full respect can protect solidarity with the poor from degenerating into a one-dimensional conception of liberation.

See also **subsidiarity**.

PETER ROTTLÄNDER

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## SOLOVIEV, VLADIMIR

B. 16 Jan. 1853, Moscow; d. 31 July 1900, Uzkoe, near Moscow. Theologian, philosopher, mystic, poet, journalist and ecumenist, Soloviev thought that the essence of Christianity consisted in the union of God and the human being in the incarnate Word, but that Eastern Orthodoxy neglected the human being, while Western Christianity tended to forget God. He pleaded for the reunion of the Orthodox church and the Roman Catholic Church. In 1889 he published *La Russie et l'Église universelle*, which met a very hostile reception in Russia, and the holy synod forbade him to write further on religious topics. In 1896 he made a profession of faith, confessed to a Catholic priest and received holy communion. He hoped to see all human beings united religiously in Christianity, which would be in practice a theocracy under the pope, and politically under the czar. Later he became more pessimistic, and more concerned with the problem of evil and of the antichrist.\* On his deathbed he received the last rites from a Russian Orthodox priest. Since he believed that Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy remained mystically united despite their outward separation, he considered intercommunion\* justifiable. In his philosophy he was influenced by J. Boehme, F.W.J. Schelling and G.W.F. Hegel. He sought to combine their pantheism with the Christian doctrine of the incarnation.\* Dostoyevsky fashioned the character Alyosha in *The Brothers Karamazov* after Soloviev.

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## SOUTH AMERICA: ANDEAN REGION

AS A PART OF the vice-royalty of Peru and Chile, the areas that later became Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador were part of the colonial system and the colonial Catholic church. Lima, the capital of the vice-royalty, was an important centre where several synods were held during the colonial period. It was also a see of the Inquisition where a number of foreigners (mostly British and French) were condemned for "Lutheran heresy" (a general term for all suspected of Protestantism). Religious liberty did not exist in the colonial period.

Latin American independence brought continuity with the Catholicism mentioned above. Nevertheless, non-Catholic foreigners enjoyed a measure of tolerance after the different countries gained their emancipation.

The struggle between church and state for control of society is an essential factor in understanding the precarious situation of Protestant communities. The demand for freedom of conscience and freedom of worship by the Protestant religious minorities in Latin America effectively made them the allies of the radical liberalism which was seeking to build a modern Latin America, breaking with the Spanish colonial heritage rather than preserving continuity with it.

One of the main concerns of the Latin American political elites at the start of the 19th century was to link the emerging nation states to the "march of progress" that was underway on the political front. In this context the representatives of the British and American Bible societies were welcomed.

With the protection of liberal governments the Scottish Baptist missionary and educationist James Thomson (1788-1854) introduced the Bible and the educational system devised by Joseph Lancaster to Chile (1821), where he had the backing of President O'Higgins; to Peru (1822), where he had the support of General San Martín himself and where translation of the New Testament into Quechua was started in 1923 and, with the help of the priest Pasoskanki, into Aymara (1824); and to Ecuador (1824). In Bolivia the earliest Bible missionaries arrived by way of the south and from Buenos Aires (1883-98) – José Mongiardino (the first martyr), Francisco

Penzotti, Andrés Milne, J.B. Arancet and others (1827-90).

Other Bible teachers and missionary pioneers established a Protestant presence towards the end of the century. When the first pan-American missionary conference took place in Panama in 1916 (see **Latin American Council of Churches**) Protestant churches had been established in all the Andean countries, but their numbers were still small. The missionary agreement reached at the preparatory meeting for the Panama congress in 1914 was perhaps the first ecumenical decision affecting the churches in this region, for it determined which churches would be present in the different parts of each country.

A policy of bitter polemics and accusations characterized relations with the majority Roman Catholic Church. Intra-Protestant relations soon developed their own problems, and the region suffered from denominational divisions and theological conflicts imported from abroad and from local division owing to leadership conflicts between missionaries and nationals or within each of the two groups. Under the influence of the cooperation committee created by some missionary societies and boards and through the friendship developed among several local leaders, different forms of cooperation and joint action developed, particularly since the 1920s. Subsequently, missionaries established "associations" or "fellowships" for consultation, practical cooperation and sometimes comity agreements.

## BOLIVIA

In Bolivia a regional conference was created in 1917, followed by a conference of national evangelical workers in 1935 and an attempt in 1941 to create an evangelical council of Bolivia, inspired by the Panama conference. Some evangelical churches created ANDEB (National Association of Evangelicals in Bolivia) in 1966, which was joined by most Protestant churches in the country.

The Ecumenical Fund for Development, an organization based in Cochabamba, tries to involve lay leaders, concentrating on development and social aid for rural communities. Other ecumenical bodies in La Paz and Cochabamba have offered their services

only during periods of military dictatorship (1972-82), for Bolivian churches have generally shown little ecumenical initiative.

In recent years an ecumenical group with the participation of the historical churches has been organized in Bolivia, on the initiative of the bishops conference of Bolivia and the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI), Andean region. One of the tasks of the ecumenical group is to bear witness to the rapprochement among the churches and engage in dialogue with the leadership of ANDEB to find ways of bringing the Protestant churches and the Roman Catholic church closer together. Four Bolivian churches are members of CLAI.

### ECUADOR

In the early 1970s three missions – the Evangelical Alliance Mission, the Church of the Brethren and the United Andean Indian Mission – discussed the possibility of forming an Ecuadorian evangelical church with the small local churches founded by them and the independent churches that might wish to join a new national church. The first two missions had links with the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States. Given the tensions existing between some of the older missions and the national personnel working in the local churches founded by them, it was likely that some of these churches and their pastors would join the new national church. The more conservative missions, which have resisted ecumenical efforts, viewed this possibility with concern.

In 1963 some missionaries with HCJB World Radio, in Quito, established the Ecuadorian Evangelical Fraternity (CEE) in order to present a united evangelical front to the government and defend freedom of conscience. The president of the CEE identifies its objectives as (1) promoting the unity of the evangelical churches, (2) developing joint efforts in evangelism and social service, and (3) defending the rights of Evangelicals and human rights in general where these have been violated.

Other such organizations in Ecuador include the Quito Corps of Pastors, which meets every month, attended by an average of 100 pastors, and the Ecumenical Fraternity, founded in April 1997, which brings to-

gether Catholic and Protestant church leaders and non-governmental organizations. It aims to promote Christian unity through prayer, Bible study, theological discussions and worship; it also prepares the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.\* The Society of Evangelical Theological Education Institutes (SIETE), likewise founded in 1997, groups together all the seminaries in Quito. SIETE serves as a forum to encourage training, exchange of teaching staff, theological development and fellowship.

### PERU

The National Council of Churches of Peru was formed in 1940 on the basis of the Evangelical Alliance, testifying to interconfessional unity through its services and its national presence. In recent years it has become a counterpart to the Roman Catholic Church and a partner of civil society in the debate on topics of national interest. One long-standing ecumenical body is the Interconfessional Committee of Religious Leaders, in which the Jewish community and the Roman Catholic Church participate. It also includes some of the Council's member churches and is not in competition with it. The Christian Centre for Social Promotion is perhaps the most active ecumenical organization in the area of human rights and pastoral studies and publications. The Ecumenical Foundation for Peace Education, as part of the human rights committee of Peru, contributes to education for peace through educational programmes and legal actions to defend the affected sectors of society. Four churches in Peru are members of CLAI.

### CHILE

The Association of Evangelical Churches of Chile (AIECH) was founded in 1974 "to establish a mechanism for facilitating understanding, exchange and the development of common programmes among the evangelical churches in Chile". The founders of the association were the Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Lutheran and Anglican Churches, the Protestant Centre and various Pentecostal missions, and UNELAM (Latin American Evangelical Movement for Unity, Andean Region). Although it was the organization most representative of Chilean Protestantism, AIECH did not fulfill the criteria

required for an alliance with the dictatorial political power of General Pinochet. It brought together all the churches with an ecumenical tradition that were actively engaged in the defence of human rights from the very beginning of the coup d'état.

A religious body such as AIECH, set up by the churches for a clear and specific purpose – which troubled the government by its critical attitude, even though it did not engage in systematic political opposition – was bound to be excluded from any plans for a permanent body to maintain relations between the minority churches and the military authorities.

Other Evangelical leaders who had supported Pinochet and the military government continued conversations with the political authorities with a view to agreeing on a strategy that would enable continued support. In 1975 the National Evangelical Activities Coordinating Centre (CENCA) was formed “to coordinate relations for the evangelical churches which have subscribed to the document in support of the government among themselves and with the military authority”. CENCA's most important achievement was the creation that year of the Council of Pastors of Chile, with 14 missions supporting the initiative.

In 1984 various evangelical churches representing different currents of the Reformed faith in Chile formally set up the Christian Fraternity of Churches, an ecumenical group that includes the Orthodox church. This organization continues the goals of the now-defunct AIECH, while contributing more clearly to work in defence of human rights. It often opposes positions adopted officially by the Council of Pastors.

Ecumenical seminaries exist in Chile (Evangelical Theological Community), in Peru (Biblical Theological Community), and Bolivia (Andean Higher Ecumenical Institute of Theology). In addition, numerous denominational seminaries often have inter-denominational enrolment and faculty.

After the coup d'état in 1973, there was a variety of evangelical action in opposition to the regime of General Pinochet, and likewise activities in support of human development directed towards the poor and marginalized sectors. These projects are run by various bodies.

Concern about the challenges facing evangelical Christians in Chilean society caused their leaders to form groups to reflect on the current situation. This effort led to the formation in 1983 of the Circle for Evangelical Studies and Reflection.

When democracy was restored in 1990, President Patricio Aylwin invited the different religious expressions to cooperate in the country's reconciliation, with a view to publicizing the “Truth and Reconciliation” report, better known as the Rettig report, which gave an account of the violations of human rights perpetrated under the military dictatorship. This invitation, which revealed evangelical divisions, led to the formation of the Evangelical Organizations Coordination Committee to coordinate their efforts. This body comprises the Council of Pastors, the Christian Fraternity of Churches, pastoral units and independent denominations. This effort for unity played an important part in the promulgation of the new law on religion, passed in October 1999.

## CONCLUSIONS

The majority indigenous population in all these countries represents a challenge for the churches with a relatively ecumenical tradition, in that the indigenous religious experience and the ways in which these people then manifest Christian spirituality are contributing to produce new models of community and dialogue with the Christian churches.

The growth of poverty and marginalization as a result of economic “adjustment plans”, the violation of human rights and the escalating violence in some areas (particularly in Peru), together with the growing numerical strength and public visibility of the Protestant churches, represent great challenges and offer opportunities that call for greater ecumenical solidarity and witness to unity from all the churches in this area.

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## SOUTH AMERICA: BRAZIL

THE HISTORY of the ecumenical movement in Brazil has been marked by the pan-Protestant spirit which characterized the modern missionary movement and by the impact made on Brazilian Protestantism by denominationalism,\* the conferences of Edinburgh (1910) and Panama (1916), the foundation of the WCC (1948), conservative and fundamentalist propaganda, and the Second Vatican Council (1962-65).

In a way, the reformers laid the foundations of Christian denominationalism by refusing to identify the church with any type of institution, declaring that the church is to be found wherever there are believers and that the continuity of the church in time is equivalent to the continuity of the faithful to the extent that they maintain the true faith. When the various Calvinist tendencies produced in England the Westminster confession of faith and its catechisms (1643-49), those foundations were re-inforced by the thesis of freedom of conscience and of the presence of the individual churches within the universal church. Although this theological position favours both the principle of unity and that of diversity, the development of Protestantism in Brazil, due in large part to North American missions, promoted the strong denominational spirit which characterized Christianity in the US in the 19th century. The principles of strict separation of church and state\* and of voluntary association, together with the ecclesiastical traditions of the Old World and the ethnic origins of the waves of immigrants flowing from Europe in the 19th century, tilted the balance towards diversity and predominance of the denominationalist spirit.

As well as denominationalism, however, the missionaries also brought the pan-Protestant spirit developed by Evangelicalism and by the Calvinist heritage, modified in the direction of the Arminianism of the Methodist movement, a fairly common theology strongly influenced by the great revival that occurred in the US in the first part of the 19th century. In consequence, Protestantism in Brazil, although having developed apart from the churches of European origin, maintained a common theological inheritance, which should have promoted the ecumenical spirit. Nevertheless the denominationalist principle prevailed and has had considerable influence on the ecumenical movement in this part of the world.

If denominationalism developed in the US for specific economic and cultural reasons, in Brazil it can be explained only by the fact that the missionaries reproduced their own denominations as a duty imposed by the respective missionary societies which sent and maintained them. In addition, however, the need for strong assertion of identity in face of the dominant religious majority of the country encouraged attachment to specific doctrines and a spirit of opposition to Roman Catholics. In this last respect, a notable paradox resulted from the impact of the congress of Panama (1916) on the Brazilian Protestant mentality. The congress, called in reaction to that of Edinburgh, which had excluded Latin America from its organization, displayed remarkable ecumenical spirit, not only by its pan-Protestantism, but especially by regarding the Roman Catholic Church as Christian and recognizing its evangelizing work in Latin America as legitimate. Thus Protestant evangelism was to go to those areas not reached by the RCC, cooperating with it in the common Christian mission.

The spirit and attitude of the congress, however, produced an irremediable split in Brazilian Protestantism and, though it meant well, compromised the future of the ecumenical movement in Brazil. It did so in the first place by weakening pan-Protestantism itself, for while some people accepted the spirit of the congress, others did not, thus opening up a source of internal distrust. In the second place, it re-inforced anti-Catholicism, producing a sort of united front

against the RCC. In fact, most of the Brazilians who had been Catholic found the reasons for their conversion to Protestantism would have been undercut by the attitude of the congress and its followers. The development of the ecumenical movement in Brazil must be understood against this background.

As an expression of reaction against the Edinburgh conference, the conference on missions in Latin America, held in New York in 1913, created the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, which in turn planned and held the congress of Panama in 1916. In Brazil, the Brazilian committee on cooperation was established for the purpose of encouraging joint Protestant-Catholic theological, Christian and secular educational work, demarcation of missionary territories etc. The committee pushed on with those projects, although some of them, such as the united seminary in Rio de Janeiro, did not manage to survive the denominationalist spirit. Nevertheless the committee, whose activities continued from 1920 to 1932, included the Sunday School Union, the Young Men's Christian Associations, the Evangelical Schools Federation and the above-mentioned seminary. The great leaders of the cooperation movement were the Presbyterian Erasmus Braga (1877-1932), whose ideas were expressed in his book *Pan-Americanismo - Aspecto Religioso* (Pan-Americanism - its religious aspect), 1917, and his disciple, also a Presbyterian, Epaminondas Melo Amaral (1893-1962), who defended views which openly favoured union in his book *Magno Problema* (Great problem), 1934. Melo Amaral was the first secretary general of the Evangelical Confederation of Brazil (CEB), which was founded in 1934 as a successor to the Brazilian committee on cooperation.

Besides stimulating internal cooperation by means of congresses, publications and representation of churches in their dealings with government authorities, the CEB maintained international relations with the World's Sunday School Association, the International Missionary Council\* and the Stockholm movement (Life and Work\*). However, the confederation never had close relations with the WCC, which was taking shape in embryo in those organizations. The

confederation undoubtedly paid the price exacted by its inclusion of the hostile forces mentioned earlier, just as it could not represent all Brazilian churches, since the Baptists did not form part of it, while some of the numerous Lutherans joined only later (1958), through the Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil. Although the confederation served Protestantism in Brazil well, it could not survive its own internal ambiguities and the pressures of the changes that were taking place in the churches, both nationally and internationally, and in the early 1960s it began to decline. The lack of representation resulting from the demise of the CEB encouraged the rise of various other associations of churches and institutions expressing the different tendencies found within the ambit of Brazilian Protestantism.

The formation of the WCC polarized these tendencies, chiefly because at a time when the churches were examining their positions in face of a new state of affairs, the preaching against the WCC unleashed by Carl McIntire and his International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC) all over the world, and especially in Brazil in 1949, divided Protestantism in Brazil into three camps in regard to ecumenism: the fundamentalist, radically opposed to it; the conservative, representing a position midway between the WCC and the ICCC; and finally the openly ecumenical, composed of churches that gradually joined the WCC. In practice, however, the three attitudes reduce to two, because churches which opted for the middle position very frequently have assumed attitudes hostile to the ecumenical movement in general and the WCC in particular.

Growing awareness of the socio-political crisis led the CEB to organize its final and perhaps most significant expression of pan-Protestantism. Through its social responsibility of the church sector, in 1962 the confederation held a conference of the northeast in Recife. Under the heading "Christ and the Brazilian Revolutionary Process", Protestant theologians and sociologists presented these on the church's responsibility to a society in profound crisis. For the first time also, non-Protestant sociologists and economists, such as Gilberto Freyre, Celso Furtado and Paulo Singer, were invited to help analyze the cur-

rent economic situation in Brazil. However, this conference seems to have played a decisive part in the almost total extinction of the CEB, for the conservative wing of the churches came to regard with even greater mistrust any expression of concern for social problems. And so, while pan-Protestantism was disintegrating, a growing radical movement agitated church circles, giving rise to a period of persecutions, exclusions and schisms. Socio-political instability, both continental and national, as well as the constant pressure from conservative and fundamentalist sources, often coming from outside the country through "faith missions", created a marked increase in suspicion and mistrust of the ecumenical movement, which was often regarded as in complicity with socialism.

The Second Vatican Council, with its openness to ecumenical dialogue, re-kindled the old problem of Protestant anti-Catholicism in Brazil, now embittered by propaganda inspired by the ICCC. Those of a more liberal and open tendency (the minority) were favourably impressed by the broader spirit in the RCC. However, these various forces operating in the religious field of Brazilian Protestantism are responsible for divisions, antagonisms and the closed self-centredness of some churches and make the ecumenical journey in Brazil increasingly difficult. An anti-socialist attitude which identifies socialism with atheism still persists, as does a lingering anti-Catholicism, now perhaps as a vestige of the need for Protestant self-identity.

The present situation of ecumenism in Brazil mirrors these conflicts and changes. It is not easy to discern the currents and focal points of ecumenism because of the ambiguous attitudes that some churches have towards it. Some groups (e.g. the Baptists and Congregationalists, not to mention the fundamentalist Presbyterian groups) are openly opposed to ecumenism. There is a perceptible weakening of the pan-Protestant spirit, as well as a change in ecumenical thinking on the part of individuals who, while within the various churches, continue to seek dialogue and fraternal cooperation between the different branches of Christianity.

A residual anti-ecumenism remains, now made more complex because of the political, social, economic and religious changes tak-

ing place in the world, which have had repercussions in Brazil. Protestantism in the country came into being and thrived in conflict with Roman Catholicism and later in clashes with atheistic socialism which were inspired by international fundamentalism. However, the changes within the RCC after the Second Vatican Council and the collapse of the existing socialism seem to have robbed mainstream Brazilian Protestantism of its only battle-fronts. This may explain the current indifference of such churches to contemporary historical developments in Brazil.

Ecumenical thought, still alive in Brazil, now seems to have passed to the RCC. At the congress of Panama in 1916, its liberal wing had already declared the need for the absolute centrality of Jesus Christ and his saving work in the preaching of the gospel, for the sake of which all Christians were called to overcome their differences and engage in this common task. The leading voice of this Christological emphasis for Latin America was Erasmus Braga. Two documents from the Second Vatican Council, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church and the Decree on Ecumenism,\* as well as John Paul II's encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*\* (1995), deal in depth with the subject of the unity of Christians in Jesus Christ. The commitment of the RCC expressed in these texts still causes some difficulties for Protestants in general and for Brazilian Protestants in particular. But while the Panama congress was a watershed among Brazilian Protestants, the openness of the Second Vatican Council to non-Catholic Christians has met with only a cool response from them.

Despite RC commitment to dialogue between the confessions, the ecumenical movement, even with this new spirit, has not made much headway. On the contrary, signs point to declining interest, caused by two major factors. First, there are the internal conflicts in mainstream Protestantism, which is increasingly struggling with the great religious changes taking place in Brazil, resulting in a constant loss of members to new churches or religious groups and retreat into denominationalism as a means of strengthening their identity. Second, the acute proliferation of new religious groups of a Christian hue, frequently stigmatized as

evangelical sects\* – to the considerable discomfort of traditional Evangelicals\* – gives rise to a religious fervour which distracts the attention of mainstream Christians and makes growing together and dialogue difficult. A further factor is that Protestants in general have not yet succeeded in coming together in a representative body as broad as the former Evangelical Confederation of Brazil, which could truly represent them in their relations and dialogues with other traditions.

If the divisive element in post-Panama Protestantism was its attitude towards the RCC, which was rejected by Latin American pan-Protestantism, present-day Protestantism is split yet further by the RCC's ecumenical progress. Its presence in interchurch bodies alongside other Christian churches, including Protestant, does help to give legitimacy to the ecumenical spirit, but at the same time it drives other churches away. Thus, because of the long history of anti-Catholicism in Latin America, the Roman Catholic Church continues to be a divisive element in the ecumenical scene. Dialogue and fellowship are thus limited.

Meanwhile, despite these limitations, mention should be made of the work of the National Council of Christian Churches in Brazil (CONIC), founded in 1982, and now with its office in Brasília, which groups the Roman Catholic Church, the Syrian Catholic Orthodox Church of Brazil, the Reformed Christian Church, the Episcopal Church of Brazil, the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil, the Methodist Church and the United Presbyterian Church. The council aims at overcoming the historic and doctrinal divisions between the churches by promoting encounters, studies and publications on matters of common concern. An important yearly activity is the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.\*

Very similar and closely linked with CONIC is the Fraternity Movement of Christian Churches of São Paulo (MOFIC), of which the same churches are members, with the exception of the Syrian Orthodox Church, but including the Armenian Apostolic Church. The Commission on Ecumenism and Inter-religious Dialogue of the Archdiocese of São Paulo, a Roman Catholic body founded in 1977, works similarly to MOFIC. The Latin

American Council of Churches\* (CLAI), Brazil region, with only Protestant churches as members, maintains the spirit of pan-Protestantism. Many other ecumenical institutions exist in Brazil dedicated to study, teaching and research.

Despite the institutional conflicts which still persist at the turn of the new millennium, at least two important signs point to possible significant changes in ecumenical dialogue and growth together between the mainstream Christian churches in the future: the common concern about the enthusiastic religious movements which are drifting away from the traditional Christian faith, and agreement on the absolute centrality of Jesus Christ in the work of evangelization. In this regard the conference on world mission and evangelism held in Salvador, Bahia, in 1996 by the WCC under the title "Called to One Hope – the Gospel in Diverse Cultures" should show the churches the way forward in relationships between themselves, with the culture and with the new religious movements.

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## SOUTH AMERICA: RÍO DE LA PLATA REGION

FROM THE 16TH to the 18th century, the religious presence in the Río de la Plata region (encompassing modern Argentina and Uruguay) was exclusively Roman Catholic and was strongly coloured by the intolerance characteristic of the Reformation/Counter-Reformation struggles. The picture began to change in the 19th century, and particularly after the struggles of independence and the birth of the new nations, with the arrival of European and North American Protestants, both those related to economic enterprises and, almost simultaneously, missionaries of the various Protestant churches.

The Protestant presence in the region can be divided into five periods.

### 1818-67: THE BUILDING OF NATIONAL STATES

This period, characterized by British economic domination, saw the first appearance and development of Protestant work among expatriate groups. Among the first to start work during this period was the British Bible Society, which sent one of its representatives, the educator James Thomson, to visit various Latin American countries and spread the new Lancasterian method of teaching by reading the Bible. He was supported in this venture by liberal governments, which encouraged the setting up of the first public schools using this method.

In Argentina, the first political organizations following independence guaranteed freedom of conscience. In 1825, as part of a trade and friendship treaty between Argentina and Great Britain, freedom of worship was granted for British subjects, the only condition being – as a result of Catholic pressure – that services should be in English and only for English people.

In 1826 the Anglican cathedral was built, in 1829 the Scottish Presbyterian mission was established, and in 1836 Fountain Pitts and John Dempster started the Methodist mission in Buenos Aires and Montevideo. From 1850 to 1860 large groups of Waldensians arrived in Uruguay and were granted land for farming and permanent settlement by the Uruguayan government.

During this period Protestantism had a very limited impact on the religious life of the Río de la Plata. The real challenge came with the start of the second phase.

### 1867-80: NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

A feature of this period was the strong presence of the American Missionary Society, determined to forge ahead with the proclamation of the gospel linked to a modern vision of society.

The missionary societies received strong support in this enterprise from liberal governments such as those of the Argentinian presidents Bartolomé Mitre and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, who not only encouraged the Protestant presence but were actively involved with them in various undertakings (e.g. the Society for the Protection of Animals set up by the Methodist pastor John

Thompson, of which Sarmiento was president for two years).

In May 1867 Thompson preached for the first time in Spanish in the First Methodist Church of Buenos Aires. In 1869 the Missionary Society set up a base in Montevideo and started its work there among Uruguayans. This effort signalled a fundamental change in the development of Protestantism in the region. What had until then been peaceful coexistence with the Roman Catholic Church now turned into harsh competition in the field of mission and an irreconcilable clash between two conceptions of reality.

### 1880-1916: CONSOLIDATION OF LIBERALISM IN THE REGION

Continuing and consolidating previous developments, this period witnessed a tactical alliance between triumphant liberalism and Protestantism, accompanying the political and economic expansion of the United States and the American way of life. Liberal governments used Protestantism to curb anti-liberal Catholic efforts for domination, in the hope that the “civilizing” influence of its schools, free thinking and emphasis on individual initiative would be a ferment of development that could only serve their interests.

Against this background, Protestant newspapers began to appear, e.g. *El Estandarte Evangélico*, the organ of the Methodist Church in Argentina, founded in 1883, or *El Evangelista*, founded in Uruguay in 1877. Both papers entered the controversy against the clerical and rationalistic ideas of the age. Local Protestant churches took root throughout the country at this time, establishing their presence and witness on a more permanent and continuous footing.

To complete the Protestant picture in the region, the churches already mentioned were joined by the Salvation Army in 1890, Baptists in 1881 in Buenos Aires and 1911 in Montevideo, Free Brethren in 1880 and American Pentecostals in 1909. The foreign-language immigrant communities included Welsh chapels in the south of Argentina (1865), Swiss Reformed (1870), Congregationalists (Volga Deutsch, 1870), and Danish Lutherans (1870).

Besides churches, these groups also set up Protestant schools intended to spread the essential elements of liberal Protestant doctrine. Crandon College in Montevideo opened in 1906, while Ward College was founded in Buenos Aires in 1913 by the Methodists and the Disciples of Christ. Many parish primary schools were also opened in more popular areas. The Anglican pastor and educator William Morris worked in poor districts of Buenos Aires, founding schools and homes as part of this "civilizing" endeavour. In Uruguay, Waldensians and Methodists carried out an early experiment in ecumenical work when they founded the first Protestant institute of secondary education in 1888.

### 1916-49: NORTH AMERICAN DOMINATION

The pan-American congress in Panama in 1916 set a new course. As a result of a policy of cooperation and "good neighbourliness" between the US and Latin America, the previous spontaneous missionary presence now gave way to a planned and structured continental organization. Initially, this was an attempt to translate the ideal of cooperation between the two Americas in religious terms. To this extent, the Protestantism of this period was, largely involuntarily, a vehicle for promoting the foreign policy of the United States. This factor became a source of tension for Protestant identity in Latin America, since the rather vague national sense of the past had been replaced by a much stronger national consciousness, but the model within the churches continued to be that of the US whose missionaries had formed and educated the church leadership.

This was a period of great numerical growth, including the formation of several ecumenical associations for cooperation in different fields: the fight against alcoholism, Uruguay (1920), the Young Men's Christian Association and the Young Women's Christian Association in Buenos Aires and Montevideo, ecumenical initiatives for work among youth and women, ULAJE (Latin American Union of Protestant Youth), Rosario (1937) and the Student Christian Movement (SCM) in the early 1920s.

Also at this time in both Argentina and Uruguay a dialogue developed between the

women of different Protestant denominations and Catholic and Orthodox women, celebrating unity in Christ. In the 1930s the Argentinian and Uruguayan Protestant Women's Leagues were formed.

### 1949-: POST-WAR AND COLD WAR

Two watershed events in the religious field marked this period – the founding of the World Council of Churches (1948) and the convening of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65). Each helped set the framework for the development of the ecumenical movement in the region during the second half of the 20th century.

The founding of the WCC opened the way for a creative and constructive approach to ecumenical work. A direct result of this initiative in Latin America was the formation in the 1950s of the Latin American Protestant Union (UNELAM), and in the 1970s of the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI).<sup>\*</sup> The Federation of Protestant Churches of the Río de la Plata, set up in 1939, divided into the Uruguayan Federation of Protestant Churches, formed in 1956, and the Argentine Federation of Protestant Churches in 1958.

Not all the evangelical Protestant churches present in the region are associated with these bodies. Indeed, they may even be a minority in view of the number of churches that have sprung up in recent times. Basically, the membership of the ecumenical bodies set up during this period forms what are usually known as the historical Protestant churches.

From the 1960s onwards, Latin America's overall economic dependence and the marginalization of its people became part of the agenda of the ecumenical movement. In this context, the other important event marking this period was the Second Vatican Council, followed by the Latin American bishops conferences (Medellín<sup>\*</sup> 1969, Pueblo 1978, and Santo Domingo 1992). The council and the conferences opened the way for a hitherto unprecedented dialogue between Protestants and Catholics. Programmes of joint service and common study were planned, giving priority to the things that unite and leaving aside doctrinal differences. Social, political and economic realities began to be used as analytical categories in

Bible study, theology and various missionary projects.

Also during this period Protestants developed many social initiatives through a variety of ecumenical organizations. Through the Latin American Ecumenical Coordination Committee, several ecumenical groups were created: Union of Latin American Ecumenical Youth, Student Christian Movement, Evangelical Latin American Commission on Christian Education and Church and Society in Latin America (ISAL), an organism of theological and social reflection which marked a new moment in Protestant theological thought for all Latin America but, during the first years, was centred in the River Plate and Brazil areas. The sociologists and theologians involved – e.g. Richard Shaull, Luis Odell, Leopoldo Niilus, José Míguez Bonino, Ruben Alves, Julio de Santa Ana, Hiber Conteris, Emilio Castro, Jether Pereyra Ramalho and Mauricio López – were ecumenical leaders concerned with the political and social development of the Southern Cone of Latin America. From ISAL later emerged the Urban and Social Mission and Ecumenical Popular Action. The praxis\* and reflection which emerged from these organisms can be considered as the first significant expression of the theology of liberation in the Protestant field.

Other ecumenical bodies came into being at this time, several of them with Catholic and Jewish participation, seeking to cover a wide spectrum in the ecumenical field of mission. They deal with Christian education (United Christian Council for Education, 1971), (Protestant Higher Institute of Theological Studies, ISEDET, 1970), human rights (Ecumenical Movement for Human Rights, 1977), refugees and migrants (Argentine Committee for Refugees, 1973), social service (Ecumenical Centre for Social Action, 1974), and Ecumenical Reintegration Service, Uruguay), indigenous people (United Board of Mission, 1964), and popular ministry (Nueva Parroquia Urban Centre, 1971).

The situation of the 1980s in the Río de la Plata countries substantially changed the situation of the various international bodies sponsoring these ecumenical mission and service projects. Local situations too had changed since these projects were first con-

ceived. These two facts marked the beginning of a new stage in ecumenical cooperation which is still in a state of transition. The trend seems to be towards ecumenical undertakings that are not weighed down by a heavy infrastructure and that are also more closely integrated into communities of faith and witness. They therefore operate with a smaller budget and more human resources, thanks to the people connected with these communities who work as volunteers on the projects.

A large number of evangelical churches look with suspicion on the word “ecumenism”, preferring to speak of “interdenominational activities”. In Argentina these churches, the majority of them conservative, banded together to form the Christian Association of Evangelical Churches of the Argentine Republic in 1985, through which they maintain conversations and a few sporadic contacts with the Argentine Federation of Protestant Churches. As to the vast evangelical Pentecostal field, some branches of it belong to ecumenical bodies connected with the WCC, while the majority are grouped together in the Evangelical Pentecostal Confederation.

Three organizations have joined, without losing their own identity, in the National Christian Evangelical Council (CNCE) for the organization of special events, such as a mass meeting of some 200,000 Evangelicals in the centre of Buenos Aires to express their concern for the socio-economic situation of the country.

New opportunities for ecumenical contact exist with non-traditional evangelical sectors, especially the ever-growing Pentecostal groups, which are seeking help and advice from the ecumenical community, particularly concerning theological education and questions of religious freedom.

The CNCE has also actively cooperated in the conversations with the Argentine government in order to provide new legislation which would ensure religious freedom and equality. And since 1995 a new place of encounter has begun between some of the traditional Protestant churches and Pentecostal and theologically conservative churches in the new spaces for prayer, reflection and common action called pastoral councils, which are functioning in most Argentine and Uruguayan cities.

Despite the changes which are bound to take place on the ecumenical scene in the Río de la Plata in the near future, what will remain unchanged is the commitment to a gospel that goes hand in hand with the struggle for justice, the protection of life and dialogue among the different expressions of Christianity and other ideologies, as well as showing forth the grace and solidarity of Jesus Christ in the struggle for freedom of people and peoples.

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## SPIRITUAL ECUMENISM

SPIRITUAL ecumenism arises out of the conflict sensed between the gospel and two phenomena which blossomed fully in the 19th century: the competition in which the missionaries of the various Christian confessions indulged, and their frequently difficult encounters with the local cultures. In his high priestly prayer, Jesus on the eve of his death prayed that his disciples might be one. This unity was not an end in itself but was "so that the world may believe" (John 17:21). Spiritual ecumenism consists in identifying with Jesus' prayer so that through the action of his Spirit he himself can raise up from within each people a reconciled church capable of proclaiming the good news to all.

Spiritual ecumenism was affirmed at the Edinburgh missionary conference in 1910. Historically it takes the form of a refusal to identify the proclamation of the gospel with any one culture.\* On the contrary, the Christian life and message are to be incarnated in the various cultures, making use of elements belonging to those cultures. Thus

spiritual ecumenism can be understood in practice as an effort of the separated Christians to create "a new unity and communion, not only within the cultures in question but also within the church universal".

Spiritual ecumenism as affirmed from 1910 onwards may thus be defined functionally as a gospel requirement which is prior to practical and theological ecumenism, as expressed in the early conferences of Life and Work (1925) and Faith and Order (1927), and which justifies and coordinates them. It is the foundation on which the WCC was built (1948).

In the Roman Catholic Church spiritual ecumenism has been affirmed since the 1930s, with some forerunners preparing the way for the changes made by Vatican II.\* Mention may be made of the priests from Lyons: Paul Couturier, who organized the world Week of Prayer for Christian Unity,\* and Jean Monchanin, who went to India in 1938 and founded an ashram there – a place for prayer and encounter for Christian and Hindu forms of spirituality. The fundamental intuition of these two priests was that "union will be the concern of all those who pray". In 1940, a dark year of war, Roger Schutz and Max Thurian established the Taizé community\* in Burgundy, in a spirit of fellowship with all who suffer. This community has been one of the first to provide a stable setting for Protestants, Anglicans, Orthodox and Roman Catholics to unite in prayer. With spiritual ecumenism taking root, an ecumenical translation of the Bible became necessary. The French version was completed in 1976 with the support of the Roman Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox leaders and has been distributed since 1977 by the United Bible Societies in a smaller version and with notes, for use of the general public.

The success of common translations of the Bible and of prayer communities like Taizé (which continues to attract many young people from all over the world) shows that spiritual ecumenism answers a real need among many Christians, whether they identify with a church body or not. It enables them to witness in common to their faith, even while the prospect of theological agreement seems to be receding with the crisis of identity from which many churches are suf-

fering. And it makes it possible to combine the duty of evangelism\* with respect for religious liberty\* and the diversity of cultures. It is a risk and a hope, a reflection of the faith itself.

See also **Bible, its role in the ecumenical movement; prayer in the ecumenical movement; spirituality in the ecumenical movement.**

RÉGIS LADOUS

## SPIRITUALITY IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

THE ECUMENICAL movement, which brings together Christians from diverse confessional and cultural traditions, is also a meeting-place of many different forms of spirituality. Some of these strands (e.g. Orthodox worship life, the monastic tradition, contemplative orders, Reformation spiritualities) have stood the test of time over many centuries. Others (e.g. the “spirituality for combat”, liberation spirituality, feminist spirituality, renewal movements, new communities and the development of lay ministries) have arisen relatively recently.

### DEFINING SPIRITUALITY

Against the background of these and other diverse spiritual traditions and disciplines, two questions help us define an ecumenical spirituality: What would characterize the church\* if it were indeed one church for the whole world? What kind of lived discipleship would incarnate that vision? If the church is called to be the one church for the whole world, it is inclusive, incarnational, universal, and sent in mission.\* Such a renewed church will necessarily enlarge an understanding of Christian discipleship.

Spirituality has come to be seen as a more integrated and integrative dimension of the life of faith\* as a result of several influences. A more holistic approach to theology, new emphases in biblical studies, a greater awareness of the need for meditation disciplines, the interface of many religious traditions and cultures, a sense of the needs of separate identities together with a realization of global interconnection and the impetus of many renewal movements have all led to the concept of spirituality as a whole way

of life. However, the use of the term to contrast “the things of the spirit” with “material things” persists; in both English and French, the connotation of “devotion”, “piety” or the “inner life” remains. Dogma\* and theology are seen as rational and intellectual; spirituality is often taken to refer to their experiential counterparts.

This article builds on a simple definition of spirituality as the endeavour to live in obedience to the gospel – in a word, in discipleship. “Who do you say that I am?” (Matt. 16:15), Jesus asked his first disciples. The lived response to that question is the disciple’s spirituality.

The vocation of the disciple has many dimensions. Obedience demands that Christians discern the voice of the Spirit (see **Holy Spirit**) in the world, make the gospel live in their own culture,\* help in the transformation of the world, find meaning in life’s struggles and participate in the life of exchange that is basic to human existence. The whole of life is to be placed at the disposal of the gospel. Spirituality, then, is the way people take to be Christian, to fulfill their Christian vocation. It embraces ministry and service, relationships, life-style, prayer and response to the political and social environment.

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The relationship between prayer and the birth of the modern ecumenical movement has been well documented. The slow dawning of inner questions relating to discipleship is illustrated in the various prayer movements of the 18th and 19th centuries, which discovered that there must be not only prayer for unity but prayer for unity by people of different traditions praying *together*. In the early years of the WCC, common worship emerged as an important question (see **worship in the ecumenical movement**). Work began on a new hymnology that expressed the search for a relevant discipleship (see **hymns**).

The 1960s were a significant decade for spirituality in the ecumenical movement. By 1961 virtually all of the Orthodox churches had entered the WCC, bringing along their own rich tradition of worship. Many of the third-world churches that joined the WCC in the 1960s brought political questioning of

the status quo. At the same time, a wave of secularism in Europe and North America brought attempts inside and outside the church to put greater energies into social issues (see **secularization**). These forces sharpened what is often called the ecumenical-evangelical divide. At the heart of this tension lie perceptions about the meaning of discipleship and obedience to the gospel (on the one hand, a community which stresses engagement for the world and expresses impatience with what it regards as other-worldly mentalities; on the other, a community which testifies to salvation\* by grace\* and is committed to leading others to this experience). The hardening and institutionalization of this division is a tragic example of the fragmentation of Christian discipleship.

Contributions of Vatican II\* to a renewed church began in the 1960s but are still taking root. Among these are the re-discovery of the Bible as belonging to the people, renewal of worship (see **liturgical reforms**), updating of religious life and responsibility for social engagement.

By the 1970s many of those engaged in the struggles for social justice were disillusioned, and there was hunger for more spiritual nourishment and undergirding. The charismatic and Pentecostal movements provided healing for individuals but also made their own ecumenical breakthroughs. At the WCC's fifth assembly (Nairobi 1975), where the dominant motif was the struggle of peoples in a broken and divided world, a band of enthusiasts ran a spirituality workshop, in effect a side-show to the main meetings.

In the 1980s the growing search for a more integrated discipleship became a serious concern on the ecumenical agenda. Liberation theology\* in Latin America, with its rich blend of worship and struggle, prayer and politics, posed an influential challenge to Western efforts to divide these pairs. After 20 years the Orthodox concern for the centrality of spirituality and worship was at last being heard. The challenge of the evangelical groups continued. The fruits of Vatican II and the vitality of Roman Catholic encounter with other Christians in most parts of the world added to the pressure on mainstream Protestantism to take a fresh look at the quality of its discipleship. The Vancou-

ver assembly of 1983, where worship was central and testimony and prayer invaded the plenary sessions, was a convincing sign of a deeper ecumenical concern for spirituality and a new willingness to put back together what belongs together in the life of the Spirit.

The Vancouver impetus in worship has been followed through in all succeeding WCC world conferences. Mixed teams preparing the worship have culled and created resources which have provided a rich source of nourishment for future occasions. One of the most noted phenomena of the 1990s was a widespread interest in spirituality, which, however, may sometimes be unhealthy, distorted or dangerously misleading. To quote one keen observer of the contemporary scene: "Spirituality can be a dangerous diversion from the living God, from the demands of justice, from engagement with reality. It can be a form of illusion. Today 'spirituality' is marketed as a product, in competition with others. It belongs to the area of 'private life'. Of all the distortions of Christian faith and discipleship, it is individualism which has most deeply penetrated spiritual consciousness... At its very heart the Christian life and identity is a process of incorporation into a new social organism, a new community. Spirituality cannot exist apart from this social context" (Kenneth Leech, *The Eye of the Storm*, 1992).

### ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC

We consider here four key dimensions of Christian spirituality.

*Spirituality and unity.* Unity\* is one of the truest and deepest aspirations of humankind. Spirituality is a binding force on the journey towards unity. Jesus' words and example address the way Christians are to live and to relate in the new order he initiated. Holiness and discipleship are not sectarian, not denominationally determined. Christians recognize the mystery of life lived in faith and overcoming the obstacles of sin and selfishness. Christians hear the call to live in obedience, to reconcile the broken fragments of life and of human community. No one person or church has reached the fullness of life in Christ. Spirituality links simple believer and erudite theologian, laity and clergy, various denominational tradi-

tions, different religious views of the world, history\* and culture.

A church which is one is inclusive. Laity and clergy, women and men, black and white, poor and rich – all find a valued place within it. Ecumenical spirituality calls all to hospitality, to participation, to a sense of partnership in service and in decision making. “No one is outside the church, because there is no longer an outside, because no one is outside the reality of God and the risen Christ” (L. Boff, *Church, Charism and Power*, 1985).

*The call to be holy* (see **holiness, sanctification**). There is a shift in much current understanding of spirituality towards a greater emphasis on the incarnational. Old understandings of holy as “consecrated”, “set apart”, “purified” find new fulfilment in a perception of the God-giveness and potential holiness of all of life (see **life and death**). The church which celebrates God’s creation in its totality and inter-relatedness will begin to be healed of the splits which have deformed much of Western Christendom – between sexuality and spirituality, public and private spheres, piety and politics, to name a few. New energies are released when old splits are healed. Values and creeds\* are incarnated. The church’s new perception of the largeness of God’s purposes sets people free to be disciples in the fullness of their daily lives, not only during Sunday worship. Thus a new integrity and authenticity emerge.

*The call to be catholic* (see **catholicity**). Christian discipleship is situated within a church which is both local and universal, which strives to live its obedience locally as well as in relationship to the worldwide church, which recognizes the interconnect-edness of reality, both for good and for ill. “If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it” (1 Cor. 12:26).

The gospel is always communicated and received in concrete situations. But it is the same gospel and the same Spirit that inspire all to create shalom (peace), to live in the fellowship of faith, hope and love. An ecumenical spirituality immerses people in their local settings, but with a global consciousness and an awareness of the connections which make all mutually dependent. In fact,

it enables people to live those connections as they make choices, build relationships, respond to their milieus, enter into mission, hold one another in prayer. The challenge is to believe that the church is essentially in its local expression part of the church universal, and to be faithful to the implications of sharing one faith, one baptism,\* one mission. It demands a conversion, a dying to attitudes and traditions that separate and divide.

*The call to be apostolic* (see **apostolicity**). The church is sent into all the world. It exists for mission, to fulfill God’s purposes in the world. Discipleship which takes seriously the call to be apostolic will constantly be sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s promptings to go forward into the new and unexpected. Key images are the servant church, the pilgrim church and the prophetic church. Implicit in each is a willingness to be poor, to reach out, to die, to follow the Spirit.

The discerning of this call to be in mission is one in which each part of the church may offer help and mutual correction: solidarity in struggles, mutual intercession, sharing and relief of pain, combat with principalities and powers. The church places itself at the disposal of a God who is co-opted by no political system and contained by no single set of beliefs, the time-scale of whose purposes is beyond our compass. Yet each act of obedience, each martyr’s lonely suffering (see **martyrdom**), is woven into God’s redemptive activity for the world. To be one, holy and catholic is to be set free and formed to be apostolic.

## IMPLICATIONS AND NEW EXPLORATIONS

In the classic arena of spirituality, prayer and worship, there are breakthroughs where risks are being taken that point the way. The context in which praise and thanksgiving are offered, the scope of confession and the extent of commitment are all indications of how ecumenical a person’s or a church’s prayer life has become. Intercession\* is a litmus test. The personal and corporate intercession of Christians shows the range of their concern. Many churches still design their prayer calendars to pray only for their own denominational or confessional groupings. The Ecumenical Prayer Cycle\* is an appeal for prayers for the

world and the church in the world. If its work is to be successful, it must result in the deepening and broadening of prayers of intercession. To pray for one another involves engagement, the offering of something. All worship should connect to life and send people out into life (see **liturgy after the Liturgy**).

The record of eucharistic inhospitality is still a painful scandal in the ecumenical movement. Many testify today, though, of the rich blessing they have received when breakthroughs have happened. In some parts of the world intercommunion\* exists between Protestant and Catholic, but it is still a breach of discipline. In some places the great spiritual centres of the past, the cathedrals, are becoming ecumenical centres, places of pilgrimage for many who had given up on the faith.

Failures in building and living in community are evident in continuing exclusions and excommunications,\* separations and divisions, in the alienation of many potentially vital members. But the ecumenical movement is also experiencing a re-discovery of community and of its fruits: covenants,\* church base communities,\* renewed religious life, ecumenical communities and projects, feminist solidarity, etc. Walls are coming down, sometimes in spite of the attitudes and decisions of the official church.

Today's widespread hunger for a deeper, more integrated way of living manifests itself in different ways: as a questioning of the idols of our times, as an emptiness or lack of meaning, as escapes into self-destructive behaviour, as a search for relevant worship, as a yearning for solidarity and sustenance in the struggle with evil powers and in a commitment to the poor and oppressed.

Related to the search for a meaningful spirituality is the contemporary emphasis on "doing theology", on relating theology to everyday life. Christians who have never had access to formal theology are learning afresh to relate faith to life, worship to work, prayer to action, proclamation to protest, in new creative ways. Theology "by the people" is theology worked out in community. It seeks an active commitment to justice and peace as an integral concern of the theological enterprise.

Some of the springs of this movement are found in basic Christian communities, in Minjung theology, coming out of the biographies of suffering people in Korea, and in African theology, with its use of proverbs, myths and songs as aids in interpreting the Christian message. The growing movement among Roman Catholics worldwide known as *We Are the Church* is similarly based on the assumptions that the church is the whole people of God, that each person has a ministry, that the agenda of the world has to be taken seriously and that theology is contextual. Such convictions pose radical questions in relation to a living spirituality.

Ecumenical spirituality, therefore, is common discernment of the direction in which the Body of Christ, the church, is being led. It is the common Christian vocation of enfleshing the gospel and cooperating with the Spirit so that through a transforming spirituality the servant church becomes truly one, holy, catholic and apostolic.

See also **prayer in the ecumenical movement, spiritual ecumenism**.

GWEN CASHMORE and JOAN PULS

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## STATE

IN THE 20TH CENTURY, Christian thinking about the state reflected both the multiplicity of religious traditions and the shaping influence of theological and political movements. Not surprisingly, therefore, the term “state” has no single meaning in theological discourse today. It is used to refer to a particular territory, the administrative apparatus of the society, the government, the nation,\* the body politic, the nation state, the polis, or the organization and monopoly of power\* or violence\* in a given society.

The differences in meaning often reflect cultural and linguistic differences, or the confusions of speaking at times descriptively, at times normatively. The historicity of the concept itself is a factor in the problem of definition. Many writers contend that the term is a fairly modern one, perhaps no earlier in usage than Machiavelli’s early-16th-century reference to *lo stato*. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, by contrast, sees the origin of the state in pagan antiquity but argues that the concept is foreign to the New Testament, where its place is taken by the concept of government. The dynamic character of the reality to which the term points also invites the blurring of distinctions. Thus Luigi Sturzo speaks of the “trend towards unification in the modern state”, referring thereby to the (totalitarian) tendency of centralizing power to draw all other social and individual realities into itself and re-define them in its image.

Jacques Maritain distinguishes among nation, body politic (or political society), people and state and refers to the last term as “that part of the body politic especially concerned with the maintenance of law, the promotion of the common welfare and public order, and the administration of public affairs. The state is a part which *specializes* in the interests of the *whole*.” This distinction and its definition are very useful and are widely shared, but they do not cover all the varying nuances and theological slants and the differences in empirical reference.

## THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIONS

Theological writings on the state are not always theologies of the state. A theological understanding may be implicit rather than explicit, and the method of inquiry non-

theological. Aware of the menace of Hitler’s totalitarianism,\* the Oxford conference on “Church, Community and State” (1937) addressed the issue directly. The Amsterdam assembly of 1948 addressed it more indirectly through inquiry into the “responsible society”\* and comparisons of capitalism\* and communism. Subsequent conferences dealt with the state in relation to liberation movements and prospects for a “just, participatory, and sustainable society”\* and explored the questions more social-scientifically than theologically. Latin American liberation theology\* committed itself methodologically to the priority of social-scientific investigation.

Theological interpretations of the state fall mainly into two types, although a third type has been recognized and advanced in the 20th century by Barth and Bonhoeffer. The state is represented as being grounded either in human nature as created (see **creation**) or in sin\* (see also **anthropology, theological**). The former view is characteristic of Roman Catholic and Anglo-Catholic interpretations but is also consonant with some liberal Protestant interpretations. The latter view predominates in churches and theologies of the Reformation traditions.

Where the state is understood to be grounded in sin, it is referred to frequently (esp. in the Lutheran tradition) as an “order of preservation”. Its primary function is to serve as a barrier to sin-induced chaos – to maintain order,\* enforce the law,\* defend against enemies, protect the innocent, punish the wicked. It is also to serve justice,\* but “justice” often is defined in terms of provisions of the legal order. With this view of the state, it has been difficult – although certainly not impossible – to expand the notion of justice into a dynamic concept, challenging established orders of privilege and power and requiring the state to take on broader responsibilities for the welfare of all the people (see **welfare state**). Where the state is understood to be grounded in original human nature, it is recognized as an “order of creation” with functions that include those of order and defence, but within a more flexible and comprehensive concept of “common good”.

In the third type, the state is understood to be grounded in Christ and to have the re-

demptive function of assuring time, space and order for the proclamation of the word of justification.\* Barth intended this Christological interpretation of the state to provide a theological basis for church criticism of the Nazi state, and both Barth and Bonhoeffer saw it as an alternative to the Lutheran two-kingdoms concept. Neither theologian developed this view into a systematic theology of politics, although in his essay "The Christian Community and the Civil Community" Barth used the analogy of the Trinity as a method for inferring a political ethic for democracy.

Christian theologies of the state in the 20th century were influenced by other considerations in addition to the theories of origin. A principled commitment to the priority of justice in the order of political values yields an activist approach to the role of the state in social transformation. The optimistic understandings of human nature generated by the Enlightenment allow possibilities for popular control of political power and for social change that brush aside the warnings of more negative views of human nature and historical expectation and that promise the engineering of an end to war, poverty and oppression, and the transformation of the state system of international politics into a world society with a democratic government committed to the advancement of the human rights of all peoples. Proletarian movements, informed by Marxist interpretations of society and history, consign the state to the role of instrument of class power and imagine a time prepared by revolution and socialist governance when the state as an administrator of persons will wither away and be replaced by an institution commissioned solely for the administration of things.

Almost all theologies of the state of the 20th century insisted that its functions and authority are merely temporal and that it has no sacramental, sacerdotal, doctrinal or other ecclesiological functions. However, the distinctions between church functions and state functions sometimes are blurred in law and practice where the two institutions are integrated in a religious-political establishment.

### FORMS OF THE STATE

Christian political thought in the 20th century generally agreed that no particular

form of the state is theologically necessary. Nevertheless, it tended to show a distinct preference for some form of democracy. Most of the major theologians who wrote on political questions – Reinhold Niebuhr, Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Jacques Maritain, John Courtney Murray, Luigi Sturzo, Jürgen Moltmann and others – argued the case for democracy. Democracy was endorsed also in the encyclical *Pacem in Terris* of Pope John XXIII. Most ecumenical documents on political issues have been democratic in tendency if not explicit commitment, through their emphases on equality, freedom, participation\* and human rights.\* The arguments in German theology of the 1930s for an autocratic and hierarchical state grounded in the *Volk* as a natural order did not survive the collapse of Nazism. Post-war German theology is explicitly democratic in its treatment of political questions.

The principal arguments over the form of the state have pertained to the presuppositions and structure of democracy itself. Democracy could not survive the severe tests put to it by movements and situations of the 20th century with an excessively optimistic view of human nature, a social theory based on contractarian individualism, and a definition of governmental responsibilities limited primarily to protection of life and property. The main thrust of much democratic theologizing therefore was to re-equip the notion of democracy with a view of human nature that acknowledged its sinful and demonic tendencies as well as its capabilities and creativity, with a relational understanding of society as persons-in-community and with an expanded vision of state responsibilities that placed protection of life and property in the context of a more comprehensive commitment to the "general welfare", especially to the welfare of the poor, powerless and oppressed members of the society.

The structural goal of this re-formulation was a state with sufficient power to carry out its expanded responsibilities, yet with constitutional limitations sufficient to restrain the oppressive tendencies of central power. Doubting the possibility of restraining a state with comprehensive welfare and educational functions, Helmut Thielicke argued instead for a minimal state. Some liberationists, rejecting the notion of improvement within the

context of the bourgeois state, argue for radical transformation of the property\* and political systems and accept the risk of the constitutionally unrestrained power of a revolutionary government (see **revolution**).

### THE AUTHORITY OF THE STATE

Major issues of political authority\* include the following five. First, is the authority of governors from God\* or the people? Pope Leo XIII (*Diuturnum*, 1881) stated that elections may designate rulers, but God confers their authority. Protestant writers asked whether a theological prescription (Rom. 13) for an autocratic state could be applied to the modern democratic state and answered that in a democracy the people themselves were the fundamental “governing authorities” (v.1).

Second, the secularization\* of politics aggravated the problems posed by popular sovereignty, further attenuated the relevance and viability of the Rom. 13 tradition, encouraged the turn towards non-theological modes of authorization and opened the way to absolutist claims and solutions.

Third, the emergence of totalitarian systems in the third and fourth decades of the century tested the limits of a theologically grounded obligation to obey.

Fourth, revolutionary movements denied the legitimacy of bourgeois and autocratic states but opened questions of the authority of revolutionary leadership and revolutionary governments.

Fifth, the new internationalism called into question the authority of particular nation states without resolving problems of transferring their authority to a world government. Growing economic globalization, on the one side, and the debates about the international right to intervene in cases of flagrant violation of human rights by a state, on the other, are specific instances of this problem.

Thielicke insisted that sovereignty is an essential and constituent attribute of states, that states therefore must be plural and that in consequence it is impossible to conceive of a single world state. Maritain, however, insisted that sovereignty is neither essential to, nor constitutive of, states, that particular states can, should and eventually will transfer their “sovereign” authority to a world

political society and that such transfer will manifest the logic of the common good, the principle of subsidiarity\* and the perfect society in its process of becoming.

### THE PATHOLOGY OF STATES

Far-reaching questions concerning the pathology of states overshadow persistent issues of the corruptive tendencies of politics and power. Totalitarian movements and systems suggest that under the conditions of modernity, states tend inevitably to discard the limits of power, put themselves in the place of God, destroy or absorb all other institutions and thereby make themselves the source and centre of meaning and existence. Liberation theologians argue that the state in capitalist civilization is not a potentially neutral if somewhat corrupt institution but a “national security state” (see **national security**) – an armed instrument of international capitalism, serving the expansion and consolidation of capitalist power. Both totalitarianism and liberation theory call in question the viability of the liberal democratic state. The conditions which lead to totalitarianism also call in question whatever might replace the liberal democratic state, including any proposed revolutionary successor to the “national security state”.

To establish the terms under which a state can be just, stable and peaceful, it is necessary to probe the perennial questions of human nature and historical expectation. Is it true that “man’s capacity for justice makes democracy possible; man’s inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary” (Niebuhr)? Or is the ambiguity of human nature and politics to be resolved towards radical pessimism or optimism? Also, is it possible to understand the nature of states from the particularity of states, or ultimately only in the context of international society? Finally, does it suffice to understand the state theologically in terms of creation and the fall, or must we not continue the Christological project of Barth and Bonhoeffer, exploring the power, promise and limits of the state in the light of the reconciling work of God in Christ?

See also **church and state, fascism, liberty/freedom, society**.

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## STATUS CONFSSIONIS

THE TERM *STATUS CONFSSIONIS* (Latin for "situation of confession", referring to a situation requiring the church to act decisively for good against evil) has only recently entered the ecumenical vocabulary with a measure of common acceptance. Derived from Reformation contexts, with their debates over whether traditions and customs were indifferent or essential to the new faith, *status confessionis* made its way into ecumenical language in connection with the Barmen declaration (1934) and its aftermath, especially in totalitarian situations and with regard to life-killing systems. Dietrich Bonhoeffer mentioned a double test for a *status confessionis*: "firstly, whether the state is going beyond its own mandate and trespassing on that of the church and, secondly, whether the state falls short of its mandate ('too much' or 'too little' state)". At the WCC Uppsala assembly (1968), W.A. Visser 't Hooft gave a new definition of heresy\* which puts Christians into the *status confessionis*: "Church members who in their practice deny their responsibility for those who are in need are just as much guilty of heresy as those who reject one or the other truth of faith."

The Barmen declaration, with its six short theses, sought to give the church guidance in

the critical moments regarding an incipient totalitarianism in Germany, fighting the inroads of the so-called German Christians, who wanted to make the church a tool of the state. Defining this situation as a *status confessionis* means that this was a moment for the church to confess its faith in the face of idolatrous powers. More recently, apartheid in South Africa has been seen as calling for a similar response. Visser 't Hooft connected apartheid and *status confessionis* for the first time in 1964. The Lutheran World Federation and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches declared apartheid a heresy (1982), stating that this was not a question on which opinions could differ; the membership of South African Reformed churches supporting the system were therefore suspended pending confession of their guilt (Debrecen 1997). The German Reformed churches used the term with regard to nuclear weapons.

Besides Barmen, Medellín (1968) was the other great 20th-century synod in the church that models compellingly the *status confessionis* (without using the expression), i.e. the need for confession in the face of the destruction of human life. Confronted by the millions of the world's poor, the Roman Catholic bishops of Latin America at Medellín stressed discipleship as part of the necessary Christian witness, not as a catch phrase but as an attitude that embraces all of life.

Today, subjugation of humanity to the global (capitalist) economy could be considered as a *status confessionis* in so far as globalization elevates allegiance to its economic goals over any faith concern, and especially as this system deprives two-thirds of humankind of decent living standards while enriching the powerful few. The Debrecen assembly of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (on the theme "Break the Chains of Injustice!") was outspoken on globalization and its consequences: "We want to affirm the gift of life, the commitment to resistance and the struggle for transformation as being an integral part of reformed faith and confession today."

But the same assembly also stressed the need for speaking of a *processus confessionis* rather than *status confessionis*. Every situation is complex and needs careful analysis. Confessing one's faith must arise from a process of education and progressive insight.

See also **apartheid; globalization, economic; Medellín.**

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## STUDY AS AN ECUMENICAL METHOD

EARLY ON IN THE Life and Work\* movement, ecumenical encounters brought forth such a variety of divergent and conflicting views on all subjects that some method and form of organized reflection and research was necessary on those issues, which were dividing Christians into opposing camps.

Already the first Life and Work conference (Stockholm 1925) had emphasized the need for continuing research on social issues, but only in the preparation for its second conference (Oxford 1937) did a systematic rationale for ecumenical study emerge. In a preparatory volume, *The Church and Its Function in Society*, W.A. Visser 't Hooft and J.H. Oldham presented the need for organized reflection and discussion of the issues facing the churches in the modern world. Oldham, who is generally regarded as the pioneer of the study method, wrote that the church must be seen not only as a community of worship and love but also as "a community of thought". He summed up the method of study in a famous sentence: "In the fulfilment of its task, the church must call to its aid the best minds that it can command." This call includes laity\* from all areas of public life, as well as theologians and church leaders.

Critics later challenged this emphasis on "the best minds" as academic and elitist. But Oldham had been careful to point out: "The clearer understanding of the significance of Christian faith for the actual life of our time... is not primarily a matter of scholarship and learning. It is rather the fruit of spiritual insight and understanding, and we

must never allow ourselves to forget that the realities of the spiritual world may be hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed to babes." In Oldham's view this qualification does not diminish the need for serious intellectual work by the churches. The church as a community of thought has to broaden its understanding of the organic structure of life, the "law of things", the laws of institutions, the role of the nation and the state, and the sources of social evil.

With Oldham as chairman of its preparatory committee, the 1937 Oxford conference became the first ecumenical "study" conference on social issues, involving large numbers of theologians and laity in preparatory studies and in the conference itself. For the first time the non-Roman Catholic churches addressed, in a substantial way, economic, political and ideological problems.

In view of the Oxford achievements, it is not surprising that the 1938 organizational plan for the new WCC churches included a "study department" as one of its four principal offices. In 1954 it became the Division of Studies, comprising the departments of church and society, evangelism, missionary studies, and the commission on Faith and Order. This office was responsible for study programmes in these fields and for the organization and preparation of the four WCC assemblies between 1948 and 1968 (Amsterdam, Evanston, New Delhi and Uppsala).

The emphasis on study proved particularly helpful in these years as a way of easing churches into the examination of controversial issues which needed ecumenical attention but found no consensus. The 1966 world conference on Church and Society was the most notable of a series of ecumenical study conferences on the urgent social issues facing the churches in this period.

After the fourth WCC assembly (Uppsala 1968) there was increasing tension between the tradition of ecumenical study and a growing demand for ecumenical action. In 1969 the WCC instituted new action programmes to mobilize the member churches for the struggle against racism\* and world poverty.\* And older WCC sectors were stimulated to become more action-oriented, for example, through the programme on the Cooperation of Women and Men in Church and Society.

The 1972 plan for restructuring the WCC emphasized the need to integrate study and action, without proposing ways to do so. Some action programmes discovered the need to reflect, which led to the formula "action-reflection". This did not resolve the substantial differences of methodology and ideology which underlay the "study-action" debate.

Since 1969, alongside the new action programmes the traditional discipline of ecumenical study continues in such areas as faith and order; justice, peace and creation; and inter-religious relations and dialogue. It has proved its role in such ecumenical programmes as the study of the future of humanity and society in a world increasingly dominated by science and technology. The conflicts and disagreements which confront the churches and the world on the issues of freedom, justice and order would seem to validate a fresh emphasis on imaginative ecumenical study.

PAUL ABRECHT

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## STUDY CENTRES

WITHIN ECUMENICAL circles, the term "study centre" refers to ecumenical or denominational centres which are engaging in special areas of research and dialogue particularly from an ecumenical perspective. Their common aim is to assist the churches and congregations in their total task of witness and service in various cultural, social and religious contexts. They should be distinguished from ecumenical institutes in Europe, which are also in a sense study centres but are engaged more in academic research and less in dialogue.

The study centres are often known as dialogue centres or institutes for religion and culture. Most of them concentrate on research and dialogue in areas of religion and

culture or on social and cultural analyses for renewal in mission. Some of them also hold conferences and undertake other programmes. Many of them are members of regional associations of so-called lay academies (see **academies, lay**). Most of these centres publish periodicals in order to share their findings with churches.

In cooperation with the WCC, consultations on the role of study centres were held in Kandy (1967), Hong Kong (1971) and Singapore (1980). A Fellowship of Study Centres was organized in 1980. A world convention of Christian lay centres held in Montreat, North Carolina, USA, in 1993 underscored the renewal of attention to the laity issue within the WCC.

TOSH ARAI

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## STUTTGART DECLARATION

LED BY W.A. Visser 't Hooft and the provisional leaders of the Evangelical Church in Germany (bishops and leading representatives of the Confessing Church such as Hans Asmussen, Otto Dibelius, Hanns Lilje, Wilhelm Niesel and Martin Niemöller), an ecumenical delegation met in Stuttgart from 17 to 19 October 1945. The common purpose was to prevent German Protestantism from isolating itself from the other churches and to find ways to help the German people, who had been spiritually, politically and economically shattered. An admission of guilt was expected from the Germans for the crimes that had been committed during the National Socialist regime and had become fully known only in the summer of 1945 (see **war guilt**). German theologians and church leaders were ready to reflect self-critically on the behaviour of the Protestant church in relation to the temptations of a totalitarian state and to re-examine the church's political responsibilities.

In August 1945 the German Roman Catholic bishops conference had deplored the crimes committed by Germans before and during the war and demanded the punishment of the guilty. The Stuttgart declara-

tion of 18-19 October goes a considerable step further, confessing the church's guilt in the sight of God and humanity: "We accuse ourselves for not witnessing more courageously, for not praying more faithfully, for not believing more joyously and for not loving more ardently."

This confession was also made by people who had been persecuted in the Third Reich or had offered resistance to it, thus admitting their own share of guilt and resisting the temptation to set victims and evil-doers over against each other. They thereby avoided the impossible task of drawing up a balance-sheet of what human beings did to each other. A people's shared suffering also means their shared guilt. It must be stressed that this was a theological conclusion and was not limited to the idea that no one in a state built on injustice can remain innocent.

The Stuttgart declaration applies the formula of the confession of guilt used in public worship to a politically disastrous situation. Both elements – the theological character and the joint responsibility for the future direction to be taken by the German people – constitute a unity, but even at that time that unity met with vigorous resistance. The declaration was misunderstood by some (Germans and others abroad) as a quasi-legal admission of the collective guilt of all Germans. Positively, many church members resisted attempts to use this confession – made to God who judges and reconciles – to criticize earlier political aberrations and newly forming problematic developments.

GERHARD SAUTER

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## SUBSIDIARITY

THE TERM "SUBSIDIARITY" refers to the principle that a central authority should perform only

the tasks which existing subordinate or local organizations cannot perform. This principle has played an important part (1) in the social teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, especially in the papal encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931); (2) in German Roman Catholic social philosophy and in Christian social sciences, especially where these have a neo-scholastic slant; (3) in the socio-political debates of the 1950s and 1960s in the Federal Republic of Germany, where it was used as the basis for arguments by RC associations and charitable organizations involved in these discussions and where it gained a new relevance; (4) in the political debates of the 1980s in the FRG, where local left-wing groups claimed the right to autonomy and self-assertion against bureaucratic tendencies, the dominance of large-scale social organizations and legal limitations on the responsibility and rights of small, more manageable social units.

The significance of the principle of subsidiarity can be understood only from the context in which it arose – German RC social metaphysics. In that context subsidiarity, along with the principles of the person and of solidarity,\* is the third principle for the creation of social order. The other two principles define the right to life of the individual, who is always also linked to the community, and the common good, which represents the content, aim and meaning of human community and is the necessary guarantee of the former right. In subsidiarity, in contrast, we have a principle that goes beyond the person's right to life and stresses individuals' basic, general responsibility for maintaining themselves, achieving their own well-being and developing their natural potential.

In this relative adaptation of the idea of autonomy, subsidiarity as a principle also has a certain affinity to bourgeois liberalism. In terms of this principle, the private initiative of the free person as an economic agent can be regarded as primary, as opposed to the economic activity of the state. Negatively, subsidiarity rejects the authority of social institutions when they supplant or eliminate the individual's responsibility for action, a view that seems to coincide with liberalism.

The fundamental contrast between the two models of order becomes clear when we

consider the metaphysical status of subsidiarity as a principle. It is an ontological statement – about what the person fundamentally is and what responsibility can be allotted to the person – but not a description of empirical reality. If individual persons are essentially responsible for themselves, the ethical imperative is always implied that they should actually be in a position to guarantee each other self-fulfilment, or that conditions must be created to that end. Thus subsidiarity as an ontological statement concerning independent human responsibility means that human beings cannot in fact simply be left to themselves in a *laissez-faire* way. In situations of physical or any other kind of need, when individuals, social groups or classes are actually incapable of providing for themselves, a society must act to help, in order to fulfill the over-riding claim of the right to life.

On the one hand, one's incapacity to be what by nature one should be may be *temporarily* lost (through illness, inability to work, etc.). If there are personal reasons for this incapacity, then help must be granted in the interests of restoring responsibility. If social structures and mechanisms are responsible for the condition (through unjust distribution of goods, oppression or unemployment), then a society, which is the frame of reference for independence and self-realization, must provide a remedy by transforming itself.

On the other hand, the actual incapacity for independence may be *permanent* (through disability, old age, etc.). Even when for individuals and groups the discrepancy between the natural right to exercise responsibility and their actual situation remains so serious that outside help is a condition of survival and is necessary for the achievement of the greatest possible well-being of the person, the principle of subsidiarity can never be adduced to justify euthanasia or the like but, rather, lays an obligation on the community to help.

The principle also applies when certain phenomena in highly complex industrial societies are taken into account. In some wealthy societies, for instance, health care may become so technological, bureaucratic and scientific that individual persons or small compact units (such as a village or

small town) no longer have access to such care. This real incapacity is not temporary but permanent. In this context the principle of subsidiarity offers a justification for the exercise of responsibility by larger units (e.g. the states of a federal republic).

It has been objected that the principle of subsidiarity is too static to cope with the dynamism of capitalistic industrial societies, that it idealizes rural societies with a low standard of welfare and production and is suitable as a principle of order only where the pace of development is slow. In reply, it may be said that subsidiarity as a principle necessarily requires accurate knowledge of the actual circumstances of human beings and their relationships so that development and change can occur.

The subsidiarity principle likewise assumes that there is an unimpaired, general moral subject who is able to create social order and to react to any demonstrated incapacity of human beings to live with dignity in their own strength. What tells against such an assumption, which is essential to the significance of the subsidiarity principle, are experiences of anonymous and subjectless mechanisms which have catastrophic effects and for which no individual person can be blamed. Also, in the light of experiences which involve an overall destructive agent (say, in the Nazi regime's extermination camps), it is clear that the right of human beings to life clearly is not uniformly accepted and cannot be assumed in the kind of thinking appealing to natural law, which lies behind the principle of subsidiarity.

For these reasons, the reservations against the principle of subsidiarity voiced by Protestant theologians and others gain in force. In an ethic guided by Protestant theology, the standards and norms for social activity, the rights and duties of individuals, are seen as having their basis in God's justifying action towards human beings and in his saving word. In particular, if we insist on the human capacity for guilt in social contexts, and especially where the rights to life are denied, it becomes extremely urgent for RC social proclamation, too, to ask whether socially relevant Christian practice can be clarified and defined exclusively in terms of natural reason and the principles that can be derived from this, or whether, in the light of

the actual denial of human rights, Christian praxis must be motivated first and foremost by the content and requirements of faith.

In recent RC discussions of ecclesiology, subsidiarity has also been introduced in a derivative way as a category for help in determining the respective competences of the parish, the diocese, the national bishops conferences, the universal church, and the papacy.

OTTMAR JOHN

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## SUFFERING

HUMAN SUFFERING is an ecumenical theme par excellence. All churches and religions participate in responding to the challenge it presents, and even non-religious ideologies need to deal not only with its causes but with the meaning of unremovable suffering to the human being as well.

The specific contribution of Christian spirituality and theology to the theme occurs within the tension between outrage and acceptance, both voiced most clearly in the book of Job. Throughout the history of the church there is outrage, protest and fighting against avoidable and unnecessary suffering, grounded in "the power of anger in the work of love" (Beverly Harrison), but there is patience, independence and inner freedom as well in those who bear the unbearable burden. Church history shows that mostly one of the two elements prevails in a given historical situation. But if one part of the dialectical tension between outrage and acceptance is completely lost, the other will degenerate as well. A church, for example, that preaches submissiveness and acceptance of God-given suffering to women has betrayed Christ's active and passionate work for freeing and redeeming all of God's children. Social activists, however, if untrained in endurance and lacking revolutionary patience, will tend to break under the burden and easily can become bitter.

These two spiritual-ethical responses are coded in the Christian symbol systems of sin,\* cross and the city of God. Christian tradition has offered these interpretative figures in response to the questions that arise with the suffering of the innocent, such as, Is suffering God's will or not? Is God the source of evil as well as of good? Does God permit suffering that comes from other sources? Do we have to choose between God's love and God's omnipotence?

The Judaeo-Christian tradition does not emphasize the tragic, unsolvable depth of suffering that is caused by natural defects or events. It places suffering in its historical context and, starting at the very first mythical narratives of origin, "ethicizes" the question why humankind has to suffer.

## SIN

Suffering is the result of separating oneself from God's life-giving love to the other, and it is caused by the lack of care for others. In response to God's question, Cain answered, "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen. 4:9), which is a rejection of our connectedness to each other. Sinners tear down the web of life and in separating themselves from the giver of life they inflict suffering on others. Even brutal natural sufferings, such as an earthquake, challenge the community of bystanders and ask them to become the keeper of their siblings. Even more so, brutal sufferings caused by human actions point to the reality of sin. The two-thirds of today's human family who lack adequate food, water, shelter, health care, education and work suffer as the victims of sin – here, an economic world order of injustice. The concept of sin is a key to make us understand human suffering in the light of ecumenical responsibility for the sufferers. It is misused when seen as punishment for those who suffer (see John 9:2). The biblical God asks two questions which belong together: "Where are you?" (Gen. 3:9) and "Where is your brother?" (Gen. 4:9). By denying the second call, we suppress the first one and fall, especially as citizens of the industrialized world, into the normal secular response to human suffering, which is denial and suppression: "Take a pill!" By embracing apathy as one of the prevailing spiritual patterns of white middle-class churches, we avoid lis-

tening to both questions of God. The technological avoidance of suffering cuts us off from living. Natural secular persons take suffering not as what they inflict upon others but exclusively as their own shortcomings; we remember our being hurt, not our hurting.

In biblical understanding, suffering follows not from God's good creation but from human freedom misused. The Christian teaching of sin and responsibility maintains the unity of the human family. We are one in Adam and shall be one in Christ (see **unity of humankind**). This teaching precludes racism,\* sexism,\* class-divided societies and other forms of structural injustice where some people seem to be children of a lesser God. From an ecumenical perspective the Body of Christ is one. "If one member suffers, all suffer together" (1 Cor. 12:26).

God is not the source of evil, nor does God permit other powers to punish or treat humans in the manner of a sadist. God does not make us suffer but suffers with us. God fighting and suffering for freedom makes us fighting and suffering as well. Not the one who causes suffering but only the one who suffers can answer Job's despair and ours. Living after the holocaust and with the memory of nuclear destruction in Japan, contemporary Jewish and Christian theologians (Abraham Heschel, Hans Jonas, Rabbi Kushner, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, James Cone, most feminists) have shifted the Enlightenment's question of theodicy – How can God Almighty permit evil to happen to "good people"? – to two more modest ones: How can God the co-sufferer abide with those who suffer? And, how long will *we* permit evil to happen to the poor?

## CROSS

The cross of Christ embodies an understanding of human suffering close to God's pain, in which we may participate. The cross, used as a torture instrument by the imperial power, is the ultimate response of this world and its powers to those who fulfill the will of the Father. Christ fulfills God's life-giving will. "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). For that "offence", Christ was sentenced to death. To share life, to make justice come true, to feed the hungry necessarily leads

those who try into conflicts with authorities, alienation from friends and family, losses in career, wealth and health, to name just the mild forms of the cross. Persecution for the sake of truth and the kingdom of God\* has been in many periods of history a criterion of the church.\* In today's liberation struggles, Christians give their lives, risk torture and death, and suffer with Christ "so that we may also be glorified with him" (Rom. 8:17). Those martyrs touch the deepest meaning of human suffering, which is to become "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17; see 2 Tim. 3:12).

In ecumenical gatherings Christians from the poor countries have reminded those from the "developed" world of the situation of the early Christians in the New Testament, which has many similarities to their own. Being a minority under an imperium of blood and tears, or even being a disempowered majority under repression, seems to be the normal status of the Christian church. Resistance and endurance are to be learned. Even in the first world, the Christian churches, if they commit themselves to Christ's way of sharing life, are to expect more suffering, more discrimination, loss of prestige and income, more conflicts with the state. When we avoid suffering with Christ, we will have to be "the devil's martyrs" (Thomas Münzer), who suffer under the contradictions of necrophilic societies. Suffering with Christ is a call to resistance against the powers of death. Love has its price.

"Rivers of blood may have to flow before we gain our freedom, but it must be our blood" (Martin Luther King, Jr). King insisted on the teaching of Jesus and Gandhi that unearned suffering is redemptive. The willingness to suffer is the utmost expression of human freedom. We then leave the technocratic illusion of a suffering-free life and join Christ's option for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.\*

Christian faith is not a complete and perfect ideology\* that solves all problems. The mystery of inequity, of nature's cruelty and indifference, is not to be solved on a dogmatic level. We miss Christ's point with our ready-made explanations of the tragic aspects of human life in reducing them to God's master plan of either punishment for the past or education for the present.

## CITY OF GOD

The pastoral task is to throw the light of Christ's suffering on the seemingly meaningless pains we have to endure. We need to learn to integrate our losses and pains into God's pain over the world. Outrage and endurance, then, come together. Plunged into the mighty river of justice, we may hand over even our most intimate griefs and pain into the hands of the co-suffering and wait with Christ for the radical transformation of the heavens and the earth. "I will rejoice in Jerusalem and delight in my people" (Isa. 65:19). We understand God's annunciation only when we hear the tears in God's voice. The God who "will wipe every tear from their eyes" (Rev. 21:4) weeps in us.

See also **martyrdom; salvation.**

DOROTHEE SÖLLE

■ A.A. Boesak, *Comfort and Protest: The Apocalypse from a South African Perspective*, Edinburgh, St Andrews, 1987 ■ J.C. Becker, *Suffering and Hope: The Biblical Vision and the Human Predicament*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1994 ■ J. Bowker, *The Problem of Suffering in the Religions of the World*, London, Cambridge UP, 1975 ■ R. Crews, *Good Lord, Deliver Us: The Praise of God and the Problem of Evil*, Akron OH, OSL, 2001 ■ G. Gutiérrez, *Hablar de Dios desde el Sufrimiento del Inocente (ET God Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent)*, Maryknoll NY, Orbis, 1987) ■ K. Kitamori, *Theology of the Pain of God*, Richmond VA, John Knox, 1965 ■ D. Sölle, *Suffering*, Philadelphia, Fortress, 1975.

## SUSTAINABILITY

SUSTAINABILITY became a widely accepted term when in 1987 the UN-sponsored Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland commission) promoted the concept of "sustainable development" in its report *Our Common Future*. Confronted with a worsening of poverty and the continuing deterioration of the ecosystems since the historic Stockholm conference on the human environment (1972), the Brundtland commission proposed an integrated environmental-economic approach, promising a solution for the conflict between environment and development concerns. In 1992 the UN Conference on Environment and Development at Rio de Janeiro gave high prominence to the

concept, calling for a global partnership on sustainable development. The UN Commission on Sustainable Development was formed to monitor progress and failure of the follow-up and to prepare for a review of the process at a special session of the UN general assembly in 1997 and again in 2002.

In the ecumenical discussion, the term "sustainable society" was first used in a working group report of the WCC world conference on science and technology for human development, organized by the Subunit on Church and Society in Bucharest (Romania) in 1974. A society will be sustainable only as long as the rate of use of non-renewable resources does not outrun the increase in resources made available through technological innovation, unless the emissions of pollutants are well below the capacity of the ecosystem to absorb them, and unless the need for food is at any time well below the global capacity to supply it.

The group was searching for a positive, pro-active response to the debate on science and technology\* and the future of humanity which was sparked by a report of the Club of Rome, published under the title *Limits to Growth* in 1972. The Club of Rome pointed to the dilemma that development based on economic growth leads to a deteriorating environment for future generations and the depletion of the planet's limited physical resources. But who could or should limit what in a world in which access to resources and technology is so unjustly divided? Considering the imbalance between over-consumption in rich countries and the need for economic growth in poor countries, the Bucharest conference emphasized the social idea of a "sustainable and just society".

The approach chosen by Church and Society, however, concentrated on the conceptual work by experts on the global level and predominantly represented a Northern perspective. This position was criticized by others, who in their contexts were confronted with increasing poverty and the exclusion of the majority of people from decision-making processes. The Nairobi assembly (1975) accepted the concept of a sustainable society as an important addition to ecumenical social thinking, but also strengthened the criticism.

In 1976 the central committee identified the search for a Just, Participatory and Sus-

tainable Society\* as a programme emphasis for the WCC. The explicit ethical focus on the necessary link between justice, participation in sustainability and the resulting critique of socio-economic and political practices from a moral point of view carried through in later WCC programmes as well, on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation\* (Vancouver 1983) and “Theology of Life” (since 1994).

A series of Visser ’t Hooft memorial consultations at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, on “Sustainable Growth – a Contradiction in Terms?” (1993), “Work in a Sustainable Society” (1995), “Sustainability and Globalization” (1997) and “Democratic Contracts for Sustainable and Caring Societies” (1999) contributed significantly to the understanding of sustainability. The concept of sustainable development is criticized because of the serious set of tensions between the market-based means proposed to achieve sustainable development (e.g. the reform of trade, aid and finance) and the goals.

Sustainability in the context of the WCC’s ongoing work on environmental issues does not mean global economic growth qualified by environmental sensitivity but a primary emphasis on local and regional communities that are economically viable, socially equitable and ecologically renewable (Larry Rasmussen). The social idea of “sustainable community” implies the nurturing of equitable relationships both within the human family and also between humans and the ecological community as a whole in a geospecific place. Earth itself in these locales is part of their very sense of being; it is their habitat, home, *oikos* (David Hallman).

See also **environment/ecology**.

MARTIN ROBRA

- Aram I Keshishian, *Towards an Ecumenical Ethic for a Responsible Society in a Sustainable Creation*, Beirut, s.n., 1994 (partially reprinted from *ER*, 46, 2, 1994) ■ W. Granberg-Michaelson, *Redeeming the Creation*, WCC, 1992 ■ D. Hallman, *Spiritual Values for Earth Community*, WCC, 2000 ■ D. Meadows et al., *The Limits to Growth*, New York, Universe, 1972 ■ L.S. Mudge & T. Wieser eds, *Democratic Contracts for Sustainable and Caring Societies*, WCC, 2000 ■ L. Rasmussen, *Earth Community, Earth Ethics*, WCC, 1996 ■ Report, world conference on “Science and Technology for Hu-

man Development”, Bucharest, Romania, June 1974, *Anticipation*, 19, Nov. 1974 ■ J. de Santa Ana ed., *Sustainability and Globalization*, WCC, 1998 ■ *Sustainable Growth – a Contradiction in Terms?*, Geneva, Visser ’t Hooft Endowment Fund, 1993 ■ *Work in a Sustainable Society* (= *ER*, 48, 3, 1996) ■ World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*, London, Oxford UP, 1987.

## SYNCRETISM

THE TERM “SYNCRETISM” in its negative meaning came into common parlance in the modern ecumenical movement at the meeting of the International Missionary Council\* (IMC) at Tambaram, South India, in 1938. Hendrik Kraemer’s *Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, the conference study book, defined syncretism as “illegitimate mingling of different religious elements” (203).

Kraemer recognized that, from the standpoint of naturalistic and monistic religions, any mingling of different religions or religious elements is regarded as legitimate. Their approach to all religions is relativistic and pragmatic. But for the “prophetic religion of biblical realism” (210), the reference point is a unique historical revelatory event. Any indiscriminate mixture, amalgamation or harmonization of that revelation\* with elements from other religions is illegitimate.

In this theologically negative sense Kraemer rejects as syncretistic the call to Christians by the 1928 Jerusalem meeting of the IMC to appropriate “values” of different religions because, as he puts it, “the argument of value does not coincide in any way whatever with that of truth” (106) and because “every religion is a living, indivisible unity” (135). No part of it – a dogma, a rite, a myth, an institution, a cult – can be separated from the faith-apprehension of the whole. Furthermore, the uniqueness of the Christian revelation in Jesus Christ\* does not permit Christians “to consider undiscerningly the glimpses of revelation and the religious institutions of mankind as a preceding and preparatory stage for the full revelation in Christ” (123).

Nor, Kraemer argues, is there theological justification for considering non-Christians like Gandhi, Tagore and others who have as-

simulated Christian ideals and ideas as “unbaptized Christians”, as Friedrich Heiler does. Nor, for that matter, is it permissible to consider reforms in other religions under the influence of Christianity as producing “an embryonic Christianity” leading to the church of Christ. William Hocking’s missionary approach in terms of “sharing religious experience” is also regarded as illegitimate. Any approach where a decision for Christ is not taken as marking a radical break with one’s religious past is a denial of biblical realism and is syncretistic (291, 296).

Kraemer, however, speaks of “adaptation” as a positive way of utilizing concepts and practices from other religions to “translate” and “interpret” the gospel of Jesus Christ in the world of non-Christian religions and cultures, and a legitimate way for Christians to relate to elements in other religions. According to Kraemer, “Adaptation in the deepest sense does not mean to assimilate the cardinal facts of the revelation in Christ as much as possible to fundamental religious ideas and tastes of the pre-Christian past, but to *express* these facts by wrestling with them concretely, and so to present the Christian truth and reveal at the same time the intrinsic inadequacy of man’s religious efforts for the solution of his crucial religious and moral problems” (308). He refers to the ways Paul and John used Jewish and Hellenistic categories of thought to controvert Jewish legalism and Hellenic monism and to express the truth and meaning of the Christian gospel, leading to new embodiments of Christianity.

Western forms of Christianity are the result of similar adaptations. Since they are foreign to Asian and African cultural milieus, “in principle and for reasons of history, new incarnations and adaptations of Christianity in the concrete Asiatic and African settings are natural and legitimate” (313). But Kraemer warns that this practice has always been associated with syncretism. The attempts to use what he calls “foreign tongues” in the past to express the gospel “have served as much to distort and falsify the revelation in Christ as to express it” (327). Some modern enthusiasts for the indigenization of Christianity in non-Western churches, he argues, “mistake cardinal and

essential elements of the Christian revelation for cultural idiosyncrasies of the West” (319).

W.A. Visser ’t Hooft, in his book *No Other Name: The Choice between Syncretism and Christian Universalism*, follows much the same line. He distinguishes between a negative syncretism and a positive approach, which he calls “accommodation” rather than “adaptation” (123). His survey of syncretism covers all history and all continents. It recognizes illegitimate amalgamations of Christianity not only with traditional religions but also with modern paganism finding expression in political ideologies (see *ideology*).

Syncretism has continued to be a subject of controversy in the ecumenical movement. The argument has not been primarily on the substance of what Kraemer and Visser ’t Hooft were saying, but on the question of whether the fear of syncretism has not stopped the Christian church from entering into relationships with non-Western or modern religions and cultures, which alone can lead to new, legitimate incarnations of Christianity. In fact, as Lesslie Newbigin has commented, at the Tambaram conference of 1938 a red light stopped the traffic between Christianity and other religions; it never turned to green, and so the traffic was halted for a long time. Any attempt at dialogue between Christianity and other religions was frowned upon as syncretistic.

The Faith and Order consultation of the East Asia Christian Conference (Hong Kong 1966) on “Confessing the Faith in Asia” recognized that the Asian churches in the past were too inhibited by an idolatrous absolutization of Western confessional formulations and by a fear of syncretism to venture into confessing Christ in relation to religious renaissance and social revolution in Asia (*Asian Christian Theology: Emerging Themes*).

This inhibiting fear of syncretism was also evident in the reaction of a section at the WCC Nairobi assembly (1975) to the first report from the group dealing with “Seeking Community: The Common Search of People of Various Faiths, Cultures and Ideologies”. In this context an effort has been made in many centres in the ecumenical movement to affirm that the legitimate

and illegitimate relations of Christianity to other religions and quasi-religious ideologies are two possibilities within the same process. There is historical warrant to use the word "syncretism" in its neutral character, accepting the possibility of true and false forms of syncretism.

Peter Latuihamako of Indonesia takes up the history of Balinese Christianity (in whose creation Kraemer played no small part) and says that what we call adaptation, amalgamation and the like seem to stem from the same spiritual source as syncretism. He calls the Christian approach "creative syncretism": "If ultimate Truth is the criterion, then there is no compromise and no syncretism. But still, the incarnation has happened. Logos has become flesh. Jesus Christ has become a fact in history. Is his earthly presence not seen as a kind of syncretism, a peaceful syncretism if you will, or maybe creative syncretism?"

John Carman, who studied a village church in South India, speaks of "a higher syncretism" evident among new converts from Hinduism to Christianity. He writes: "Syncretism may be regarded either as the same person's participation in both Christian and Hindu worship, or, more rarely in India, an attempt to combine the two. Yet there is also what I would like to call a higher syncretism, something close to what Hocking calls 'creative reconception', but not carried on by theologians. It is rather the faith, the ritual forms, and the patterns of living of lay Christians, sometimes new 'converts' to Christianity, who manage to clothe their new faith in the forms of the old, not merely the external language, but also something of the inner intent of the old faith and thereby create a genuine 'Hindu Christianity'" (93).

Among theologians closely related to the WCC in recent times, there is a tradition of defining syncretism as a neutral or even as a very positive process. In Wolfhart Pannenberg's view, the growth in understanding of the biblical figure of God has "actually the form of a syncretic process". In his estimation, "Christianity affords the greatest example of syncretic assimilative power; this religion not only linked itself to Greek philosophy but also inherited the entire religious tradition of the Mediterranean world"

(*Basic Questions in Theology*). Moltmann characterizes the religion of Israel as itself the product of a syncretic process: "Israel achieved a syncretism between the religion of the nomad and of the Canaanite peasant through historicizing the latter in struggle." The Orthodox theologian Demetrius Constantelos writes: "After all, it was a syncretic approach that won Christianity its followers in the first five centuries."

If an attempt is made to keep the purity of the gospel of Christ through isolation from other religions and secular ideologies, it will lead to a conception of the uniqueness of Christ\* which will militate against the universality of Christ. As the Willowbank consultation report of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization\* puts it: "Indeed perhaps the most insidious form of syncretism in the world today is the attempt to mix a privatized gospel of personal forgiveness with a worldly (even demonic) attitude to wealth and power." Raymond Panikkar characterizes Western Christianity as "ancient paganism, or to be more precise, the complex of Hebrew-Hellenic-Greek-Latin-Celtic-modern religions converted to Christ more or less successfully".

Since all conversions are "more or less" and require continued struggle for the transformation of the unconverted elements, any new form of Christianity, like the old, will have to continue to fight within itself against thought-forms and life-practices which betray the universal lordship of Christ. Therefore, the decision for Christ which makes a person or culture or religion Christian is the dominant intention and goal of the conversion process. This is more so in the modern pluralistic world in which we all live with fragments of culture, philosophy and cult drawn from different religious and secular ideological traditions. "All Christians are pagan in parts. More so today. Synthesis is a long way away, it is almost 'eschatological'. Syncretism with a sense of Christian direction is all that we can now realize" (Thomas, 392).

See also **dialogue, interfaith; religion.**

M.M. THOMAS

■ L. Boff, *Church, Charism and Power*, London, SCM Press, 1985, ch. 7 ■ J. Carman, "Continuing Tasks in Inter-religious Dialogue",

in *Living Faiths and the Ecumenical Movement*, S.J. Samartha ed., WCC, 1971 ■ D. Elwood ed., *Asian Christian Theology: Emerging Themes*, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1980 ■ H. Kraemer, *Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, London, Edinburgh House, 1947 ■ J. Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, London, SCM Press, 1967 ■ R. Panikkar, *Christian Revelation and World Religions*, London, Burns & Oates, 1967 ■ W. Pannenberg, *Grundfragen systematischer Theologie (ET Basic Questions in Theology)*, vol. 2, Philadelphia, Fortress, 1971 ■ Y. Tesfai, "Ecumenism, Culture and Syncretism", *IRM*, 84, 332/333, 1995 ■ M.M. Thomas, "The Absoluteness of Jesus Christ and Christ-centred Syncretism", *ER*, 37, 4, 1985 ■ W.A. Visser 't Hooft, *No Other Name: The Choice between Syncretism and Christian Universalism*, London, SCM Press, 1964.

## SYNDESMOS

SYNDESMOS, the World Fellowship of Orthodox Youth, was founded in 1953 at the initiative of Orthodox involved in the work of the WCC Youth department. Its name is the Greek word for "uniting bond" (used in Eph. 4:3). Syndesmos is a federation of youth movements and theological schools within local Eastern Orthodox churches; the Oriental Orthodox youth\* movements form a particular category of federated membership with representation in the administrative board and among the vice presidents. In 2000 it had 127 member movements and schools in 42 countries in Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, North America and Latin America. As the only worldwide Orthodox organization, Syndesmos requires all member movements to be officially endorsed by the local hierarchy.

The problems of "diaspora"\* – Orthodox living in countries without traditional Orthodox presence – have always been high on the Syndesmos agenda. It took significant initiatives in foreign mission in the 1950s and again in the early 1980s, and the African region has grown to be a significant one in the fellowship. Orthodox participation in the ecumenical movement was a high priority for Syndesmos in the two first decades and again in the late 1980s, with fraternal relationships developing with the WCC youth network, the World Student Christian Federation,\* the Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe, the Middle East Council of Churches\* and others.

Several Syndesmos assemblies have taken initiatives to improve international means of communication and information among the Orthodox, and some concrete initiatives have been achieved, including the development of an Orthodox press service, periodicals, directories and an important series of publications. Syndesmos has always been financially dependent on ecumenical support, and severe financial restrictions have required heavy reliance on volunteer work.

The role of laity\* in the life of the Orthodox church has been an important topic throughout Syndesmos's existence, but with more focus in recent years on its social and ecclesial implications. Rapprochement and cooperation with Oriental Orthodox youth has been a growing concern since the 1960s, with significant steps taken in recent years. By the time of its 1989 assembly in Boston, Syndesmos had established links of communication and cooperation with movements from all Oriental churches, with Oriental representation in all Syndesmos meetings as a principle. At the 1992 assembly in Moscow, a new category of "federated" membership was created to allow Oriental Orthodox organizations and schools to join Syndesmos on an equal basis with the Eastern Orthodox, still recognizing the fact that full canonical and eucharistic unity had not been achieved on the level of the churches; the federated members are represented in the board of administration and in the executive committee, where their representative is one of the vice presidents.

Although Western European émigré groups were the most active in founding Syndesmos, there has been official Greek, Middle Eastern and Finnish representation from the outset. The role of Greek student movements with pan-Orthodox and ecumenical outlook grew stronger in the late 1950s, with the increasing presence and influence also of the Lebanese and Syrians of the patriarchate of Antioch. As an important area of diaspora, with several youth movements, North Americans became members officially in the 1960s.

With the 1964 amendment of the constitution to include theological schools as full affiliated members, Eastern European churches were able to join, since youth work

as such was not permitted in most socialist countries. Their number grew slowly but steadily in the 1980s, as did the participation of youth movements of local dioceses in Greece and North America.

With the changes in the situation of the Orthodox churches in Central and Eastern Europe, Syndesmos has in the 1990s played a significant role in youth movement training and organizing. Seminars on various aspects of youth work and movement-building have been highest on the agenda; without any doubt, Syndesmos has the largest and most effective youth network in the region, connecting effectively with the grassroots.

After a period of reduced activity in the early 1970s, Syndesmos was able to take new initiatives in the late 1970s and through the 1980s in all of the areas mentioned above. Besides general assemblies (usually every three years), Syndesmos has organized international festivals of Orthodox youth, with thematic discussions on current challenges facing the Orthodox church, and four consultations of Orthodox theological schools, including those in Leningrad (1986), in Suprasl, Poland (1989) and in

Halki, Constantinople (1994). Dozens of other consultations and exchanges on key issues have also been organized.

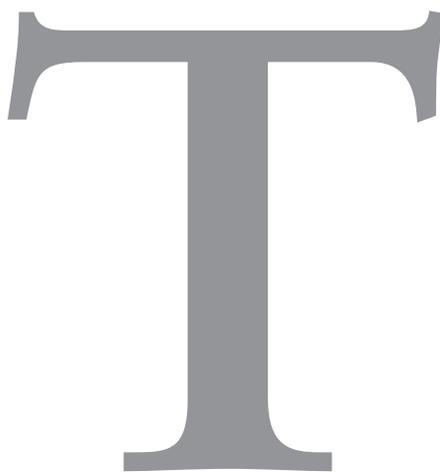
In the 1990s the contribution of Orthodox spirituality and theology in the area of ecological concerns became important in the work of Syndesmos. Several workshops, seminars and camps were organized on these themes, e.g., with the monasteries of Mt Athos and Ormylia. New themes of bioethics and sexuality as well as encounter with people of other faiths emerged in Syndesmos programmes towards the end of the 1990s.

The Syndesmos international office is usually hosted by the church and youth movement of the general secretary (1997, Bialystok, Poland), thus giving them a prominent role in the fellowship for that period, providing a strong local base and practical and financial support. Regional offices have also been organized in several parts of the world.

See also **Eastern Orthodoxy, Oriental Orthodox churches.**

HEIKKI HUTTUNEN

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## TAIZÉ COMMUNITY

THE ECUMENICAL community of Taizé was founded by Brother Roger Schutz in 1940. Alone for two years during the second world war, in the small village of Taizé in eastern France, he gave shelter to political refugees, mainly Jews. In 1949 seven brothers took monastic vows for life. The brothers today number 90 and include Catholics, Anglicans and various Protestants from 25 countries. Some live in small “fraternities” in poor regions. The community lives exclusively from its work and refuses donations. Brother Roger’s aim was to create a monastic community that would be a “parable of communion” among divided Christians.

Taizé is in constant contact with church leaders. Pope John Paul II, Archbishops Ramsey and Runcie, Metropolitan Nikodim

of Leningrad and countless pastors and church leaders have visited Taizé. The brothers, as guests of Pope John XXIII (who once said of Taizé: “Ah! that little springtime!”), were present throughout the Second Vatican Council.\* They have participated in several assemblies of the WCC and have been associated with the work of WCC commissions.

Since 1958 Taizé has welcomed hundreds of thousands of young people from around the world for weekly meetings. They participate in the community’s common prayer three times each day, study the Christian sources of faith and reflect on inner life and human solidarity. Refusing to create a “movement”, the community encourages participants to return to their local churches and parishes. Taizé is also a place of retreat for many ministers and priests.

In 1982, to stimulate reconciliation and trust in the world, a "pilgrimage of trust on earth" led Taizé not only to the major capitals of Europe but to those in other continents. The European meetings, always prepared with local parishes, bring together each year tens of thousands from both eastern and western Europe, from all denominations. Two Asian meetings were held in Madras, India, and several large gatherings have taken place in North and South America.

#### BROTHER ÉMILE

■ J.L. Balado, *The Story of Taizé*, 3rd ed., London, Mowbray, 1988 ■ G. Carey, *A Spiritual Journey*, London, Cassell, 1993 ■ O. Clément, *Taizé: A Meaning to Life*, Chicago, GIA, 1997 ■ J. Eck, *Religious Facilitation through Intense Liturgical Participation: A Quasi-Experimental Study of Swedish Pilgrims*, Lund, Lund University, 2001 ■ K. Spink, *A Universal Heart*, London, SPCK, 1986.

## TAKENAKA, MASAO

B. 1925, Peking. Takenaka has been active in the WCC and the Christian Conference of Asia. He has addressed major ecumenical gatherings, including the WCC's New Delhi assembly in 1961, and lectured on ecumenical topics from an Asian perspective at various universities. A graduate of Doshisha University in 1950, he received a PhD degree in social ethics from Yale University in 1955. He returned to Doshisha in 1962 as professor of Christian ethics and sociology of religion, and held visiting professorships at Union Theological Seminary, New York, 1962-63, Yale University, 1973, and Harvard University, 1981-82. In 1986 he became director of the Centre for American Study at Doshisha University.

#### ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ M. Takenaka, *Christian Art in Asia*, Tokyo, Kyo Bun Kwan, 1975 ■ *God Is Rice: Asian Culture and Christian Faith*, WCC, 1986 ■ *Reconciliation and Renewal in Japan*, New York, Friendship, 1967.

## TANTUR ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE

LOCATED in Jerusalem, Tantur arose from a compelling suggestion in 1963 to Pope Paul VI from the official Anglican, Protestant and Orthodox observers to the Second Vatican Coun-

cil: someone, somewhere, should establish an international, intercultural institute where Christian scholars and teachers could experience a community life of prayer, study and dialogue. The main focus would be "Christian reflection on the mystery of salvation as revealed through the sacred scriptures and the teachings of the early, undivided church, and as expressed in the experiences of the diverse Christian communions throughout the ages".

Upon Paul VI's return from the holy land in January 1964, where he had met Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras, he decided that Jerusalem should be the place for the centre. "There Christ founded in the Spirit the one, undivided church, and today Christians of all communions, one yet sadly divided, find other 'peoples of the book', Jews and Muslims." The Vatican purchased the Tantur property, and an interconfessional advisory board authorizes the institute's programmes and personnel.

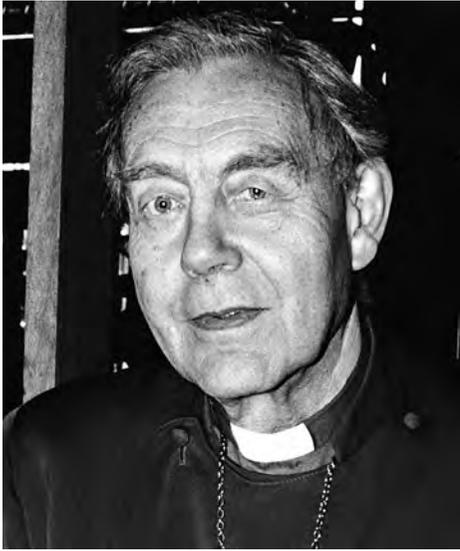
Since Tantur's opening in 1972, over 4000 Christian scholars, teachers, parish clergy and other church workers have participated in its programmes. Besides the programme for young and senior scholars on sabbaticals, three-month sessions in continuing education and spiritual formation are so designed that one can concentrate on biblical studies and field trips in historical geography (the holy land as "the fifth gospel"); biblical spiritualities; the Eastern churches; Jewish and Islamic spiritualities; the bases and practices of ecumenical and inter-religious relations; the social, political and religious situation in the Middle East; and human rights and conflict resolution through creative non-violence.

Located on the southern border between Israel's Jerusalem and the West Bank (Bethlehem), Tantur is called "an oasis of sane discourse" for its many publicized and unpublicized gatherings of Israeli Jews and Muslim and Christian Palestinians.

TOM STRANSKY

## TAYLOR, JOHN VERNON

B. 11 Sept. 1914, Cambridge, UK; d. Feb. 2001. Taylor was bishop of Winchester, UK, 1975-85. After studying theology at Oxford, he was warden of Bishop Tucker Theological College, Uganda, from the end of the war



until 1954. Then followed a period of international, and especially African, involvement: with the International Missionary Council,\* 1956-59; as Africa secretary, then general secretary, of the Church Missionary Society, 1959-74; and as vice-chairman of the Theological Education Fund, 1968-74. He was a speaker at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, in 1955 and 1957. Before the IMC-WCC integration he was a delegate to the IMC Ghana assembly in 1958, then to the WCC assemblies in New Delhi 1961 and Uppsala 1968, and to the Bangkok 1973 and Melbourne 1980 world mission conferences.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ J.V. Taylor, *Enough Is Enough*, 1975 ■ *The Go-Between God*, 1972 ■ *The Growth of the Church of Uganda*, 1958 ■ *A Matter of Life and Death*, 1986 ■ *The Primal Vision*, 1965, all SCM Press, London ■ *Weep Not for Me: Meditations on the Cross and the Resurrection*, WCC, 1986.

## TEACHING AUTHORITY

IN THE HISTORY of church division, dissent over teaching authority and authoritative teaching has played a prominent role. From its very beginning within the Jewish community of faith, which was characterized in Jesus' time by a pluralism of at least four main teaching traditions, Christianity wrestled

with three decisive questions: What is the normative and unifying content of the Christian faith\* (the *regula fidei*) which could guide the re-reading of the Jewish scriptures in light of the Christ-event? Who are the authoritative witnesses and teachers in the new-born communities of the church?\* How should the community and its leaders proceed in order to safeguard the content of faith and the way of life according to the gospel of Christ, to unite the church members and the scattered communities within one bond of love, and to guide them in committed confession to that faith amid the challenges of the surrounding world?

The New Testament writings reflect this foundational struggle over the original proclamation (*kērygma*) of the gospel (*euan-gelion*), the teaching (*didachē*) of Jesus and the apostles, the authority (*exousia*) of the Lord sent forth upon the community, showing it how to speak boldly (*parrēsia*) and how to give witness even at the risk of one's life (*martyria*). Amid all the diversity, the NT has given special attention to factors of unity and continuity (*homologia*), including early confessional formulas, the authority of the Twelve and of the first missionaries like Paul, the collection of reliable gospel narratives and apostolic correspondence, a common sacramental practice of baptism\* and the eucharist,\* and a common discipline of life (e.g. on marriage,\* on public life within the Hellenistic context). The apostles exercised authority also by a practice of excommunication\* and reconciliation,\* a conciliar form of decision making about divisive issues (Acts 15) and, in a later stage of development, by a more common pattern of ministry and its orderly transmission.

Initially there was no need for formal legitimation of the action of the bearers of the kerygma, as they could speak with the authority and commission of the Lord (see Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 10:19; John 1:12, 18:20; Acts 4:29-31, 9:27, 18:25, 28:31; 2 Cor. 10:8, 13:10), "not like the scribes" (Matt. 7:29), rather like "uneducated and ordinary men" (Acts 4:13), yet "by the Spirit" (Acts 2; 1 Cor. 12:3-11) and "by the name of Jesus" (Acts 4:10), as messengers of the gospel, sent by Christ (Rom. 1:1) and as (eye)witnesses of his life, death and resurrection (Acts 1:21-22).

But already in Paul's writings, and much more in the pastoral epistles and in 2 Peter and Jude, some formal structures of a teaching authority can be discerned: apostolic authority and episcopate (1 Cor. 1:10-17, 4:1-6; 2 Cor. 5-6, 11-12; Acts 15:2,22,28; 1 Pet. 1:1, 5:1-4; 2 Pet. 1:12, 3:1-2; 1 Tim. 1:18, 3:1-13, 4:6-7, 5:21-22, 6:20-21; 2 Tim. 1:11-14, 3:14-17; Titus 1:5-9), a sound deposit of faith (2 Tim. 1:14; Titus 1:9,13, 2:1; Jude 3), an incipient canon\* of apostolic writings (2 Tim. 2:14-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21, 3:15-16), the truth laid down in a rule of faith (1 Tim. 1:15, 2:5-6; 2 Tim. 2:11-13), which must be defended against false teachings and myths (1 Tim. 4:1-7; 2 Tim. 2:15-18; Titus 1:10-16; 2 Pet. 2:1-22, 3:17; Jude 4-8).

This rather early development of a rule of faith, a common discipline of life and common structures of authoritative teaching and decision making was further elaborated during the first four or five centuries. Synods and councils formulated confessions of faith and creeds\* and put certain teachings under *anathema*.\* From the middle of the 3rd century, episcopal oversight gained momentum in the local churches. Catechetical schools blossomed in Alexandria and Antioch. Bishops of the apostolic sees (leaders of Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople and Rome being called patriarchs) were consulted in matters of faith and morals, especially the bishop of Rome, in order to protect the unity\* and holiness,\* the catholicity\* and apostolicity\* of the church. But we have to wait until the middle ages before a more formal idea of an episcopal *magisterium*\* developed in the West, being from its very beginning in a certain tension with the teaching authority of the theologians, their schools and universities (*magisterium doctorum*).

From the 8th and 9th centuries, the basis of teaching authority has gradually shifted from charismatic and traditional to legal (Max Weber), from original *auctoritas* of what was taught to juridical *potestas* of those who taught (Yves Congar), from its reliability to set forth the true tradition (*traditio*) to its competence to discern and to decide (*discretio*) (Karl Morrison), from its role to communicate and proclaim the faith (*communicatio fidei*) to an office to define the standard formulations of faith (*determi-*

*natio fidei*) (Odessa report). The teaching authority of the bishops was connected with the civil ideas of investiture, representation and licence and became part of ministerial jurisdiction. This history is the source of the disputes between conciliar and papal jurisdiction (see *conciliarity*), which lie behind the Western schism, as well as the origins of the theory of papal infallibility\* (Tierney). Even the Reformation and Counter-Reformation can be viewed to a large extent as a theological struggle over how to define "hierarchy of authorities" with regard to the teaching of the church. The Protestant reformers re-organized the forms of episcopate and entrusted it to synods and local councils, advised by a college of theological *doctores* (Henderson). The challenges of the European Enlightenment, the contextual and inculturation problems of the Christian faith in the 20th century and the growing religious pluralism\* and Christian denominationalism\* have added to the urgency of an ecumenical debate about the authoritative and faithful teaching of the church. A common authoritative teaching today would become possible and credible only if on this matter the controversies and censures from the past could be overcome.

To this end the Accra meeting of the Faith and Order\* commission in 1974 started an "ecumenical inquiry" on "the ways in which the various churches decide or define or proclaim basic teaching about Christian faith and morals in the contemporary situation". Reasons given for the study were: the pluralism of authoritative teaching bodies and hermeneutical procedures (see *hermeneutics*), the crisis in church teaching authority in an era of rapid change, a strong sense of the historicity and contextuality of all church teaching, the challenge of modern linguistic and hermeneutical philosophy and, last but not least, the division of the churches itself, which seems to be caused not only by the content of their teaching but also by the authoritative procedures leading to the reception\* of such teaching in various churches. "No church", it was said, "can be satisfied until the fullness of the truth attested by its own authoritative doctrine and promised through its own living teaching office is perceived and appreciated by the whole people of God."

The WCC's assembly at Nairobi in 1975 warmly welcomed the project "How Does the Church Teach Authoritatively Today?" A small consultation in Geneva in 1976 prepared a working paper (*One in Christ*, 12, 1976), which was followed by reports from Italy, Greece, Holland and East and West Germany. In 1977 a F&O consultation took place in Odessa. It concluded: "As the churches engage in the ecumenical movement, they need to re-examine deliberately their ways and modes of teaching. Consensus and communion in conciliar life can be reached only if the ways of teaching become more and more capable of common decision-making."

The report reflected especially on the divergences and convergences among the various traditions, the varieties of actual situations, the search for new patterns of credibility and the examples of common teaching today within the ecumenical movement.

At the Bangalore plenary meeting of the F&O commission, due attention was paid to the results of the study thus far, but a decision was made to give priority to the content of the apostolic faith before studying at a later date the common ways of making decisions and exercising teaching authority.

By doing so, Bangalore postponed the issue of ecumenical hermeneutics, on which F&O had prepared various studies in the 1960s, such as those on "The Hermeneutical Significance of the Councils" and "The Authority of the Bible". The theme of teaching authority was also left aside in the Lima text on ministry (see *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\*). The importance of the subject was recognized, however, and perhaps even overstated by repeated reminders (Lima 1982, Vancouver 1983, Stavanger 1985, Budapest 1989) that the unity of the church depends on three main elements or conditions: a common understanding of the apostolic faith, full communion in the sacraments\* and mutual recognition of ministries, and agreement on common ways of teaching and decision making.

In the responses to the Lima text on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, several churches asked for continuation of the study on decision making and teaching authority. The Budapest meeting of F&O in 1989 decided to include such a study in its overall

programme on ecumenical perspectives on ecclesiology. At the fifth world conference of F&O in Santiago de Compostela in 1993, it became clear that the issue implies both hermeneutical and ecclesiological questions. Two parallel series of consultations were set up, resulting in two F&O documents presented to the eighth assembly of the WCC in Harare in 1998: *The Nature and Purpose of the Church* and *A Treasure in Earthen Vessels*.

In the former, teaching authority is put under the heading of oversight, or episcopate, in its communal, personal and collegial forms and under the heading of the complementarity of conciliarity and primacy.\* The document speaks of the accountability of those who exercise oversight in their communities and of the necessary functions to discern the truth, reckoning with the faith insights of all believers (*sensus fidelium*). It sadly recognizes in a commentary that no agreement could be reached on common structures of decision making, neither in conciliar nor in primatial forms. In a time of growing differentiation of life-contexts and of post-modern philosophical questioning of universal truth claims, such a result is no surprise. Increasingly, authoritative teaching in *any* church has met with serious problems of reception. In a pluralist society, the conflict of interpretations requires creative hermeneutical skills and a patient exchange of ideas. To teach and to serve the coherence and mutual confidence of the community of faith demands the sensitive listening of those who decide "what the Spirit is saying to the churches", even through the voices of other churches.

The second F&O document therefore reflects on "a hermeneutics for the unity of the church" and calls the church a "hermeneutical community", a "communion of co-responsible persons". It commented: "All believers, because of their unity with Jesus Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, have the potential to receive God's word, to discern God's will and to proclaim the gospel. Those whose call by God to exercise the ministry of oversight (episcopate) is recognized by the church must enable the people of God to recognize and actualize the gifts that the Holy Spirit has bestowed upon them for the fulfilment of the church's life and

mission. This means that the ministry of oversight must include an hermeneutical function" (55). Part of this hermeneutical function is to consult with other churches regarding important questions of faith and discipline, and to consult all levels of their constituency in matters of doctrine, "so that what relates to all should be dealt with by all" (58,61,64). The document concludes: "As an hermeneutical community, the church is called to grow into full koinonia by Spirit-guided discernment of the living Tradition." Though the text recognizes deep differences in organization and reception of oversight and authoritative teaching models in various churches, it is optimistic about a growing "ecumenical tradition" of a coherent, though by no means uniform, interpretation of "the faith of the church through the ages". This faith might be found across confessional boundaries, helped by exegetical exchange, theological dialogue, shared pastoral solutions in comparable contexts and the gradual reception of ecumenical consensus-texts.

The topic of teaching authority has been intensely discussed in some bilateral dialogues\* as well. Perhaps over the past 20-30 years they have reached even more results with regard to concrete structures of teaching authority and decision making, especially with regard to conciliar and primatial structures of authority in matters of faith and morals. They have considered the sensitive question of the need for a form of a "Petrine ministry" for the universal church, seen as a communion of communions. First steps were set in a broad range of dialogues in the 1970s and 1980s, e.g. in the Reformed-Roman Catholic conversations reports "The Presence of Christ in Church and World" (1977) and "Towards a Common Understanding of the Church" (1990); in the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission's Venice (1976) and Windsor (1981) reports on "Authority in the Church"; in the Disciples of Christ-Roman Catholic dialogue "The Church as Communion in Christ" (1992); in the Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue's report "The Ministry in the Church" (1981); in the Methodist-Roman Catholic conversations Denver (1971), Dublin (1976) and Honolulu (1981) reports and their further elaboration

in the statements "The Apostolic Tradition" (1991) and "The Word of Life" (1996); and in the Old Catholic-Eastern Orthodox dialogue's report on ecclesiology (Chambésy 1983). In most of those dialogues the issue of the specific claims of the papal magisterium was treated to some extent, though far from resolved.

After the invitation issued in 1995 by Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*\* to the leaders and theologians of the other churches to seek together with him the forms in which such Petrine ministry of the Roman see might accomplish a service of love recognized by all, various dialogues have tried to go deeper into this historically church-dividing issue. Two ground-breaking theological statements issued from the dialogues of the RCC with Anglicans and with Methodists in 1999 and 2001 respectively: *The Gift of Authority and Speaking the Truth in Love* (see **Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue; Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue**). Both not only touch upon formal structures of decision making and authoritative teaching but, drawing upon the scriptures and the creeds, formulate the core content of faith to be taught in communion. These texts, once fully received by the mandating churches, would themselves become a form of ecumenical authoritative teaching. With regard to the ecclesiological setting of those who exercise episcopate, it seems generally accepted, as became clear in the F&O statement on ecclesiology, that it should be done in a communal, personal and collegial way and in communion with the whole church. Preliminary consultation of the *sensus fidei* within the whole people of God is considered a necessity by Methodists, Anglicans and Roman Catholics alike. And even when a final decision in matters of faith and morals is taken, the reception\* by the faithful is important as a sign that they recognize in it "the faith of the church through the ages".

Differences of opinion remain, however, among Roman Catholics, Anglicans and Methodists, with regard to the way clergy, laypeople, men and women, should take part in the task of discerning and determining the truth of the gospel within the authoritative teaching procedures of the church, though there is agreement on their constitutive, Spirit-led role in keeping to the

truth which is Christ. In both documents the Roman Catholic dialogue partner is urged to make this constitutive role of lay participants much clearer in its regular synodal and conciliar life. Differences of opinion remain as well over the interpretation of the guaranteed freedom from error, or “infallibility”, claimed by the First Vatican Council for doctrinal definitions *ex cathedra* by the bishop of Rome. In both cases, the Roman Catholic dialogue partners make clear, as John Paul II has done in *Ut Unum Sint*, that such freedom from error does not eliminate human frailty and weakness of any particular bishop of Rome, nor does it exclude improved insights and formulations in the future.

Finally, *The Gift of Authority* makes clear a possible fruitful approach to primacy: “The exigencies of church life call for a specific exercise of episcopate at the service of the whole church. In the pattern found in the New Testament, one of the Twelve is chosen by Jesus to strengthen the others so that they will remain faithful to their mission and in harmony with each other... Historically, the bishop of Rome has exercised such a ministry either for the benefit of the whole church, as when Leo contributed to the council of Chalcedon, or for the benefit of a local church, as when Gregory the Great supported Augustine of Canterbury’s mission and ordering of the English church. This gift has been welcomed and the ministry of these bishops of Rome continues to be celebrated liturgically by Anglicans as well as Roman Catholics... It is this faith which the bishop of Rome in certain circumstances has a duty to discern and make explicit. This form of authoritative teaching has no stronger guarantee from the Spirit than have the solemn definitions of ecumenical councils. The reception of the primacy of the bishop of Rome entails the recognition of this specific ministry of the universal primate. We believe that this is a gift to be received by all the churches” (47).

ANTON HOUTEPEN

■ Y. Congar, “Pour une histoire sémantique du terme ‘magisterium’” and “Bref historique des formes du ‘magistère’ et de ses relations avec les docteurs”, *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, 60, 1976 ■ *Faith and Order:*

*Minutes Accra 1974*, WCC, 1974 ■ R.W. Henderson, *The Teaching Office in the Reformed Tradition*, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1962 ■ “How Does the Church Teach Authoritatively Today?”, *ER*, 31, 1979 (Odessa report) ■ K.F. Morrison, *Tradition and Authority in the Western Church, 300-1140*, Princeton NJ, Princeton UP, 1969 ■ *Sharing in One Hope: Bangalore 1978*, WCC, 1978 ■ F.A. Sullivan, *Magisterium: Teaching Authority in the Catholic Church*, Dublin, Gill & Macmillan, 1983 ■ B. Tierney, *Origins of Papal Infallibility, 1150-1350: A Study on the Concepts of Infallibility, Sovereignty and Tradition in the Middle Ages*, Leiden, Brill, 1972 ■ W.A. Visser’t Hooft, *Teachers and the Teaching Authorities: The Magistri and the Magisterium*, WCC, 2000.

## TEMPLE, WILLIAM

B. 15 Oct. 1881, Exeter, UK; d. 26 Oct. 1944, Westgate-on-Sea, Kent. William Temple was the most prominent British ecumenist in the period from the Student Christian Movement (SCM) conference at Matlock in 1908 and the Edinburgh conference of 1910, at which he was a steward, to the creation of the British Council of Churches (BCC) in 1942.

Temple was the son of Beatrice and Frederick Temple, bishop of London, who later (1896-1902) became archbishop of Canterbury. William thus came from the heart of the English establishment. He attended Rugby school and Balliol College, Oxford, where he received first-class honours in classics, ancient history and philosophy. He had the unconscious, effortless superiority of the Balliol scholar but combined this with a winsome humanity and humility, tempered by chronic ill health.

Temple taught philosophy at Queen’s College, Oxford, 1907-10, and was ordained, though not without some doubts from his bishop (Paget) over doctrinal issues. From these early wrestlings stems Temple’s theology expressed in *Mens Creatrix*, *Christus Veritas* and *Nature, Man and God*. Here – Caird was the great influence – is the last theological flowering of Oxford neo-Hegelianism before the era of logical analysis. Temple links matter, life, mind and spirit but insists at the same time on the historicity of the incarnation.\* It was this which made Christianity “the most avowedly materialist



of all the great religions”, for the coming of the Logos into the created world was seen as the fulfilment of God’s immanence. Rejecting any kenotic theory, Temple did not foresee the difficulties which philosophers and theologians were soon to discover.

Temple quickly put theology into practice as president of the workers’ education association, 1908-24, a lifelong concern for the underprivileged he shared with Frances Anson, whom he married in 1916. After four years as headmaster of Repton school (1910-14), Temple became rector of St James, Piccadilly, London, throwing himself with vigour into the mission of repentance and hope and also the life and liberty movement, which aimed at securing greater self-government for the Church of England. Temple’s hopes were partially fulfilled in the enabling act of 1919, which set up the church assembly.

From a canonry at Westminster, Temple was appointed bishop of Manchester in 1921, then archbishop of York in 1929, becoming archbishop of Canterbury from 1942 to 1944 – arguably the sharpest mind in that see since Anselm, and the most popular archbishop of modern times.

Temple was in the line of Anglican social thinkers running back through the Christian social union to F.D. Maurice. He combined an incarnational theology with an acute social conscience. He was a moderate, if idealistic, radical. Chairmanship of the Conference on Christian Politics, Eco-

nomics and Citizenship at Birmingham in 1924 was his first significant ecumenical foray. COPEC foreshadowed much of the thinking which came to legislative fruition in the “welfare state”\* (that phrase was popularized by Temple) created by Clement Attlee’s administration, 1945-50. Temple searched for “middle axioms”,\* i.e. statements which offer working guidelines between fundamental Christian theological statements and the complexities of both legislation and industrial problems. *Christianity and Social Order* is a foreshadowing of much social thinking in the era of consensus in Britain from 1945 to 1979. Freedom, fellowship and service were characteristics of the approach to the common good stated in an Anglican form at Malvern in 1941. A stress on corporate sin\* was learned from Reinhold Niebuhr.

Temple came into international ecumenical prominence at the Jerusalem missionary conference (1928): as drafter of the conference statement, he revealed extraordinary gifts of penetration and empathy that enabled him to synthesize diverse views. He was prominent at Lausanne in 1927, drafted the final statement at Oxford 1937, and was chairman of the Faith and Order conference at Edinburgh in 1937. It was there by 122 votes to 19 that the plans for a world council of churches were laid. Temple embodied the inevitable link between faith and action, both stemming from the absolute allegiance to Christ as Lord. At the first meeting of the provisional committee at Utrecht on 13 May 1938, Temple was elected chairman. His dream came true, not in 1941 as planned but after the cataclysm of war in 1948. It was in 1942 at his enthronement at Canterbury that Temple pointed to the “worldwide fellowship of Christians” stemming from missions as the “great new fact of our era”.

In England Temple dominated two decades, though disappointed at the follow-up to the Lambeth appeal of 1920 and at the failure of Lambeth 1930 to live up to its promise. Temple himself, though consistently backing the South India negotiations, became rather more “Catholic” on church order but must be given credit for Anglican initiatives, without which there might have been no religion-and-life weeks, unprece-

dented cooperation with Cardinal Hinsley, or a BCC inaugurated in 1942 with the inevitable sermon from Temple, who became president.

In the world of ecumenical scholarship Temple was a paradox. If his theology became unfashionable in the decades of Hitler and Barth, his devotional writings were widely read. *Readings in St John's Gospel* helped many, though it was out of key with critical scholarship. Temple also had the ear of students to an extraordinary degree, especially through the SCM, which was a vital ecumenical seedbed for Christian leaders. Many trace the renewal of Christian apologetics among students to the Oxford mission of 1931 led by Temple. His biographer recalls 3000 student voices at that mission whispering the words of the hymn "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross". Perhaps that was his greatest hour. Temple's death was a great shock to a war-stricken nation.

JOHN MUNSEY TURNER

- W. Temple, *Christianity and the State*, 1928
- *Christus Veritas*, 1924 ■ *Mens Creatrix*, 1917
- *Nature, Man and God*, 1934 ■ *Readings in St John's Gospel*, 1939, all Macmillan, London
- *Christianity and Social Order*, Harmondsworth, Shephard-Wolwyn & SPCK, 1942
- F.A. Ironmonger, *William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury: His Life and Letters*, London, Oxford UP, 1948
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- R.H. Preston, *A Future of Christian Ethics*, London, SCM Press, 1987, ch. 6
- R.H. Preston et al., *Archbishop William Temple: Issues in Church and Society Fifty Years On*, William Temple Foundation, 1994
- A.M. Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple*, London, Longmans, 1960
- A.M. Suggate, *William Temple and Christian Social Ethics Today*, Edinburgh, Clark, 1987
- A. Wilkinson, *Christian Socialism: Scott Holland to Tony Blair*, London, SCM Press, 1998, ch. 5.

## THEOLOGY, AFRICAN

AFRICAN THEOLOGY is the articulation of the Christian faith\* by African theologians or Christians who try to understand this faith within the context of their history\* and culture,\* taking into consideration also the contemporary issues of life. They look at it through reading and understanding of the

Bible, reflecting a rich cultural heritage that has evolved over many generations. They celebrate it in their own liturgies and express it through art, drama and song.

The phrase "African theology" is used here to refer to the contemporary developments in theology, although it could also include the impressive theological developments of the early church in North Africa and Egypt by the likes of Augustine of Hippo, Cyprian of Carthage and Athanasius of Alexandria. The ancient church in Ethiopia developed also its own theological tradition.

One of the problems of doing theology in Africa concerns language. Africa has some 2000 languages, not counting dialects, which means that one must use a foreign language, chiefly English or French, to communicate beyond one's own ethnic and language setting. Theologizing in a foreign language imposes limitations. In using an indigenous language that has been exposed to Christianity for perhaps only 50 or 100 years, the theologian faces the question of how far it can fully assimilate, sustain and articulate Christian concepts that have no immediate parallels in indigenous concepts. For example, how does one talk about the Trinity, the incarnation, transubstantiation, or the programme of the WCC on a Just, Participatory and Sustainable Society\*?

## SOURCES OF THEOLOGY IN AFRICA

The first and foremost source is the *Bible*, of which there were in 2001 about 660 translations in African languages. The second is *Christian heritage*, which has come down the centuries through Hebrew, Greek, Roman and later European and American cultures. This heritage has been wrapped in the dresses of those cultures, and it is rich in spirituality, theological concepts, art, music, liturgies, symbols, etc. all of which (depending on their critical use) have a contribution to make to African theology.

The third source is *African culture*, particularly African religion, world-view and values. African religion is profoundly monotheistic, at many points resembling the religion of the Jewish (Old) Testament, the proverbs and parables of Jesus. It has been the most influential force in shaping the African world-view and is still strong today,

coming to the fore especially in times of life crises. African religion is grounded on the conviction that God\* exists and is the Creator of all things. Missionaries did not introduce the notion of God to Africans; the main new element in their teaching was the naming of Jesus Christ.\* Nevertheless, the religious vocabulary used in the churches, the spirituality of the Christians and the translation of the Bible are all heavily coloured by African religion.

The fourth source is *African history*, which we primarily divide into pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods. Contemporary history includes rapid social, economic and political change, for better or for worse, with mass media, modern technology and contact with other nations playing increasingly important roles.

### MAIN ISSUES IN AFRICAN THEOLOGY

African theology addresses all aspects of the Christian faith, but here we mention only the items which receive the most attention.

*African religion and the Christian faith.* The encounter between these two began at the very moment the first missionaries preached the gospel in Africa. Is the God described in the Bible the same God who is acknowledged and worshipped in African religion? African theologians themselves generally answer yes, affirming that God's revelation is not limited to the biblical record (see Matt. 5:17; Heb. 1:1-2).

Theologians go on to discuss ways in which the gospel comes to fulfill African religious longing and yearning. In turn, they ask what contributions African religion makes to the life of the church, e.g. in terms of sensitivity to the spiritual realities, harmony with and respect for nature\* and creation,\* and the evolving of relevant forms of liturgy\* and worship. Worship in African tradition utilizes the whole body through singing, dancing, clapping, yelling, shouting and moving rhythmically, so that the entire person (body and spirit) is rejoicing, giving thanks to God and calling upon God.

One of the central points of contact relates to African anthropology, since here the two religious traditions intimately rub shoulders. According to African religion, persons are a creature of God and are in re-

lation to God as child and parent. Many prayers of African religion address God as "Father"/"Mother" and refer to persons as God's children. This concept links persons to God and simultaneously separates them ontologically from God. At the same time, a person is part of creation and therefore finite in power, knowledge and duration of life. Each one depends ultimately on God, whatever one may achieve in life. It is God who creates, sustains and continually saves a person individually and humankind corporately. Each person is in relation with fellow persons and with nature at large. A basic understanding here is: "I am, because we are." This perspective relates horizontally to embrace the family, community and wider circles of human society, and nature at large. It also relates vertically towards God, to embrace the departed, the living, and those yet to be born. People acknowledge two dimensions of existence that dovetail with each other, forming a unity: the visible and the invisible, the physical and the spiritual. People are also aware of a mystical power that derives from God and fills the universe, being variously accessible to people and other creatures.

The growing consensus of African theology is that African religion has said yes to the gospel. The gospel has also said yes to African religion. Consequently, African theology is taking up this inter-religious dialogue seriously. Many theologians have done research in African religion to understand it better and to relate it to the Christian faith, including Harry Sawyerr (Sierra Leone), E. Bolaji Idowu (Nigeria), Engelbert Mveng (Cameroon), Vincent Mulago (Zaire), Gabriel Setiloane (South Africa), A.B.T. Byaruhanga-Akiiki (Uganda) and Joseph N.K. Mugambi (Kenya).

A few theologians, however, consider such a discussion a form of syncretism\* to be avoided. Failing to see any continuity between biblical and African religion, they tend to view dialogue with African religion as a return to heathenism.

*Christology.* African theology is giving an increasing variety of answers to the question of who Jesus Christ is. For example: in the theology of liberation in Southern Africa, Jesus Christ is described as the fighting God, the Liberator who is on the side of

the poor\* and oppressed. The footprints of Jesus in his suffering appeared during the apartheid era in the torture chambers, imprisonments, beatings and cries of the oppressed. Africans were being driven to the cross of Jesus, to the God who hears the cries of the oppressed, and not to the God of the oppressor.

Some theologians, like Mveng and Anselme Titianma Sanon, see Jesus Christ as the Master of initiation because he has gone through the main stages of life according to African tradition and has survived death, the hardest of them all (see **resurrection**). Jesus Christ has risen again and therefore has the qualifications to be Friend-Master, to show us the way of life in its fullness and to win our respect, confidence and love.

In different ways in African Christianity, people know Jesus Christ as the great Chief, the Ancestor, the Healer, the One who exorcises troublesome spirits, the One who protects them against magic and sorcery, and the One who enables childless women to bear.

This healing image of Jesus Christ comes out particularly in the African Independent Churches\* (AIC), many of which emphasize healing. This movement started in the early 19th century and now is found in almost every African country (10,500 separate AICs in 2001). For various reasons they have separated from historic or mission churches and from one another or have arisen totally autonomously. In general the movement is in reaction to what local Christians perceive as unsatisfactory theology and practices of the historic churches, which have to some extent failed to capture the hearts of Africans.

*Women's theology.* As they do in all countries of the world, women constitute the majority in the church in Africa. Power, however, is in the hands of men, a form of injustice that African women are beginning to recognize. A shrillness is growing in women's theological voices. Mercy Amba Oduyoye, for example, on the basis of the Genesis creation story, emphasizes creation and the continuity of human life in the womb of the woman. In 1989 the first convocation of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians was held in Accra, Ghana, bringing together 65 participants. This has been followed by two further meet-

ings, the first in 1996 in Nairobi on transforming power, and the second in 2002 in Addis Ababa on "Sex, Stigma and HIV/AIDS: African Women Challenging Religion, Culture and Social Practices".

*The theology of liberation.* This theology was prevalent in Southern Africa during the apartheid\* era (up to 1994), where oppression was rampant and the minority European settlers denied Africans their human rights. Among the African theologians of liberation are Desmond Tutu, Simon Maimela, Itumeleng J. Mosala, Zephaniah Kameeta and Takatso A. Mofokeng. The first major book on the subject was published in 1972, which the South African government banned before it could be put on the shelves. A year later it was published in London and New York as *Black Theology: The South African Voice*, edited by Basil Moore, an Englishman. In this book of essays, one hears the cry of the oppressed "in revolt against the spiritual enslavement of African people... It is a theology of the oppressed, by the oppressed, for the liberation of the oppressed."

The Kairos document\* appeared in 1985, produced by a number of theologians, both African and settlers. The document took up the issues of liberation theology and exposed the false theology of the state, which had justified the violence of the racist government against Africans under the guise of keeping law and order. The document identifies God as being on the side of the oppressed people and urges Christians to stand against oppression. South Africa gained majority rule in 1994, with Nelson Mandela as its first African president.

*Church and state.* The relation between church and state\* is a major concern in many areas. For example, in the formerly socialist countries of Ethiopia, Angola and Mozambique, the freedom of the church was to a certain degree curtailed, and the state was committed to an ideology of atheism.\* But with the collapse of socialist and communist ideology in these and other countries, religious freedom was restored, and atheism has vanished like dew before the morning sun. In predominantly Muslim countries like Egypt, Sudan and others in the northern one-third of Africa, the church has little freedom, and Christians sometimes live under

pressure, if not outright persecution. Large-scale enslavement of African peoples by the Arab immigrants is reported in the Sudan and elsewhere, where also Islamic law (sharia) is enforced upon all inhabitants. Many African countries have been or still are under military regimes. Here too, situations of conflict arise, and churches have sometimes been faced with difficulties, as was the case in Uganda during the regime of Idi Amin (1971-79). Most African Christians, however, live in countries where the state and the church enjoy a high degree of cooperation in various ways, as for example in South Africa today, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Other themes in African theology include biblical studies and hermeneutics, the nature and mission of the church, the liturgical life of the church, Christian art and drama, the ecumenical movement, the church itself and the relation between human life and nature at large.

## CONCLUSION

African theology is in its early stage. Much of it is expressed orally, through art, singing, sermons and prayers. Written theology is the privilege of a small number of theologians, who are often forced to write in languages not native to them. But African theology is raising issues which are relevant to the living situation of the church in Africa. At the same time, it is in touch with theologies from other parts of the world.

There was an explosion of Christianity in Africa in the 20th century, and African theology began to take shape in that process of rapid expansion. Whereas there were only 10 million Christians in Africa in 1900 (9% of the total population), by the year 2000 the number had reached some 380 million, or 48% of the total population. Within 100 years the southern two-thirds of Africa became predominantly Christian, while the northern one-third remained predominantly Muslim. Since about 1965, African theology in the form of books and articles has also become much more widespread. Theology is thus at a very exciting period in the history of Christianity in Africa.

See also **anthropology, African**.

JOHN S. MBITI

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## THEOLOGY, ASIAN

A LIVING theology is one that addresses the questions, aspirations and sufferings of a people in a given situation. When Asian churches begin to relate their theology to their context, there emerges a distinctive Asian theology. In the past the Asian churches, by and large a product of Western missions, were content with repeating, without reflection, the confessions of faith evolved by the Western churches. A creative theology in Asia began to emerge in the 19th century when the churches started relating their faith to the questions and concerns peculiar to Asia. This theological encounter continues as the church faces new problems and challenges.

The relation between Christian faith and the major Asian religions continues to be a dominant theme of Asian theology. The world-views and doctrines of traditional religions exercise a profound influence in moulding the sensibilities of the people of Asia. In the days of aggressive evangelization and colonization, the missionaries were not prepared to see any value in Asian views. Most of them considered the religions in Asia to be discontinuous with Christian faith.

A new awareness of the spiritual values embedded in them surfaced as a result of the objective study of these religions and a closer contact with the followers of these faiths. Still basing their approach on a theological framework that drew a sharp distinction be-

tween Christ and religions, the missionary theologians began to interpret Christ as the fulfilment of the deepest yearnings in the religions of Asia. J.N. Farquhar's *The Crown of Hinduism* (1913) is perhaps the best-known expression of this view. During this period there were bold attempts on the part of Asian theologians to use concepts and doctrines of other faiths for the church's interpretative and apologetic task. The Hindu concept of *avatar* was used to interpret the Christian doctrine of incarnation,\* and that of *sat-chit-ananda* (being, consciousness, bliss) for explaining the doctrine of the Trinity.\* In all these, the superiority of Christian faith was affirmed but with a sympathetic, even if somewhat condescending, view of other faiths.

A new stage was set when Asian theologians like D.T. Niles (1908-70) acknowledged the incognito presence of Christ in Asia's history and religions long before the missionaries came to Asia. A cogent interpretation of this view is provided by P.D. Devanandan (*The Gospel and Renascent Hinduism*, 1959). Writing on the same theme, M.M. Thomas affirmed a more recognizable presence of Christ in renascent Hinduism, as the title of his influential *Acknowledged Christ of the Indian Renaissance* (1969) suggests.

In other parts of the region writers tried to integrate gospel and culture.\* Buddhist experience of nirvana and the reality of the kingdom of God\* were brought together by writers in Sri Lanka. Christ assumed a cultural face in China. Chinese Christ was the man who was also the Tao in the writings of Chang I-Ching (b.1871) and Chao Tzu-ch'en (1918-56). For Pandipeddi Chenchiah (1886-1959), an Indian theologian, Christ was the cosmic Christ, whose birth brought a new creative energy into the biosphere. An admirable work of this genre was Kazo Kitamori's *Theology of the Pain of God* (1946); its main theme of pain (*itami*) was very familiar to people in Japan, who had suffered much during the war.

Theology at this time emerged from an active interaction between the gospel and the religious philosophies of Asia. Concepts, doctrines and symbols of other religions were used freely and critically by Asian churches to deepen their experiences of

Christ and to interpret the Christian faith. With this there was a vigorous search for an Asian face of Christ, dismantling the foreignness of Christianity. Profound was their recognition that the Christ reality was greater than formal Christianity and that the Christ was present but unacknowledged in the religions and cultures of Asia.

A deeper awareness of this position is expressed in attempts at interfaith dialogue which the WCC's dialogue programme has pursued with vigour. A valuable contribution was made by its first director, S.J. Samartha; his attempt, in *One Christ, Many Religions* (1991), to conceive a revised Christology free of the problems of exclusivism and superiority is perhaps the fruit of a wider search by Christian thinkers in Asia.

The goal of interfaith dialogue should be a renewed community which allows space for different religions and cultural and ethnic identities to flourish. We need to mobilize the humanistic and liberative vision of religions in order to build a just and participatory community. Fundamentalism is the denial of the very essence of religion. At the same time, to ignore the reality of religion in the lives of the poor is to ignore their basic struggle.

A second stream in Asian Christian theology stemmed from the churches' encounter with the socio-political realities of their context. Early beginnings of this emphasis are found in the life and writings of Toyohiko Kagawa (1888-1960) of Japan. He questioned the "spatially extensive evangelism" and attempted to relate the gospel to the social realities of his people, especially to the labour situation in Japan. In reflecting on the experience of colonialism and the freedom movements, many Asian thinkers discovered a vital link between the gospel and the aspirations of their people for a freer and better social and political order. A profound analysis of the Asian revolution from the perspective of the gospel is provided by M.M. Thomas in a number of his writings. According to him, colonization, though ruthless and exploitative, has been the bearer of an ambiguous process of humanization in Asian societies, especially through technology and industry, and liberal ideas of freedom\* and justice.\* Christ, the promise of a new humanity, he argued, should be

confessed as the transforming and judging presence of God.\*

The East Asia Christian Conference provided the forum for Asian thinkers to reflect more deeply on the events of the gospel in the social and cultural contexts of Asia. They affirmed that confessing faith in Christ meant constructive participation in revolution and in the building of nations based on justice and freedom. The methodology governing their theology is that of contextualization (see **inculturation; theology, contextual**). The late Shoki Coe of Taiwan, who contributed significantly to the growth of Asian theology, indicated that this process is a dynamic interaction between the text and the context. Contextual theologians also proposed a critical Asian principle as a method for doing theology in their situation: the principle "seeks to identify what is distinctively Asian and uses this distinctiveness as a critical principle of judgment on matters dealing with the life and mission of the Christian community, theology, and theological education in Asia" (Nacpil). The contextual approach to theology has brought together the religio-cultural and socio-political streams.

In recent years, the theme "people"\* has assumed a special significance in the discussions of Asian theology. Korean theologians focused their attention on *minjung* (see **theology, minjung**), Indian theologians have responded to the suffering of the dalits, traditionally known as untouchables, who have been oppressed by the caste system, and in many countries there is a new recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples and their search for selfhood. The irruption of people's histories and cultures into Asian consciousness has brought a critique of the elite-oriented theologies and philosophies of religion.

The *minjung* and other sections of the marginalized (not all of whom are Christians) are the theological actors or subjects of theology in the measure in which they struggle against domination. The place of theology therefore is the human community striving for liberation\* and life, in which the Spirit is at work. The theology and spirituality of *minjung*, dalits and indigenous people expresses itself in their stories – mostly unwritten, articulated in symbols, folk songs, poems, myths, dance and celebration.

The method of doing theology with people's symbols and images holds great promise. Indications are that if this project is pursued, there will emerge a distinct voice in theology that comes out of the deepest yearnings of the people of Asia. Choan-Seng Song of Taiwan has made important contributions in this area, as have Kosuke Koyama and Masao Takenaka.

Even when the end product and the mode of theologizing are new, the presuppositions of this theology may raise a serious challenge to traditional formulations on the scriptures, revelation\* and Christology.

The tendency of modern theology is to subsume all the new questions of theology under a framework which can be described as "Christocentric universalism". Too much weight is put on this paradigm. Asian theologians seem to suggest that a Spirit-filled theology that respects the integrity of spiritual vision and values of people in their own tradition and culture has to evolve. The characteristic posture of the Spirit is openness and an ability to transcend limits. The affirmation of solidarity of the poor is the Spirit's creative activity. To discern the Spirit's working, we need "Christic" sensitivity, but it can never be wholly interpreted by Christomonism.

A statement of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians\* poses this challenge in these words: "Could a live historical process and spiritual quest be ruled for ever by fixed texts born of particular limited experiences of one ancient group of people? Is it not the witness of the scriptures that God is present not in books but among the people and in their struggles for justice and dignity?" The same statement concludes: "The task of theology is to recognize the embodiments of the Word in the history of freedom; the passion of Jesus in the struggles of the people; and the resurrection in their growing emancipation and fellowship" (*Third World Theologies: Commonalities and Divergences*, 1990, 234).

This is people's theology; this is Asian theology.

K.C. ABRAHAM

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## THEOLOGY, BLACK

BLACK THEOLOGY is the attempt of black people to articulate their faith as Christians out of their experience of material and racial discrimination at the hands of white fellow Christians. Black theology insists on foregrounding the adjective “black” for at least four broad reasons: (1) It highlights the suggestion that Christian theology is seldom a neutral and colour-blind affair, even if this fact is not openly admitted. Many proponents of black theology argue that what often poses as neutral, universal and biblical Christian theology is, in terms of its categories, imagery and consequences, effectively nothing but white theology. (2) Whereas blackness has become the basic imagery of evil and badness, black theology deliberately seeks to embrace rather than flee from this very category and to do so in its own positive terms, thus giving it new life and new meaning. (3) The foregrounding of blackness also implies a challenge to and dissatisfaction with white theology, even though the latter seldom recognizes its own biases. (4) “Black” qualifying theology is not about pigmentation of the skin but is about black experience, out of which the reflection on God’s word emerges. The black experience in practical terms has been synonymous with poverty, ignorance, terror, insult, exploitation by others, relegation to the periphery of humankind. By contrast, “white” is the symbol of lordship, mastery of history and of the gospel, power, being automatic heirs of the chief seats in the great parliament of humanity. The difference between white and black experience is thus of epistemological relevance. Unlike black experience, white experience has been accommodated to, if not co-opted by, the white power structures and ideology with its hallmarks of racism, capitalism, white nationalism (e.g. Afrikaner nationalism) and the ideology of national security.

In so far as these hallmarks of white experience are functional factors of domination, they become a formative factor in the articulation of black consciousness and of black theology. The point to underline is that the elements of the power structure are not only political and social but also theological issues because they relate to the integrity of the gospel, to the credibility of the Christian and church witness in the world and to the confession of Jesus as Christ and Lord. Therefore, four key words of black theology are “idolatry”, “heresy”, “sin” and “blasphemy”, which are used in its analysis of the white power structure. By the same token, there is a truth claim in the black experience which has been described as the epistemological privilege of the poor,\* i.e. truth is often suppressed in the context of oppression and may therefore be more accessible to the oppressed.

Black theology is found among blacks of the USA and of Southern Africa, particularly the Republic of South Africa. Its proponents include James H. Cone, Gayraud Wilmore and Cornel West from the USA and Itumeleng J. Mosala, Takatso Mofokeng, Mokgethi Motlhabi, Simon Maimela and Allan Boesak from the Republic of South Africa. The newer generation of black theologians includes Dwight Hopkins and Vincent Winbush in the USA and Tinyiko Maluleke, Daryl Balia and Russel Botman in South Africa.

Black theology suggests an epistemological break with traditional theology. In Western theology it is often assumed that ideas such as revelation, reason, nature and church doctrines are the points of departure. On the contrary, black theology in the tradition of liberation theology chooses for its starting point social relations, particularly the cry of the oppressed. Black theology’s epistemology is from below and is counter-hegemonic, rejecting any assumption that all people, irrespective of experience, can perceive reality in the same way and therefore reflect theologically in the same way. Because social relations have been identified as the starting point of theologizing, social analysis is an important tool of theology. Social analysis is “a mediation between the black experiences and the theological reformulation”, attempting to clarify contrasting

experiences. In this regard structural analysis is seen as being fully as important as attitudinal analysis. Structural analysis interprets the black experience with reference to a global structure, which is closely related to European expansion. The black experience is explained in terms of the inter-relation between economy and the symbolic structure of society. Boesak develops this point theologically as follows: "Racism is an ideology of racial domination that incorporates beliefs in the cultural or inherent biological inferiority of a particular ethnos. It uses such beliefs to justify and prescribe unequal treatment of that group. In other words, racism is not merely attitudinal but structural. It is not merely a vague feeling of racial superiority, but a system of domination, furnished with social, political and economic structures of domination" (*Black and Reformed*, 110-11). In that light repentance must include the structural change of the society so as to overcome the negative black experience, especially racism.\*

Some of the emphases in black theology's insisting on perspectives from below have borrowed from the Marxist theory of knowledge even to the point of using Marxist terminology. Unlike Marxism, however, black theology insists on the cultural creativity of the oppressed. Although opponents of black theology criticize it for being simply politics using a vocabulary of religion and theology, it actually addresses a fundamental dysfunction in spiritual life. It promotes speaking responsibly about God in the modern world, social relations based on love and justice, a sense of Christian identity which eschews alienation and upholds true humanness, and making real the gospel of hope, which is threatened by the idols which are death-dealing and oppressive (i.e. political ideologies such as racism, economic theories such as capitalism\*).

The emphases of black theology include the following: creation and faith, pointing to the God who created all humanity in his own image and likeness and to the black person's identity in that creation\* in the company of fellow believers; and wholeness of life, so that politics, economics and all of human life are seen to be based on relations with God. Because God meets humankind with his gifts, blacks and whites can live in a

community in which equality and justice are central values.

The similarity between black theologies from the USA and Southern Africa leads some to suggest that the former influenced the latter or even that the latter derives from the former. Influences may not be denied, but South African black theology is rooted in its own context. Born out of university student politics and racially divided denominational caucuses and seminaries, South African black theology is distinct from its North American counterpart, even as it is influenced by it. In the new century, black theology faces the challenges of the globalization of capital and all its consequences and the ending of the cold war, which provided the context for all liberation theologies, including feminist theology.

See also **theology, liberation.**

JOHN S. POBEE and TINYIKO MALULEKE

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## THEOLOGY BY THE PEOPLE

THE PHRASE "theology by the people" has been associated with the WCC since the Vancouver assembly (1983), which made it a major thrust of the Programme on Theological Education and, to some extent, of the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development. The phrase continues the emphasis of the earlier focus on "ministry by the people of God".

These slogans arise from the re-discovery of the church as the people of God. Based perhaps on Ignatius's often-quoted statement – "Where the bishop is, there is the church" (i.e. the bishop guarantees the harmony of the people of God when they are gathered around him in eucharistic celebration) – an increasing clericalization characterized the church over the centuries. It did not take seriously enough the place of the people – i.e. all who are united to God and one another by faith\* and baptism.\*

Two recent documents have helped to elevate the idea of the people of God: *Lumen Gentium* (1964, esp. para. 2), from the Second Vatican Council,\* and the WCC's Faith and Order document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry\** (1982). These documents reflect a new sensitivity to the strand of biblical tradition represented by 1 Pet. 2:9 – that the church is "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light". All the faithful, not only specialist theologians and the clergy, are called to give an account of the faith and to exercise ministry in God's name on behalf of the world. Thus the equipping of the whole people of God\* to exercise ministry has been a particular concern of the ecumenical movement.

There is a continuing debate on who the people are in the phrase "theology by the people". Some have used it in the sense of the whole people of God, i.e. all the baptized, all Christians. Others use "people" to mean the poor, oppressed, marginalized and suffering (see **theology, minjung**). In Latin America, "people" is used in a still more specialized sense of the ones in whom popular power is constituted and established as the collective will.

Theology has long been the preserve of the specialist. In a scholarly way it articulates the revelation of God and a holistic Christocentric world-view. In the hands of theologians, the revelation of God thus came to be seen as first and foremost a body of doctrines.

The starting point of talk about God, however, should be the gospel, the good news. Theology is not to be erudition for its own sake but a clarifying of the word of God\* so that it can be experienced by peo-

ple as good news. Theology by the people recalls theologians and others to a missiological emphasis. People's hopes and fears must be addressed by theologians, from within a community of faith.

The preposition "by" in this phrase, while not denying that the source of theology is the word of God, suggests that the perceptions, hopes and fears of the ordinary people are also an important factor in the theological task and that the specialist must speak only from the midst of the people, the poor, who seek God's salvation.\* We must see that "poor people are the very origin of the theological discussions".

The phrase "theology by the people" carries some assumptions and implications. First, if holy scripture\* is the source of revelation, it is also claimed that people's experiences can be a source of revelation. While a relevant and authentic theology may reflect a particular temporal horizon, it must retain the biblical as well as the transcendental dimensions as a framework of reference.

Second, since theology is concerned with good news, it cannot only be an intellectual activity; it must involve a life-style which acts to bring good news to the poor, makes sacrifices on behalf of the poor and the weak, in whom Christ meets people (Matt. 25:31-46). Theological education must foster commitment to the values of the kingdom within its students. The vitality of theology may be judged largely by its relevance to the life and tasks of the people of God.\* Theology should seek to motivate the people of God and through them all humanity to be redemptively involved in the world. Those in theological training must thus be involved in the realities of daily life of the people and society in which they live.

Third, people have an ecclesiological significance (see **church**). The poor are fully part of the Body of Christ and must be respected and given due recognition. Teaching the word of God and encouraging one another become community tasks that always must aim at human transformation. For that very reason dialogue becomes a mark of theology by the people.

Fourth, if the theological task of the church belongs to the whole people of God, then traditional elitist theological education practices are inadequate for the task. Alter-

nate models of theological education are needed, especially theological education by extension.

See also **church base communities, poor.**

JOHN S. POBEE

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## THEOLOGY, CONTEXTUAL

MANY PEOPLE have viewed theology as the queen of the sciences, a discipline to be studied with the same methods (philological, historical, psychological, sociological, philosophical, etc.) as any other scientific subject in the humanities. And especially as it has been practised in the North, theology has often been based on a universalism which holds that every human being, from whatever region, class or circumstance, may perceive reality and reflect theologically in the same way.

In recent times there has been some questioning of these assumptions, particularly by theologians from the South, who have challenged the idea of a single, uniform social reality in one place, much less at a universal level. Besides, there is new awareness that theology's formative factors include experience, God's self-exposure (see **revelation**), scripture,\* Tradition,\* culture\* and reason. Given the diverse facts of experience and culture, there can never be only one theology; any particular theological construct represents the confluence of a number of variables, some of which depend crucially on the life context of those doing the theology. Furthermore, given the Christian task of proclaiming the Christ-event as the good news in a particular context, Christian theology may not start simply from a body of church doctrines, lest it become insensitive to the situation around it, the context from which it speaks. Its point of departure should be the specific social relations, the hopes and fears of people – the particular

context into which the gospel must enter. For precisely this reason social analysis is a vital aspect of contextual theology. Liberation theology\* of Latin America thus has sometimes used Marxist critique as a tool for social analysis.

The word "context" and its cognates "contextuality" and "contextualization" were thrust into the centre of theological debates by the work of the Theological Education Fund, a service of the WCC's Commission on World Mission and Evangelism. "Context" means the interpenetration of subject and object, signalling the willingness and concern to live with specifics rather than generalities, particulars rather than universals. According to Shoki Coe, "By contextuality we mean the wrestling with God's word in such a way that the power of the incarnation, which is the divine form of contextualization, can enable us to follow his steps to contextualize" (*Theological Education*, 11, 1974).

Contextual theology, then, represents a declaration for relativities in theology (though not a doctrinaire relativism). Second, it signals that in a Bible study (as in chemistry), the inductive method at best yields probabilities, not necessities. Contextual theology is concerned to bring together faith and life, the Bible and one's respective context and the different ways in which people's context influences their understanding or appreciation of the Bible. Thus contextual theology seeks to direct attention to the task of communicating the gospel in terms of the realities of the cultures with which the church is involved. Collectively, contextual theologies – encompassing cultural theology, ecological theology, feminist theology, liberation theology, narrative theology – are wide-ranging and diverse.

Contextualization has become a slogan of third-world theology, referring to a kind of theology which starts from the problems of the community and attempts to formulate the Christian message accordingly. Contextual theology thus not unexpectedly often reads like a programme, a crusade rather than a gospel.

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■ R.O. Costa ed., *One Faith, Many Cultures: Inculturation, Indigenization and Contextualization*, Maryknoll NY, Orbis, 1988 ■ V. Donovan, *Christianity Rediscovered*, London,

SCM Press, 1982 ■ *Learning in Context: The Search for Innovative Patterns in Theological Education*, London, New Life, 1973 ■ R. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, London, SCM Press, 1985 ■ R. Schreiter, *The New Catholicity: Theology between the Global and the Local*, Maryknoll NY, Orbis, 1997 ■ A. Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation*, London, Chapman, 1988.

## THEOLOGY, ECUMENICAL

THEOLOGY begins when a believer becomes conscious of his or her faith\* and finds it necessary to reflect upon it mainly for reasons of communication. Theology is therefore a necessity for the transmission of the faith, for the sharing of the experience of belief, for the edification of the community of believers.

Within the Christian community, theology has always been present in the preaching of the good news, in the confession of faith and in liturgical prayer. From the very start, one of the main concerns in the Christian community has been maintaining the unity\* of the church,\* expressed in the confession of the one faith. This unity has always been endangered by the difficult theological problem of announcing the good news of Jesus Christ\* in the context of ever-new contemporary challenges. Theology is therefore not only the private reflection of believers upon their individual faith but the concern of the church as a community constantly striving to express its faith in a manner which preserves the shared experience of God by the witnesses of all times from the apostles onward and which guards against deviations affecting the truth of God and the salvation\* offered by God.\* This expressing and preserving is what councils (see **ecumenical councils**) sought to achieve. They have thus contributed to the development of an ecclesial theology, a theology belonging to the church.

In their effort to maintain the purity of the apostolic faith (i.e. in doing church theology), Christians have been conscious of acting, thinking, debating and preaching in the light of Christ's words about the "Spirit of truth" who "will guide you into all the truth" (John 16:13; see **Holy Spirit**). Church history is nevertheless full of examples of failure to achieve unanimity in the one Spirit

who testifies to Jesus Christ (John 15:26); as confessions and confessionism developed, theology tended to become defensive and often divisive (see **schism**).

This divisive character of theology springs from different roots. The most obvious cause is the difficulty which constantly arises among Christians about the interpretation of revelation\* as witnessed to by the scriptures and the apostles.

There are also dangers inherent in "private" theology, i.e. an individualistic reflection pursued in isolation from the community of the church. This practice often begets a tendency to single out one aspect of the revealed mystery and to systematize the whole in the light of this over-emphasized aspect. This form of divisiveness is due to the human temptation to substitute one's own private spirit for the Holy Spirit.

Another form of divisive theology springs from the temptation to use theology and the church of God for non-theological ends, such as political domination or imperialism, which arises from the human tendency to self-assertiveness, misuse of power and authoritarianism. This approach tends to substitute the spirit of this world for the Holy Spirit.

Theology also tends to become divisive when it consists in a pious conservatism which misinterprets tradition\* to mean a rigid adherence to past formulas, with a total failure to be attentive to history\* as a dynamic process. This attitude leads to a blindness to the signs of the times and encourages defensive, if not aggressive, theology. The church in this perspective is seen as free from any responsibility for the world.

The reaction to such theology, however, can be just as divisive in its own tendency to identify theology with the immediate, narrow historical context. This reaction may lead to a Christology which loses sight of the full implications of the incarnation\* and the announcement of the coming of the kingdom.\* Christ's message becomes purely human or rather humanistic in the negative limiting sense. The transformation of humanity through its assumption by the second person of the Trinity\* tends to disappear, and theology becomes yet one more political ideology.\*

In so far as the ecumenical movement is a reaction against a passive, complacent or

even self-righteous acceptance of divisions among Christians, its ultimate goal is the reunion of all in one eucharistic community – the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church. And because the ecumenical movement necessarily involves theology, it is an invitation to react against all forms of divisive theology and to recover a theology of unity, a theology of the church.

In this context, unity certainly does not mean uniformity. Conciliar unanimity, the unity in the one Spirit, should not be confused with generally imposed conformity. When Paul says that “all of you are one in Christ Jesus”, after stating that “there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female” (Gal. 3:28), he does not mean that Christians are an indistinct, neutral, sexless company of beings united in a kind of middle-of-the-road compromise, but that the categories enumerated do not represent a limiting characterization of each; they are the expression of a unity in diversity.

Does this mean that ecumenical theology consists simply in placing side by side diverse, sometimes contradictory, if not conflicting, expressions of faith in Jesus Christ and declaring that their coexistence is legitimate? Such a form of pluralism\* would not be conducive to the unity in the one Spirit, any more than would authoritarian uniformity. Theology, as a necessary means of communication, especially with a view to re-establishing broken unity, necessarily implies finding out the meaning that each gives to the same words.

After a period of confrontation, of comparing notes, of discovery of each other, Christians in the ecumenical movement have begun to work in a form which tends towards an ecumenical type of theology: in statements such as those produced by bilateral dialogues\* (both at an official level and among such less formal parties as the Dombes Group\*) or by multilateral work such as the *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* text or the explication of the Nicene Creed\* now published in book form by the WCC's Faith and Order commission as *Confessing the One Faith* (1991).

These statements or texts are attempts to say together what can be said to express agreement or convergence in particular on

divisive questions. And in some areas, the progress made in the last 50 years is extraordinary. However, the spirit of suspicion is not dead within the divided Christian communities; behind each word, suspicious readers tend to see the old “heresies”\* of the other party or parties. Yet it is not impossible to overcome these historical stumbling blocks and arrive at statements which represent doctrinal agreement and even consensus.\*

The difficulties of ecumenical theology lie elsewhere. First of all, it implies taking very seriously the words of the WCC basis\* about confessing “Jesus Christ as God and Saviour” and about the churches' vocation to glorify the Trinity.\* Taking these words seriously means that the sole criterion for ecumenical theology is God himself, Jesus Christ, image of the Father, bearer of the Spirit who reveals Christ and cries “Abba, Father” in the hearts of all the baptized.

Ecumenical theology implies total humility and intellectual honesty; it implies being prepared to be guided into all truth by the Spirit of truth (see John 16:13). This stance is a permanent crucifixion for the intellect. All philosophical categories are to be used critically, with constant awareness that none can comprehend or circumscribe the fullness of the mystery of Christ. Ecumenical theology implies readiness to be guided into recognizing the presence of the Truth, i.e. Christ himself, in forms of expression which may be unfamiliar or even alien at first sight. This is the purpose of Faith and Order's study on hermeneutics.\*

Perhaps the greatest difficulty for ecumenical theology is the fact that, although it may be relatively easy to agree about doctrinal problems in the light of a common acceptance of Jesus Christ as the sole criterion of truth, it is much harder to reach a common mind about the reading of the historical context in which theology and the gospel message, the good news of the kingdom, is to be expressed. Jesus Christ is “the same yesterday and today and forever” (Heb. 13:8), whereas the ethnic, cultural, political and regional conditions are so complex, conflictual and divisive as to represent an almost insuperable obstacle to an intellectually unified view. The permanent temptation is therefore either to be content with the formulations of the past and disregard the con-

crete conditions of today or to consider only these latter and disregard or reject the past, the formulations of our predecessors.

Ecumenical theology can be neither blind to the variety of contexts of the present world nor deaf to the witnesses of all times to the apostolic faith. It must be a theology of the church, the one church whose unity is as absolute as its diversity, in the image of the Holy Trinity; it must be worked out within the communion of saints\* and is therefore no mere intellectual exercise. It implies a permanent intensification of the relation of each one engaged in this process with the one Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit for the glory of the Father. In other words, it is prayerful and doxological, as well as intellectual. It is a permanent re-discovery of the church as the heart of the world, of creation.\* It is a renewed awareness of the church's responsibility for all, in that it exists "for the life of the world" (liturgies of St John Chrysostom and St Basil). For this reason the unity of the church is closely linked with the unity of humankind and no human problem can be disregarded by ecumenical theology.

See also **theology in the ecumenical movement**.

NICHOLAS LOSSKY

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## THEOLOGY, EUROPEAN

THEOLOGY in the years between the two great European wars was largely dominated by concerns arising out of the German intellec-

tual tradition. The war had hastened the decline of liberal Protestantism, with its confidence in the reconcilability of Christ and culture;\* and the rise of National Socialism in Germany prompted a strong reaction against any notion of a revelation apart from the word of God\* uttered in Jesus and witnessed to in scripture.\* This approach, associated above all with the name of Karl Barth, had great influence in all the European Protestant churches, though it certainly did not go without criticism (and had relatively little impact at first in the Anglo-Saxon world). Barth's own involvement in the ecumenical movement also meant that his insights and arguments were influential outside the Reformed tradition: the important Russian emigré theologian Georges Florovsky was able to integrate some of Barth's ideas into the framework of Orthodox thinking, combining Barth's insistence on revelation\* with a rather fuller sacramental theology.

Within the ecumenical movement itself, considerable tensions developed during the 1930s between those like Barth and Bonhoeffer who insisted on extremely rigorous standards of theological integrity, appropriate to the apocalyptic dimensions of the German struggle, and English and North American voices, more inclined to pragmatism and the maintenance of dialogue. The dominance of Barthian language and ideas in ecumenical circles is probably most marked in the era immediately after the 1939-45 war, in a period when the rhetoric of divine judgment and human impotence answered a deep need for a theology of corporate repentance.

Barth had derided theologians who admitted a concern with philosophy or with theories of history and culture. Related to, but distinct from, the Barthian influence was the radical New Testament exegesis of Rudolf Bultmann during this period, sharing Barth's scepticism about natural theology and rejecting any attempt to ground Christian faith in history, by using the philosophy of Martin Heidegger as a tool for re-interpreting the Lutheran commitment to justification\* by faith alone.

In the post-war years, theologians in Germany began increasingly to challenge the dominance of Barth's anti-philosophical and

Bultmann's anti-historical prescriptions, and the face of European theology changed substantially as various writers made attempts to re-claim history and culture. The group associated with the young Wolfhart Pannenberg at Munich in the early 1960s developed a theology in which history, including intelligible history, was itself revelation:\* the events of scriptural history were not to be seen as different in kind from other historical happenings, and the rationality of faith required a foundation in such authentic occurrences. Pannenberg went on to produce a very influential essay in Christology (*Jesus: God and Man*, 1964), and a programmatic study of the foundations of the philosophy of science in relation to Christian theology; and more recently he has written extensively on ethics and on the doctrine of human nature (*Anthropology in Theological Perspective*, 1983). He has not substantially deviated from his early commitment to a theology which can justify itself in the realm of "public" intellectual discourse, by criteria that are not special to theology alone.

A different path has been followed by Jürgen Moltmann. Closer to Barth, and more particularly to Bonhoeffer, he produced, again in the 1960s, an important book entitled *Theology of Hope*, conceived as a kind of dialogue with the Marxist philosophy of Ernst Bloch. Christian faith is presented as a living under the judgment of God's future: that judgment is made concrete in our history by the raising of the crucified Jesus from the dead, the sign and promise that God does not let go of the humanly lost, the oppressed and murdered, the despairing, the "godless". This theme is taken up in Moltmann's perhaps most influential book, *The Crucified God* (1972), where this account of Christian belief and identity is developed in close engagement with the unhealed and unhealable memory of the holocaust. Later works have discussed the theology of the church (*The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 1975) and have presented a novel and provocative version of Trinitarian theology, underlining the idea that God's very being is lived out in suffering and the transformation of suffering (*Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 1980). Most recently, major studies towards a theology of

the material environment have appeared (*God in Creation*, 1985).

Moltmann has maintained an important dialogue with political trends in Europe and, increasingly, in the third world as well. Although his passionate commitment to the centrality of Jesus in the process of making sense of the human and material world still echoes Barth, his wide-ranging and often speculative engagement with politics and philosophy sets him very definitely apart. He has been – as has Pannenberg – an influential presence in the ecumenical scene; both theologians have manifestly developed in unexpected and fresh directions through their participation in the work of the WCC from time to time, and it is no longer as true as it once was that so-called mainstream European theology is totally indifferent to movements in the rest of the Christian world.

Moltmann represents one flowering of the movement among several of Barth's pupils and followers towards a politically literate and critical theology. Helmut Gollwitzer, one of Barth's most loyal disciples, has been a prophetic voice on many issues in Germany over the last few decades: he and an older associate of Barth's, Ernst Wolf, were prominent in demanding a theological critique of German re-armament in the 1950s and in arguing that the possession of nuclear arms was a matter on which the church should make a "confessional" stand, as it had in opposition to the Third Reich. Gollwitzer has continued to write on the responsibilities of Europe to the poorer nations and on questions of war and peace and has directed several significant pieces of doctoral research into the borderlands of theology and politics.

Other figures in Germany have developed Barth's legacy in rather different ways. Less overtly political have been Eberhard Jüngel's monumental efforts in re-examining the meaning of the word "God"\* against the background of the history of European atheism\* (*God as Mystery of the World*, 1965): he shares with Moltmann the conviction that only the theology of the cross can meet atheist charges against an indifferent ruler of the cosmos and is equally prepared to speak of suffering in God, even of death "in God"; but he is less interested in ecclesiology than is Moltmann and has not developed the the-

ology of God's identification with the suffering into a programme of Christian solidarity with the oppressed to the same extent as Moltmann.

Roman Catholic theology in the 20th century in Europe offers a story of enormous upheavals and divergences. In the 1920s and 1930s, there were the beginnings of a new look at the theology of grace,\* searching for a more personal and less mechanical understanding. These explorations, however, were conducted more in the sphere of philosophy than in that of theology. The French Jesuit Joseph Maréchal is probably the most important figure here, and his work was to bear fruit by way of its considerable influence on the great Karl Rahner, whose mature writing in the post-war period was one of the major formative elements in the thinking of the Second Vatican Council. Rahner's thought pivots around the conviction that the structure of human being as knowing and loving is intrinsically oriented to the divine, so that God is to be encountered wherever humanity is becoming authentically human. Christ is less the great interruption of the order of the human world than the fulfilment of the human subject's potential for union with God. The possibilities opened up in Rahner's work for dialogue with other faiths and ideologies have been eagerly taken up by a good many Catholic theologians working in non-Christian contexts.

Rahner was also much influenced by the "new theology", or *théologie nouvelle*,\* which developed in France in the post-war years. This represented a re-discovery of early Christian thought, especially the Greek fathers, as a source of theological wisdom more fertile for the 20th century than the rigid categories of medieval scholasticism. Typical of this school (whose leading names were Jean Danilou, Henri de Lubac and Yves Congar) was a profound concern with the church\* as an organic, living community, rather than an institution with members and hierarchy standing in a quasi-legal relation. The *théologie nouvelle* greatly influenced many writers in the Anglican tradition and opened new possibilities for conversation with Eastern Orthodox Christians; the entry of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) into fuller involvement with international ecumenism, especially through the many bilat-

eral dialogues now in process, owes an incalculable debt to this theological movement.

The two decades following Vatican II saw an increasing variety in Roman Catholic theology in Europe (let alone other continents). Hans Urs von Balthasar produced several multi-volume works setting out an integral vision of theology as the contemplation of the paradoxical beauty of the work of God in Christ crucified; his concerns form a counterweight to those of Rahner, emphasizing the priority of revelation and repentance, as well as the central significance of the aesthetic dimension in religious understanding. Edward Schillebeeckx, after writing important studies on the philosophical foundations of faith, much marked by the critical social philosophy of the Frankfurt school, and immensely influential studies in the theology of the eucharist,\* has more recently published substantial books on Christology and some radical essays in the theology of Christian ministry, which have already had great impact outside the RCC itself (where they have been received with some hostility). Hans Küng, author of one of the earliest Catholic studies of Barth, has become well known as a critic of the present practice of papal authority and as a prolific writer on Christian themes for a general educated public. His views on ordained ministry are close to those of Schillebeeckx and have had similar reception inside and outside the Roman Catholic Church.

A fuller account of European theology would need to include more detail on the evolution of Eastern European thought, both Protestant and Orthodox. The experience of churches in a nominally socialist and often anti-religious atmosphere has generated some very different theological priorities and, in particular, the theology of the church as servant, popular in Romania in the 1970s, had an impact on the wider thought and language of the ecumenical movement. In recent years, some of the impetus towards a deeper engagement with the theological issues raised by the nuclear question has come from Eastern European churches, especially in Hungary and the former East Germany. Peace\* has become a major concern for many European theologians, and there now exist several international networks to further this discussion. The

WCC's 1981 public hearing "Before It's Too Late: The Challenge of Nuclear Disarmament" included some pertinent material (for example, an article by Schillebeeckx on theology and disarmament). A broader discussion has opened out of this in the WCC project on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation,\* picking up the themes which Moltmann and others had begun to treat connected with our theological perception of our belonging in the world, as both creatures and co-creatures. As European politics comes to be more and more attuned to "green" issues, there will be increasing need for this area to be explored by theologians.

A final area of development which must be noted is a growing theological sensitivity in Europe to the complex questions arising from the growth of multicultural social patterns. These questions range from considerations of the theology of work (in connection with the issues of migrant labour) to the urgent issue of racism and the need for a more consistent and far-reaching theological critique, to the problems associated with interfaith dialogue.\* It is a time of rapid movement and diversification in European theology; there seems little chance in the foreseeable future of any one systematic perspective emerging as dominant or claiming the kind of authority that was once attached to single names or schools.

See also **theology in the ecumenical movement**.

ROWAN D. WILLIAMS

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## THEOLOGY, FEMINIST

THE TERM "feminist theology" refers to a way of doing theology which takes seriously the criticism and conclusions of contemporary

feminism.\* It entails the self-conscious adoption of a critical feminist hermeneutic which is then applied to all the individual disciplines which together compose "theology". Under the heading of feminist theology is to be found work on scripture, church history, doctrine, philosophy of religion and ethics. It is a theological method, then, rather than a branch of theology or area of study. Nor does the term refer simply to theology "done by women", as some women theologians would not consider themselves feminists, nor would they adopt this methodology. Furthermore, if men can be feminists, then men can do feminist theology, in so far as it involves a critique of the patriarchal underpinning of church and theology. The overwhelming majority of feminist theologians, not surprisingly, are women.

While the term "feminist theology" is a modern one, it is by no means a new phenomenon, for women have consistently challenged patriarchal presuppositions about their role and status within the church. In more recent times the work of the 19th-century American feminists Elizabeth Cady Stanton (*The Women's Bible*) and Matilda Joslyn Gage (*Woman, Church and State*) can be seen as a precursor to the kind of material being produced by contemporary feminist theologians. The modern movement originated in the US during the 1960s, when scholars such as Mary Daly, Rosemary Radford Ruether and Judith Plaskow found an eager and receptive audience for their work. The development from these beginnings into an ecumenical and worldwide network of systematic scholarship has been rapid, which is no doubt because feminist theology has been experienced by so many Christian women and men to be a liberating force in their lives, enabling them to make sense of their previously un-named sense of unease experienced within their church community.

The ecclesiological dimension of this work has clear implications for the modern ecumenical movement. Not only has received historical tradition about patterns of ministry and leadership been challenged by feminist scholars (and has obvious relevance to the debate within some churches regarding the ordination of women\*), but there is also a creative re-visioning of what it is to be church.\* While the work of some feminist

theologians clearly reflects the concerns of the particular church community to which they belong, the overall tenor of this scholarship is ecumenical. The tendency has been to extend and create networks of shared experience, knowledge and community. This process has involved creative dialogue between women from different socio-political contexts; in the USA between white women and Afro-American women (who are developing what they term “womanist theology”); between Asian and African women and Western women, as well as dialogue between Christian women and women from other religious traditions, as is being encouraged by the WCC’s dialogue programme. Groups such as the women’s commission of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians\* clearly embody the guiding principle of modern ecumenism that “partners in dialogue should be free to define themselves”.

A central concern of feminist theology is the question of the use of language, which involves the twin issues of inclusive language\* and, perhaps more critically, the language chosen to present images of God. The recovery of female images of the divine from scripture and tradition has been a first stage. The second is to ask the question why male images and language have been deemed more appropriate. Whereas traditionally Western theology has used philosophy, and liberation theology has used sociology, it may be that feminist theology (in asking psychological questions about human self-understanding) will use psychology as one of its major conceptual tools. Do women and men experience, and make sense of, the world in different ways? If so, do they experience God differently too? Has Christian theology been the record of only male “faith seeking understanding”? What would a doctrine of God based on women’s experience be like? How far would this doctrine conform to what is generally perceived to be traditional Christian theology? And so on. Dealing with such questions leads contemporary feminist theology to be one of the most dynamic and creative fields of scholarship within theology today.

See also **women in church and society**.

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## THEOLOGY IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

THEOLOGICAL currents have been quite clearly shaping the ecumenical movement from its beginnings, and the emergence of the movement has been influencing developments in theology. Attempts to clarify the understanding of theology and its specific function in the movement are meagre. With diverse theological traditions and various methods of doing theology, one cannot easily reduce “theology” to a single definition, even a very general one. For the purposes of this article, however, I define “theology” as *that human activity by which the Christian community accounts for its faith*.\*

To unfold this general formula, note that (1) theology is human reflection and must be distinguished from divine revelation;\* (2) it takes place in the midst of, and is supported by, a Christian community of faith (see **church**), to which the theologian remains accountable; (3) it can develop into a specialized, academic discipline, but this form should not be considered the norm; (4) it is related to doctrine (dogma\*) but is not bound by it: as a living account, it responds to questions from within and from outside the community; and (5) theology is meaningful only on the basis of a commitment of faith, which is not itself the result of theological argument.

These mainly descriptive, clarifying terms point to a number of critical issues or relationships: the relationship of theology and doctrine/dogma, or the issue of the *magisterium* (i.e. teaching authority\*); the relationship between theology and philosophy/secular sciences, or the issue of *methodology*; and the relationship between theology and church, or the issue of the *freedom* and the autonomy of theology.

The ambiguities which have developed around the Christian usage of the term "theology" can be traced to its origins in classical Greece. The Greek compound word *theo-logia* (lit. God-talk) has carried a double meaning since its emergence in the 5th century before Christ. It refers to (1) the act of religious and cultic proclamation through which the myths about divine reality are being passed on, and (2) the critical, rational reflection about religious talk, subjecting its truth claims to certain basic rules.

The Christian reception\* of the term "theology" began to spread from the 3rd and 4th centuries onwards (Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea). It is an expression of the Christian victory over pagan religion and is much less the result of the Hellenization of Christianity. Thus, "theology" is used primarily to refer to proclamation, confession or doxology with regard to God\* (God-talk in the literal sense), which is distinguished from *oikonomia*, i.e. knowledge and teaching about the events of salvation.

The Eastern Orthodox understanding of theology remained close to this patristic tradition. In their view theology is experiential rather than intellectual; it is mystical rather than rational; it is "apophatic", i.e. it respects the inaccessibility of God to human knowledge and therefore speaks of God in negative terms. The appropriate setting for theology in this tradition has remained the monastic community.

The specifically Western, Roman understanding of theology emerged together with the development of the European university and the reception of Aristotelian philosophy (through Thomas Aquinas). Theology now became the methodical exposition of revealed truth through rational argument. Scholastic theology appropriated philosophical categories to unfold the sacred doctrine of the faith. In this tradition, theology and

the magisterium have remained closely linked.

The Reformation strove to liberate theology from the rigid, scholastic framework by recovering its existential character and by re-establishing its biblical framework. The specific profile of Protestant theology emerged only in the encounter with the Enlightenment and the rise of secular science and philosophy. Its characteristic features are the distinction between theology and religious praxis (spirituality), the distinction between historical and dogmatic theology, and the strong sense of autonomy vis-a-vis the institutional church. The academic community has become the general context for theological work.

### THEOLOGICAL INFLUENCES UPON THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

The theological profile of the ecumenical movement has undergone several significant changes. The period before the first world war was shaped by the theology of the evangelical revival, a dominating, non-intellectual lay theology. The WCC basis,\* confessing "the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour", comes out of this tradition and the concern to preserve and affirm the essential evangelical truths over against the spread of religious indifferentism. At the same time, the programme for the Edinburgh world missionary conference (1910) deliberately excluded questions of doctrine or theological issues which could become divisive. This non-denominational attitude is rooted in the affirmation of the Bible as the principal source and norm of Christian faith.

The second phase covered the period up to the years of crisis, 1929-32. It presents a very different profile. Ecumenically, this phase is marked by the emergence of the main branches of the ecumenical movement: the International Missionary Council\* (IMC), the World Alliance for Friendship through the Churches,\* and the two movements Faith and Order,\* Life and Work.\* Theologically, this period is shaped by a broad current of liberal theology with a strong sense of social responsibility (the so-called social gospel), on the one hand, and, on the other, by a more conservative, confessional theology of Lutheran or Anglo-Catholic persuasion. Strong tensions erupted

between different theological orientations at the conferences of Life and Work at Stockholm (1925) and of the International Missionary Council at Jerusalem (1928). Within this diversity, the influence of liberal Protestantism remained dominant.

The third phase lasted up to the end of the second world war. It bears the mark of the increasing influence of dialectical theology (Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Paul Tillich and others), known in the USA also as neo-orthodox theology (Reinhold Niebuhr). The main features which influenced the development of the ecumenical movement were the radical criticism of the liberal convictions of the preceding period and the struggle for the independence of theology from cultural patterns by affirming its dependence only on divine revelation through holy scripture.

Joined to this critical theological mood were a renewal of the tradition of Reformation theology, a fresh encounter with Orthodox and particularly with patristic theology through Russian theologians-in-exile (Nicolas Berdyaev, Sergius Bulgakov, Paul Evdokimov and Georges Florovsky) and, in all of this, a re-discovery of the integrity of the church in confrontation with secular ideologies.

Never before had a similar effort to draw academic theologians into ecumenical work been made as that undertaken by J.H. Oldham for the Oxford Life and Work conference in 1937. This conference and those of F&O (1937) and of the IMC (1938) came closest to developing a "recognized theology" of the ecumenical movement.

This close identification of the ecumenical movement with the prevailing theological orientation in theology faculties and seminaries continued through the fourth phase, until the early 1960s. Building on earlier foundations, the profound crisis of the world war was overcome by a re-discovery of the Bible and its relevance in opening up a new understanding of God's purposes in history\* ("salvation history"\*). Biblical theology became the common framework of orientation, affirming the unity of the Bible as the faithful and uncorrupted witness of God's history of salvation.\* Jesus Christ\* as the centre of the history of salvation also became the central point of reference for the interpretation of the entire Bible. This Chris-

tocentrism was accepted as the undisputed principle of theological orientation in the ecumenical movement, as can be seen in the various intensive theological studies carried out within the WCC during these years.

The years immediately after the war also saw a new departure in Roman Catholic theology, which in fact prepared the ground for the later openings towards the ecumenical movement through Vatican II.\* The so-called *théologie nouvelle* (1945-50), with its centre in France (Yves Congar, Henri de Lubac and others), broke through the limitations of scholasticism and appropriated the re-discovery of patristic theology and of the church (see "theology, new"). The *théologie nouvelle* built on the earlier RC movements for liturgical and for biblical renewal, as well as on the lay movement (Action catholique, since 1923). The encyclical *Humani Generis* (1950) put a provisional stop to this advance, but during these years contacts between theologians were established in France, the Netherlands and Germany, and their efforts bore fruit at Vatican II. This council marks the high point of theological influence on the church and the ecumenical movement.

The fifth phase began in the early 1960s. The close relationship between theology, Bible and church began to break up. The "systematic theologies" of Barth, Tillich, Niebuhr and others, which had formed the minds of a whole generation of ecumenical leaders, were slowly losing their dominating influence. Just as the Montreal F&O conference (1963) marked the crisis of "biblical theology", so the 1966 Geneva conference on Church and Society marked the re-discovery of the prophetic tradition of theology by discerning the signs of God's "revolutionary" action in history.

The search for a relevant, living theology (e.g. black, political, liberation) increasingly began to influence the ecumenical agenda. The advocates of an inductive, dialogic way of "doing theology" were challenging classical deductive approaches. Since the early 1970s "contextualization" has become the focus of this new theological orientation in the ecumenical movement (see **theology, contextual**). Contextualization accepts, but goes beyond, the claim that relevant theology must be rooted in a given historical and

cultural setting. "Authentic contextualization always is prophetic" (Shoki Coe). Growing out of a genuine encounter between gospel and culture,\* it aims to challenge and transform the given historical situation, guided by the vision of the reign of God. Around these convictions the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians,\* formed in 1976, has begun to influence the ecumenical movement.

While the inculturation\* of theology has been promoted mainly by academic theologians, contextualization challenges theology to re-insert itself into the life of the Christian community. Thus, the quest for new ways of doing theology leads to the new discussion about practical ecclesiology – that is, the appropriate community base from which a relevant and living theology can grow and to which it remains accountable. The formula "theology by the people" expresses this new theological consciousness.

While these developments have opened fresh perspectives for theology, the growing diversity which goes along with contextualization has become a challenge, if not a threat, to the inner coherence and unity of the ecumenical movement. While the movement certainly needs the challenge of a critical and prophetic theology which presses for radical renewal and a re-assessment of inherited tradition, it also needs the assurance of a theological coherence which provides for a sense of continuity. Therefore, the call by the 1983 WCC Vancouver assembly for a "vital and coherent theology" remains timely and appropriate.

### ECUMENICAL INFLUENCES ON THEOLOGY

Almost a century of the growing ecumenical movement has left its mark on theology – on its self-understanding and its praxis. Four significant themes show the influence of this movement upon theology.

First, *all theology must be rooted in the biblical witness*. This is not a new criterion for doing theology but has been recognized since the time of patristic theology. For a long time in the Western traditions, however, theology had accepted the constraints of philosophical logic. The ecumenical movement has helped to liberate theology from this captivity. The lively debates about biblical authority, the relationship between scrip-

ture\* and Tradition, as well as between context and tradition – in short, the whole hermeneutical debate from 1950 to 1980 – makes sense only as long as one accepts the criterion formulated above. Thus, the most notable ecumenical advance in theology has been the broad cooperation between theologians from different traditions in the area of biblical translation and interpretation (e.g. the French *Traduction oecuménique de la Bible* and the various series of biblical commentaries which are written and published ecumenically).

As the Bible is being liberated from dogmatic captivity, it is being read with new eyes and is beginning to challenge theology. Traditional theology does have a sharpened historical consciousness that the meaning of the Bible is only in the reading, and the reading itself is conditioned by the experience of a given, present reality. But traditional theology has difficulties in responding to the challenges that are emerging from the new readings of the Bible which are taking shape among Christian communities in Asia, Africa and Latin America. What these communities expect from theology is not primarily translation, analysis and interpretation of a biblical text but rather mediation between the biblical story and the life story of peoples today. Reading, in the sense of entering into dialogue with the Bible, is in itself an encounter of life with life. Theological reflection about different readings of the Bible thus becomes a paradigm for the ecumenical dialogue of cultures.

Second, *all theology is being shaped by, and is accountable to, the life of the Christian community*. There is no entirely autonomous theology. The validity of theology, in the end, depends on its spiritual reception\* in the community of faith. A fruit of the ecumenical movement and the inspiration it has provided for the re-discovery of the church is that the inseparable linkage between theology and the church is widely acknowledged. The dynamics of this relationship, however, give rise to passionate discussions within and between the different churches and traditions. The positions range from the classical RC stance, which subjects theology to the magisterium of the church, entrusted to the bishops, together with and under the pope, to the radical Protestant af-

firmation of the critical task of theology vis-a-vis the church, which presupposes that theology should be free from hierarchical control. There are many positions in between these two extremes; however, each position carries with it an implicit ecclesiology which one should openly acknowledge.

To affirm the linkage between theology and the life of the Christian community is to call in question the current separation of academic theology from spiritual praxis. In fact, one of the crucial ecumenical discoveries is that the first act of theology is doxological.

Third, *all theology is contextual; there is no universal theology*. This is perhaps the most far-reaching change in the perception of theology which the ecumenical movement has brought about. Over against a tradition of theology which has accepted a metaphysical, timeless framework of universally valid propositions, the ecumenical movement is requiring theology to face up to the radical historicity of human existence. Theology, as a human activity, is subjected to the limitations of space and time. The ecumenical movement makes us recognize that we live in the same space, on the same earth, but not in the same time. A universal theology presupposes simultaneity, which only oppression and domination could achieve.

The affirmation that there is no universal theology seems to undermine one of the very purposes of the ecumenical movement, i.e. to bring about the unity of the church by way of agreements on the essential truths of the Christian faith. To the extent that the intensive theological dialogues between the churches lead to growing agreement, even beyond the essential truth, it becomes apparent that quite a number of the original reasons for separation were non-theological, i.e. contextual. The same is true for those factors which prevent the churches from entering into full communion with one another.

Contextual theology is "local" theology. It is in danger at any time of falling into theological provincialism, of becoming self-sufficient. Confessionalism in theology is the result of an earlier process of contextualization which has turned rigid. The contextual character of theology calls for mutual accountability in dialogue, the proper mode of

doing theology in the ecumenical movement, over against the apologetic defensiveness of traditional theology.

Finally, *theology belongs to the whole people of God*.<sup>\*</sup> With this affirmation the survey has come full cycle. The ecumenical movement began in a setting which was characterized by an evangelical, non-academic understanding of theology; it was far removed both from the cathedral and from the faculty. Some generations later, theology had gained a prominent place in the ecumenical movement, as the theological experts and specialists were put in the centre of the ecumenical discussion. At the same time, the ecumenical movement began to re-discover and affirm the role of laypeople. Meanwhile, there is growing recognition that theology not only arises from the people but belongs to them – not a theology for the people, but a "theology by the people".<sup>\*</sup> There may be agreement that theology is the continuous effort to account for the faith in response to questions and challenges, but the decisive issues then become: Where do the challenges come from? What are valid questions which merit a theological response?

For a long time the questions and challenges which theology took up arose from within the intellectual, academic community. The ecumenical movement has helped in broadening the basis beyond the seminaries, colleges, faculties and professionals. The basis now includes groups and networks which are involved in theological reflection in the context of social and political conflicts. Important as this opening of the traditional understanding of theology may be, it is at best a half-way step towards implementing the programmatic stance of theology by the people.

What, then, is the role of academic theology in the ecumenical movement? It has the indispensable function of working out and enforcing the rules and the criteria which are needed to keep the dialogue between different contextual theologies alive, to keep theological activity authentic. Academic theology is not an end in itself; it is meant to serve and support the theology by the people. The partner and addressee of theological reflection should therefore be much less the non-believing, secular person than the person who is involved in the strug-

gle for human dignity. At this critical point the ecumenical movement most disturbs academic theology.

See also **Bible in the ecumenical movement; ideology; theology, ecumenical; Tradition and traditions.**

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## THEOLOGY, LIBERATION

ALTHOUGH "liberation"\* is a correct translation of the biblical vocabulary of salvation\*/redemption,\* only very recently has it found a significant place in theological vocabulary. Its basic concerns, however, have been present in different forms throughout Christian history. As a general designation, "liberation theology" refers to several contemporary expressions of theology which intend to reflect on the presence and power of God\* in the life and struggles of oppressed people (including women and certain races, classes and groups) in the light of God's redemptive purpose manifested in Jesus Christ.\*

Liberation theology, trying to be faithful at the same time to God's purpose of a fullness of life that encompasses and integrates economic, political, cultural and spiritual dimensions – in every one of which oppression can and does make itself felt – and paying also attention to the particular conditions of the context, has found expression as feminist, black, African or Asian theologies. The Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians\* has given expression both to the basic unity and to the distinctions and has provided a space for a fruitful dialogue and cooperation.

Liberation theology is generally identified with its Latin American expression, which has used this name since Rubem Alves's and Gustavo Gutiérrez's books of 1971 (Gutiérrez's book appeared in 1988 as *Theology of Liberation*). The origins of this theology in Latin America can be traced to the growing participation of Christian priests, ministers and laypeople in the life and struggles of the large poor majorities to overcome the condition of marginalization, poverty and oppression. Such participation generated a deep spiritual commitment to the poor,\* an awareness of the destructive nature of their conditions, an admiration for the solidarity, depth and resourcefulness which these people manifest and a need to understand better the social, economic and political structures which caused such situations.

Theologically, the biblical and theological developments in European theology emphasizing the historical nature of God's revelation\* and the relevance of fundamental biblical categories like justice,\* shalom and eschatology\* for social change influenced some younger theologians. For Roman Catholics, these influences found expression in Vatican II;\* for Protestants they were received through the ecumenical movement, specifically, the Church and Society commission of the WCC. Between 1960 and 1980 a number of theological essays explored methodological questions for the articulation of a Latin American liberation theology, including the use of social analysis and therefore the need for an interdisciplinary dialogue with the social sciences (Hugo Assmann, Julio de Santa Ana, Franz Hinkelammert, Joseph Comblin, Juan Luis Segundo),

the need for a hermeneutics\* in the use of scripture and Tradition (Segundo, Severino Croatto, Pablo Richard), the significance of praxis\* both as epistemological instrument and as verification principle (Gutiérrez, Clodovis Boff). But at the same time, certain theological themes demanded particular attention: Christology (Leonardo Boff, Jon Sobrino, Segundo, Raul Vidales), ecclesiology (Segundo, Sobrino, L. Boff), the doctrine of God, particularly the Trinity (Victorio Araya, L. Boff, Ronaldo Muñoz, J. Míguez). The series *Teología y Liberación*, published until the late 1980s, presented a number of texts that sought to respond more systematically to this need. Biblical scholarship addressing social, economic, ethical and political issues urgent in Latin American life, particularly from an exegetical and hermeneutical perspective, has developed significantly in the last two decades and found expression in the journal *Revista de Interpretación Bíblica Latinoamericana*, published since 1988.

The expansion of church base communities\* throughout Latin America has at the same time fed liberation theology and been an instrument of its propagation. It has also generated a spirituality expressed in song, prayer and liturgical and sacramental renewal which is essential to an understanding of liberation theology.

The Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has issued two instructions concerning liberation theology. The first warns against the danger of "certain liberation theologies" becoming forms of reductionism or ideologization; the second proposes principles for a right understanding of freedom and liberation. In a letter to Brazilian bishops, Pope John Paul II stated that a theology of liberation is "both necessary and opportune".

Although the WCC has never explicitly discussed liberation theology, the general concern for liberation has been present in different forms and especially in the Nairobi assembly's theme: "Jesus Christ Frees and Unites" (1975). Latin American liberation theology was discussed at the Christian education meeting (Lima 1971), and references to black theology appear in Bangkok 1973 and to feminist theology in Berlin 1974 in a way that is affirmative but not developed. It

has nevertheless been implicitly present in such WCC programmes as "The Church and the Poor" and the political ethics consultation of Cyprus (1981) of the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development, in the Human Rights Resources Office for Latin America and in the Programme to Combat Racism.

New developments in liberation theology in the late 1980s and 1990s have included a response to the social, cultural and economic developments related to globalization and the domination of the so-called neo-liberal economies and to the forms of marginalization and personal, family and social instability which it has produced. This response has led to enlarging the interdisciplinary scope of liberation theology (now to include also social psychology, cultural anthropology and micro-economics), to deepening certain theological focuses (the Trinity, ecclesiology and eschatology), as well as to giving greater attention to the deeper religious needs and quest of the people in the "new religious movements".

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## THEOLOGY, MINJUNG

MINJUNG theology is an indigenous theology of politics and culture\* that has developed in South Korea in recent years. "Minjung" is a Korean word for people,\* mass, or the masses of people, but it refers specifically to the oppressed vis-a-vis their oppressors, or to the poor\* over against the rich and powerful. Thus, minjung theology may mean a theology by the people, for the people, and of the people. It emerged out of Christian concern for and solidarity\* with the economically exploited, politically oppressed

and socially marginalized peoples in South Korea in the 1970s. It is a theological endeavour by the whole people of God.\*

Minjung theology developed out of specific political struggles of Korean Christians. In the 1970s Korea's oppressive military dictatorship silenced nearly all of its political opposition, denying the people their fundamental human rights. In addition, the regime imposed a "development" ideology upon the people, which created a wide gap between the rich and the poor in the country, denied the people's right to form labour unions and created massive poverty in both the industrial urban and rural areas of the nation. Many Korean Christians resisted the dictatorship and the ideology thus imposed, especially student activist groups such as the Korean Student Christian Federation and the Ecumenical Youth Council, as well as the Urban Industrial Mission, Church Women United and the Human Rights Commission of the National Council of Churches. These groups organized Christian movements which entered into solidarity with the urban and rural poor in the struggle for justice and democratization in Korea. Minjung theology is a faith reflection of, by and for the people in their struggle against oppression; it is a political theology of liberation developing from the people's struggle towards and within the kingdom of God.\*

Out of the experiences of suffering\* and struggle against oppressive powers, and with the eyes of the poor, minjung theologians read and interpret the Bible. For minjung theology, God is working in human history to liberate the suffering people of God. Jesus himself was of the minjung and a friend of the minjung; he suffered, died, and was raised with and for the minjung. Of central importance to minjung theology is this minjung Jesus, who is on the side of the poor and oppressed for their liberation. The gospel and the Jesus-event are interpreted from the perspective of the poor and oppressed, and in turn the Jesus-event interprets the struggles of the minjung. Thus the history of the liberation struggle of the minjung is seen from the perspective of the presence of God in and through the person and work of Jesus.

As minjung theologians struggle with the people for their liberation, they also identify

with and reflect upon events in the history of the Korean poor which highlight the peoples' quest for freedom and dignity. One such event was the student revolution of 1960, which toppled the corrupt political regime of President Syngman Rhee. Other events include the independence movement of 1 March 1919 against Japan's harsh imperial rule, and the 1894 Donghak farmers' rebellion against the brutal feudal bureaucracy imposed by the Confucian kingdom of Chosun. In minjung theology, the irrepressible struggle of the people for their liberation in history is viewed as a movement of the Holy Spirit\* and a source of power, which names the minjung as the true subjects of history.

In addition to history, minjung theologians also perceive that culture is a source of power for people's liberation. The Korean minjung express and celebrate their life in music, drama and masked dances which are distinct from those of the rulers and the Confucian aristocrats. Particularly they favour the minjung farm dances, where the music is rhythmic and throbbing and where it calls forth dynamic and often frenzied dancing steps and motions, and the minjung mask dance, which gives satirical expression to the people's sublimated grief, anger and frustration (*han*) over against their oppressors. In attempting to give theological understanding to these various expressions, minjung theologians perceive that they are indigenous forms of "confessing", resistance and empowerment; they are Spirit-infused cultural expressions of the minjung for their liberation from oppression.

Minjung theology, therefore, is an indigenous theology deeply rooted in the culture and religions of the Korean people, and it takes the Bible very seriously. It takes seriously the developments in Latin American liberation theology and uses openly the language of that theology, for example, "God's preferential option for the poor", the hermeneutical "suspicion", and "Jesus the Liberator". In addition, minjung theology follows Latin American liberation theology in its limited use of Marxist analysis of political economics and gives its own critical analysis of the ideologies of militarization and economic development, which are the principal "idols" oppressing the people in contemporary Korea. It has links also with the libera-

tion theologies that have developed in other Asian countries and has had a certain ecumenical impact, chiefly through the work of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA).\*

Minjung theology has made story-telling an indispensable part of its hermeneutics,\* and in that sense it differs from Latin American liberation theology. Minjung theologians originated the phrase "socio-biography of the minjung", and they have made the stories of the minjung – their suffering, their *han*, their struggles against oppressive powers – central to their theological methodology. Minjung theology in this sense is essentially narrative theology; it is a vehicle through which the stories of the joy and the grief, failure and success, laughter and tears of the minjung are faithfully gathered, told and interpreted, as a means for their liberation.

Minjung theology takes seriously the feminist liberation movement; Korean feminist theologians argue that Korean women are the "minjung of minjungs". Minjung theology condemns the sexist exploitation of the poor and the patriarchal systems which discriminate against women, whether in the church or society. It is now being developed in minjung church movements among labourers, the urban poor, and farmers, confessing faith in Jesus Christ who is in solidarity with the people in their daily struggles for economic and political rights against the present oppressive regime.

Minjung theology is in the vanguard of those addressing the tragic division of Korea between the North and the South, the consequence of decisions imposed on the Korean people by super-powers following the second world war. It defines the Korean people forced to live under the present divided structures of government and ideology as minjung. The theologians are active in the movement for peace and re-unification in Korea, and minjung theology articulates a theology of peace and re-unification, of justice and reconciliation.

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## "THEOLOGY, NEW"

THE EXPRESSION *théologie nouvelle* came into existence in (French) Roman Catholic circles, mainly in the 1940s, in an attempt to discredit the renewal of theological methods using history, exegesis, patristics and liturgy at the expense of a rigid scholastic methodology. The term occasioned a public controversy which developed after the appearance of a book by Henri Bouillard, SJ, entitled *Conversion et grâce chez saint Thomas d'Aquin: Etude historique* (Conversion and grace in St Thomas Aquinas: A historical study, 1944).

This "new theology" was never an organized movement, even if an article by Jean Daniélou on present trends and religious thought ("Les orientations présentes et la pensée religieuse", *Etudes*, 1946) has sometimes been represented as a kind of manifesto. The expression appeared in an article by Monsignor Parente in the *Osservatore Romano* of 9-10 February 1942. This article, entitled "Nuove tendenze teologiche" (New theological trends), condemned criticism of scholastic theology and put such criticism in the same category as modernist trends. Also, an article by M. Cordovani in the *Osservatore Romano* of 22 March 1940 had prepared the way by its criticism of a supposed "theological renewal" relating to ecclesiology, ecumenism and ethics. These various criticisms came to a head with the publication of the encyclical *Humani Generis* in 1950, which afforded Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange a further opportunity to write one of his many articles in which he lumped this theology together with modernism, sentimental Romanticism, empiricism, Kantianism, scepticism, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and even heresy.\* This controversy, then, though limited both in time and geographically, clearly epitomized the

polemics hurled by the official theologians at the theological renewals of that time.

This controversy was limited to a few main centres: on the one hand, Rome, supported by St Maximin and the *Revue thomiste*, and on the other, Fourvière and Louvain with certain Jesuits, and Le Saulchoir with some Dominicans. One of the immediate issues was the interpretation of "Thomism", which had been established as an official theology. By showing a development in Thomas's thought on the question of grace,\* Bouillard seemed to be relativizing a deductive, narrowly rationalist scholastic method in which the role of the fathers and of scripture was simply to provide a more effective confirmation of a hidebound, authoritative theology. But there was something immoderate in these polemics, and so the main surviving witnesses now tend to play down the arguments of that period, the more so since the theologians who were referred to at the time were to a great extent those who inspired Vatican II (M.-D. Chenu, Bouillard, Henri de Lubac, but also Daniélou and Hans Urs von Balthasar). Also, some prelates, especially the cardinals of Paris and Toulouse, had officially come to their defence in and after 1946. And while Pius XII on 17 and 22 September 1946 had expressly condemned the "new theology" in addresses to the Jesuits and the Dominicans, Monsignor Parente was to rehabilitate them publicly in a speech given at the Urbaniana University in Rome on 11 November 1967.

This controversy, however, still has a highly symbolic significance because it points clearly to the great biblical, patristic, liturgical and historical renewals which were to be legitimized at Vatican II in the Roman Catholic Church. Far from being an argument primarily of the French among themselves (on both sides of the Alps), this discussion indicated the limits of post-Tridentine thinking and Roman Catholic authoritarian centralism both in France and also beyond the Rhine and in Belgium. This centralism was challenged in regard to its methods of justifying theological positions by recourse to the fathers, the liturgy, scripture and the historical method. It is not by chance that Monsignor Parente in 1942, in his criticism of the "new theology", also evoked the name of Johann Adam Möhler, a

19th-century Roman Catholic church historian whose work was published by Yves Congar in the series *Unam Sanctam* immediately after *Chrétiens désunis* (Disunited Christians) in 1937, the same year as Chenu's book.

Monsignor Bruno de Solages came to the defence of theological pluralism just at the time when a group of Jesuits, in reply to attacks made on them, wrote in the *Recherches de science religieuse* of 1946 that the Christian revelation is not first and foremost "the communication of a system of ideas" but "the revelation of a person" and that "the church has always in the past accepted the freedom of theological schools within the same orthodoxy". Certain notes had already been struck which were to be strongly sounded by Vatican II – especially the Constitutions on Revelation, on the Church, and on the Liturgy, the Decree on Ecumenism, and the affirmation of the "hierarchy of truths".\*

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## THEOLOGY, NORTH AMERICAN

THE ORIGIN of North American Christianity in the Puritan churches of New England did not predispose it to acquire ecumenical concerns. Yet the simultaneous presence of Spanish Catholicism in Florida and California, French Catholicism in Quebec and Louisiana, Anglicanism in Virginia, Maryland and Canada, and the Society of Friends in Pennsylvania made the encounter of churches and theologies unavoidable in the lands that became the USA and the Dominion of Canada. The major theologian of the 13 colonies, Jonathan Edwards, pursued concerns, such as the beauty of God and his works, that were broader than the Calvinism of his background. The Great Awakening, in which he was active, tended to blur denominational differences under the impact of the Spirit, at least in the churches of the Connecticut valley.

The 19th century was too busy with church expansion and consolidation to favour the theological enterprise. Yet it saw the birth of a wide variety of theological orientations. Between the Unitarianism of New England and the Anglo-Catholicism of the Episcopal Church in Wisconsin (diocese of Fond du Lac), the Mercersburg theology (John Nevin, *The Mystical Presence*, 1846; Philip Schaff) emphasized "development" as a force in Christian history that could serve as a basis for a "Protestant Catholicism" based on a high view of sacraments. In a different direction the Holiness churches, influenced by the Wesleyan tradition, opened new dimensions by giving a prominent voice to women (Phoebe Palmer). Pastoral concerns led to reflection on social problems even before the social gospel theology of Walter Rauschenbusch offered the possibility of interdenominational convergence in the effort to face the problems of society in the light of the gospel. Meanwhile, liberal theology (Horace Bushnell) tended to remove the accent from formal institutions, thus reducing the churches to denominations (see **denominationalism**, **Holiness movement**, **social gospel movement**, **Unitarian Universalism**).

Theological writing in Quebec has been overshadowed by French theology, though a few authors have reached an international audience, notably René Latourelle with studies on the theology of revelation (1963) and Bernard Lambert with an analysis of the ecumenical movement (*Le problème œcuménique*, 1962). In English-speaking areas theological thought has been the most fruitful.

The many-sided background inherited from the 19th century in the USA spawned a variety of ecumenical dimensions in theologies that were open to European influences. While the system of Paul Tillich included a rehabilitation of the "Catholic substance" animated by "the Protestant principle", Reinhold and H. Richard Niebuhr, adapting Barthian thought to the American scene and insisting on the historical conditioning of Christian doctrines, encouraged the growth of a self-critical principle that, in turn, could easily nurture ecumenical thinking. Thus Douglas Horton and Walter Horton (*Christian Theology: An Ecumenical Approach*,

1955) were consciously oriented to concerns of the wider church beyond denominational boundaries. Arthur Karl Piepkorn affirmed the Catholic dimension of Lutheranism, received from the middle ages, while John Macquarrie (*Principles of Christian Theology*, 1966) pointed to the catholicity of Anglicanism, and Albert C. Outler drew from John Wesley's thought inspiration and guidance for his active contribution to the ecumenical movement, notably when the nature of Tradition was debated in preparation for the Faith and Order conference of Montreal (1963). The continuing participation of American theologians in Faith and Order\* can be illustrated with works of lasting value (J. Robert Nelson, *The Realm of Redemption*, 1951; Paul Minear, *Images of the Church*, 1960; Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology*, 1980).

The "death of God" theology (Paul Van Buren, *The Secular Meaning of the Gospel*, 1963; Thomas Altizer, *The Gospel of Christian Atheism*, 1966) sparked a crisis in the media. But it had no lasting effect, as alternatives remained alive in the resilience of the churches' traditional teaching, in adaptations of process thought to theology (W. Norman Pittenger, Schubert Ogden, John Cobb), and in critiques of the basic ideas of the "death of God" (Langdon Gilkey, *Reaping the Whirlwind*, 1977). This crisis may have encouraged an emphasis on theology as a consistent system. Wainwright's *Doxology*, sub-titled, "a systematic theology", illustrates the interest of theologians in organizing theological coherence around a stable principle – here, the liturgy. Besides Tillich, Macquarrie and Wainwright, one may mention Gordon Kaufman (*Systematic Theology: A Historicist Perspective*, 1968), Gabriel Fackre (*The Christian Story*, 1984) and, among Catholics, Frans Jozef van Beeck (*God Encountered*, 1988-).

Meanwhile, several Orthodox theologians gained a wide audience, notably Georges Florovsky through his patristic writings and his participation in Faith and Order, Alexander Schmemmann through his baptismal and liturgical theology, and John Meyendorff through his presentation of major Orthodox doctrines. Roman Catholic theology, which had been largely dormant in the 19th century, entered the mainstream of

American thought with the writings of John Courtney Murray on the theological implications of political democracy, of Gustave Weigel on the ecumenical movement, and of the Canadian Bernard Lonergan on methodology (*Insight*, 1957; *Method in Theology*, 1972). David Tracy's work (*The Theological Imagination*, 1981) emphasizes theology as public and academic discourse. Avery Dulles's proposal that the theologies of revelation\* and of the church\* may be seen in terms of "models" opens a way to approach many questions in ecumenical dialogues.

New theological accents testify to the growing fruitfulness of North American thought. Black theology (James Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, 1970) stresses the ties of Christianity with ethnic experience and culture. Feminist theology (Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 1983; Elizabeth Johnson, *She Who Is*, 1992) retrieves neglected aspects of the Tradition, in light of which it puts forward tentative reconstructions. Generally, North American theology has been predominantly speculative and systematic, yet also with an important historical emphasis (Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, 1971-89). The participation of North American theologians in bilateral dialogues between churches has been significant. The dialogue "Lutherans and Catholics in Conversation", with its nine common statements, has become a model of ecumenical method.

GEORGE H. TAVARD

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## THEOLOGY OF RELIGIONS

THE THEOLOGY of religions involves the attempt, by Christian theologians, to reflect upon the meaning and significance of non-Christian religious beliefs and practices from the standpoint of Christian revelation. This theological discipline, which has emerged since Vatican II\* among Catholics and Protestants alike, should not be confused with the "history of religions" (*Religionsgeschichte*) or the "philosophy of religion". It differs from the latter two approaches by virtue of its *explicit* dependence upon God's revelation in Christ as the decisive framework in which religious "data" are interpreted.

Questions discussed under this rubric include the following: What conditions must obtain for adherents of other religions to experience salvation (as it is understood within the Christian faith)? For example, must they express *explicit* faith in Christ? Are non-Christian religions to be viewed simply as expressions of "unbelief", or is it possible that they play some hidden role in God's plan of salvation\* for humankind? What theological explanation can be offered of the phenomenon of human religiosity? To what end, and on what basis, should Christians enter into dialogue with adherents of other religions? Finally, to what extent can one draw upon elements of non-Christian religious traditions in building indigenous churches in missionary contexts?

Much of the debate regarding a Christian theology of religions has been shaped by the *exclusivist-inclusivist-pluralist* typology. "Exclusivism" has been associated with the position that salvation can be found only through the person and work of Jesus Christ and that saving grace\* is not mediated through the teachings and practices of other religions. (Exclusivists, however, are divided regarding the necessity of *explicit* faith in Christ as a condition for salvation. Some prefer to take an agnostic stance on this question.) "Inclusivism" generally denotes the view that salvation extends beyond the witness of the church and that non-Christian religions play some positive role in God's plan for humanity. (Inclusivists, however, are divided on the question of whether non-Christian religions, *qua* religions, constitute channels through which salvation is medi-

ated.) As an interpretation of religion, “pluralism”\* denotes the viewpoint that all religions are culturally conditioned, yet authentic, responses to a largely unknown divine ultimate Reality (cf. John Hick).

Although the exclusivist-inclusivist-pluralist typology framed this discussion for almost two decades, three important limitations beset it. First, the typology focuses almost exclusively on soteriology to the neglect of other important questions. Second, as emerging proposals have become increasingly complex, its explanatory power has diminished. Finally, as Gavin D’Costa has noted, this typology implicitly veils the fact that every interpretation of religion is “exclusive” in that it offers a “tradition-specific” account of other religions (*The Meeting of Religions*, 22). D’Costa claims that the idea of a “neutral” interpretation of religion is simply an Enlightenment myth.

### RECENT PROPOSALS

In his book, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, the Belgian Jesuit Jacques Dupuis argues that the “two hands” of God, the Word and the Spirit, are universally present and active in non-Christian religions. As a result of the Spirit’s inspiration, “revelation” can be encountered in the sacred writings of non-Christian religions. For example, sacred scriptures such as the Qur’an can be viewed as containing the “word of God” (245). Building upon the foundation of Karl Rahner, Dupuis claims that non-Christian religions constitute “channels of salvation” through which efficacious grace is mediated to their adherents. For example, the worship of images may constitute a means of grace for Hindus: “[T]he worship of sacred images can be the sacramental sign in and through which the devotee responds to the offer of divine grace; it can mediate secretly the grace offered by God in Jesus Christ and express the human response to God’s gratuitous gift in him” (303). Dupuis’ views have come under the scrutiny of Roman Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Mark Heim, a Protestant theologian, outlines a very different proposal in *The Depth of the Riches: A Trinitarian Theology of Religious Ends*. He suggests that the debate over the theology of religions has pro-

ceeded upon the “largely undefended assumption that there is and can only be one religious end, one actual religious fulfillment” (17). This assumption, he claims, must be rejected. Heim suggests that while Christians will experience “salvation” (communion with the Triune God), adherents of other religions may experience other positive “ends” which are not “salvation”. For example, while a Christian may experience communion with God, a Buddhist may experience nirvana. These various “religious ends” are all, in fact, rooted in an encounter with the Triune God, whether so named or not: “I contend that distinctive religious ends sought and realized in other religious traditions are grounded in apprehension of and connection with specific dimensions of the divine life of the Triune God” (9). According to Heim, the divine life of the Triune God generates three “dimensions”. Multiple religious ends obtain as a result of an intensified “relation” with one of these dimensions: “The presence of the Triune God in creation in such varied dimensions has the perplexing effect of allowing persons to form various and even contradictory visions of God. These then can become moulds within which to construe the entire human relation with God. These form the basis for a variety of religious ends, marked by an intensification of a particular kind of relation with an aspect of the divine life” (289).

Writing from a Pentecostal-charismatic perspective, Amos Yong has outlined a “pneumatological” theology of religions. The metaphysical foundation for his proposal is the universal divine presence of the Spirit in the world. Yong claims that Pentecostals and charismatics must learn to “discern” the Spirit’s presence in other religions by employing a “pneumatological imagination”. This does not entail the affirmation that the Spirit inspires every form of religious experience. Indeed, a proper Pentecostal theology of religions must be able to account not only for the “transformative” nature of religious experience but also the negative element produced by “spiritually destructive fields of force symbolized by divine absence or the demonic” (*Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 312). To this end, Yong outlines a “three-tiered process” for discerning the

activity of the Spirit in other religions. The first element is “phenomenological-experiential”, the second component is “moral-ethical” and the third is “theological-soteriological” (250). Although “discerning the Spirit(s)” is a complex affair, responsible Christians must engage in it.

Finally, from an Evangelical perspective, Harold Netland claims that the phenomenon of human religiosity must be viewed against the backdrop of the biblical themes of creation, revelation, sin and redemption. On the one hand, every human being possesses, no matter how limited and distorted, an awareness of God. Thus, “We can think of religions as displaying, in varying degrees, a rudimentary awareness of God’s reality through creation and general revelation” (*Encountering Religious Pluralism*, 333). As a result, one should not be surprised to encounter elements of truth in other religions; nor should one be surprised by similarities in moral teaching among religions. On the other hand, religions are not merely “benign” expressions of humanity reaching out to God. Every aspect of human life, including the religious dimension, has been corrupted by sin. Thus, a paradox exists: created in the image of God, human beings long for a relationship with God; however, as sinners they rebel against God and hide. “While a religion can be a way of reaching out to God, it can also be a means of hiding from him” (332). Because of sin, every human being stands under God’s judgment. The only remedy for this problem is the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Thus, Jesus Christ is the only Saviour for all humankind, including adherents of other religions. This is why the gospel, by nature, has a missionary orientation. Those who turn to God in faith and repentance experience salvation. God’s love and mercy extends to people everywhere, including adherents of other religions. Rather than dogmatically speculating about the fate of the unevangelized, the church should place its trust in a holy and righteous God who treats all people justly as it graciously proclaims Christ as the way, the truth and the life.

Clearly, differences in constructive proposals are, to a large degree, shaped both by differing methodological assumptions re-

garding the hermeneutic relation(s) of biblical teaching and religious “data” as well as differing theological assumptions. One’s understanding of anthropology, ecclesiology, soteriology and doctrine of God\* deeply influences the content of specific proposals. Recently the doctrine of the Trinity\* has played an increasing role as several theologians have attempted to employ this doctrine, albeit variously understood, as the constitutive basis for a Christian theology of religions.

See also **dialogue, interfaith; mission; uniqueness of Christ.**

KEITH E. JOHNSON

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## THEOLOGY, PACIFIC

PACIFIC THEOLOGY is a contextual theology growing out of the Pacific soil and waters; it is concerned to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to bear on contemporary sociological, political, environmental and religious events as well as on the future of the region. It seeks to put faith,\* gospel and religion in the local Pacific soil and context so that these may exist meaningfully in the local climate.

For 150 years the Pacific has been described as a mission field – missionaries came from the North to “the ends of the earth”, the periphery of the world, to proclaim the good news. They came with such theology as they knew in their context, a theological construct conditioned by their history, culture and circumstances. Now Pacific islands are

independent nations, and the churches are autonomous. Missionary trends have changed; the Pacific is no longer the periphery for “sending churches” to evangelize, and foreign missionaries are no longer the major personnel; now Pacific islanders are missionaries to themselves. Since the Pacific islanders can never be like the Western missionaries, Pacific churches desire that the revelation\* of God in the history\* and cultures of peoples shall also be good news in the history and culture\* of the Pacific region.

The effectiveness of Christ’s birth in Bethlehem, his crucifixion at Calvary and the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost\* in Jerusalem was immediate and simultaneous to every part and every people of the world. Indeed, the good news was present in the Pacific before the missionaries’ arrival. The missionaries from the North came to enable the Pacific to re-discover and name what was already there. Pacific theology then illustrates, in the light of the gospel and from the Pacific history, culture and customs, what God is like and is doing in revelation and salvation.\*

In going about this task, they follow the principle of what Christ did, using his environment (e.g. animals of Palestine, mustard seed, fish, farmers) to contextualize the ecumenicity and catholicity\* of the gospel. Pacific theology uses the ever-present environment of coconut, kava, betel nuts, hibiscus, orchids, yams and taro – Pacific delicacies – to articulate the good news of Jesus Christ, hence such designations of Pacific theology as betel nut theology (in Papua New Guinea) or coconut theology (in Fiji and Tonga). These are varieties in a genus. They may be limited in so far as the symbols are from a regional context, but the applied theology is universal and ecumenical.

Pacific life is characterized by celebration. The life-cycle of birth, puberty, marriage and death is marked by feasting and celebration, which also re-furbishes the sense of community. A community is so by virtue of the cooperation of its members, inclusiveness of the extended family, sharing and caring, particularly for the aged. Characteristic of Pacific theology are the emphases on solidarity and unity, very much the opposite of the individualism of Western theology.

Two statements of coconut theology with regard to Christology and eucharist\* should illustrate Pacific theology. The coconut is the key Christological image because the coconut is the life of the Pacific. The tree has many potentialities as drink and food, its branches for shelter, housing and fuel, its raffia for mats. To drink it is to draw nourishment by “kissing” it. It falls from the tree only in the fullness of life. Thus the image of the coconut encapsules biblical Christology: the virgin birth and the incarnation\* are in the coconut. The full potential of new life is in the coconut, and when it is ready (fullness) the new life breaks through its sprouts and is rooted in the soil, growing towards heaven. The glimpses of death and resurrection\* are also present because “a seed must die in order to live”. At the final end, the world powers forced him to the earth’s womb, intending to keep him there with the Roman seal and to say “the end has come”. But instead of the expected end, the shell cracked and the resurrection took place; a new full-grown coconut came to its own.

In the earliest eucharistic celebration Jesus used unleavened bread and wine, very common elements in his society. In the Pacific these elements are not only expensive and difficult to acquire but also very foreign. To use coconut for eucharistic celebration is more relevant because it is to bring the common and the familiar into the orbit of the Holy Spirit in the ritual act. Besides, the coconut is both drink and food from the same fruit, even as the blood and flesh are from the one and same body of Christ.

With other third-world theologies, Pacific theology claims that the eternal word of God\* seeks an encounter with every people as they are and that no group may be assimilated to another group. Pacific theology is the symbol that the islanders have taken their place among the “great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb... They cried out in a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who is seated upon the throne, and to the Lamb!’” (Rev. 7:9-10).

Pacific theology is in the process of creation, and most of it is in oral form. It is a

reality which can be ignored only to the detriment of the fullness of the ecumenical movement.

SIONE 'AMANAKI HAVEA

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## THEOLOGY, POLITICAL

POLITICAL THEOLOGY AROSE in Europe in the 1960s and 1970s in reaction to the privatizing tendencies in existentialist interpretations of Christianity that emphasized personal encounter as the appropriate framework within which to understand the Christian gospel. Political theology sought to make clear the public nature of the eschatological message. What is promised is not just a new self-understanding for the individual but a new society. Even when addressing the individual, the fact remains that the person is embedded in a social milieu which must be addressed at the same time, if one is to speak to the real situation, for human existence is by nature political. Moreover, the God of the Bible is not "apolitical" (Jürgen Moltmann), a neutral observer of the human situation, but a partisan in the struggle against the forces of injustice. It follows that there is no apolitical theology. A theology which is not calling for change is in effect legitimating the status quo, whether it intends to or not.

Discernable in the thought of the leading representatives of political theology, Johann Metz and Jürgen Moltmann, is the influence of the Frankfurt school of critical sociology (Jürgen Habermas, Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno) and the philosopher Ernst Bloch's exploration of utopian thinking. Political theology does not seek to "mix religion and politics" but disavows the alliances of the past between the political order and

the church in which theology served to legitimate and give divine sanction to those in power. Instead, political theology calls for the church to function in a consistently critical mode, analyzing existing conditions by the plumbline of the kingdom of God\* and the "dangerous memory" (Metz) emerging out of the Hebrew-Christian past of the suffering of the people, on the one hand, and the intervention of God to free them, on the other. God's self-identification with those who suffer poses a permanent threat to all attempts to link God with the forces of wealth and power. This insight parallels the "preferential option for the poor" in Latin American theology.

Political theology grounds its critical stance in the divine commandment prohibiting idolatry and in the hope for justice\* conveyed by the eschatological promise of the kingdom of God. The first supplies the "secularizing" impulse in political theology, its critical examination of political and ideological loyalties to determine whether they are claiming for themselves a devotion that belongs to God alone. The second, the vision of the kingdom, makes the theory-praxis dialectic an integral part of the position. Every historical realization is questioned in the light of that which still remains to be actualized.

The consistently critical stance has caused objections to be raised by Latin American theologians. While acknowledging their own indebtedness to political theology and the kinship they share, Latin Americans complain that an approach which only critiques ignores the necessity in the practical world to form alliances and to be committed to concrete, less-than-perfect alternatives in order to achieve proximate justice. Theology must take the risk of being partisan (José Míguez Bonino), rather than simply the critic, if it is to mobilize the disenfranchised to secure their rights. From the Latin American perspective, therefore, political theology's revolutionary critique looks more like a Cartesian revolution of systematic doubt than a practical one (Juan Luis Segundo), a theoretical principle and method that assure the thinker a position above the fray rather than committing one to the movements that bring about change.

Political theologians counter that theology responds to the concrete situation in

which it finds itself. In the social democracies of Europe, where there is hope for change through normal political processes, criticism of existing conditions may be the most important contribution the church can make. In other contexts, where fundamental changes are required before justice is a possibility, commitment to a single political alternative may be necessary. Theology's goal in either case is to make clear God's identification with the disenfranchised, who have no one to speak for them, and to bring about the reforms necessary to ensure their full participation in society.

See also **theology, liberation**.

THEODORE RUNYON

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## THEOLOGY, PUBLIC

THE TERM "public theology" first appeared in English in an analysis of the contributions of Reinhold Niebuhr by Martin Marty (1974), but it points towards a wider and deeper strand of theological reflection rooted in the interaction of biblical insight, philosophical analysis, historical discernment and social formation. In America, Martin Luther King, Jr, later became a model of public theology in its activist mode, re-invigorating a tradition, obscured temporarily by notions of inevitable secularization, that the clergy are "public intellectuals". This form of discourse seeks to offer an interpretation of the common life and to provide the moral and spiritual vision to guide it, and it claims that theology is indispensable to both tasks.

The idea also appeared in German theology, especially as introduced by Wolfgang Huber, as the issues of the relationship of

church preaching to public discourse was debated in the European context in the face of the powerful influence of Karl Barth and a number of ongoing discussions of the Bar-men declaration and the lingering influence of the political theologies of, for example, Carl Schmitt on the right and Ernst Bloch on the left. From these sources "public theology" has come to signal the idea, not only that the theologian and pastor may address public matters, but in fact that they must do so, since the inner architecture of civil society always has moral and spiritual dimensions that demand attention and guidance.

The roots of such views are found in the prophets, in Jesus' preaching and teaching, and in Paul's encounters at the Acropolis. Augustine's *City of God*, Thomas Aquinas's writings on justice and the reformers' teachings about "orders of creation", "vocation", "covenant" and the relationship of law and gospel, and more recent developments such as Abraham Kuyper's theology of the "spheres", Ernst Troeltsch's quest for a "Christian social philosophy" and Walter Rauschenbusch's "theology for the social gospel" variously anticipate and influence contemporary developments. All presume that "theology", while always related to personal faith, particular faith communities and concrete social conditions, is at its most profound levels neither contextually determined nor an unwarranted claim about the way things are and ought to be. Public theology differs from liberation theology,\* with which it otherwise shares a concern for social justice, for it resists contextualism and the use of Marxist analysis, both of which it views as reductionistic and frequently subversive of justice and truth.

The term was developed also by others. John Courtney Murray and David Tracy, for example, connected the idea to Roman Catholic teachings in the social encyclicals, from *Rerum Novarum* on labour by Pope Leo XIII, through *Quadragesimo Anno* on the ideas of subsidiarity and of solidarity by Pius XI and *Pacem in Terris* by John XXIII, all of which anticipated aspects of Vatican II and contemporary statements by recent popes to the UN on racism, war, human rights and more recent thought about pluralism. Tracy points out that although many

today turn to human experience to find a basis for common morality and meaning, experience turns out to be even more pluralistic than doctrine and provides no means to interpret itself. Various modes of public discourse are needed to discern its meanings.

Public theologians, especially in the face of current global trends, have identified a variety of publics. They can be discovered by posing a series of questions. First, the religious public can be identified by this question: What can and should be preached and taught among those who seek faithful living and thinking according to the most holy, and thus the most comprehensive, righteous and enduring reality to which humans can point? Christians will, of course, have a ready answer, but it will have to be tested by inter-religious encounter.

Second is the political public. The question here is: What is the best vision of, and the motivation for, the just use of power, so that the common life can flourish? Public theology, in other words, not only must make sense in the faith community, it must show that it can help shape viable government, precisely because it sees the public of "civil society" as prior to any regime or "republic". It differs from political theology in so far as the latter sees politics as the comprehending institution rather than as a necessary, dependent and limited one. Public theology thus allies itself with a social theory of politics rather than a political theory of society.

Third is the academic public, found by asking: What claims can best be called true or valid because they can best withstand critical analysis and offer convincing arguments or evidence in the face of informed scrutiny? This question implies that public theology can learn from philosophy, science and the professions, and has something to contribute to them.

To these publics we must add the economic: What modes of production, finance, exchange and distribution best allow us, worldwide, to create plenty, to relieve want and drudgery, and to enable the material well-being of humanity? Furthermore, today many issues of family life, of the relations between males and females, parents and children, and nuclear and extended patterns

of obligation are of public concern, for traditional guidelines are under strain or seen as problematic. Thus, what patterns of morality, relationship and care can best guide those who seek to embody love rightly and well in publicly recognized bonds of matrimony?

There are objections to public theology. Some argue that theology has nothing essential to do with these publics. Some say that theology is essentially personal, not social. Others say that it is and should be an articulation of revelation or of the faith of a particular believing community. Public theology may draw from such dogmatic and confessional emphases, but it also has an apologetic emphasis. While revelation\* and faith\* are gifts of God, not all claims about them are of equal validity or can shape public discourse. Public theologians hold that it is not only possible but necessary to assess them as to whether they accord with the most universal understandings of holiness, justice, truth, creativity and love we can know.

Disagreement over this matter has, however, led to two wings of public theology. One is more deeply indebted to the fideist definitions of theology and has allied itself to recent forms of "post-modern" thought, for both groups doubt that any universalistic arguments about such matters can be sustained. This wing calls upon believers boldly to proclaim what can only be known "through the eyes of faith", for in public life everyone else is also presenting views that are based on unverified convictions. Believers claim a place at the table of incommensurable discourses on the grounds of inevitable pluralism and the justice of fair access.

A second wing argues that the purported break-up of meaning is overstated and that the capacity of humans to learn each other's languages and to engage in meaningful debate about such matters as human rights, sound ecology, fair trade, good technology, quality medicine and just law suggests a deeper substratum of ecumenical commonality. While some speak of "natural law", others speak of "common grace" that allows the claims of theology to be understood and assessed – even by those who do not share in a particular faith. This wing holds that we can, and are obligated to, "give an account

of the faith that is within us”, in part because it is necessary for the well-being of the neighbour and in part to test our own myopia.

Public theologians differ on the interpretation of “modernity”. This Western development did not entirely deny that religion could be a powerful force in people’s lives, but it doubted that theological matters could be reasonably defended and were necessary for civil society.\* Some saw them as the source of conflict. They were relegated to the private sphere of preferences and were denied a public role. Science, philosophy and politics were thought to have firm foundations and thus to be sufficient for interpreting and guiding civil society.

Public theologians agree among themselves that this view is mistaken, but the fideist wing tends to hold that science, philosophy and politics are governed as much by subjective, irrational “preferences” as is theology, while the apologetic wing tends to think that modernity has valid aspects but in fact has misunderstood its own foundations. Modern science, philosophy and politics are, in this view, more profoundly based on universally valid, reasonable, theological bases than they acknowledge. Indeed, they often irrationally obscure or deny those bases. The decisive task of an ecumenical public theology would therefore be to uncover and recast them for today in order to interpret and to guide our “post-modern”, emerging global civilization.

See also **theology, political**.

MAX L. STACKHOUSE

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## THEOTOKOS

THE GREEK term *theotokos* means “God-bearer”, and it was given officially to Mary the mother of Jesus by the ecumenical council of Ephesus in 431. The expression is, however, older. It appears in a papyrus from the end of the 3rd century, and it was used for Mary very frequently throughout the 4th century.

Christians at that time were very much aware that this expression was fundamental to discussion of the incarnation\* of the second person of the Trinity.\* It was to culminate in the Chalcedonian formula in 451: “Jesus, very God and very man” (see **Chalcedon**), contrasting with the philosophy of the first few centuries, for which the incarnation of God remained a scandal. If a woman gives birth to God, does that make her his mother? “When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of woman” (Gal. 4:4).

Polemics at Ephesus were lively. Nestorius proposed the expression *Christotokos* (Christ-bearer), but the council adopted *theotokos* (she who brings God into the world) as its formula, for Mary gives birth to Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. “The child to be born will be holy; he will be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35). It is Mary, a woman like all other women, but a virgin chosen by God, who writes the divine Word into the human family tree.

This designation was joyfully welcomed by the church and has remained a title uniting the majority of Christians up to the present. In the 16th century, even though Calvin refused to use the word, Luther and Zwingli for their part continued to mark the Marian feasts (the annunciation, visitation, incarnation, presentation and dormition) by sermons stressing Mary’s unique place in the history of the human race: “Let Mary be held in honour and the Lord be worshipped!”

The Orthodox church remained faithful to the doctrinal judgments of the ecumenical councils; in hymnology and iconography moderate veneration of the *theotokos* continued.

In the last few centuries, however, Christian tradition in the West developed extremely polarized positions. On the Protestant side, the churches of the Reformation like to speak of Mary as an "example of humility, prayer and faith" for believers; "the woman" in the book of Revelation represents the church. On the Catholic side, the Roman dogmas of 1854 and 1950 laid down as an essential affirmation "the immaculate conception of Mary" by her parents, and her "assumption" instead of her dormition.

For some decades, thanks to the breadth and openness of ecumenical dialogue, we have been able to tell each other where the differences between us lie and to ask each other how Mary, whom the angel called "full of grace", is to be venerated without that veneration becoming worship of the "queen of heaven" as a supposed co-mediatrix alongside Jesus. Today the expression *theotokos* may help the church to re-discover the true place for Mary, who sang the Magnificat.\*

See also *Mary in the ecumenical movement*.

ELISABETH PONTOPIPIDAN

- B. Bobrinskoy, *Le mystère de la Trinité*, Paris, Cerf, 1986 ■ A. Dumas & F. Dumas, *Marie de Nazareth*, Geneva, Labor & Fides, 1989 ■ J. Feiner & L. Vischer, *Neues Glaubensbuch: Der gemeinsame christliche Glaube* (ET *The Common Catechism*, London, Search, 1975) ■ Groupe des Dombes, *Marie dans le dessein de Dieu et la communion des saints*, part 1: *Dans l'histoire et l'écriture*; part 2: *Controverse et conversion*, Paris, Bayard/Le Centurion, 1999 ■ V. Lossky, *Théologie mystique de l'Eglise d'Orient* (ET *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, London, Clarke, 1957) ■ G. Miegge, *La Vergine Maria* (ET *The Virgin Mary*, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1955).

## THIRD WORLD

THE TERM "third world" is generally understood as synonymous with developing nations (a term that itself merits definition). "Third world" is used more commonly than either "first world" or "second world"; more recently the term "fourth world" also has come into use.

The first world usually denotes the leading industrialized countries mainly of Western Europe and the USA and other countries

of comparable economic development. The second world refers to the rest of the industrializing nations, mainly the former Soviet Union and countries of Eastern European. The third world is the rest of the world, in particular, the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Used as such, the term appears widely both in the media and in academic circles.

The term "third world" was first used in 1952 by the French economist and demographer Alfred Sauvy in an essay on "Trois mondes, une planète" (Three worlds, one planet). The concept reflected the idea that several continents had been excluded from power in the world. The term has come to suggest that this very exclusion has generated a set of common characterizations in the historical experiences of the people of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. This concept of the third world as an excluded world gave it more currency than "first world" and "second world".

The expression "third world" became part of the development\* debate, especially in the 1960s when the rich countries began to be called developed countries, and the poor countries, backward or under-developed. The first world became the rich nations, the second the industrialized or industrializing, centrally directed socialist countries. The term "fourth world" was added only much later to denote the least developed and chronically poor countries. The so-called theory of dependence,\* developed in the 1960s by people like Samir Amin in Africa and A. Gunder Frank, O. Sunkel, Celso Furtado and others in Latin America, saw underdevelopment as a process related to the development of the "central countries". The third world, therefore, can also be seen as the dependent "periphery" of an integrated "international division of labour".

The countries which have been held to compose the third world exhibit tremendous differences – historically, politically, culturally and economically. But it can still be maintained that they also have enough in common historically, and potentially culturally or economically, to include them in a common analytical category which contrasts them qualitatively with other countries.

The term "third world" still best encapsulates a particular way of analyzing the

world which is relevant even after the end of the cold war and the demise of the former “second world”. Globalization, characterized by exclusion and marginalization of vast sections of people and countries, has in a way made the term “third world” even more significant.

The WCC has given major attention to the issues of the third world since the late 1960s. The expansion in the membership of the Council, especially in the 1960s, with a large number of churches from developing nations, a preferential option for the poor\* and an action-oriented approach to issues naturally made the Council deeply involved in the third world.

In the Roman Catholic Church, Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio* (1967) is the first document devoted to this issue, although John XXIII had already called attention to the condition of under-developed peoples. The joint WCC/RCC SODEPAX\* commission (1968-80) worked extensively on this theme, underlined again in John Paul II's *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987).

See also **globalization, economic; poverty; social encyclicals, papal.**

NINAN KOSHY

■ *British Churches and the Third World*, London, BCC, 1979 ■ T. Draisma, *Underdevelopment Continued?*, Rotterdam, Ecumenical Research Exchange, 1984 ■ A. Gilmore, *Aid Matters: A Book of Cries, Questions and Prayers*, London, SCM Press, 1998 ■ K.B. Hadjor, *Dictionary of Third World Terms*, London, Penguin, 1993 ■ N. Harris, *The End of the Third World*, Harmondsworth, UK, Penguin, 1990 ■ *International Third World Studies Journal and Review*, pub. since 1989 ■ V. Samuel, *Evangelism and the Poor: A Third World Study Guide*, Bangalore, Partnership in Mission-Asia, 1983 ■ W.R. Schmidt ed., *Catalysing Hope for Justice: Essays in Honour of C.I. Ity*, Singapore, CCA, 1987 ■ P. Worsley, *The Three Worlds: Culture and Development*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1984.

### THOMAS, M.M. (Madathilparampil Mammen)

B. 15 May 1916, Kerala, India; d. 3 Dec. 1996, Madras. “M.M.”, a pioneering Asian ecumenical thinker and layman, active in the ecumenical movement for many years, was



moderator of the WCC central committee, 1968-75. Secretary and later vice-chairman of the World Student Christian Federation,\* 1947-53, he was also chairman of the working committee of the WCC's Department on Church and Society and of the world conference on Church and Society at Geneva in 1966. At the WCC's assemblies in New Delhi 1961 and Uppsala 1968 he was a main speaker.

Thomas helped to organize and spoke at the world Christian youth conferences – Oslo 1947, Kottayam 1952 and Lausanne 1960. In Asia, he organized a series of ecumenical study conferences on social questions, which provided the basis for social reflections during the early years of the East Asia Christian Conference: Bangkok 1949, Lucknow 1953 and Kuala Lumpur 1959. He was secretary of the Youth Christian Council of Action, Kerala, and afterwards youth secretary of his own church, the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar, and later director of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society in Bangalore, 1962-75.

He studied for a year at Union Theological Seminary in New York on a WCC fellowship, and was later visiting professor at Union, at Princeton Theological Seminary, and at Perkins School of Theology. He has lectured extensively in North America, Europe and Asia on Christianity and social problems and on the dialogue between Christianity and other faiths. In 1990 he was appointed governor of Nagaland in India.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ M.M. Thomas, *The Acknowledged Christ of the Indian Renaissance*, London, SCM Press, 1970 ■ *The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution*, London, SCM Press, 1966 ■ *My Ecumenical Journey*, Trivandrum, Ecumenical Publ., 1990 ■ *Risking Christ for Christ's Sake*, WCC, 1987 ■ *Salvation and Humanisation*, Bangalore, Christian Institute, 1971 ■ K.C. Abraham, *Christian Witness in Society: A Tribute to M.M. Thomas*, Bangalore, Board of Theological Education, Senate of Serampore College, 1998 ■ T.M. Philip, *The Encounter between Theology and Ideology: An Exploration into the Communicative Theology of M.M. Thomas*, Madras, CLS, 1986 ■ H.T. Wolters, *Theology of Prophetic Participation: M.M. Thomas' Concept of Salvation and the Collective Struggle for Fuller Humanity in India*, Delhi, ISPCK, 1996.

## THURIAN, MAX

B. 16 Aug. 1921. Geneva, Switzerland; d. 15 Aug. 1996, Geneva. At age 21, in the midst of theological studies, Thurian met Roger Schutz who was seeking companions for an experiment in an ecumenical monastic com-



munity which he was founding in eastern France – Taizé.\* Of the Reformed church, he became one of its first members, and the community theologian and liturgist. From 1949 his ecumenical study and research served the WCC commission on Faith and Order.\* From 1970 on he was instrumental in preparing the document on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*,\* adopted by the WCC in 1982, and afterwards edited the six vol-

umes of official church responses: *Churches Respond to BEM* (WCC, 1986-89).

Well aware of Taizé's exemplary ecumenical influence, the former Vatican nuncio to France (1944-53), Pope John XXIII, personally invited Brothers Roger and Max to participate as observers at Vatican II.\*

In 1987 he discreetly professed full communion with the Roman Catholic Church, and was ordained a priest of the diocese of Naples. Remaining a faithful brother of Taizé, he continued on occasion quietly to guide ecumenical prayer groups in Geneva and gatherings of young people at Taizé, and to contribute to the studies of the international theological commission, of which he was a member, in the Roman curia.\*

TOM STRANSKY

■ M. Thurian, *La liturgia, contemplazione del mistero*, Bologna, Dehoniane, 1997 ■ *Mariage et célibat* (ET *Marriage and Celibacy*, London, SCM Press, 1959) ■ *Marie, mère du Seigneur, figure de l'Eglise* (ET, *Mary, Mother of the Lord*, London, Faith, 1963) ■ *Le mystère de l'eucharistie* (ET *The Mystery of the Eucharist*, London, Mowbray, 1983) ■ *L'unité visible des chrétiens et la tradition* (ET *Visible Unity and Tradition*, Baltimore, Helicon, 1962) ■ M. Thurian ed., *Ecumenical Perspectives on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, WCC, 1983 ■ M. Thurian & G. Wainwright eds, *Baptism and Eucharist: Ecumenical Convergence in Celebration*, WCC, 1983.

## TING, K.H. (Ding Guangxun)

B. 29 Sept. 1915, Shanghai. Ting has been principal of Nanjing Theological Seminary since 1953. From 1981 to 1997 he was president of the China Christian Council and the National Three-Self Movement. Ordained in 1942, he moved to Canada in 1946 to become mission secretary for the Student Christian Movement. After obtaining an MA from Union Theological Seminary in New York, he moved to Geneva as mission secretary for the World Student Christian Federation, 1948-51. Returning to China, he became general secretary of the Christian Literature Society, Shanghai, 1952-53, before going to Nanjing. He was consecrated bishop of Chekiang in 1955. As well as his responsibilities at Nanjing, he was made a member of the standing committee of the

National People's Congress in 1983, president of the Amity Foundation in 1986 and vice-moderator of the National People's Consultative Conference in 1989.

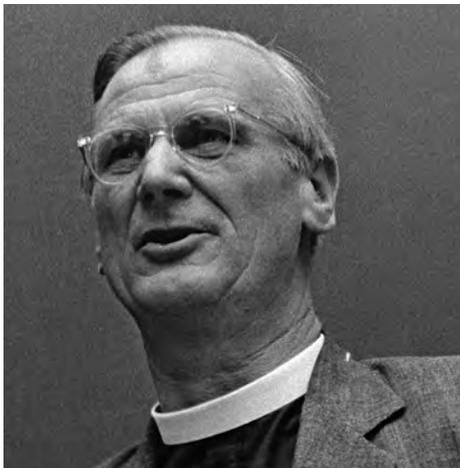
ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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### TOMKINS, OLIVER S.

B. 9 June 1908, Hankow, China ; d. 29 Oct. 1992, Esher, UK Anglican theologian and bishop of Bristol, UK, from 1953 to 1975, Tomkins was associate general secretary of the WCC, in charge of its London office, 1945-53. His close involvement with the WCC continued in a number of ways: as assistant secretary of the Faith and Order\* continuation committee, 1945-48; secretary of the commission on Faith and Order, 1948-53; chairman of the Faith and Order working committee, 1953-67; member of the central committee, 1968-75; and member of the Roman Catholic-WCC Joint Working Group,\* 1968-75. He helped to draft the basis of what became the Toronto statement.\* He was active in the British Student Christian Movement and in the World Student Christian Federation.\*

ANS J. VAN DER BENT



- O.S. Tomkins, *The Church in the Purpose of God*, London, SCM Press, 1950
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### TORONTO STATEMENT

THE TORONTO statement, whose proper title is "The Church, the Churches, and the World Council of Churches", was received by the meeting of the central committee of the WCC gathered at Toronto in 1950. It carries an explanatory sub-title: "The Ecclesiological Significance of the World Council of Churches". In retrospect, to attempt so comprehensive a statement on so potentially divisive a subject so soon after the first assembly in Amsterdam in 1948 may seem to be both foolhardy and courageous. Subsequent ecumenical history has shown that the risk was worth taking.

That the ecclesiological question had to be faced so soon after Amsterdam was the result of critical and fundamental questioning of the implications of Council membership for the member churches' concepts of the nature of the church\* and of what it meant to relate to churches with concepts which differed on ecclesiology. Among the questioners, interestingly enough, were some Roman Catholic ecumenists. In September 1949 a group of ten WCC representatives met with a like number of Roman Catholics at the Istina centre in Paris. This meeting helped the WCC leaders to realize that, even at this early stage, it was essential to try to define more clearly what the WCC was and what it was not. The Istina meeting was an important stage in the preparation of the Toronto statement. Oliver Tomkins of Great Britain was then secretary of the Faith and Order\* commission, and he, together with W.A. Visser 't Hooft, drafted a statement on the ecclesiological significance of the WCC and sent it to theologians for comment. Out of this consultative process came the draft of the Toronto statement.

### CONTENT

The statement, as finally agreed, begins by quoting the Amsterdam resolution on "the authority of the Council" and goes on to indicate that a further statement is needed, both to prevent misunderstandings and to indicate the provisional nature of any

WCC utterance. In the light of this declared intention, the statement begins with a series of five disclaimers headed "What the World Council Is Not", followed by eight assumptions which, it is claimed, underlie the WCC. The disclaimers have proved particularly significant in the history of the WCC as providing sufficient safeguards to encourage membership applications by churches for whom ecclesiology is the crucial test of relationship. The five disclaimers are as follows: (1) the WCC is not and must never become a super-church; (2) the purpose of the WCC is not to negotiate unions between churches, which can be done only by the churches themselves acting on their own initiative; (3) the WCC cannot and should not be based on any one particular conception of the church (i.e. it does not prejudge the ecclesiological problem); (4) membership of the WCC does not imply that a church treats its own conceptions of the church as merely relative; (5) membership of the WCC does not imply the acceptance of a specific doctrine concerning the nature of church unity.

The positive assumptions underlying the WCC speak of belief that all relationships must be based upon the headship of Christ, belief in the New Testament view that the church is one, recognition that membership of the church of Christ is more inclusive than any one church body, recognition that in churches other than one's own there are elements of the true church, a willingness to consult together to learn the will of Christ, an acceptance of a solidarity to assist each other, a resolve to enter into spiritual relationship for the purpose of mutual instruction, help and renewal.

One assumption requires fuller quotation, as it provoked lively and difficult debate in its drafting and final reception and carries with it ecclesiological implications for the WCC. It states: "The member churches of the World Council consider the relationship of other churches to the holy catholic church which the creeds profess as a subject for mutual consideration. Nevertheless, membership does not imply that each church must regard the other member churches as churches in the true and full sense of the word."

The commentary immediately following goes on: "There is a place in the WCC both

for those churches which recognize other churches as churches in the full and true sense, and for those who do not." The debate on that fourth assumption and the following commentary has been described by Visser 't Hooft as "one of the most heated we have ever had in the World Council". It reflected the different presuppositions of the founding fathers of the Council. One group assumed that the churches in membership gave full and unreserved recognition to each other. Others believed that membership did not mean that any church had to give up its convictions about the nature of the church, but rather that each member church was ready to enter into relations of fellowship and dialogue with other churches, in the hope that they would lead to full recognition and full unity. If the first group had had its way, membership of the Council would have become virtually impossible for those holding the second view. Far more was at stake than sentences in a document. The Orthodox churches, in particular, regarded the other churches as *essentially* incomplete. Others acknowledged that they did not consider their own church as a full, true and complete church and were not afraid of being told the same thing by others. As the statement was finally received at Toronto, it reflects the very originality of the WCC in that it sought to create a fellowship between churches who were not yet able to give full recognition to each other.

## BEYOND TORONTO

There is little doubt that at Toronto in 1950 the WCC so early in its life was at a crisis point. But it proved to be a "crisis unto life". From then on, the member churches recognized not only that they had a deep discernment of the differences between them but also that they had to live with them and work through them as the Holy Spirit led them on into deeper relationships. Unity was developing through admitted and acknowledged diversity. The existence of the Toronto statement has enabled a number of churches to become members of the WCC. Vitaly Borovoy has commented on the statement: "For the Orthodox it is the great charter of the WCC." It has also facilitated developing relationships between the RCC and the Council.

Not surprisingly, since 1950 the ecclesiological issue relating to membership has been handled cautiously by the Council. The New Delhi assembly in 1961 confirmed the statement but pleaded for further clarification of the issues raised, even as it affirmed, "We learn what the Council is by living together." But hopes for theological reflection on the meaning of that life remained, on the whole, unfulfilled. The world Faith and Order conference at Montreal in 1963 asked again that the WCC should devote further attention to the question of its ecclesiology. The fourth assembly at Uppsala (1968) spoke of the Council as a fellowship of churches seeking to express catholicity. By the time of the Nairobi assembly in 1975, the concept of the Council as "a conciliar fellowship of local churches which are themselves truly united" had developed. But the meaning of "conciliar" was and is still awaiting clear and agreed definition. The Vancouver assembly in 1983 sought to develop the perspective of such conciliar fellowship by considering practical steps in the churches' life and relations with one another. In 1991 the seventh assembly at Canberra adopted a statement on "The Unity of the Church as Koinonia: Gift and Calling" which emphasized again the call to the divided church to repent and renew its own life and witness as it seeks to manifest visibly in unity the communion which God intends with him and with each other.

In 1997, after a lengthy consultative process, the central committee adopted a statement, "Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC". This sought to spell out the implications and experience of the churches as they have been together in the WCC, and noted the changed situation since the Toronto statement was drawn up. The focus of the statement is on the *fellowship* of the WCC, rather than on its institutional structure and on the *common* calling which the churches seek to fulfill in and through the Council.

At the present time, the Toronto statement still remains as basic. It has rightly been described as more of a milestone than a stumbling block. It has served the churches well for 50 years. It remains still generally relevant, though many feel it needs revision.

Any revision can now be undertaken in the light of having walked together for two generations and of convergence and growing consensus on issues which are, at root, ecclesiological. These issues include baptism, eucharist and ministry; mission in Christ's way; justice, peace and the integrity of creation. The statement, however, is historically rooted in the situation of the churches of the 1950s. Rather than attempting a revision, it is now suggested, the better way of recovering the ecumenical memory as an aid to ecumenical progress is to combine an explanatory memorandum on the basis of the WCC with the publication of the entire Toronto statement, to which can be added a commentary in the style of BEM, incorporating the change and positive developments that have taken place since 1950.

See also **World Council of Churches**.

MORRIS WEST

■ Text of the Toronto statement in W.A. Visser 't Hooft, *The Genesis and Formation of the World Council of Churches*, WCC, 1982

■ T. Best & G. Gassmann eds., *On the Way to Fuller Koinonia: World Conference on Faith and Order*, WCC, 1994 ■ V. Borovoy, "The Ecclesiastical Significance of the WCC: The Legacy and Promise of Toronto", *ER*, 30, 3-4, 1988 ■ A. Bronkhorst, "Die Toronto-Erklärung nach 36 Jahren", *ÖR*, 36, 2, 1987

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## TORTURE

PRACTISED in nearly half of the countries of the world, torture today has become more scientific and hence more destructive. At the same time, it has never been so universally denounced as it is today. The struggle against torture is in the forefront of human rights\* questions.

Christian communities have not always had the same attitude to torture. Early Christians were persecuted for their refusal to accept the divine claims of political powers. Later on, however, in new conditions, Christians allowed torture, or at least acquiesced in its practice, from positions of influence in political relationships and organiza-

tions. During the Inquisition in Europe, the conquest of America and the era of colonial expansion, torture was widely practised.

Used to obtain confessions and to increase the punishment of criminals, methods of torture often become methods of governing, as political authorities terrorize entire populations by systematically resorting to torture to suppress all kinds of dissent. Physical suffering caused by beating, weapons, electric shock, rape and sexual brutality, the inhuman treatment of children, mock executions, forced labour, the use of drugs and psychologically destructive procedures, sensual deprivation and destabilizing prison routines, harassment and perpetual menace are all so many acts of cruelty aimed at breaking the free will of the victim and sometimes of an entire population.

The diversity and universality of the methods of torture practised today contrast with the unanimity of its prohibition. Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, the international pact on human rights of 1966, the 1984 international convention (UN) against torture, the European and inter-American conventions on human rights, the African charter, and numerous national laws absolutely forbid the practice of torture. An international committee against torture (UN) examines cases and appeals; a recorder files an annual report denouncing torture at the Commission on Human Rights; the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture invites a group of acknowledged experts to visit places of detention so that states can install mechanisms designed to prevent torture in places of high risk.

The pressure exerted by non-governmental organizations\* often brings the facts to light, protects victims by publicizing their cases, and shows states that the practice of torture can undermine their international standing. People from all parts of the world write letters to support a victim. Public attention has to a large extent shattered the isolation and silence that torturers need to hold and break their victims. Individuals are no longer alone but know that others are working for them. At the same time, the torturers have discovered that they too are being watched and must eventually account for their actions.

Torture can be prevented by educating the public about human rights and by providing special training for law enforcement agents in every country. A network of solidarity is needed to unite the numerous anti-torture groups to make their efforts more effective.

The theological undergirding of the struggle against torture is not difficult to find: the dignity of the human person, the reality of our common humanity, God's universal concern for men and women, Christ's presence in the "little ones" that suffer – all these truths speak clearly against all abuse of the human person. With regard to torture, Pope John Paul II said to the International Committee of the Red Cross (1982): "From their childhood Christians hear the story of Christ's passion. The memory of Jesus stripped naked, beaten, derided, nailed to the cross, should make them refuse to see similar treatment meted out to other human beings. The disciples of Christ reject, spontaneously and absolutely, any recourse to such means which nothing on earth can justify and which destroy the dignity of both the tortured and the torturer."

In 1977 the WCC gave expression to its permanent concern on this question: "Torture is endemic, breeds in the dark, in silence. We call upon the churches to bring its existence into the open, to break the silence, to reveal the persons and structures of our societies which are responsible for this most dehumanizing of all violations of human rights." The WCC has initiated specific programmes in which churches could be involved. Many Christians have joined non-confessional organizations such as Action of Christians for the Abolition of Torture, created in France in 1974, or Amnesty International.\*

The flare-up of the phenomenon of torture reveals a profound sickness that has stricken humanity. Torture is indeed the product of several causes. The economic injustice that characterizes some countries leads all too easily to reactions of violence and repression. When the personalization of power is pushed to the limit, the dictator feels justified in torturing those who do not submit. Similarly, when ideologies leave no place for mystery, for humankind's higher state, they become totalitarian and crushing.

Deviants become easy prey for those who impose their singular and total truth. Christian churches themselves learned this sad lesson: when they transformed faith in Jesus Christ into an ideology at the service of a temporal power, they justified the use of torture.

GUY AURENCHE

■ G. Aurenche, *Avocat de l'espérance*, Paris, Centurion, 1994 ■ W.T. Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics and the Body of Christ*, Oxford, OUP, 1998 ■ A. Jacques, *L'interdit: La torture en procès*, Paris, Cerf, 1993 ■ *The Tortured, Torturers and Christian Hope*, Paris, FIACAT, 1990.

## TOTALITARIANISM

TOTALITARIANISM as a form of government that denies individual freedom and that subordinates all aspects of personal and social life to the authority of a centralized government has existed in various forms throughout history. In modern times Benito Mussolini used the term "totalitarianism" (*totalitario*) to define the fascist project (see **fascism**): "All within the state, none outside the state, none against the state." Mussolini's Italy, Stalin's Soviet Union and Hitler's Germany have usually been seen as typical forms of totalitarianism.

The basic characteristics are easily recognized: a strong central rule that controls all aspects of life through coercion and repression, usually exempt from all legal or political control, the control or suppression of social institutions and political organizations (political parties, trade unions, religious, social, cultural and even sports institutions), and the attempt to replace or subordinate all relations of allegiance (family, friendship, religious loyalty) to the ties of loyalty and obedience to the state. The economy usually rests in the hands of the governing elite, allegedly for the sake of the superior end, frequently simply for the profit and enjoyment of its members.

Totalitarianism can be distinguished from dictatorship, despotism and tyranny by two characteristics. On the one hand, it usually eliminates all existing political institutions, laws and traditions and replaces them with new ones. On the other hand, it claims that this step is taken in pursuit of some ab-

solute goal, such as national expansion, racial purity or theocratic rule. All opposition must be eliminated at whatever cost. Usually some group, internal or external to the country, is denounced as the main enemy (the Jews in Nazi Germany is a paramount example) and targeted for destruction. In these circumstances large-scale and organized violence is permissible and often necessary. Government is exercised by an elite, conceived of as possessing superior intelligence, moral integrity and willpower and sometimes claiming divine sanction.

Totalitarianism has been repeatedly condemned as an ideology\* by most Christian churches (see **Confessing Church**), although groups of Christians and even churches have sometimes supported such governments and even tried to justify them theologically. Although religio-political fundamentalisms (see **Fundamentalists**), present so commonly today in Christian, Muslim and other religious movements and regimes, have other specific characteristics, their political and social policies link them very closely to totalitarianism.

The WCC has emphatically rejected totalitarianism ever since the Oxford conference (1937). The word had been used by J.H. Oldham in a preparatory document, and Oxford took over his definition of it as "the widespread tendency of the state to control the totality of human life in its individual and social aspects, combined with the tendency to attribute absolute value to the state, the national community or the dominant class". The theological rejection of such claims is based on the affirmation of the sovereignty of God and on the understanding of what it is to be human. Totalitarianism becomes a species of idolatry by claiming for the state, the nation or the race an absolute allegiance that is owed to God alone; it reduces the person,\* created in the image of God, to a mere particle in a total whole; and it prevents the participation of people in the building of society, thus denying a fundamental right of all human beings and a demand that God makes of them.

Amsterdam 1948 confirms the rejection of totalitarianism and opposes to it the idea of "responsible society", further developed in Evanston (1954) as a criterion to oppose some absolute claims of both communism

and liberal capitalism. Since Nairobi 1975, the critique of "economic domination" at both national and international levels and more recently the rejection of the totalitarian claims of neo-liberal economics to represent the only alternative and the final stage of economic development have been often expressed in ecumenical statements and initiatives.

See also **globalization, economic.**

JOSÉ MÍGUEZ BONINO

## TOURISM

ECUMENICAL concern about tourism grows out of the recognition that its effect on the economies, cultures and life-styles of third-world countries involves a crucial issue of justice\* and development.\* WCC attention to tourism emerged in the late 1960s in the context of a Department on the Laity study of "Changing Concepts of Work and Leisure". Following a 1969 conference on leisure-tourism in Tutzing, Federal Republic of Germany, the issue was studied under the rubric of "Participation in Change", one of five major WCC programmes between the fourth and fifth assemblies. Visits to the Middle East assessed the impact of leisure travel on Arab-Jewish relations. A chaplaincy at the Munich Olympics (1972) sought to evaluate the effect of such sporting occasions on personal and international relationships.

In the early 1970s a conference in Nairobi explored tourism in East Africa. Black Africans in the tourist business pointed out that almost all the profits from tourism went to white tour operators and their partners in Europe, with minimal spin-off for the country that provided the surf, sand, scenery and service. Out of this conference came an experiment in responsible tourism. Canadians, on a two-week visit to East Africa, could spend one week as they chose, then, for the other week, they worked alongside counterparts engaged in the same trade or profession. Tourism was the subject of one of the five preparatory consultations that led to the founding of the Caribbean Conference of Churches in 1973. Researchers gathered advertisements for Caribbean tourism in North American peri-

odicals; in every case, black people were shown serving whites.

In Asia, concerns expressed at ecumenical workshops in Penang, Malaysia, in 1974 and in Manila in 1980 led in 1982 to the formation of the Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism (ECTWT), with its headquarters in Bangkok. Its member organizations – both Roman Catholic and groups related to the WCC – are from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, the Middle East and the Pacific. ECTWT has links with the European Ecumenical Network on Third World Tourism (TEN) and the Center for Responsible Tourism in San Anselmo, California.

ECTWT cooperates with organizations in destination countries that challenge tourist policies and practices and encourage codes of tourist ethics and alternative forms of tourism. International industry promotions have been used as occasions to present dissenting views that expose political and economic imperialism, racism,\* sexism\* and human rights\* abuses in the tourism industry.

In seeking to call attention to the injustices of the tourism industry, ecumenical programmes have investigated the role of the transnational corporations\* controlling travel and resort facilities and the collaboration with them by third-world governments. Foreign currency earned by a tourist-destination country is about 15% of the travel, hotel and entertainment costs. Little technology or management skill is transferred. Environmental destruction often accompanies resort construction. Loss of fishing rights and farming areas aggravates the drift to city squatter areas.

The ecumenical programmes seek to defend the rights of those who suffer human rights abuses, cultural desecration, loss of livelihood and destruction of life-style. People are encouraged to express and to organize themselves in resort areas. A particular concern is sex tourism, including child prostitution (see **prostitution, child**), which may enslave children as young as three years old. Ecumenical programmes have highlighted the evils of prostitution, the threat of AIDS\* and other sexually transmitted diseases, the link with drugs and the exploitation of "bar hostesses" in conditions of virtual slavery. Other programmes focus on alternative ap-

proaches to tourism which enable tourists to see the actual life-style and cultural traditions of people and to avoid the debasement of “cultural performances” for tourists, dependence on foreign hedonism to make a living and inculcation of servile attitudes and consumer values.

National and international groups have also studied the theological basis of ecumenical concern for tourism, e.g. seeing travel as a pilgrimage of humble discovery of the human face of God in the peoples, maximizing the inter-relationship of people. They have emphasized that humanity’s creation in the image of God implies the preciousness of human life and the importance of human relations. Liberational approaches to theology have helped to focus on victims of tourism so as to arouse new consciousness and point to new structures for more just relationships.

IAN FRASER and HARVEY PERKINS

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## TRADITION AND TRADITIONS

“TRADITION” is used in a variety of senses, some wide-ranging and others more restricted. (1) In an inclusive sense it designates the whole of Christian faith\* and practice – not only doctrinal teaching but worship, norms of behaviour, living experience, sanctity – as handed down within the church\* from Christ and the apostles to the present day. Understood in this comprehensive way, Tradition is not to be contrasted with holy scripture\* but seen as including it; scripture exists within Tradition. (2) In a narrower sense Tradition may be distinguished from scripture and taken to mean the teaching and practice of the church, not explicitly recorded in the words of the Bible, but handed down from the beginning within the Christian community. (3) More narrowly still – especially when used in the plural, “traditions” – the term may refer, often in a

pejorative sense, to a belief or custom which cannot claim any divine or apostolic origin.

Although different Christian bodies differ widely in their estimate of Tradition in sense (2), it is obvious that no religious body could exist without some kind of tradition. Even the decision to dispense altogether with Tradition and to rely solely on the authority of scripture would itself constitute a tradition.

## TRADITION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The key passages occur in 1 Cor. “I received from the Lord”, says Paul, “what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf bread” (11:23). Here the noun “tradition” (*paradosis*) does not occur, but Paul uses the related verb *paradidonai*, “hand on”. Two points are noteworthy in this text: Tradition is regarded as derived from Christ (cf. Gal. 1:12), and it is directly connected with the institution and celebration of holy communion. This second point acquires particular significance when seen in the context of contemporary “eucharistic ecclesiology”. The church, in the view of many present-day Roman Catholic and Orthodox theologians, is essentially a sacramental organism, which becomes itself through the celebration of the eucharist;\* and so Tradition is best understood not primarily as a collection of facts and propositions, whether recorded in writing or preserved orally, but rather in terms of a communal action and a living presence. Tradition means the eucharistic Christ; to live within the Tradition signifies above all to “eat this bread and drink the cup”, proclaiming the Lord’s death “until he comes” (1 Cor. 11:26).

Paul also links Tradition not just with the eucharist but more broadly with the total ministry of Christ. After stating, “I handed on to you... what I in turn had received”, he goes on to refer to Christ’s death “for our sins” and, more particularly, to his resurrection\* (1 Cor. 15:3-4). But Tradition in the Pauline writings can also carry a much more restricted meaning, denoting a custom such as the veiling of the head by women during prayer (1 Cor. 11:2,5-6).

While in these passages the word “tradition” and its cognates bear a favourable sense, elsewhere in the NT the attitude is

more ambivalent. Paul, for instance, refers to the “traditions of my ancestors” (Gal. 1:14), i.e. Jewish customs which he himself observes but which he does not consider obligatory upon all believers. Elsewhere he makes an emphatic contrast between the truth which is “according to Christ” and mere “human tradition”, which is to be rejected (Col. 2:8). In the synoptic gospels Jesus draws a similar distinction between the “tradition of the elders” and the “commandment of God”, and he accuses the scribes and Pharisees of “making void the word of God through your tradition that you have handed on” (Mark 7:5-13).

The NT attitude towards Tradition and traditions is therefore one of critical discernment. Traditions must be continually tested; as the Russian Orthodox theologian Vladimir Lossky (1903-58) observes, Tradition represents “the critical spirit of the church”. Seen in this way, Tradition is not only a protective, conservative principle but primarily the principle of growth and regeneration. Christians do not remain “in” the tradition simply through passive inertia or mechanical repetition. There must be an unceasing effort to discriminate between “Tradition” and “traditions”, between the essential gospel of salvation in Christ and what is simply accidental and historically conditioned. “The Lord said, I am truth. He did not say, I am custom” (council of Carthage, A.D. 257).

### TRADITION IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Since, so far as we know, Christ did not commit his teachings to writing, the church depended at first entirely on oral tradition. After the composition of the books of the NT, oral traditions continued for a time to circulate in the Christian community and are cited by 2nd-century authors such as Papias and Hegesippus, but from A.D. 200 onwards little use is made of these unwritten traditions. The Gnostic appeal to a secret tradition independent of the recognized scriptures was firmly rejected by Irenaeus (d. c.200), who insisted that the Christian faith is based on the Bible and on the public teaching, in full agreement with the Bible, which is handed down by the succession of bishops in each Christian centre. Clement of Alexandria (d. c.215) appealed like the

Gnostics to esoteric tradition, but here Origen (d. c.254) adopted a significantly different standpoint, holding that all tradition must be based ultimately on the Old and New Testaments. Writers in the late 2nd and early 3rd centuries, such as Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Hippolytus and Novatian, refer to a summary of Christian teaching which they term the “canon” or “rule of faith” (*regula fidei*), but the contents of this canon turn out to be entirely biblical; it is regarded, not as something supplementary to the Bible, but as identical with scripture and confirmed by it (see **canon**). The same is true of the primitive baptismal creeds\* and of later conciliar statements of faith such as the Nicene Creed\* (381) and the Chalcedonian definition (451); these again are intended simply as re-affirmations of the fundamental biblical message concerning Christ.

One of the most explicit patristic statements concerning unwritten Tradition occurs in Basil of Caesarea (d.379): “Some things we have from written teaching, and others we have received handed down to us in a mystery from the tradition of the apostles. Both forms of tradition have the same value for piety” (*On the Holy Spirit* 27.66). This passage has sometimes been used to support a “two-source” theory of divine revelation. When Basil goes on, however, to give examples of the things “handed down to us in a mystery”, these involve not points of doctrinal teaching but various practices in Christian worship such as the sign of the cross, turning to the east during prayer, the invocation (*epiclesis*\*) over the gifts at the eucharist, and threefold immersion in baptism, all of which he considers apostolic in origin, although not explicitly mentioned in scripture. Thus for Basil unwritten Tradition, while important for liturgical prayer, does not seem to represent a second source of doctrine, independent of the Bible. In this text, as in 1 Cor. 11:23, we note the connection between Tradition and the eucharist.

For patristic authors in general, then, Tradition does not constitute a supplementary source of information about Christ alongside scripture, but it denotes simply the manner in which scripture is interpreted and lived by successive generations within the church.

## THE REFORMATION DEBATE

The relationship between scripture and Tradition (in sense 2) has figured prominently in controversy between Roman Catholics and Protestants since the 16th century. The council of Trent (session 4, 8 April 1546) drew a distinction between "written books" (*libri scripti*) and "unwritten traditions" (*sine scripto traditiones*). It was probably not the intention of the bishops at Trent to commit themselves specifically to a "two-source" doctrine, whereby revelation is handed on partly in scripture and partly in living oral tradition, but this was in fact the prevailing view among the Roman Catholic theologians from Trent until Vatican II. Tradition was usually treated as distinct from scripture, and it was held that teachings not contained in the Bible may be gathered from Tradition alone. On such a view Tradition becomes something added to the biblical testimony, so that scripture and Tradition form two parallel and complementary elements that together make up a larger whole, the totality of revealed truth.

"Two-source" language, similar to that employed by Roman Catholics, frequently occurs in Orthodox texts from the 17th century onwards. The statement in the Orthodox confession of Peter of Moghila (1643) is typical: "The articles of faith have received their authority and approbation partly from holy scripture and partly from ecclesiastical Tradition... The dogmas of the church are of two kinds, some being committed to writing... and the others handed down orally" (1.5).

On the Protestant side, the Reformers carefully distinguished between apostolic and post-apostolic Tradition, accepting the first as divine revelation,\* while regarding the second as human teaching, to be received only if it agrees with the Bible. Scripture was proclaimed as the sole and final test by which all traditions were to be judged. The *principle* of Tradition was not denied, but its *applications* were rigorously submitted to the sovereign criterion of scripture, and any notion of two parallel "sources" of revealed truth was repudiated. Thus the Westminster confession of faith (Presbyterian: 1646) states that "all things necessary... for man's salvation" are to be found "expressly set down in scripture", or else may be deduced from it, "unto which nothing at any time is

to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men" (1.6). But approval is then given to such traditional statements of faith as the Nicene Creed and the Chalcedonian definition. The Lutheran Augsburg confession (1530) and formula of Concord (1576), while affirming the primacy of scripture, similarly endorse the ancient creeds (the Apostles', the Nicene and the Athanasian), together with the other conciliar decisions that have the "unanimous consent" of the undivided church.

The same position is adopted in the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England (1562). Here it is stated as a basic principle: "Holy scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation" (art. 6). The "three creeds" are to be received, since they agree with scripture (art. 8), but the decisions of "general councils" do not possess authority unless "it may be declared that they be taken out of holy scripture" (art. 21); "traditions" may be changed (art. 34). Tradition is thus accepted, on the Protestant and Anglican view, only in so far as it represents the true interpretation of scripture, and it can never constitute a parallel authority, independent of scripture or supplementary to it.

In modern ecumenical discussions concerning Tradition, the 16th-century categories with their sharp polarity have been largely superseded. The "two-source" language, while still found occasionally in Roman Catholic authors, is no longer generally prevalent. Tradition is now commonly understood, by Catholics and Orthodox alike, in an inclusive manner (sense 1 rather than sense 2); there is, in other words, one source and not two, so that Tradition and scripture must be always taken together and never treated separately. Many Anglicans and Protestants today are willing to recognize the need for Tradition, viewed in this comprehensive way, so long as the primacy of scripture is safeguarded.

In the context of multilateral ecumenism, the statement on "Scripture, Tradition and traditions" made by the fourth world conference on Faith and Order at Montreal 1963 marked an incipient convergence: "We exist as Christians by the Tradition of the gospel (the *paradosis* of the *kerygma*) testified in scripture, transmitted in and by the church through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Tradition taken in this sense is actualized in the preaching of the word, in the administration of the sacraments and worship, in Christian teaching and theology, and in mission and witness to Christ by lives of the members of the church." Yet Montreal could as yet do no more than recognize the hermeneutical problem of the relation between scripture and authoritative ecclesial traditions or between those traditions and Tradition (i.e. the transmission of the gospel as a whole, including scripture). Montreal offered no criteria but simply asked questions: "How can we distinguish between traditions embodying the true Tradition and merely human traditions? How can we overcome the situation in which we all read scripture in the light of our own traditions? Does not the ecumenical situation demand that we search for the Tradition by re-examining our own particular traditions?" The Montreal convergence made the production of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* possible. But the unresolved questions re-emerge in the responses of the churches to BEM, particularly in connection with the first question put by the Lima document: How far can your church "recognize in this text the faith of the church through the ages?" (see *BEM, 1982-90: Report on the Process and Responses*, WCC, 1990, 131-42).

The shift in Roman Catholic opinion was strikingly apparent at Vatican II\* (1962-65). In the original draft of the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, the first chapter was entitled "Two Sources of Revelation", but such language was eliminated from the final version. While "sacred Tradition and sacred scripture" continue to be mentioned as coordinate elements, the integral connection between the two is constantly emphasized: together they "form one sacred deposit of the word of God" (para. 10). But the constitution also specifies: "It is not from sacred scripture alone that the church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed" (para. 9). While this statement is bound to prove disturbing to Protestants, it does not exclude the opinion, held in fact by many at the Council, that all revelation is indeed contained in scripture, albeit at times only in an obscure and implicit fashion. Since Vatican II most Catholic theologians have taken the view

that Tradition and scripture, while different in form, are identical in content, so that Tradition is only formally, but not materially, independent of scripture. But this position is not actually stated in the constitution on revelation; Vatican II deliberately left the question open.

In its Decree on Ecumenism Vatican II invoked the important concept of "an order or hierarchy of truths" (para. 11), which makes possible a more flexible approach towards the nature of Tradition (see **hierarchy of truths**). Certain elements in Tradition are nearer than others to the central message of salvation; Tradition is not to be viewed in strictly monolithic terms. Whereas at Vatican I (1869-70) Tradition was closely associated with the pronouncements of the magisterium,\* after Vatican II increasing emphasis has been placed on the role of the *sensus fidelium*, the conscience or consciousness of the people of God as a whole, in preserving and expressing Tradition (see **consensus fidelium**). This understanding too has served to re-inforce a more inclusive and flexible understanding of Tradition.

The developing ecumenical convergence on Tradition and scripture is evident in the agreed statement adopted by the Anglican-Orthodox joint doctrinal commission at Moscow in 1976. Here Tradition is taken in a comprehensive sense: it is "the entire life of the church in the Holy Spirit" (para. 10). Interdependence is stressed: "Any disjunction between scripture and Tradition such as would treat them as two separate 'sources of revelation' must be rejected. The two are correlative... Holy Tradition completes holy scripture in the sense that it safeguards the integrity of the biblical message" (para. 9). The primacy of scripture is asserted, but in qualified terms: scripture is styled, not "the only criterion", but "the main criterion whereby the church tests traditions" (para. 9). The Moscow statement concludes with some optimism that the agreement reached on scripture and Tradition "offers to our churches a solid basis for closer rapprochement" (para. 12).

Yet difficulties remain. A notable instance is the belief in the bodily assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, proclaimed as a dogma\* by the Roman Catholic Church in 1950. On the Protestant side it can be ob-

jected that the assumption is nowhere mentioned in the NT, either directly or indirectly, while the earliest specific references to it in ecclesiastical authors do not occur before the late 4th century. In what sense, then, can the doctrine be regarded as present, even in an obscure fashion, within scripture or apostolic Tradition?\* For this very reason the 1950 definition has also aroused misgivings among the Orthodox. While affirming the assumption in their liturgical worship, they feel that because of the absence of early evidence it should not, and indeed cannot, be proclaimed as a dogma. In Lossky's words, it is a mystery "which the church keeps in the hidden depths of her inner consciousness... not so much an object of faith as a foundation of hope".

### LIVING TRADITION

Recent writing on Tradition is marked by a strong preference for dynamic rather than static categories. Tradition is not so much a "deposit of doctrine" as a shared style of living, not primarily an accumulation of documents and testimonies but the life of Christ and the Holy Spirit in the church. For the French Catholic Yves Congar, Tradition is "the church's life in the communion of faith and worship... the setting in which the Catholic sense is fostered and finds expression"; for the Romanian Orthodox Dumitru Staniloae it is "not a sum of propositions learned by heart, but a lived experience". In any contemporary discussion of the topic, what needs to be said first of all is that the only true Tradition is living, critical and creative, formed by the union of human freedom with the grace\* of the Holy Spirit.\*

However, this vision of Tradition as dynamic and developing is by no means exclusively modern. Gregory of Nazianzus (329-89), for instance, envisages a progressive revelation in three main stages: "The Old Testament preached the Father clearly, but the Son only in an obscure manner. The New Testament revealed the Son, but did no more than hint at the godhead of the Holy Spirit. Today the Spirit dwells among us, manifesting himself to us more and more clearly." So, "by gradual additions and ascents, advancing from glory to glory", the people of God grows in its apprehension of the truth (*Ora-*

*tion* 31.26-27). Significantly Gregory uses the words "more and more" of the Spirit's self-disclosure; the Paraclete's manifestation is not completed at Pentecost,\* but it develops with an ever-increasing clarity in the continuing life of the church.

A dynamic understanding of Tradition was re-affirmed during the 19th century in Catholic Germany by Johann Möhler and the Tübingen school, and in Orthodox Russia by Aleksey Khomyakov. Möhler described Tradition as "the living gospel... this vital, spiritual force, which we inherit from our fathers and which is perpetuated in the church". Cardinal Newman discussed the subject more systematically in his seminal *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845). His views, although never officially adopted by the Roman Catholic Church, have proved widely influential and received at least partial confirmation in the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation at Vatican II: "This Tradition which comes from the apostles develops in the church with the help of the Holy Spirit. For there is a growth in understanding of the realities and the words that have been handed down" (para. 8). But many Orthodox, while wholeheartedly endorsing a dynamic view of Tradition, are unhappy about the phrase "development of doctrine", preferring to speak rather of a "development in the expression of doctrine".

As living and dynamic, Tradition is essentially communal. It is transmitted not by isolated individuals but by persons\* in relation – by the total ecclesial community, especially when gathered for the celebration of the eucharist. While, in the Catholic and Orthodox view, the apostolic succession of bishops plays a central role in the transmission of Tradition, it is handed down equally through the succession – which also may be termed "apostolic" – of holy men and women in the church, through what Symeon the New Theologian (959-1022) called the "golden chain" of the saints extending from Christ to our own day. Tradition involves the transmission not just of doctrine but of sanctity and spirituality. And alongside the bishops and the saints, all the baptized without exception are active and responsible guardians of Tradition. In the words of Paulinus of Nola (d.431): "Let us hang upon the lips of all the faithful, for the

Spirit of God breathes upon every one of them.”

While Tradition is indeed the dynamic movement of God in history,\* it is to be seen also in a metahistorical or eschatological perspective. It is not so much a long line stretched out in time as the gathering of time itself into God's eternity, the irruption into this present age of the eschaton, or age to come (see *eschatology*).

#### KALLISTOS WARE

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## TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS

CORPORATIONS with activities in one or more foreign countries have existed for a long time. After the second world war, however, when transnational corporations (TNCs) expanded at an unprecedented rate, a strong interest in the phenomenon developed.

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), TNCs are at the core of the process of globalization. In 1997 the world's 100 largest non-financial TNCs together held \$1.8 trillion in foreign assets, sold products worth \$2.1 trillion abroad and employed some 6 million persons in their foreign affiliates. Almost all of these corporations are from the rich Triad countries (European Union, Japan and United States). The trend towards the liberalization of regulatory regimes for foreign direct investments is creating ever more favourable conditions for TNCs, while mergers and acquisitions are leading to an increasing concentration of economic power in the corporate world.

An important concern for the ecumenical movement is the fact that corporate concentration and power are rising at a more rapid pace than the capacity of individual governments and the international community to monitor, regulate and control TNC activities. The conference on “Church, Community and State” (Oxford 1937) noted: “The earlier stage of competitive capitalism has been gradually replaced by a monopolistic stage, and this economic change has brought with it corresponding political consequences.” The original ideal of modern democracy has therefore become increasingly difficult to achieve, since “centres of economic power have been formed which are not responsible to any organ of the community and which in practice constitute something in the nature of a tyranny over the lives of masses of men”.

In 1955 the WCC central committee identified the need for critical study and evaluation of the impact of private trade and enterprise in the “economically underdeveloped nations” of the world. Concern about the effects of TNC activities in developing countries was also expressed at the meeting of SODEPAX\* in Montreal, 1969. Although a SODEPAX meeting in Beirut one year earlier had expressed optimism about the beneficial effects of TNCs, the Montreal meeting noted that the Beirut report did not give adequate attention to certain questions regarding the ambiguity of private investment in the under-developed countries. It predicted that international corporations would control an enormously increased productive capacity within the next decade, hence the need for international regulation and study of the circumstances under which private investment would lead to a net gain in welfare.

Criticism of the exploitative nature of TNCs and the need for effective control over their power also came during the assembly of the WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism in Bangkok 1973, and at the WCC conference on science and technology for human development in Bucharest 1974. The criticism culminated in a sharp statement of the fifth WCC assembly in Nairobi, 1975: “TNCs are a typical example of the ways in which capitalist forces in the international and national sphere join together to

oppress the poor and keep them under domination.”

It was recommended that a study programme on TNCs be initiated. The WCC executive committee in Zurich (1978) approved a number of guidelines for this programme, which was to help raise awareness through action and reflection and to be undertaken from a perspective of solidarity with victims of TNC operations. A report on the lessons learned through the TNC programme was given to the WCC central committee in 1982.

Reactions of churches to the phenomenon of TNCs are diverse. Some churches have publicly denounced specific TNC activities, e.g. their operations in apartheid South Africa, the irresponsible promotion of baby food, and other socially and environmentally harmful activities. Certain churches are actively promoting codes of conduct for TNCs, and yet others have been involved in boycott campaigns against certain TNCs. The consensus view is that TNCs should be rendered more accountable to society and their power constrained and controlled.

Roman Catholic social teaching has mentioned TNCs only infrequently. However, in an apostolic letter to Cardinal Maurice Roy in 1971, Pope Paul VI mentioned multinational corporations, “which by the concentration and flexibility of their means can conduct autonomous strategies which are largely independent of the national political powers and therefore not subject to control from the point of view of the common good. By extending their activities, these private organizations can lead to a new and abusive form of economic domination on the social, cultural and even political level. The excessive concentration of means and powers that Pope Pius XI already condemned on the fortieth anniversary of *Reverum Novarum* is taking on a new and very real image.”

ROB VAN DRIMMELEN

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## TRENT, COUNCIL OF

THE COUNCIL of Trent (1545-63) was the first of the three modern Roman Catholic councils, named after the imperial city of Charles V in the Italian Alps. The general council is noted for its response to the Protestant Reformation.

Already in the late 1400s, strong clerical and lay leaders were beginning to cry out for a council to reform the Western church “in head and members”. Disagreement on the agenda and participation (esp. the selection of political delegations) and opposition by vested interests of papal courts, powerful bishops, emperor and king kept the reformist pleas but a dream. Even Rome’s fifth Lateran council (1512-17), with only a few besides Italian prelates present, produced superficial decrees. Finally, spurred by the influential growth and influence of the Protestants and by pressure from Charles V, Pope Paul III (1534-49) was able in 1544 to convoke the council with three stated goals: the healing of the schism\* in the West, the reform of the church, and a Christian coalition against the European encroachment of the Ottoman Turks of Islam.

Because of political upheavals, poor attendance and outbreaks of disease, the council had three separate periods and 25 sessions through four papacies. The first period (1545-48) gave the Catholic answer to the Protestant principle “faith alone, grace alone, scripture alone”. The council listed the books of the Old and New Testament canon,\* declared the Latin Vulgate the authentic version for church teaching, insisted on the appropriate role of Tradition,\* addressed original sin\* and justification,\* and maintained seven sacraments.\* The second period (1551-52) failed to have the intended Lutheran representation, with equal voice and vote. By the word “council”, the two sides meant different assemblies, and Trent could not serve both. The session defined the eucharist,\* with the real presence of Christ described by transubstantiation, and clarified the sacraments of penance\* and the anointing of the dying. The third session (1562-63) gave reasons for denying the chalice to the laity, explained the eucharist as the sacrifice of Christ, and declared the priesthood\* to be truly a sacrament.

Although the reform of church practices was dividing the council fathers, Trent legis-

lated seminary training for all priests; moral and intellectual qualifications for cardinals, bishops and priests; norms for admission in religious orders; and the prohibition of clandestine weddings, with procedures for valid marriages. Within a decade of the council's close, the popes published new editions of the breviary (1568) and the Roman missal (1570), a general catechism or manual of Catholic instruction for parish clergy (1566), and a revised edition of the Vulgate Bible (1597).

As an answer to the Protestant Reformation, Trent had limited success. The council distinguished essential elements of the faith\* from theological opinions and made room for the continued debate of those opinions. It tried to understand the various Protestant confessions first-hand, and unlike previous councils it did not condemn persons but only errors (see **anathemas**). It initiated a certain number of serious ecclesiastical reforms. But the council of Trent failed to heal the schism within the Western church between Catholics and Protestants. In hindsight, one sees that both sides had limited visions of what should be entailed in a true church reformation of teaching and practice.

Trent gave birth to what is called Counter-Reformation Catholicism. The church leaders and theologians of the next four centuries became far less irenic in spirit and acts than Trent itself had displayed and intended.

TOM STRANSKY

■ O. Chadwick, *The Reformation*, London, Penguin, 1972 ■ H. Jedin, *Geschichte des Konzils von Trient* (ET *History of the Council of Trent*, 2 vols, London, Nelson, 1957-60) ■ N.P. Tanner ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, London, Sheed & Ward, 1990, vol. 2 for complete texts of decrees.

## TRINITY

ALTHOUGH there is no developed or systematic doctrine of the Holy Trinity in the Bible, yet the holy scriptures, especially the New Testament, bear witness to the self-revealing mystery of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as distinct and yet inseparable persons acting for the life, salvation\* and glorification of all humanity and of all cre-

ation.\* In this respect, all the individual biblical references to God,\* the Creator of heaven and earth, to his eternal Word and his eternal Spirit, from the beginning of the book of Genesis till the end of the book of Revelation, find their coherence and focus in the mystery of the incarnation\* of Jesus Christ\* (1 Tim. 3:16) and in its ultimate goal: the participation of the whole creation in God's kingdom\* (Rev. 21:1-3). The mystery of the cross of Christ and of his resurrection\* is the window and light through which the church\* experiences the mystery of the divine Trinity as eternal love and sees the inner coherence and unity of the otherwise apparently diverse biblical witnesses related to the mystery of the Triune God.

Shortly before his crucifixion, the incarnate Word of God gives account to his eternal Father of his mission in the world, saying that he revealed to his disciples the very name of God, i.e. Father, and the eternal love of the Father for his only begotten Son (John 17:6-26, also 1:14), with whom the Father shares the same glory before the existence of the world (John 17:5). It is for the Father's eternal Son and through him that the world was created (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:15-20) and the church comes into existence (John 17:9-26; Eph. 2:19-22, 4:9-16; Col. 1:17-18). The very purpose of the Son's incarnation was to reveal to the world not only the love of God for his eternal Son but also God's love for the whole creation, and to inaugurate its participation in the eternal life of God (John 3:16), liberating the world from sin\* and death (Matt. 26:28; John 6:51-58; 1 Cor. 15:20,26). The incarnate Son reveals also the identity of the Holy Spirit\* as an eternal person distinct not only from the Father, from whom he proceeds, but also from the Son, to whom he bears witness (John 14:26, 15:26). The Father and the Holy Spirit not only confirm the very identity of Jesus Christ as being the only begotten, eternal Son of the Father, upon whom rests the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:16-17 and par.; John 1:29-34), but they are also united with the Son, cooperating permanently with him, being present in him even in or since the very moment of the Son's incarnation, although the Son alone became man (Luke 1:35).

This differentiated yet indivisible action of the three distinct and inseparable divine

persons revealed through the mystery of the incarnation of Christ is in fact present in the whole economy of salvation and consequently in the whole life of the church, pointing to the kingdom of God as being the kingdom of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This life and activity of the Holy Trinity is an eternal and perfect communion\* of love, a permanent movement of mutual and fully free self-offering of each person\* to the others and of all of them to the world (John 10:17-18, 17:4; Phil. 2:6-11; Heb. 9:14). The Trinitarian revelation shows that ultimately the truth, life and unity in God are identical with koinonia\*/communion.

The Father and the Son sent the Spirit into the world (Luke 4:18) in order that the Son may reveal to the world the love of the Father for it and the future action of the Spirit, who by his personal dwelling in the believers enables them to participate in the eternal love and glory which unite the Father and the Son (John 14:15-26, 15:26, 16:14-15). It is precisely by the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in those who believe in Christ that they can truly confess Jesus Christ as Lord (1 Cor. 12:3) and call God "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15-16), for the Spirit alone knows and declares all that the Father possesses and has given to the Son (John 16:13-15).

There is no confusion or subordination among the persons of the Holy Trinity but only mutual self-giving, each person glorifying the others. In fact the unity of the Trinitarian life lies in the movement of perfect mutual self-giving. This Trinitarian unity affirms the communion and distinctiveness of the persons.

The fact that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father (John 15:26) and rests upon the Son or is received by the Son from the Father (John 1:32; Luke 4:18; Acts 2:32-33) allows him to be called the Spirit of God the Father (1 Cor. 2:12, 3:16) and the Spirit of his Son or the Spirit of Christ (Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:9). Since the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, he is called the Spirit of God, but he is also called the Spirit of the Son, since he is received by the Son and sent by the Son from the Father, or by the Father in the name of Christ and at the request of Christ (John 14:26, 15:26). Being in a distinct manner the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of Christ, the one Holy Spirit bears

witness to the other two distinct persons in their irreducible distinctiveness: the Father and the Son.

At the same time, the Holy Spirit enables those who believe in Christ to be baptized in the koinonia of the one body of Christ, while preserving their unique identity (1 Cor. 12:13) and helping them to have access to the Father (Eph. 2:18) and to live within the world as adopted sons and daughters of the Father, receiving the same glorious gifts which the risen Jesus Christ received from the Father (Rom. 8:14-18). These gifts of the Father are communicated by the Spirit to those who believe in Christ in order that they may become like his Son, so that the Son should be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters (Rom. 8:29). Those who receive the Holy Spirit know the love of the Father as the Son knows it (John 17:25). In this way the Holy Spirit builds up church life and unity\* through the participation of human beings in the life and koinonia of the Holy Trinity. Therefore all sacramental life of the church is accomplished through the action of the Holy Spirit and bears witness to the saving presence of the kingdom of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit within the world, thus preparing believers to long for the revelation of the glorious freedom of the children of God, for which in fact the whole creation is longing (Rom. 8:18-25).

For this reason, the apostolic church early identified baptism\* with sharing in the mystery of the cross and resurrection of Christ (Rom. 6:3-4) and in the eternal Trinitarian communion of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19). The same church experienced in the whole ecclesial celebration both the distinctiveness and the indivisibility of the divine Trinitarian love for humankind (2 Cor. 13:13: "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit"). To early Christians, this experience of the living presence of the Holy Trinity in church life was so deep and self-evident that they could easily grasp the fact that "the church is full of Trinity" (Origen).

### THE TRINITY IN CHURCH HISTORY

The fact that the sharing in the Trinitarian communion of life and love was the cen-

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tre and focus of the new life of the Christians is particularly attested by the baptismal creeds\* and rituals of the church but also by its whole sacramental and liturgical life in the first millennium after Christ (and esp. in the Eastern and Oriental churches). The Christological and pneumatological controversies of the 4th and 5th centuries were in fact a challenge for the church to express and defend in more conceptual ways the permanently lived mystery of the divine Triune communion revealed in Christ and communicated by the Spirit to the church.

The doctrine of the Trinity as formulated by the fathers of the church in the Nicene\* (325) and Constantinopolitan (381) Creeds and in the Chalcedonian council (451; see **Chalcedon**) was in fact a great effort to preserve the unity of God, not as an abstract arithmetical or quantitative kind of unity which makes of God an eternal solitude, but precisely the Trinitarian unity as the eternal, indivisible and life-giving communion of the three consubstantial, equal and yet distinct persons, avoiding any separation, confusion and subordination among them. It is precisely the uniqueness of the Trinitarian unity that crucifies the human discursive (or linear) way of thinking.

The dogmatic formula of the council held in Chalcedon in 451 ("one person in two natures") is not primarily an explanation of the mystery of the incarnation of Christ but rather an effort to preserve the fullness of the divine-human communion accomplished and revealed in Christ, in which humanity fully and eternally participates in the life of the Trinity, without confusion or separation between God and humanity. In fact the Chalcedon formula protects the faith of the apostolic church, which recognized and confessed the risen Christ as being at the same time the only begotten Son of God (John 1:14) and "the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29 RSV). To Greek philosophy or any human way of thought which is inclined to confound or separate God and humanity in order to obtain artificial unity, the church, inspired by the Spirit of truth (John 15:26) and of communion (2 Cor. 13:13) and faithful to the revelation, opposed a real and authentic theology, i.e. that of the saving and deifying communion.

The Trinitarian unity as mutual self-giving and total sharing of life, love and glory, accomplished through the mutual dwelling of each person in the others (*perichoresis*), becomes both the supreme model and the ultimate source of church unity (John 17:21-23) and points to the final unity in the glorious kingdom of God, when all of creation will be renewed and united in God (Rev. 21:1-4). In the light of this unity revealed by Christ to his disciples and communicated to the church by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the fathers of the church took the mysterious plural of the book of Genesis – "Let *us* make humankind in *our* image, according to *our* likeness" (1:26) – as a project of God which anticipates the eschatological unity of all humankind in God. In this respect the patristic doctrine of the Trinity, as expressed in the formulas of the ecumenical councils\* and in the sacramental life of the patristic church, has a permanent ecumenical significance precisely because it bears witness to the living apostolic faith that continues throughout the centuries, representing in itself a praise directed to the Trinitarian communion present in the church catholic universal.

### THE TRINITY IN THE MODERN ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

The understanding of the Trinity, after many centuries of ecclesiastical polemics and theological controversies, offers a new climate and basis for re-discovering the mystery of the Holy Trinity as the source, model and goal of Christian unity and as the basis for a deep renewal of Christian theology and spirituality. Although the doctrine of the Trinity has not yet been the object of an organized and systematic ecumenical reflection, the ecumenical interest in a common understanding of the centrality of the mystery of the Holy Trinity for the life of the church, and particularly for Christian unity, can be detected in many significant ecumenical events.

Particularly at the demand of the Eastern churches, the Christocentric affirmation of the Amsterdam basis (1948; see **WCC, basis of**), i.e. "a fellowship of churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour", was placed at New Delhi 1961 into a Trinitarian setting: "to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit". The ecumenical vision of unity formulated at New

Delhi is also marked by a Trinitarian perspective: "The love of the Father and Son in the unity of the Holy Spirit is the source and goal of the unity which the Triune God wills for all men and creation... The reality of this unity was made manifest at Pentecost in the gift of the Holy Spirit, through whom we know in this present age the first-fruits of that perfect union of the Son with his Father, which will be known in its fullness only when all things are consummated by Christ in his glory."

This Trinitarian perspective concerning the unity of God and church unity also marked to a certain extent the efforts of the Second Vatican Council\* (1962-65) in its teaching on revelation and the mystery of the church. At the same time, the Faith and Order\* conference in Montreal (1963) displayed interest in a Trinitarian perspective in its understanding of worship as a "service to God the Father by men redeemed by his Son, who are continually finding new life in the power of the Holy Spirit". Later, when the "conciliar fellowship" model of unity was discussed at the fifth assembly of the WCC (Nairobi 1975), it also appeared necessary to place the deep theological and spiritual understanding of conciliarity in a Trinitarian setting.

Furthermore, the study of the F&O commission on the ecumenical significance of the so-called filioque\* controversy ended in 1979 with the recommendation that the meaning of faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be more fully explored "so that the Holy Trinity may be seen as the foundation of Christian life and experience". Another study of the F&O commission, namely the project "Towards an Ecumenical Explanation of the Apostolic Faith as Expressed in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (381)", has been to a certain extent an ecumenical effort to understand the apostolic faith in the Holy Trinity in the light of contemporary challenges (human responsibility for the integrity of creation, women's emancipation in church and society, dialogue with people of other living faiths, etc.). Again, in their evaluation of the Lima document on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*,\* many churches expressed their appreciation of the fact that baptism and eucharist are approached in BEM from a Trinitarian perspective.

At the same time, an increasing interest in deeper ecumenical understanding of the significance of the faith in the Holy Trinity for

church unity and life in the world is also displayed in many bilateral dialogues. Some examples are the Orthodox-Roman Catholic international dialogue with its first theme "The Mystery of the Church and of the Eucharist in the Light of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity" (1980-82), or the Orthodox-Reformed and Anglican-Orthodox dialogues in which common agreement on the faith in the Holy Trinity appears as a necessary presupposition for a common vision of church unity.

To promote an ecumenical ecclesiology of communion based on an ecumenical reflection on the very nature of the church appears today to be one of the most urgent ecumenical tasks. It calls all churches to rediscover together that the mystery of the Holy Trinity is the very heart of any authentic Christian theology and spirituality. Since, from the Christian point of view, the unity that really matters is a saving and liberating divine-human communion, the ecumenical prayers and theological efforts, and the practical actions have a lasting value when they help us recover the early Christian experience according to which the "church is full of Trinity" amid a creation that is ultimately moving towards the glorious reign of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

See also **Anglican-Orthodox dialogue, Orthodox-Reformed dialogue, Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue.**

DANIEL CIOBOTEA

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## TUTU, DESMOND MPILO

B. 7 Oct. 1931, Klerksdorp, Transvaal, South Africa. Tutu, recipient of the 1984 Nobel peace prize and known worldwide for his efforts against apartheid in South Africa, chaired the Truth and Reconciliation Commission 1995-98. He was general secretary of the South African Council of Churches, 1978-85, and in 1987 became president of the All Africa Conference of Churches. He received his theological education at St Peter's Theological College, Rosettenville, Johannesburg, and was ordained an Anglican priest in 1961. A member of the chaplaincy staff of the University of Fort Hare, 1967-69, he then became lecturer in the department of theology of the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, 1970-72. After a period in England as assistant director of the Theological Education Fund of the WCC, 1972-75, he returned to serve his church in South Africa in several major positions: as dean of Johannesburg, 1975-76, bishop of Lesotho, 1976-78, bishop of Johannesburg, 1985-86, and archbishop of Cape Town, 1986-96. He was a speaker at the WCC assembly in Vancouver 1983.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ D.M. Tutu, *Crying in the Wilderness*, London, Mowbray, 1982 ■ *Hope and Suffering*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1984 ■ E. Adler, *Desmond Tutu*, Berlin, Union, 1983 ■ S. Du Boulay, *Tutu: Voice of the Voiceless*, Harmondsworth, UK, Penguin, 1989.

## TYPOI

THE NOTION of *typoi*, or types (singular *typos*), adopted from sociology, has been used in ecumenical research to describe the various particular forms that Christian communities or churches may assume within the visible fellowship of the one church.\* Some writers have spoken of "typologies" within a single ecclesial allegiance (Bernard Lambert,

1962, Emmanuel Lanne, 1967), but the notion of *typos* really caught on after an address given by Cardinal Johannes Willebrands in 1972. On the basis of two Vatican II\* texts (*Unitatis Redintegratio* 14 and *Lumen Gentium* 23) concerning the different forms which the churches of the East and the West had from the start given to their ecclesial life within the communion\* of the one, undivided church, Willebrands offered this description of a *typos*: "Where there is a long coherent tradition commanding men's love and loyalty, creating and sustaining a harmonious and organic whole of complementary elements, each of which supports and strengthens the other, you have the reality of a *typos*." He went on to indicate certain distinctive elements of a *typos*: a theological method and approach, a liturgical expression, a spiritual and devotional tradition, a canonical discipline.

Whereas the components of universal communion must be the same in all the churches, i.e. communion in the faith,\* sacraments\* and ministry,\* the characteristic elements of the *typoi* vary from one church to the other. According to the Vatican II Decree on Ecumenism,\* this variety of forms, subsequently called *typoi*, contributes to "giving ever richer expression to the authentic catholicity and apostolicity of the church". The idea of *typoi* described by Willebrands was taken up in the Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue\* (*Facing Unity*, 1984, nos 42-43) as one of the models for unity in diversity. The Methodist-Roman Catholic *Towards a Statement on the Church* (1986) lists it as one "model of organic unity in the koinonia of the one Body of Christ": the notion of *typos* "implies that within the one church in which there is basic agreement in faith, doctrine and structure essential for mission, there is room for various 'ecclesial traditions', each characterized by a particular style of theology, worship, spirituality and discipline".

See also **unity, models of.**

EMMANUEL LANNE

■ P.A. Crow, Jr, "Ecumenics as Reflections on Models of Christian Unity", *ER*, 39, 1987, esp. pp.400-401 ■ J. Willebrands, address in Cambridge, England, Jan. 1972, in *Documents on Anglican/Roman Catholic Relations*, vol. 1, Washington DC, US Catholic Conference, 1976.

# U

## UNA SANCTA

THE LATIN words *una sancta* serve as an abbreviation for the four “marks” attributed to the church\* in the Nicene Creed (381): “We believe in one [*unam*], holy [*sanctam*], catholic and apostolic church.” The *una sancta* is thus the church as understood in the ancient professions of faith, almost all of which mention it after their article about the Holy Spirit.\* Christian faith in the Triune God (see **Trinity**) entails also belief in God’s saving deeds, one of which is the founding of the church as the Body of Christ (Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:22-23) and as the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 2 Cor. 6:16). The church is thus an effect of God’s saving action. For patristic authors, this reality was symbolized in the blood (representing the eucharist\*) and

water (representing baptism\*) which flowed from the pierced side of Jesus as he hung on the cross (Augustine, *Enarratio in Psalmum 138*, 2; John Chrysostom, *Catecheses* 3,16-19).

This inter-relation has been re-affirmed in ecumenical dialogues: “Christians believe and confess with the creed that there is an indissoluble link between the work of God in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit and the *reality* of the church. This is the testimony of the scriptures” (Faith and Order, *Confessing the One Faith*, 1991, 216; see also **Old Catholic-Orthodox dialogue**; *Ecclésiology*, 1977, III/1, 1-19; and ARCIC II, *The Church as Communion*, 1990, 25-41). Nevertheless, the church remains human and imperfect. The unity,\* holiness,\* catholicity\* and apostolicity\* of the church

are gifts which are actualized within the community on its pilgrim journey through time, but which will reach their perfection only in the eschatological reign of God.

In one of his commentaries on the creed, Augustine notes that the church must be understood as existing both “in heaven and on earth” (*Enchiridion de fide, spe et caritate* 15,56). As such, the *una sancta* is more extensive than simply the visible church on earth; it includes also those “in heaven”, and thus all of the just who have been saved in Christ from the beginning of time (*ecclesia ab Abel*). Christian communities relate the *una sancta* to the historical, visible church in different ways. The Catholic bishops at Vatican II, for example, claimed that the one, holy, catholic, apostolic church “subsists in” the Catholic church, but that many of its elements are also present in other communities (*Lumen Gentium* 8). Other churches would perhaps identify the *una sancta* with their own visible community, or deny that it can be so identified with any visible community. The WCC Canberra statement (1991) relates the ecumenical movement to the *una sancta*, when it states: “The goal of the search for full communion is realized when all the churches are able to recognize in one another the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church in its fullness” (“The Unity of the Church as Koinonia: Gift and Calling”, 2.1).

WILLIAM HENN

■ Y. Congar, *L'Église une, sainte, catholique et apostolique*, Paris, Cerf, 1970 ■ H. Schütte, “Die Kirche als eine, heilige, katholische und apostolische,” in idem, *Kirche im ökumenischen Verständnis*, Paderborn, Bonifatius, 1991, 89-123 ■ F.A. Sullivan, *The Church We Believe In: One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic*, New York, Paulist, 1988.

## UNA SANCTA MOVEMENT

THE USM COMES from the ecumenical awakening in Germany during the National Socialist period (1933-45) and after the second world war. Both Roman Catholic and Protestant ministers and laity participated.

Among the earlier currents of the ecumenical movement, the specific ecclesiological, spiritual and dialogical efforts of USM

in Germany were part of the stream which stressed the overcoming of confessional divisions by restoring and renewing in the historical form of each church that which the ancient creed characterized as being *una* (one) and *sancta* (holy) in its essence (see **unity, holiness, catholicity**). Anglicans in the 19th century found this emphasis in the Oxford movement, which later influenced the “united but not absorbed churches” formula of the aborted Malines conversations between Anglicans and Roman Catholics in the 1920s. The re-awakening of *una sancta*\* understanding is already expressed in the 1937 world conference of Faith and Order\* (Edinburgh) and of Life and Work\* (Oxford), when Archbishop Nathan Söderblom of Sweden called for “evangelical catholicity”. And the Hochkirchliche Vereinigung (High Church Union) was emerging in German Protestantism, seeking to restore in the Lutheran church the catholicity of the early undivided church of the creeds, governance and liturgies.

Some Roman Catholic attempts prepared the way for the USM by various movements for church renewal after the first world war, together with a critical awareness of the inadequate nature of catholicity\* in terms of the gospel within the actual history of the RCC. Bonn theologian Arnold Rademacher and Paul Simon, dean of Paderborn cathedral, became spokesmen for a “catholicity not constricted by a narrow idea of catholicism” in an effort to promote the “corporate” reunion of the churches. They were in fact supporting Yves Congar, a French Dominican, who in his 1937 *Chrétiens désunis* claimed: “That... which the separation of our brethren has... realized and actualized” outside the “visible borders” of the Roman Catholic Church “is a loss... to its actual and effective Catholicity.” At the same time, the church historian Joseph Lortz was revising the traditionally harsh RC interpretation of the Reformation\* and of Martin Luther’s person and chief concerns.

Max Josef Metzger (1887-1944), a German priest, tapped this increasing readiness for ecumenism. Already in 1920 he was committed to peace among the nations and in society and peace among the Christian confessions, and he began to communicate

his convictions in addresses and short articles and in personal contacts, especially with Protestant pacifists in Europe. Metzger secured Vatican permission to be an unofficial observer at the first world conference on Faith and Order (Lausanne 1927), where he was moved by the common prayer of the participants. In 1928 he established the House of Christ the King and the Society of Christ the King at Meitingen-bei-Augsburg. This society was the focal point of the USM, initially called the Una Sancta Fraternity to express the re-awakened self-awareness of "fraternity in Christ across all barriers". In 1939 Metzger organized the first Meitingen ecumenical dialogue.

The USM tasks were to break down misunderstandings and prejudices, to create awareness of common elements in the faith, to test in open encounter and discussion between Roman Catholics and Protestants how far differences might be reconciled, but above all to join in common prayer and to provide a sign of "hope against all hope". After a mock trial by the Nazi people's court for his unswerving convictions, Metzger was executed for high treason on 17 April 1944.

The experiences which German Protestants and Catholics shared in the period of National Socialism, the upheaval in the redistribution of the German population after the war, and the resulting increase in the number of interconfessional marriages brought about a new atmosphere of coexistence. In many places new Una Sancta circles were founded. In 1946 at the Benedictine abbey of Niederalteich, a Una Sancta meeting centre (since 1962, the ecumenical institute) was established, and the abbot, Emmanuel Heufelder, led regular encounters between Roman Catholic and Protestant Christians. The journal *Una Sancta* developed out of USM circulars.

But the USM was also exposed to negative criticism: among the Protestants, that it was disguised Catholic proselytism; among the Catholics, that it promoted religious indifferentism. A 1948 Vatican *monitum*, or warning, about RC participation in ecumenical conferences and services, and Vatican Radio commentary that this warning should be a safeguard against an uninhibited growth of the USM, sharpened the negative tone against the USM. Later instruction by

the Vatican in December 1949 was more positive in encouraging ecumenical gatherings, but under strictly defined conditions. The success of the Una Sancta event at the world eucharistic congress of 1960 in Munich, however, made clear how far the ecumenical idea had caught the imagination of the Roman Catholic grassroots on the eve of the Second Vatican Council.

After Vatican II (1962-65),\* Christians with USM experience were especially valuable members of new ecumenical bodies in Germany. Soon tensions arose, though, between the official ecumenical leaders of the churches and those who daily gave ecumenical witness in their daily lives (e.g. those in mixed marriages\* and teachers in schools). To give voice to these grassroots ecumenical experiences in Germany, the USM led in founding the Arbeitsgemeinschaft ökumenischer Kreise (Council of Ecumenical Groups) in 1969.

See **Roman Catholic Church and pre-Vatican II ecumenism.**

GERHARD VOSS

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## UNEMPLOYMENT

MASS UNEMPLOYMENT became a serious issue in the North after the industrial revolution, when the relative importance of agriculture and other forms of self-employment declined. The depression of the 1930s triggered worldwide concern about the welfare implications of widespread unemployment. The United Nations charter acknowledges such concern, as it calls on governments to take action to promote the achievement of full employment. The Universal Declaration on Human Rights states that "everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work, and to protection against unemployment" (art. 23).

Northern unemployment rates have been high in most of the rich countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development since the 1970s. In Central and Eastern Europe, unemployment ballooned after the reforms which started in 1990, and many Southern countries also experience high unemployment and under-employment rates, especially in urban areas.

There is, however, no single universally accepted definition of unemployment. National statistics are not uniform and cannot easily be compared or added. Besides definitional problems, there is the difficulty of measuring under-employment, work done in the so-called informal sector, and clandestine employment.

At present, unemployment is high and growing, particularly in industrial countries, where unemployment affected 35 million people in 1996. In Eastern Europe and the countries of the former Soviet Union, where people were long accustomed to secure and full employment, unemployment skyrocketed since the start of reforms in 1990. Official unemployment statistics in most Southern countries have limited meaning but also there, unemployment problems are acute, especially in urban areas.

The results of unemployment are distributed very unequally among population groups. Hardest hit are the disabled, those who suffer ill health, younger and older workers, women and ethnic minorities.

The issue of unemployment has been on the agenda of the modern ecumenical movement since its beginning. The Anglican Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship (COPEC), held in England in 1924 at the initiative primarily of William Temple, called unemployment morally unacceptable and urged that the causes be removed. The COPEC was organized in preparation for the universal Christian conference on Life and Work,\* held in Stockholm in 1925, which also spoke about the "tremendous question of unemployment". The message of the conference was sent to the workers in the world "in the name of the Son of Man, the Carpenter of Nazareth". The Life and Work movement established the International Christian Social Institute in Geneva and developed close links with the International Labour Office. Its first major research project was a study of unem-

ployment, a widespread problem during the great depression. A series of national study conferences was organized leading up to an international conference in Basel, which resulted in a pressing appeal to the churches to combat unemployment and to alleviate the distress of those most deeply afflicted.

The great depression also influenced the world conference on "Church, Community and State", which took place in Oxford in 1937. The conference report speaks about unemployment sapping people's strength of body, mind and spirit, and it points to the progressive mechanization of industry, which has periodically thrown large numbers of workers into long periods of unemployment. The threat of unemployment "produces a feeling of extreme insecurity in the minds of masses of the people. Unemployment, especially when prolonged, tends to create in the mind of the unemployed person a sense of uselessness, or even of being a nuisance, and to empty his life of any meaning. This situation cannot be met by measures of unemployment assistance, because it is the lack of significant activity which tends to destroy his human self-respect."

Probably because of the relatively high employment levels after the second world war, the issue of unemployment then received less ecumenical attention. This situation changed when the world economy plunged into a deep recession beginning in 1979. The WCC Sub-unit on Church and Society and the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development organized consultations and published reports on the issue of unemployment as seen from a global perspective. Many WCC member churches and related ecumenical bodies put the issue high on their agendas, organized consultations, published reports and suggested policies to combat rising unemployment.

Most of the churches' activities in this field were based on the conviction that involuntary unemployment is a basic injustice against each person and family suffering from it, that it is an obstacle to the fulfilment of Christian vocation,\* and that work is both a right and a need of all persons. However, less attention has been given to the concept of work\* as such.

Roman Catholic social teaching has strongly addressed labour issues and the rights of workers. In *Gaudium et Spes* (1965) and "The Church and Human Rights" (Pontifical Commission Iustitia et Pax, 1974), work is regarded both as a duty and as a right. Pope John Paul II's encyclical *Laborem Exercens* (1981) stresses the centrality of "suitable employment for all who are capable of it". According to John Paul II: "The opposite of a just and right situation... is unemployment, which in all cases is an evil, and which when it reaches a certain level can become a real social disaster." The pope also stressed "the principle of the priority of labour over capital", stating that "capital, the whole collection of means of production, remains a mere instrument" (see **social encyclicals, papal**).

The US bishops' "Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the US Economy" (1986) stated bluntly that "people have a right to employment". According to the bishops, "Work with adequate pay for all who seek it is the primary means for achieving basic justice in our society."

Many church statements and studies emphasize the negative social consequences of unemployment – exclusion, social isolation, family breakdown, increase in crime, mounting racism and xenophobia. Reference is often made to the paradox that there is high unemployment while many tasks remain undone, e.g. in the field of care for people in need and for the environment, and that much work is not paid, recognized or counted. Increasing doubt is expressed about the validity of the traditional view that urges economic growth as the solution to unemployment. Indeed, many church pronouncements recognize that the very concept of work and employment needs to be fundamentally re-thought.

ROB VAN DRIMMELEN

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## UNIAPAC

THE UNION internationale des associations patronales catholiques (UNIAPAC = which changed its meaning in 1962 to International Christian Union of Business Executives) comprises 26 national associations of Christian business people and managers, principally in western Europe and Latin America, but also in Africa and Asia. Founded in Rome in 1931 by a small group of Roman Catholic Belgian, French and Dutch employers, it expanded and in 1962 became an ecumenical association. The network is committed to studying and spreading the ethical principles of Christian social teaching in economic and social life, particularly at the level of business and management.

From its general secretariat in Brussels, UNIAPAC issues occasional socio-economic papers on, for example, Latin American business investments, the ethical climate in companies, integration of young people into business, the churches and transnational corporations,\* and ethical approaches to the international debt question (see **debt crisis**).

TOM STRANSKY

## UNIATES, UNIATISM

THE TERMS "Uniates" and "Uniatism" were originally derived from the act of union which a group of Orthodox in the Ukraine and Poland signed at Brest-Litovsk in 1596 establishing their unity with Rome. These terms, used mainly by the Orthodox who are opposed to this union, have come to include all Eastern-rite Catholics and have a definitely derogatory connotation, resented by those they are applied to.

See **Eastern Catholic churches, Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue**.

NICHOLAS LOSSKY

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## UNION, ORGANIC

AS THE BODY of Christ, the church\* is an organism "joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped as each part is working properly" (Eph. 4:16). Its unity\* is therefore properly described as organic. All churches accept and use this biblical language with reference to their own inner life. The debate about organic union arises when churches seeking closer unity have differing views of the way in which unity and diversity are related to each other in the Body of Christ. Churches with similar polities have had little difficulty in entering into organic union. Scores of such intraconfessional unions took place in the 20th century.

The world missionary conference (Edinburgh 1910) debated the respective merits of organic and federal types of union and found strengths and weaknesses in both. Some delegates, notably Charles Brent, Episcopal bishop of the Philippines, were convinced that practical cooperation was not enough and that only a united church could offer a credible invitation to adherents of the great religions of the East. From his initiative came the first call for a world conference on Faith and Order,\* and at the initial meeting of those churches which had responded to the call (New York 1913) it was agreed that "while organic unity is the ideal which all Christians should have in their thoughts and prayers", the immediate task was not to propose such unity but to explore patiently the reasons for disunity.

It was no accident that this initiative came from Anglican sources. The movement for cooperation in missions had been, prior to 1910, an affair of Protestant churches of an evangelical persuasion, with the assumption that the questions of faith and order which divided their churches were of small account compared to the task of evangelism.\* Anglicans of a Catholic churchmanship could not accept this assumption. As far

back as 1870, the American Episcopalian W.R. Huntington had proposed a plan for organic union among the American churches on the basis of what was to become the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral:\* scripture,\* the ancient creeds,\* the sacraments\* of baptism\* and eucharist,\* and the historic episcopate (see **episcopacy**). In the country of its origin this vision was to be swept aside by the federal ideas which led to the creation of a council of churches (see **federalism**), but it provided the basis for the appeal to all Christian people issued by the Lambeth conference of 1920. The vision offered in this appeal was of "an outward, visible and united society, holding one faith, having its own recognized officers, using God-given means of grace, and inspiring all its members to the worldwide service of the kingdom of God".

This appeal and Anglican initiatives flowing from it occupied centre stage in unity discussions for the next 40 years. Its proposal of the historic episcopate as the visible centre around which unity could be restored was both its strength and the stone of stumbling for churches not episcopally ordered.

When the first world conference on F&O met in Lausanne in 1927, the only section which was not able to produce a report acceptable to the whole conference was section 7 on the unity of Christendom and the relation thereto of existing churches. Anglican members of the conference held that the report gave too much emphasis to cooperation in practical tasks and not enough to unity in faith and order. The second F&O conference (Edinburgh 1937) discussed the issue under the three headings: cooperative action, intercommunion,\* and corporate union. The last is described as "the final goal" but also as the most difficult.

The formation of the WCC in 1948 created a new situation in which it became immediately necessary to assure member churches (esp. the Orthodox) that by joining the Council they had not committed themselves to any particular conception of union. This assurance was given in the Toronto statement\* of the central committee (1950), which affirmed that the Council was a forum for the discussion of this question but did not prejudice the outcome. In the following decade there was intense discussion of

the nature of the unity we seek, leading to the formulation of the New Delhi statement of 1961 (see **unity of "all in each place"**). This statement does not use the term but expresses what has generally been understood as organic union. At no point before or after this statement has the WCC committed itself so explicitly to the goal of organic union.

But by the time this statement was made, changes were afoot which would alter the terms of debate. At New Delhi the Orthodox churches of the Eastern bloc, hitherto outside the Council, became full members exercising increasing influence in all its thinking. None of these had been involved in discussion of organic union with non-Orthodox churches. At the same time the Second Vatican Council\* brought the Roman Catholic Church for the first time into full participation in the discussions of faith and order. Its immense influence, and its character as a single supra-national church, shifted the focus away from local moves for organic union and towards the relations of the World Confessional Families with Rome and with one another. The suggestion of Cardinal Willebrands that the aim should not be organic union but rather the coexistence of different "types" of church life was widely canvassed (see *typoi*).

In the ensuing years, while intraconfessional unions of an organic type continued to occur, the only area in which the Lambeth appeal led to organic union between episcopal and non-episcopal churches was the Indian sub-continent. Numerous attempts in other parts of the world failed. And (perhaps partly because of wider political changes) the Anglican communion no longer played the leading role in initiating moves for union which it had played earlier in the century. Moreover, movements in biblical scholarship eroded the assumption which lay behind the Lambeth appeal, namely that our task is to restore an original organic unity which has been lost. Much New Testament scholarship claims to show that such unity did not exist in the primitive church. And meanwhile the growth of para-church organizations and of church base communities\* in many parts of the world has strengthened the tendency to bypass the issues of faith and order which divide the great communions and to concentrate on

practical issues of peace\* and justice.\* Organic union does not appear urgent.

It would seem, however, that as long as churches continue to use and to cherish the language of scripture about the Body of Christ, the issue of organic union can never be ignored. The periodic conferences of united and uniting churches\* continue to bear witness to the fruitfulness of unions among churches of different polities. However difficult the way, it is hard to believe that anything can be the final goal except the organic unity of one body. But, as Stephen Neill remarks at the end of his survey of unions achieved and contemplated: "The final and terrible difficulty is that churches cannot unite unless they are willing to die" (*HI-I*, 495).

See also **unity, models of; unity, ways to.**

LESLIE NEWBIGIN

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## UNIQUENESS OF CHRIST

IF JESUS CHRIST\* is not unique, then it must be that either the Word of God has become personally incarnate in others also (which would be a highly unusual position in Christian thinking), or else Jesus himself is something less than the incarnation of the second person of the Trinity\* (an opinion which would be definitely heretical). Some seek to evade the ontological problem by denying that the (divine) salvation\* of humankind requires such a "metaphysical" basis, or by softening the question of uniqueness to one of degree rather than kind, a relative rather than an absolute matter.

Of those who question that Jesus Christ is "the Saviour of the world" (John 4:42; or "the Light of the world", "the Life of the world", "the Hope of the world", to cite the attributions made at several WCC assemblies\*), while still holding to the possibility of human salvation, the most radical are those who consider that salvation may come

by other routes (whether such routes pluralistically include the way of Christ or Christ is excluded in favour of another path). While, by definition, no Christian can espouse the second possibility (the denial of any saving value to Christ), some who claim to be Christian theologians have recently argued for the first, namely that Christ is (simply, and perhaps not even pre-eminently) one access to salvation (e.g. see Hick & Knitter). Evangelism,\* if practised at all, will not have much urgency in this perspective. The problem, however, is whether salvation means the same thing when the saviours are different, and whether different saviours mean different “gods” (see **God**). In 2000 the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in the declaration *Dominus Iesus* signed by the Cardinal Prefect Joseph Ratzinger and ratified by Pope John Paul II, found it necessary to remind bishops, theologians and faithful of the Catholic doctrine concerning Jesus Christ as the sole Saviour of the world – doing so in the face of “relativistic attitudes towards truth” and the failure to distinguish between the revealed faith of Christianity and other religious aspirations.

Hitherto Christians have held that human salvation depends *in some way* on Christ. From the beginning of Christianity, Christians have had to face the question concerning people who lived before the time of Jesus. With regard to the righteous in ancient Israel, the answer was reached quite quickly: they had believed in the same God, who would later reveal himself in the incarnation\* of the Son and the pentecostal gift of the Spirit. Abraham’s faith was reckoned to him for righteousness (Rom. 4:3); Abraham and Isaiah had “seen” Christ’s “day” and his “glory” (John 8:56, 12:41). With regard to the pagans, Justin Martyr held that the good Greeks who had lived “according to the Logos” (which “enlightens every one”, John 1:9) were Christians *avant la lettre* (*Apology* 1.46). Perhaps the same principle can be applied, even in the Christian era, to those who never hear Christ preached. For pagans, according to Paul, “what the law requires written on their hearts” (Rom. 2:15), and they may “do by nature what the law requires” (2:14 RSV), and in the divine judgment there will be “glory and honour

and peace for everyone who does good” (2:10; see also 2:16; 2 Cor. 5:10). By virtue of the Logos (which became personally incarnate in Jesus Christ, John 1:14) or the law (for, according to Justin Martyr, Christ himself was the fulfilment of the promise of “an eternal law and a new covenant for the whole world”, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 43, cf. 11,51,122; see already 1 Cor. 1:30), a reference to Christ is here maintained.

A modern version of this position is the “anonymous Christians” of Karl Rahner. Although those so designated may reject the designation for various reasons (e.g. considering it to be “Christian imperialism”), some such accounting seems from a Christian standpoint to be both *necessary* (“No one comes to the Father except through me”, John 14:6; see also Matt. 11:27) and *possible* (“And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself”, John 12:32), if salvation is already to be found outside the historic Christian community; it allows Christians to discern, rejoice in, and be grateful for “signs of Christ” beyond the bounds of the institutional church. Thus M.M. Thomas envisages a “koinonia in Christ” that includes not only those who acknowledge “the *person* of Jesus as the Messiah” but also, at different levels, “people of different faiths inwardly being renewed by their acknowledgment of the ultimacy of the *pattern* of suffering servanthood as exemplified by the crucified Jesus” and, even more broadly, people engaged in “the power-political struggle for new societies and a world community based on secular or religious anthropologies *informed* by the agape of the cross” (*Risking Christ*, 119). Ontologically, this view would seem to imply the *saving presence* of Christ among and with all such people. Or if a similar vision is phrased in terms of the Spirit, then it will be remembered that in Christian teaching the Holy Spirit is never separated from the Son – who was incarnate in Jesus Christ. In such a perspective, evangelism will be seen as the effort to bring people to an *explicit* faith in Christ and a *deliberate* discipleship to him.

Other Christians remain doubtful about the notion of “anonymous Christians” or a vision such as that of Thomas. They will appeal to Acts 4:12: “There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under

heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (RSV), and see this "name" to require confession that "Jesus is Lord" (Rom. 10:8-13) to the point of receiving baptism\* in the Triune name (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16). The preaching of the gospel will then be regarded as an act of rescue towards those who are otherwise perishing (Rom. 10:14-17; John 3:18,36).

Doxologically, Christians have always affirmed the uniqueness of Christ in a strong sense, attributing the gift of salvation to him and ascribing him universal significance, all in closest association with the Father and the Holy Spirit. In what appears to be liturgical language, all things are said to be made "through him" and "for him" (John 1:1-3,14; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:15-20; Heb. 1:1-3). Because he has been given "all authority in heaven and on earth", he can instruct his followers to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:18-19). An early hymn looks to the time when "at the name of Jesus every knee [will] bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:10-11). A "great multitude... from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages" will cry: "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated upon the throne, and to the Lamb" (Rev. 7:9-10). Meanwhile, God's blessings descend, and our prayers ascend, "through Jesus Christ our Lord", while "Father, Son and Holy Spirit" are worshipped and glorified together. The doctrinal account of this doxology is given in the dogma\* of the Trinity, which is epistemologically grounded in the history of Jesus (incarnation, life, death, resurrection, exaltation), which itself rests ontologically on the reality of the Triune God.

How, or whether, all will finally, by God's grace\* and with God's help, be saved is not yet given to human knowledge (see **universalism**).

See also **dialogue, interfaith; mission; redemption; revelation.**

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## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM

UNITARIAN Universalism fuses two religious traditions: the Unitarian, which derives its name from its belief in the unity of God (as contrasted with a Trinitarian view), and the Universalist, which holds to the doctrine of universal salvation,\* in the conviction that a loving God could never condemn human beings to the fires of hell (see **universalism**).

Unitarianism traces its roots to *On the Errors of the Trinity*, written in 1531 by the 20-year-old Michael Servetus, who found no sound basis in scripture for the doctrine of the Trinity.\* (Servetus was burned at the stake in Calvin's Geneva in 1553.) Unitarian ideas, including the belief that Jesus saved human beings not by dying for them but by setting an example for them to follow, were spread widely throughout Poland by Faustus Socinus (1539-1604) and the so-called Polish Brethren. As an organized movement, however, Unitarianism first received official recognition in 1569 when the only Unitarian king in history, John Sigismund (1540-71) of Transylvania, issued an act of religious tolerance and freedom of conscience.

The first Unitarian congregation in England was formed in 1774 by Theophilus Lindsey, and in the USA in 1782 by James Freeman. But the movement in the USA did not become organized and coherent until after William Ellery Channing had preached his Baltimore sermon "Unitarian Christianity" in 1819; to traditional Unitarian views he added a rational approach to the interpretation of scripture and oppo-

sition to the Calvinist doctrine of original sin.\* The following years witnessed the division of New England Congregationalism into Trinitarian and Unitarian branches. The American Unitarian Association was founded in 1825.

While universalist views of salvation had spread widely in England in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, universalism as an organized movement was principally a US phenomenon, founded by John Murray. In his *Treatise on Atonement* (1805) Hosea Ballou taught a Unitarian view of God and argued that the Bible ought to be interpreted in the light of reason. The Universalist Church of America traces its formal beginnings to 1793.

A growing commonality of belief resulted in the formal institutional merger of the two North American movements in 1961 with the formation of the Unitarian Universalist Association\* – a creedless denomination which encourages its members to seek religious truth out of their own reflection and experience. While Unitarian (Universalism) is found in its largest numbers in North America, Unitarians who still practise their faith are in Romania (80,000), India (9000), Great Britain (8000) and in smaller groups in over 20 other countries.

Unitarian (Universalism) teaches tolerance and respect for other religious viewpoints. Unitarians were the founders in 1901 of the oldest continuing international interfaith organization in the world, now known as the International Association for Religious Freedom.\*

WILLIAM F. SCHULZ

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## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION

THE UUA RESULTED from a 1961 merger between the American Unitarian Association (1825) and the Universalist Church of America (1793). It consists of over 1000 congre-

gations with about 215,000 members, located principally in the US and Canada.

While not permitted on doctrinal grounds to be a member of the WCC or national councils of churches, the UUA works closely with those and other ecumenical and interfaith bodies on social justice issues and is a founding member of the International Association for Religious Freedom.\*

UUA headquarters are in Boston. It produces the bimonthly *Journal of the UUA* (Beacon).

WILLIAM F. SCHULZ

## UNITED AND UNITING CHURCHES

IN BROADEST definition, united churches are national or regional churches (as distinguished from union parishes or congregations) formed by the union of two or more previously separated denominations. These may be churches within the same confessional family, such as the United Methodist Church (USA) or churches from different confessional traditions, such as the Church of South India (CSI), which in 1947 brought together Anglican, Methodist, Reformed and Congregationalist streams. While intraconfessional unions can be both ecumenically significant and difficult to achieve, it is the transconfessional churches that have attracted most ecumenical attention; this article focuses on these.

There is no typical united church, but the following characteristics generally hold true. First, united churches have achieved “organic” or structural union (see **union, organic**) in the sense that they can make common decisions of faith and order,\* mission\* and the use of their own resources. This distinguishes them from relationships of “full communion” between still-separate churches (see **communion**). Second, they are worshipping faith communities, with their own patterns of authorized ministry (see **ministry in the church**). This distinguishes them from councils or federations of churches (see **councils of churches, federalism**). Next, they seek to give theological expression to the gospel in the context more of the present ecumenical movement than of inherited confessions. Fourth, while they certainly do not abandon the vision of universal Christian fellowship, they are committed

to manifest the unity\* of the church\* in their particular nation, region or culture\* (e.g. the United Church of Christ in the Philippines or the Church of North India). Finally, their self-understanding is, to a considerable extent, shaped by an intentional act of “uniting” through which a new churchly identity has been assumed.

Beyond this, united churches manifest great diversity. Most are the result of decades of negotiation and planning, but others came quickly into being, e.g. the United Church of Christ in Japan (Kyodan), formed as a result of governmental mandate in 1941. A few are episcopally ordered (see **episcopacy**), usually because Anglicans have been involved in the union; others have a basically connectional polity, having been formed by the union of Reformed (Presbyterian), Methodist, Congregationalist, Disciples, Baptist or Brethren churches (see **church order**). In most cases, the confessional identities of the negotiating churches are superseded by the identity of the united body (though distinctive ways of worship or confessions of faith from the parent traditions may well be preserved), but others (e.g. the Church of Christ in Zaire) understand themselves as united while allowing the previous denominations to continue as identifiable communities within the new church structure.

Most churches which think of themselves as united are products of the 20th-century ecumenical movement; the Evangelical Church of the Union (EKU), however, which stems from early-19th-century efforts in Prussia to heal the division between Lutherans and Calvinists, is a central participant in gatherings of united churches. The majority of united churches have originated since the second world war in formerly colonized nations where confessional divisions have little historical significance and where the need for a common Christian witness is intensely felt (see **colonialism**). The first major union of the modern ecumenical movement, however, was that of the United Church of Canada in 1925.

The difficulty with definition also makes it hard to determine the precise number of united churches. According to the “Survey of Church Union Negotiations”, compiled by the WCC’s Faith and Order

staff and published biennially in *The Ecumenical Review*, more than 20 transconfessional united churches, representing more than 65 former church bodies, have come into existence since the second world war, and several of these (e.g. the United Protestant Church of Belgium, the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom and the United Church of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands) have undertaken more than one union process.

Advocates of church union often defend their vision with various arguments. First, the New Testament speaks positively of the church in different places (e.g. Rome or Corinth) but not of different “types” (e.g. Apollos or Paul [1 Cor. 1]). Second, confessional labels seem to undermine the Christian claim to be a reconciled and reconciling people (see **reconciliation**) and thus damage the churches’ witness to Christ, especially in places where Christians are a minority. Third, for unity to be meaningful, it must make a difference to the way Christians live their lives in local communities; it must find visible, structured embodiment through which Christians take direct, active responsibility for one another. Fourth, united churches, by avoiding duplication and competition, are better stewards of resources; they are also able to bring these resources to bear on new issues of witness and service in a concentrated way. Fifth, those who have undergone union generally testify that, while painful, it has led to enrichment and renewal. They would agree with these sentences from the WCC’s New Delhi assembly (1961): “The achievement of unity will involve nothing less than a death and rebirth of many forms of church life as we have known them. We believe that nothing less costly can finally suffice.”

United churches may be called “uniting” in the sense that they generally view themselves as but a stage in the process of seeking the unity of “all in each place”.\* At least one united church, the Uniting Church in Australia, has incorporated this understanding into its name. The term “uniting churches” is also used, however, with reference to churches that are currently participating in conversations which intend church union.

Church-union committees often report that questions of polity (esp. the reconcilia-

tion of ministries) and the fear of losing a sense of ecclesial identity are the most stubborn obstacles to union. The socio-political context can also be a very important factor. A proposed union of Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian churches in Nigeria was postponed in 1965 due to legal challenges. Two months after postponement, a military coup overthrew the civilian government and led to civil war and the abandonment of plans for a united church. In Sri Lanka, decades of careful preparation were left unfulfilled by litigation and ethnic violence.

### RECENT TRENDS

The creation of united churches through structured, "organic" union was, for much of this century, a favoured strategy for ecumenical advance. The New Delhi assembly, which spoke of the unity we seek as a "fully committed fellowship" of "all in each place", contributed to an unprecedented surge in union activity. Between 1965 and 1972, united churches were born in Zambia, Jamaica and Grand Cayman, Madagascar, Ecuador, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, Belgium, North India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Zaire and Great Britain.

During this same period, however, mounting criticism was directed against the idea of church union. Many church leaders, especially in developing countries (where the call to united churches had been so prominent), began to argue that overcoming confessional differences through corporate union should not be their primary agenda. The major challenges before the church, they maintained, are political and social injustice or threats to peace; and the deepest source of division between Christians is not their denominational identity but their differing responses to such issues. The tremendous effort expended on uniting would thus be better spent on the struggles against racism\* or hunger or nuclear weapons.

The 1960s also marked the official entry of the Roman Catholic Church into the ecumenical movement. This development quickly transformed discussions about what unity entails and how it is to be realized. The idea of union which develops a new identity among churches in various regional or national settings is at odds with Roman

Catholic ecclesiology. Far preferable, from the RC perspective, are "bilateral dialogues" (see *dialogue, bilateral*), which seek the reconciliation of theological differences between globally organized Christian World Communions\* (CWCs, e.g. the Lutheran World Federation). These conversations, far from undermining confessional identity, have tended to strengthen it. They have also helped to shift the ecumenical spotlight away from national-level church union.

Such challenges have contributed to several new developments in the search for church union. Union negotiations are increasingly unwilling to talk about unity across doctrinal and structural barriers apart from issues which divide the human community (e.g. racial discrimination or poverty). It is now widely affirmed that inclusive community and greater sensitivity to the needs of mission are not simply the byproducts of union. As authentic marks of what it means to be the church, they must be central to the uniting process itself.

There is broad agreement that visible unity must be realized "in stages". Several union efforts (e.g. the Commission of the Covenanted Churches in Wales and the Consultation on Church Union\* [COCU, USA]) have established or are trying to establish "covenants" (involving such agreements as the mutual recognition of members, mutual recognition or reconciliation of ministries, regular eucharistic sharing and common mission) as a way of moving towards deeper fellowship (see *covenanting*). Church union, in other words, is viewed not as an all-or-nothing, one-time achievement but as a process of gradual growth that allows the churches to strengthen their commitment to each other through interim steps. There seems to be less preconceived adherence to a particular "model" of union (e.g. "the CSI plan") than in the past. The COCU, for example, in its 1988 text (*Churches in Covenant Communion*), speaks of its proposed covenant as an expression of unity in its own right (though one which must deepen and expand) and not simply an interim stage.

In line with the previous point, churches in various parts of the world are now exploring other models while yet identifying themselves with the basic vision of united

churches. A good example is the joint council of the Church of North India, the Church of South India, and the Mar Thoma Church. For some time these churches have had relationships of full communion.\* The current joint council seeks to give visible expression to the churches' "organic oneness" while still maintaining certain of their distinguishing features, such as liturgical language (see *denominationalism*). In Italy the Waldensians and Methodists refer to their covenant as a united church, although both keep their specific identities. In 1984, the 54 member denominations of the Council of Churches in Indonesia redefined their relationship under a new name – the Communion of Churches in Indonesia. Unity, they contended, will not come by the negotiations of official representatives but gradually through the common will and actions of "all the church members of all levels... and in all places".

This quotation indicates a fourth trend: less interest in developing national plans of union and more attention to building relationships at the grassroots level. This trend is consistent with recent ecumenical emphasis on unity as *koinonia*. Indeed, in such places as England and New Zealand "local ecumenical partnerships"\* (united or cooperating parishes) seem to be exerting the greatest pressure for church unity.

United churches and church union negotiations are attempting to relate their work and vision more deliberately to the wider ecumenical picture, including the bilateral conversations between CWCs and the multilateral efforts of F&O (e.g. *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*). Recent meetings of united churches speak frequently of the dangers of a competitive ecumenism which polarizes the search for unity (e.g. union with Protestants *or* closer relations with Rome, international theological dialogues *or* national union conversations).

Many of these developments have received focused attention at a series of F&O consultations which involve representatives from united and uniting churches around the world. Six such meetings between 1967 and 1995 exchanged information, sought solutions to common problems, lifted up the vision of church union and strengthened relations between these churches (the seventh is

scheduled for September 2002). Of particular interest is the relationship of *Kirchengemeinschaft* ("full communion", involving mutual recognition and accountability) between the Evangelical Church of the Union in Germany and the United Church of Christ in the US.

### ECUMENICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The debate between united churches and the CWCs is a useful framework for describing the contribution of united churches to the wider ecumenical movement. For example, the CWCs acknowledge the importance of unity "in each place", yet they tend to emphasize that the church is a universal fellowship which transcends national and cultural boundaries. On the other hand, united churches affirm that unity must be "in all places", yet they see their task as witnessing to the need for a visible, embodied fellowship in each particular location. They remind the ecumenical movement that the church can manifest catholicity by its ability to give common witness in a variety of cultural settings.

The CWCs frequently stress the historical continuity of the church's faith and life, especially as this finds expression in the various confessional traditions. Advocates for church union insist that, while continuity is important, the presently divided church will also need to be transformed if it is to show forth more fully its given unity in Christ. They remind the ecumenical movement that the search for unity is never without cost.

The bilateral dialogues carried on by CWCs emphasize the need for extensive theological consensus as a prerequisite for consideration of structured commitment between church families. United churches, while by no means ignoring the importance of theological work, have stressed that the building of trust and commitment through structural forms of interaction is at least as essential to the search for unity as theological agreement. They remind the ecumenical movement that one must not minimize "non-theological factors", such as fear of change and institutional inertia. These churches also affirm that unity grows as much after union as before it. As a result, many united churches leave the development of constitutions, statements of faith and

worship materials to the period after the new church is inaugurated.

United churches may be the place where the ecumenical vision of Christ's one Body is most concretely tested and experienced. Visible unity often seems, at best, like a distant goal. Yet every week millions of Christians, once divided at the Lord's table, break bread together within communities that have made a deliberate decision to grow beyond past separations. This can be an important sign of hope.

See **local church; unity, models of; unity, ways to.**

MICHAEL KINNAMON

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## UNITED NATIONS

THE UNITED Nations was established in 1945 "to maintain international peace and security", "to develop friendly relations among nations", "to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems" and for "promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms".

Before the first world war the system for limiting international conflict and avoiding war consisted mainly of certain generally accepted principles of international law, supported by certain understandings as to spheres of influence and by alliances to maintain balances of power, as a means of discouraging any nation from dominating the world. The system broke down with the first world war, and at the end of the war the League of Nations was established. The ba-

sic concept of the league was that its members should be protected by collective action from aggression. The number of league members varied. At the beginning, in 1920, it included 42 states, and in 1939 there were 58 members. In the 20 years of the league's activity, events did not fulfill expectations. The support its members gave to the league was halting and reluctant, and certain states, dissatisfied with the post-war arrangements, were determined to destroy it.

During the second world war it was realized that a universal organization dealing with collective security after the war could no longer be the League of Nations. The charter for the United Nations was drawn up by the representatives of 50 countries at the UN Conference on International Organization, which met at San Francisco from 25 April to 26 June 1945. The UN officially came into existence on 24 October 1945, when the charter had been ratified by China, France, the USSR, the UK and the USA and by a majority of other signatories at the conference. As of 2000 it had a membership of 189 nations.

The principal organs of the UN are the general assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the secretariat. The general assembly is the main deliberative organ, the only one composed of all the UN member states. The Security Council's task is to promote international peace and security. The Economic and Social Council promotes world cooperation on economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems. The Trusteeship Council has supervised the UN Trust Territories through the administering authorities to promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants towards self-government or independence. The International Court of Justice is the principal judicial organ of the UN.

The secretariat consists of the secretary-general and the staff. The secretary-general is the chief administrative officer of the organization, elected for a five-year term by the general assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council.

The Security Council has five permanent members: People's Republic of China, France, Russia, the UK and the USA. The re-

maining ten members are elected by the general assembly for two-year periods.

The original UN charter has remained unchanged. It thus largely reflects perceptions about international relations which pre-date the second world war and the nuclear age and does not adequately represent the realities today. However, any attempt to change the charter will likely face enormous difficulties.

The constraints the charter itself puts on the UN in fulfilling its mandate should be taken into account in assessing its achievements and failures. Of fundamental importance is the doctrine of national sovereignty, for "the organization is based on the principle of sovereign equality of all its members" (art. 2). The doctrine of national sovereignty is reflected in several provisions of the charter, e.g. "the domestic jurisdiction provision" in article 2 and the inadequate provisions regarding the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice and the enforcement of its judgments. Closely related is the tendency on the part of the major powers – who are also members of the Security Council – to protect and expand their spheres of influences. Any improvement in relations among the major powers thus greatly enhances the capacity of the UN to fulfill its mandate.

To its credit, the UN has helped to keep peace in many conflicts and has successfully resolved disputes in some important instances. Its efforts at peace-keeping have been more successful than those for peace-making. The secretary-general establishes and maintains channels of contact and negotiations with states, thus providing for eventual settlements of disputes. There are many failures and evident inadequacies in the system of the UN and its functioning.

The accomplishments of the UN in humanitarian, development and cultural fields are commendable. UN bodies and agencies like the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the UN Children's Fund, the UN Development Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization have made substantial contributions in alleviating human suffering and in laying the foundations for development in many countries.

Notwithstanding the substantial achievements, the UN system must become stronger in anticipating and responding to major humanitarian issues.

One of the important objectives of the UN is to promote respect for, and to address fundamental violations of, human rights. The Commission on Human Rights is the main forum where member states consider the practical application of the charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the instruments codified through the organization. Non-governmental organizations play an important role in providing information to the commission on violations of human rights in different parts of the world. The Centre for Human Rights is the principal secretariat organ in charge of following up matters related to human rights.

Work on human rights focuses primarily on the responsibility of states. A major breakthrough occurred in July 1998 when the statute of the International Criminal Court was adopted, providing for the first time jurisdiction over individual persons for the most serious international crimes (esp. genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes of aggression). The court will be established in The Hague when 60 states have ratified the statute. By mid-2001, a total of 139 states had signed it, and 35 ratified.

The UN provides several venues for the promotion of disarmament. It is a unique public forum for the articulation and debate of proposals of disarmament before the world community. It provides a practical negotiating forum in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. The UN also has the capacity to monitor or manage arms-limitation agreements.

With the end of the cold war easing long years of deadlock on security issues, the Security Council operates closer to the intention of the charter than at any time in history and has been active in a number of trouble spots. However, there is strong criticism of the dominant role played by the United States in the Security Council.

In the recent past the UN has taken action in a number of situations that might be described as internal conflicts of member countries. Actions with regard to northern Iraq, the former Yugoslavia, Somalia and Cambodia, though of different character,

have raised critical questions about the role of the international community in internal conflicts and the expanding jurisdiction of the UN.

The WCC's Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, which has consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN (and with all major specialized agencies), represents the WCC in the UN system.

The WCC has supported the UN from the very beginning. Secretary-general Dag Hammarskjöld addressed the second assembly of the WCC (Evanston 1954). On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the UN, the central committee (1985) re-affirmed support for the UN "as the principal organization of the world community in defence of the common good of humankind". As a non-member state, the Vatican has a permanent observer status at the UN.

NINAN KOSHY

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## UNITY

CHRISTIANS confess the church\* as "one, holy, catholic and apostolic" (Nicene Creed,\* 381). Even where this creed is not in official use, the oneness of the church of Jesus Christ is affirmed. Thus the unity of the church, while it is a goal yet to be realized in history,\* has as its essential presupposition the already-given oneness of the church. The ecumenical task, then, is to manifest this oneness, to make it visible and effective.

Both this indicative and this imperative are grounded in biblical witness. The New Testament writings refer in a great variety of ways and images to the oneness or unity of the church as one of the fundamental characteristics of its nature and mission (see also **New Testament and Christian unity, images of the church**). This unity, as well as the very

being of the church, is grounded in and reflects the unity of the Trinity.\* As there is only one God,\* one Lord (see **Jesus Christ, uniqueness of Christ**), one Holy Spirit\* and one communion\* among them, there can be only one church: the one people of God,\* the one Body of Christ, the one temple of the Holy Spirit. This God-given unity is constantly sustained by the proclamation of the one gospel, the celebration of the one baptism\* as incorporation into the one body, and the eucharistic communion (see **eucharist**) with Christ in the Holy Spirit and with one another. It becomes visible in the *koinonia*\* within and between Christian communities, in their confession of the same faith,\* in spiritual and sacramental fellowship, in mutual love, in the common service of the multiple gifts of the Spirit given to all, in the upbuilding of each community and of their communion with each other through a common apostolic ministry (see **ministry in the church**). It becomes effective in the world through common service (see **diakonia**) and witness\* in continuing the mission of Christ. These basic lines of the biblical witness were expressed not as a theoretical system but in direct relation to the emerging early Christian community, and they are often formulated as exhortations and challenges addressed to communities whose internal unity or whose bond of unity among them was threatened from within or outside.

## THE STRUGGLE FOR UNITY

From NT times church history has been deeply marked by the tension between the confession of the given oneness of the church of Jesus Christ and the historical reality of division within Christianity (see **schism**). The implications of these divisions for the oneness of the church of Christ as confessed in the creed have been and still are interpreted differently by the different Christian traditions. Some claim that the one church is preserved in their own tradition, others have seen in the divided Christian traditions "branches" of the one tree, while yet others have come to the recognition that the divisions break up the Body of Christ and are therefore to be regarded as sinful (see **sin**). Yet, whatever the explanations, there was a growing general recognition before, and even more so after, the turn of the 20th cen-

tury that a divided Christianity is a counter-witness against the confession of the one church and thus contradicts the gift, will and prayer of Jesus Christ. This recognition brought about the modern ecumenical movement, which sought to reverse church history from a history of division to a movement towards unity.

With the establishment of the WCC in 1948, the aspirations and efforts for unity received a new and effective instrument. Accordingly, the first constitutional function of the WCC is "to call the churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and in one eucharistic fellowship expressed in worship and in common life in Christ, and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe". This commitment finds its central expression in the work of the WCC commission on Faith and Order,\* with the understanding that all the diverse activities of the WCC should help the churches effectively to live out their already-existing fellowship and to move on towards full visible unity. Since 1948 the WCC has helped churches to enter into radically changed relationships with each other, to reach agreements and convergences in basic issues of faith and order, and to develop forms of solidarity, cooperation and common witness.\* With the official entry of the Roman Catholic Church into the ecumenical movement at the time of the Second Vatican Council,\* the efforts for unity have been decisively broadened and now include all major Christian traditions.

### CONCEPTS AND MODELS OF UNITY

Already in the early stages of the F&O movement, discussion of particular church-dividing issues inevitably raised questions like: What are the constitutive elements of the unity we seek? How much (and in what form) is agreement necessary in such elements? How much diversity is possible and legitimate? In what form is unity to be expressed? Some Protestants emphasized the already-existing spiritual unity as a sufficient basis for mutual respect and for cooperation in mission and service. Others went one step further and pleaded for general agreement on some basic convictions of faith as a basis for forming federations of churches (see **federalism**). Anglicans and some others consistently argued for

the goal of organic or corporate unity/union (see **union, organic**), which would be realized in the coming together of hitherto independent churches in one, united church.

The concept of organic unity received a certain pre-eminence in the F&O movement and in the work of the WCC after 1948. This theme is clearly seen in the way the 1961 assembly in New Delhi formulated for the first time the goal of unity: "We believe that the unity which is both God's will and his gift to his church is being made visible as all in each place who are baptized into Jesus Christ and confess him as Lord and Saviour are brought by the Holy Spirit into one fully committed fellowship, holding the one apostolic faith, preaching the one gospel, breaking the one bread, joining in common prayer, and having a corporate life reaching out in witness and service to all, and who at the same time are united with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages in such wise that ministry and members are accepted by all, and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls his people."

The 1968 assembly in Uppsala further developed this concept by emphasizing its universal and conciliar dimension and by the call to the churches "to work for the time when a genuinely universal council may once more speak for all Christians and lead the way into the future". The 1975 Nairobi assembly re-affirmed the basic statement of New Delhi and combined it with the Uppsala emphasis on the conciliar and universal dimension of unity: "The one church is to be envisioned as a conciliar fellowship of local churches which are themselves truly united. In this conciliar fellowship each local church possesses, in communion with the others, the fullness of catholicity, witnesses to the apostolic faith, and therefore recognizes the others as belonging to the same church of Christ and guided by the same Spirit... Each church aims at maintaining sustained and sustaining relationships with her sister churches, expressed in conciliar gatherings whenever required for the fulfilment of their common calling." This concept of a conciliar fellowship met with wide approval in all Christian traditions.

At the time of the Nairobi assembly, the bilateral dialogues\* between Christian

World Communions\* were already increasing in number, and in their context the question of the goal of unity was also raised. Because worldwide communions were undertaking these dialogues, the significance of entire confessional traditions in searching for and expressing unity was given more attention than the work of multilateral dialogues.\* Accordingly, concepts of unity like "unity in reconciled diversity", full communion between "sister churches"\* and "a communion of communions" were developed which seek to preserve (changed and reconciled) confessional identities as an element of future structures of church unity. Here the idea of a union, a merger of churches leading to a united church, is no longer seen as the only structural expression of organic unity. But in their description of the essential conditions of unity, these new concepts agree fully with the perspectives expressed in the New Delhi and Nairobi statements, including the idea of a "conciliar fellowship".

These perspectives were further developed within the framework both of salvation history and of ecumenical history in the statement of the 1991 Canberra assembly on "The Unity of the Church as Koinonia: Gift and Calling". It affirms: "The unity of the church to which we are called is a koinonia given and expressed in the common confession of the apostolic faith; a common sacramental life entered by the one baptism and celebrated together in one eucharistic fellowship; a common life in which members and ministries are mutually recognized and reconciled; and a common mission witnessing to the gospel of God's grace to all people and serving the whole of creation. The goal of the search for full communion is realized when all the churches are able to recognize in one another the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church in its fullness. This full communion will be expressed on the local and the universal levels through conciliar forms of life and action."

### REALIZATIONS OF UNITY

Ecumenical language has long used the expression of an already-existing, though imperfect, fellowship between the churches to indicate that the churches are on their way from division to unity. This fellowship

is expressed in new relationships with one another, forms of common prayer and worship, convergence on dividing theological differences, common witness and service. The WCC and the regional, national and local councils of churches\* are both expressions and instruments of this already-existing fellowship. But there are also more direct expressions of unity or steps towards it.

Churches of the same confession in a particular country have united. Different denominations have come together to form united churches, e.g. the United Church of Canada as early as 1925, the Church of South India (1947), the Churches of North India and Pakistan (1970), the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom (1972), the Uniting Church in Australia (1977). Lutheran, United and Reformed churches in Europe have declared full church fellowship (Leuenberg agreement 1973; see **Leuenberg Church Fellowship**). Methodist churches in the former East and West Germany agreed with their Lutheran, United and Reformed partners to establish sacramental fellowship and forms of cooperation (see **Lutheran-Methodist dialogue**). One of the most significant recent ecumenical events was the establishment in 1996 of full communion, on the basis of the Porvoo\* common statement, between the four Anglican churches in Great Britain and Ireland and the Lutheran churches in Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden. In the USA and Canada, Anglicans and Lutherans have moved from "interim eucharistic sharing" to full communion (see **Anglican-Lutheran dialogue**). In fact, most Reformation and Free churches practise today, whether officially declared or generally permitted, what is called eucharistic hospitality (see **communion, intercommunion**). All these forms manifest a commitment to move beyond mutual respect and friendly coexistence.

### METHODS AND COMMON ORIENTATIONS

In ecumenical endeavours one of the fundamental and continuing questions has been whether theological dialogue or common missionary and social action leads the churches into unity. Today many are agreed that this is not a true alternative, since efforts for unity require a comprehensive ap-

proach involving both the doctrine and the life of the churches. Another question where differences remain concerns the degree of consensus\* or convergence required for unity and the forms in which agreement should be expressed – whether by mutual recognition that each already holds the same faith or by new consensus texts. All agree that theological agreements and convergences need to be “received” by the churches on all levels of their life in order to facilitate steps towards unity (see **reception**). The spiritual dimension of unity (prayer, sharing in each other’s joys and sufferings) is affirmed by all, and the role of so-called non-theological factors in facilitating or preventing closer fellowship is also generally recognized. There is also general agreement that the goal of visible unity, however defined structurally, can be reached only by intermediary steps and forms on the way.

Among the common fundamental orientations which have emerged in the course of ecumenical history, the following are of special importance. First, the unity confessed in the creed and to be manifested by the churches is not merely a spiritual, invisible reality but must be visible. Sacramental communion is one basic element of this visibility, but there must also be additional forms of visible and effective expression. Second, unity is not to be regarded as uniformity but must allow for a diversity of theological expressions and forms of ecclesiastical life. Positive heritages of different Christian traditions should be preserved, and the “rootedness” of churches in various social and cultural contexts must be respected. Third, unity can be achieved only through renewal\* of the life of the churches. Such renewal is necessary in order to overcome antagonistic positions and constitutes at the same time an enrichment of thinking and life. Fourth, unity is not aimed at for its own sake but in order that the world might believe, i.e. for the sake of the salvation and renewal of all humanity according to God’s purpose. Finally, all forms of unity are provisional. They are first-fruits of that eschatological fulfilment when God will unite and complete all things in the perfect communion of his heavenly banquet (see **eschatology**).

See also **apostolicity; catholicity; holiness; united and uniting churches; unity,**

**models of; unity of “all in each place”; unity, ways to.**

GÜNTHER GASSMANN

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**UNITY, MODELS OF**

MODELS OF unity are statements of the nature and form of the full visible unity\* of the church\* which is the final goal of the ecumenical movement. The term is normally used of the classic visions of church unity associated either with the united churches and the multilateral discussions of the Faith and Order\* commission of the WCC (organic union, conciliar fellowship) or with the bilateral discussions of the Christian World Communions\* (reconciled diversity,\* communion of communions). Without claiming the precision and predictive power of their mathematical or scientific counterparts, these models have fostered discussion among the churches and focused the issues, options and fundamental choices facing them in their search for visible unity.

The various models should not be regarded as competitive; their value is in helping the ecumenical movement define a form of unity which enables all Christians, in their proper diversity, to experience themselves (and to appear to the world) as belonging to the one Body of Christ, and which enables them to speak and act as one on issues of faith\* and life.

*Organic unity*, the historical goal of the F&O movement, envisions “a church so united [that] the ultimate loyalty of every member would be given to the whole body and not to any part of it”. This unity would be that “of a living organism, with the diversity characteristic of the members of a healthy body” (Edinburgh 1937). The third WCC assembly (New Delhi 1961) emphasized that the institutional price of such unity would “involve nothing less than a death or rebirth of many forms of church life as we have known them”. This choice has meant the end of denominational identities (see **denominationalism**) and the creation, in their stead, of new “local” (i.e. national or other such) churches expressing the fullness of Christ’s body in that place. Though no such local union has yet encompassed all churches in any one place, this vision has been most fully embodied in the more than 60 united churches which have come into being over the past two centuries, in all regions of the world.

*Conciliar fellowship*, defined at the fifth WCC assembly (Nairobi 1975, drawing upon F&O discussions at Salamanca 1973), is not itself a model but a vision of how organic unity might be realized among the various local united churches. Though separated by “space, culture or time”, they would periodically express their unity through “councils of representatives of all the local churches at various geographical levels” (see **conciliarity**). In this view, legitimate Christian diversity is not based on historical factors (e.g. confessional and denominational divisions) but is rooted in the cultural and geographical diversity of the whole people of God\* and arises from the indigenization of the gospel in the diverse regions and cultures of the world.

*Reconciled diversity* begins from “the legitimacy of the (present) confessional differences and therefore the need to preserve them”, though not as ends in themselves but as “points of reference” within a larger Christian identity. Thus, as stated at the Lutheran World Federation\* (LWF) sixth assembly (Dar es Salaam 1977), these differences and unique confessional identities are not “simply preserved and maintained unaltered” but “lose their divisive character and are reconciled to each other”. Furthermore, a church so united would be “ordered in all

its components in conciliar structures and actions” (LWF seventh assembly, Budapest 1984).

In the *communion of communions*, proposed in 1970 by Cardinal Willebrands, secretary of the Secretariat (now Pontifical Council) for Promoting Christian Unity\* of the Roman Catholic Church, the confessions would continue within the framework of a larger ecclesial allegiance (with a common dogma,\* sacraments,\* and basic ordering of ministry\*), each confession (with its characteristic expression of theological emphasis and method, discipline, liturgical life, and spirituality) embodying a distinctive *typos* (see *typoi*) of the one faith: “the confessions should be the form and expression of ecumenicity” (Karl Rahner and Heinrich Fries). The bishop of Rome would exercise within the one church a unique ministry in the service of unity.

Thus the various models embody important differences in the approach to unity, particularly in the role which they foresee, in a future united church, for the present confessional and denominational identities.

The discussion of models is presently being broadened and deepened significantly through several developments. One is reflection on the term “koinonia” (communion, community, fellowship), which emerged from the bilateral discussions and gained prominence through the fifth world conference on Faith and Order (whose theme was “Towards Koinonia in Faith, Life and Witness”) in 1993. Koinonia is not itself a model of unity but a biblical term evoking the special quality of relationship meant to obtain among Christians and the churches and pointing to the intimate, mutually sustaining and challenging bonds – both spiritual and material – linking them within, and to, the one Body of Christ. As such, the notion of koinonia has enriched our understanding of all models of unity.

A related development has been the increasing importance of the concept of mutual accountability. This reflects the churches’ growing acceptance of their responsibility to and for one another as partners within the one ecumenical movement, and their awareness that actions taken – even on “internal” matters – by each church affect all other churches, and the ecumenical

situation overall. Relationships among the churches have also been influenced by work on ecclesiology and ethics, with its insistence that ecumenical engagement in ethical reflection (and, where appropriate, action) is intrinsic to the church. Thus "recognition" among churches implies not only shared faith, mutually accepted sacramental practise, ministry, etc. but also some degree of common witness before, and shared service in, the world.

Two additional, related factors are contributing to the discussion on models. First, recent calls for a unity "in solidarity" (Jon Sobrino and J.H. Pico) and a unity "marked by shared suffering" (Paul Crow) are challenging all models to remember that church union is not an end in itself; each model must be judged as to how well it enables and empowers the church in its mission,\* witness\* and service (see **diakonia**) in the world. Second, it is increasingly recognized that the form of unity must be such as to encourage the renewal\* of the church's life and enable the proper participation of all the people of God, at all levels, especially the local congregation (see **local church**). Otherwise, as stated at the fifth international consultation of united and uniting churches\* (Potsdam 1987), "union without renewal only continues the sin of division – not institutional division, but divisions between Christians (now within one church) of different races, economic levels, sexes".

The models remain fundamental to our reflection on the nature of the unity we seek. Indeed, many of the other approaches to the search for visible unity (e.g. the discussion of "full communion" or the notion of "steps" towards unity) may be regarded as explorations of the meaning and implications of one or another model. Thus further work on models of unity is essential, with five related areas requiring special attention: (1) the structural form of a future united church, including the inter-relation of the various levels of its life (congregational, national, regional, global; it is striking that all models envision some type of conciliar structure, but no model is sufficiently clear about its form); (2) the nature of authority\* within the future one church and how authority will be exercised for the maintenance of unity (the question of authority

awaits adequate discussion in the ecumenical movement); (3) the proper balance between unity and diversity within a future united church (here it should be remembered that the word "organic" in organic unity was intended to guard precisely the rich diversity of Christian faith and church life); (4) new ecumenical thought on the nature of the church, particularly the concept of *koinonia*\* (communion\*); (5) the relationship between the visible unity of the church and the renewal of its worship, life, witness, mission and service.

See also **union, organic; unity, ways to.**

THOMAS F. BEST

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## UNITY OF "ALL IN EACH PLACE"

AT THE FIRST WCC assembly in Amsterdam (1948), provision was made for meetings of the World Confessional Families but not for representatives of united churches (see **united and uniting churches**). The latter met apart from the assembly. The assembly's report did not discuss local unity except for a brief commendation of the "courage and enterprise" which had inspired "some notable unions" of churches (*The Universal Church in God's Design*, 125).

Immediately following the first assembly there was sharp debate about the ecclesiological significance of the formation of the WCC. Did it commit the member churches to specific models of unity\* (see **unity, models of**)? Would it press churches to unite? Would it become a "super-church"? At the meeting of the central committee in Toronto (1950), these questions were squarely faced, and a statement was issued which has remained determinative of subsequent development (see **Toronto statement**). Membership in the WCC committed churches to the quest for unity but did not imply acceptance of any particular model of unity. There were in fact many different models on offer – reintegration into the Orthodox church, organic union\* on the lines suggested by the Lambeth Quadrilateral,\* a federal relationship between the World Confessional Families (see **federalism**), and for some the WCC itself represented the desirable form of unity. The WCC could not espouse any of these models but continued to show interest in local unions of churches by regularly publishing surveys of such unions or plans for unity in many parts of the world.

The Lund Faith and Order conference (1952) and the Evanston assembly (1954) followed their predecessors in omitting discussion of the local schemes of union from their agenda, but after each of these meetings there were unofficial consultations of representatives of united and uniting churches in which leading personalities in the WCC participated. The representatives at Lund of younger churches involved in united or uniting churches felt obliged to counter the suggestion that their eagerness for unity might be "mistaken for a by-product of Asian nationalism" (*Lund report*, 130). But in the debates which centred on the Toronto statement, it was made clear that, while the WCC could not propose the acceptance of a particular model of unity as a condition of membership, member churches, if serious in their quest for unity, could not remain permanently uncommitted to one model or another. In a lecture at the time of the Evanston assembly, the writer of this article affirmed that "the proper form of the church's unity" required "first that it must be such that all who are in Christ in any place are, in that place, visibly one fel-

lowship; and secondly that it must be such that each local community is so ordered and so related to the whole that its fellowship with all Christ's people everywhere, and with all who have gone before and will come after, is made clear" (published in *The Journal of Religion*, 35, 1, 1955).

These phrases were to be further refined in the following five years. The impetus to do so came partly from a conference of North American churches on "The Nature of the Unity We Seek", partly from a WCC central committee request for F&O comment on the Toronto statement and partly from the appointment of a committee on the future of F&O. In 1958 that committee presented a report advocating a "churchly" model of unity, in contrast to a model which appeared to call only for cooperation. The next year the F&O working committee submitted to the central committee a report which contained the following sentences: "We believe that the unity which is both God's will and his gift to his church is one which brings all in each place who confess Christ Jesus as Lord into a fully committed fellowship with one another through one baptism into him, preaching the same gospel and breaking the one bread, and having a corporate life reaching out in witness and service to all; and which at the same time unites them with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages in such wise that ministries and members are acknowledged by all and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls the church."

After further discussion this statement was adopted by the third assembly in New Delhi with small modifications – one of which was to remove the semicolon which divided the "local" and "universal" parts. In spite of this attempt to hold the two parts of the statement together, it was the "local" emphasis which captured attention. The fourth world conference on F&O at Montreal (1963) gave much attention to the local church.\* It affirmed that "the proving ground of unity is the local church" (80) but was concerned that new forms of the local church might in fact be forms of schism.\* It was no doubt by inadvertence that the Montreal report put a comma at the crucial point from which a semicolon had been removed!

It followed that the fourth assembly at Uppsala (1968) thought it necessary to recover a balance which had been tipped one way. It emphasized the global dimension of unity and expressed the hope that "the members of the WCC, committed to each other, should work for a time when a genuinely universal council may once more speak for all Christians" (*The Uppsala Report*, 17).

This vision of a "genuinely universal council" was taken up at the next meeting of the F&O commission (Louvain 1971). In a statement entitled "Conciliarity and the Future of the Ecumenical Movement", a vision of unity was sketched in the form of a "conciliar fellowship of churches". Certain factors favoured this shift of emphasis. Movements for local organic union which had seemed promising ten years earlier were faltering. The growing role of the Orthodox churches in the life of the WCC was giving wider recognition to the role of ecumenical councils\* in the history of the church. And, most importantly, the massive presence of the Roman Catholic Church in the ecumenical movement from the 1960s onwards had shifted emphasis from local schemes of union to bilateral dialogues\* between world confessions. It was obvious that the RCC as a single world communion should find its partners in the World Confessional Families, which thus assumed a much more prominent role than in the preceding decades. "Conciliar fellowship" seemed to be a more attractive (and less costly) way to unity than the sometimes traumatic experiences of organic unions, in which churches surrendered their separate existence to form new bodies. By the middle of the decade a WCC publication was able to list almost fifty of these bilateral conversations between world confessional bodies (*Confessions in Dialogue*, 1975).

The relation between these two approaches to unity was discussed at a conference in Salamanca (1973), and its findings were taken up by the fifth assembly at Nairobi in the same year: "The one church is to be envisaged as a conciliar fellowship of local churches which are themselves truly united. In this conciliar fellowship, each local church possesses, in communion with the others, the fullness of catholicity, witnesses to the same apostolic faith, and therefore

recognizes the others as belonging to the same church of Christ and guided by the same Spirit" (*Breaking Barriers: Nairobi, 1975*, 60).

The acceptance of this formulation led naturally to the question: What is a "local church... truly united"? At New Delhi it had been recognized that the word "place" did not have a simple unambiguous denotation. It affirmed that the unity among Christians "must be found in each school where they study, in each office or factory where they work, and in each congregation where they worship" and, furthermore, that "place" may imply not only local communities but also wider geographical areas such as states, provinces or nations (*The New Delhi Report*, 118). A consultation called by the WCC in 1976 sought to clarify the issues. It noted that by using the term "place" for all levels of the church's life, the third assembly (New Delhi) avoided a clear definition. It affirmed that "the church cannot even be conceived apart from the reality of places" (*In Each Place: Towards a Fellowship of Local Churches Truly United*, 4).

It considered the missionary obligation to relate the gospel to the specificity of particular groups in changing situations and affirmed that "a place is not merely a geographical area which can be identified on the map. It has temporal dimension as well" (5). It attempted a definition of the term "local church" as follows: "The term refers to an area where Christians can easily meet and form one committed fellowship in witness and service. Every local church will normally gather in one eucharistic service. The conditions of the area may be such that there is need for several separate services. Even then it must be made evident that these communities understand themselves as one eucharistic fellowship" (8). Common language is widely recognized as legitimate grounds for forming a distinct congregation. But "is it proper to recognize distinct eucharistic assemblies in the same area on the basis of distinct language, race, culture and other factors?... There is no agreed answer to these questions" (9-10). It is agreed, however, that in the course of its missionary outreach into new cultural groups, "as a provisional measure, there must be room for the formation of a congregation within [the] receiving cul-

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ture, speaking its language and sharing its style of life, through which the full riches of that culture may be brought into the life of the universal church" (10). In a final section, which suggests the direction for the future, the consultation noted that "in many places small groups and fellowships have grown around common concerns and interests" and that in many cases "their commitment to the unity of the church leads them to anticipate the communion of the future" (11). These discussions about the nature of "local unity" need to be continued.

The sixth assembly (Vancouver 1983) re-affirmed the Nairobi statement and sought to develop it further through a search for a common understanding of the apostolic faith, through mutual recognition of baptism, eucharist and ministry (see *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*) and through common ways of decision making. The WCC has also sponsored consultations of united and uniting churches by themselves, and with the Christian World Communions,\* including the Roman Catholic Church and representatives of the Orthodox churches.

See also **church; conciliarity; eucharist; unity, ways to.**

LESLIE NEWBIGIN

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## UNITY OF HUMANKIND

ALTHOUGH THE concern to relate church unity\* and social problems characterized 20th-century ecumenism from the start, the phrase "the unity of humankind" became an explicit theme in ecumenical discussions in the early 1960s. The thrust of this discussion has been the attempt to discern how divisions in the human community are becoming problems of church unity today, and likewise

how the quest for church unity might be a sign of promise for the healing of these broken human communities as well.

Vatican II's\* concept of the sacramentality of the church ("the church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind") provided a powerful impulse for developing this theme. That insight then became the basis for the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, addressed to "the whole of humanity". The parallel development in the WCC echoes Vatican II with an eschatological accent: "The church is bold in speaking of itself as the sign of the coming unity of mankind" (Uppsala 1968).

Faith and Order\* launched a major local, regional and international study on "The Unity of the Church and the Unity of Mankind" and built much of its programme at Louvain (1971) around an attempt "to view our historic theme of church unity in a new context, specifically in the context of human, not simply denominational divisions". It thus considered the struggle for justice,\* encounters with living faiths, the struggle against racism,\* issues of the disabled in society and church, and differences in culture.\* And a concern developed that the method of such studies should not be simply "contextualization" but "intercontextualization", whereby the two contexts reciprocally provide the interpretative frame for each other. Subsequent discussion revealed large problems about anthropology (see **anthropology, theological**), ambiguity in the notion of "the unity of mankind", the comparability of "the two unities", and the abstractness of the perspective from which such "unities" could be discussed, among others.

Accra (1974) attempted to clarify the language of the theme: "human inter-relatedness" refers to an inescapable fact of modern global life (e.g. air travel) which has both positive and negative aspects. "The just interdependence of free people" refers to the kind of utopian visions of human community which animate movements of liberation; "the unity of humankind", in contrast, is a theological term for the eschatological promise of the coming kingdom of God.\*

The first phase of studies reached its provisional conclusion in a comprehensive report entitled *Unity in Today's World* (1978). A

powerful impulse for renewed study soon came from the Sheffield conference on “The Community of Women and Men in the Church” (1981). And in 1982 at Lima, F&O launched a major study on “The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community”. This study concentrates on explicating “the church as mystery and prophetic sign”; on probing two specific major problems as issues of church unity: the community of women and men, and the search for justice; and on promoting a considerable number of local study groups around the world. A comprehensive progress report was approved by F&O in 1989 for publication in 1990 and submission to the WCC’s Canberra assembly (1991). The specific subject does not appear after that date, but the concerns which originated it can be detected in the study on ecclesiology and ethics\* and in the church as koinonia, understood as an ecclesiological approach in which “the understanding of unity in terms of koinonia, the Trinitarian understanding of ecclesiology, the theological location of the unity of the church within God’s purpose for the whole of creation” establish the inseparable relation between the twofold concern of Faith and Order.

Although *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* has been more noticed by the churches, this 20-year study of church unity and human community has been most closely followed by the central organs of the WCC, for this study addresses as no other the constitutive concerns which brought the WCC into being and the question about the unity of the ecumenical movement itself.

See also **disability, universalism.**

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## UNITY, WAYS TO

WAYS TO UNITY are the various processes and practical steps through which the churches seek that full visible unity\* of the church\* which is the final goal of the ecumenical movement. Effective ways to unity are rooted in the conviction that, because God wills the church to be one, it is the state of church union which is normal, and the present state of church division abnormal and requiring correction. The sharing of this conviction with others – however separated by differences of confession and conscience – in common prayer and commitment to overcome all that divides us is “spiritual ecumenism”.\* Nurtured in personal contacts and through programmes such as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity,\* this is the source and power of all the more visible and practical ways to unity.

The various ways to unity differ principally in their estimation of (1) the specific elements of Christian faith\* and practice upon which agreement is required for unity, and (2) the degree of agreement (which may be different for differing aspects of the church’s faith and life) necessary for unity to be achieved.

The most dramatic “way” to unity is unity itself, an approach exemplified by the united churches. Their constituent denominations, on the basis of “sufficient” agreement on essentials of the apostolic faith and on sacramental practice (esp. the areas of baptism,\* eucharist\* and ministry\*), have committed themselves to common decision making and mutual accountability within a single unified structure. Considerable diversity may remain, for example, in the form of baptismal practice, within congregations or from one congregation to another. Through experience of, and continuing dialogue about, such differences, the church grows in its common faith and life more effectively, it feels, than had the union been postponed until full agreement in all areas had been reached. The united churches have experienced this process as a dying to old confes-

sional identities and a re-birth to a new and richer identity: “No schemes of union have come about,” said D.T. Niles about the Church of South India in a memorable comment; “the churches have united.”

Structural unions continue to be formed (e.g. in Jamaica in 1992, South Africa in 1994 and 1999, and the UK in 2000, with several other union plans currently underway). There is, however, a growing tendency for churches negotiating structural union to emphasize more immediately realizable goals, which include intensive sharing in worship, parish life and witness (as in the “partnership” between the Disciples of Christ and the United Church of Christ), or finding new ways, short of structural union, of manifesting the bonds between them (as in Churches Uniting in Christ, formed in January 2002 as the successor to the consultation on Church Union,\* fostering the common confession and life of member churches in the US), or the remarkable proposal of 1997 for an “ecumenical bishop” put forward by the Commission of the [five] Covenanted Churches in Wales).

A complementary approach to the search for unity aims at achieving a state of “full communion” among existing churches. As they overcome theological and historical issues which have divided them, specific groups of churches move by “steps” and “stages” towards unity. Their unity is “visible” not through their incorporation within a single ecclesial body but as they “live out” their agreement on fundamentals of faith and practice, mutual recognition of their membership and ministries (or indeed full interchangeability of their ministries, as in the Porvoo\* agreement between the Anglican churches of Britain and Ireland and most of the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches), and their commitment to common witness\* and mission.\*

Another approach understands full agreement in faith as a necessary precondition of union. This way to unity lies through slow, patient work towards full common understanding in matters of faith and practice; until such an understanding exists, any thought of institutional union is considered premature. In particular, sharing in sacramental life must be the fruit of unity rather than a means towards it (see **intercommunion**). In the Roman Catholic view, “the

common celebration of the eucharist must be the sign of an already-existing ecclesial unity” (Swiss bishops’ statement, Einsiedeln, June 1986); for the Orthodox, “intercommunion must be considered as the crowning act of real and true reunion which has already been fully achieved by fundamental agreement in the realm of faith and order and is not to be regarded as an instrument for reunion” (statement by the representative of the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople to the second world conference on F&O, Edinburgh 1937).

Where churches bear a burden of bitter historical conflict, the way to unity must lie through a “reconciliation of memories”, a process exemplified in the Leuenberg agreement reached in 1973 between Reformation churches (Lutheran and Reformed) in Europe (see **Leuenberg Church Fellowship**). Despite “the condemnations pronounced [against each other] by the Reformation confessions of faith” in the areas of the Lord’s supper, Christology, and predestination, the agreement affirms that, in their present common understanding of the gospel, these churches consider that these ancient accusations and actions “are no longer an obstacle to church fellowship”. Some differences still persist among the churches, but they are not judged to have divisive force, and thus a state of pulpit and altar fellowship can be declared.

The healing power of this approach lies in its courageous facing of past wounds. Often this step frees the churches to transcend the theological language of their ancient disputes – language formulated precisely to distinguish one church from others, if not to prove them heretical – and to discover new language adequate to their present common convictions.

An effective and widespread way to unity is participation by churches in the life of councils at the city, national, regional and global levels (see **councils of churches**). Councils provide opportunities for common programming in mission, witness and service (see **diakonia**) and accustom the churches to working together rather than apart or in competition. In councils, the bilateral dialogues\* between pairs of churches or confessional families can be set in a much wider, multilateral framework, and insights can be tested

and enriched by the experiences and convictions of many churches (see **dialogue, multi-lateral**). Such reflection on issues of faith, paralleling the work of the F&O commission of the WCC, is increasingly pursued in councils at city, national and regional levels.

While the councils cannot be confused with their member churches, there is a growing awareness that they fulfill some ecclesial functions. In reflecting, sharing, speaking and acting together, the churches within councils experience themselves, as described at the global gathering of national councils of churches in Geneva in 1986, as “both instruments and signs of unity”, expressing a growing koinonia of confession, of worship and of common witness and action.

Clearly no single way to unity is sufficient in and of itself; it is the responsibility of Christians to pursue the search for visible unity through all ways open to them, and with all the energy and ingenuity at their command.

See also **unity, models of; union, organic**.

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## UNIVERSALISM

IN ITS STRONGEST sense, “universalism” designates the view that all intelligent, moral creatures (angels, humans, devils) will cer-

tainly be saved in the end. In 543 the emperor-theologian Justinian anathematized the view that the punishment of devils and the wicked is only temporary, so that they would be included in a final “restoration of all things”, and such an *apokatastasis* appears to have been part of the “Origenism” subsequently condemned at the second ecumenical council of Constantinople in 553. Continuing proponents of universalism appeal to God’s love, power, patience and mercy. In the 20th century, such prominent figures as Karl Barth and Hans Urs von Balthasar have stopped only just short of the universalistic conclusions implicit in certain tendencies in their theology. Since so many humans appear to die in their sins and unbelief, universalism seems to imply opportunity for repentance and conversion after death.

All opponents of universalism hold that it does not take seriously enough moral evil and sin: “Deeds that cry out to heaven also cry out for hell” (Peter Berger). Some opponents of universalism think that it does not respect the freedom\* humans have to reject God, but others hold that such a view of human freedom impugns God’s sovereignty and that the biblical hell will be peopled by those whom God has “passed over” for salvation\* and deliberately predestined to condemnation.

A middling view notes that God “desires everyone to be saved” (1 Tim. 2:4) but reckons that, while God will continue resourcefully to elicit an opening to himself and to others, the self-closure of the sinner to love and life (*cor in se incurvatum*, “the heart turned in upon itself”) may finally entail self-extinction. Thus there would be no subject left to endure an eternal hell.

In a weaker sense, universalism denotes the global scope of the activity of the one true God,\* the God of Israel and of Jesus Christ.\* (Linguistic clarity might be furthered if “universality” could be used instead of “universalism” in this case.) Echoing the ancient promise that all the families of the earth would find blessing in Abraham (Gen. 12:3), later prophets proclaim that, after judgment, the survivors of the nations will turn to the Lord, the Sovereign of all creation and history, and join in the salvation granted to the remnant of Israel (e.g. see Isa. 25:6-9, 45:1-25; Zech. 14:1-21). According to the New Testament, the risen

Christ sends his apostles to “make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19), and missionary witness to him will be borne “in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). The universality of the Christian mission is grounded in the “mystery” of God, i.e. the divine design, long hidden but now revealed in Jesus Christ, to include both Jews and Gentiles in salvation (Rom. 16:25-27; Eph. 1:9-10, 3:1-6; Col. 1:24-28; 1 Tim. 3:16).

Christian theologians have differed as to whether salvation is to be enjoyed only by those with explicit and confessed faith in Christ (see Mark 16:15-16; John 3:16-18,36; Acts 4:12; Rom. 10:8-21), or whether also by those who follow Christ “anonymously”, by virtue of the “law written in their hearts” (see Rom. 2:14-16; 2 Cor. 5:10), or whether salvation is possible even without reference to Christ at all (but this position would run counter to John 14:6 and 12:32).

Whether discussion involves universalism in the stronger or in the weaker sense, many would recognize the wisdom of the Lutheran Paul Althaus (1888-1966): “What believers hope for themselves in their own assurance of faith, they hope also for all their fellow humans. The grace which has been directed towards believers is not grounded in a preference for their own persons; rather it is unconditioned, groundless grace. Therefore they may not think of it as other than comprehensive.”

See also **salvation, salvation history, uniqueness of Christ.**

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## URBAN RURAL MISSION

THE CONCERNS and issues surrounding the dual problems of industrialization and urbanization have their roots in the industrial

revolution of the late 18th and 19th centuries. As people were increasingly dehumanized and made poor, the churches’ responses were sporadic. These varied individual and local initiatives, some with global impact, could be viewed as the antecedents of Urban Rural Mission. Better known among these initiatives were the Mission populaire in France (1871), Sheffield Industrial Mission (1944), the International Missionary Council’s Urban Africa project, based in the copper belt of what is now Zambia (1958), and the first Asian Conference on Industrial Evangelism, Manila (1958).

At the third assembly of the WCC in New Delhi, India (1961, at which the International Missionary Council merged with the WCC), considerable attention was given to the concerns, issues and consequences surrounding industrialization and urbanization. Programmatic responsibilities for these concerns within the WCC were assigned to the newly formed Division of World Mission and Evangelism (DWME, later to become the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism [CWME]). Shortly after the world mission conference in Mexico City (1963), an informal group met to discuss urban industrial evangelism. There was recognition of the many efforts around the world, and the DWME realized “that these efforts need coordination and cross-fertilization leading to a common approach and that all members of the WCC should engage actively at the front line of this work”. Thus the first meeting of the DWME advisory group on urban and industrial mission, which later became known simply as urban industrial mission (UIM), gave a formal name, structure and methodology to this aspect of WCC’s commitment to mission. Its essential goal was “to involve the total church in all continents in the ecumenical task of urban industrial evangelism”. Flexibility and a decentralized form of cooperation, with a minimum of organization at the top, were to be among the guiding principles. By 1966, with perspectives from the churches of Asia, the question of securing social justice was prominently on the agenda. In UIM’s first major public document, “Becoming Operational in a World of Cities: A Strategy for Urban and Industrial Mission” (presented to

and adopted by WCC's fourth assembly at Uppsala, 1968), there was a strong call for the churches to "involve themselves more deeply with the new groups – the new poor, the workers, the new marginal groups – and become a servant church among them".

The concern of the churches and missionary agencies for rural societies, leading to their separate and diverse activities on behalf of those societies, also came on the WCC agenda at Uppsala in 1968. The concern was given an ecumenical dimension in view of the rapid social and economic changes which were adversely affecting rural communities. Consequently the DWME was requested to "consider ways in which member churches and councils can be assisted in mission to the world's rapidly changing rural societies". An office for Rural Agricultural Mission (RAM) was established within DWME in 1973. RAM's mandate was "to stimulate member churches to pay particular attention to rural areas; to facilitate ecumenical cooperation in the prosecution of rural mission, to encourage regional/local groups that will be responsible for training animators; to encourage churches to re-examine and re-construct their lay and ministerial training schemes and programmes with a proper orientation towards rural mission; and to select one or two places for an experiment in intensive integrated rural mission".

In 1978, after consistent pressure from the continents of the South to bridge the apparent gap between "urban" and "rural", the CWME decided to merge its UIM with the RAM offices into Urban Rural Mission (URM). It was agreed that UIM's preferred style of attempting to respond to local initiatives provided a useful basis for work with rural communities. Over the years through UIM activities, staff travel, meetings and conferences, a fellowship of people committed to the struggles for justice and dignity grew at local, national, regional and global levels.

The 1970s and 1980s were a period of growth in URM, especially as people responded to the challenges of militarization, violence, suppression of democratic processes and the denial of human rights. Marginalization and poverty became an everyday reality as governments, the politi-

cal elite, establishment structures, multinational corporations and countries of the North began to increase their control over almost every aspect of life. People's movements to resist unjust structures, to struggle for peace, justice and community, and to network in efforts to build a more healthy and sustainable society grew throughout the world. In many places URM played a significant part in this process. URM encouraged biblical and theological reflection and articulation, particularly through listening to the people's stories and re-reading the Bible in the specific context of struggle, resistance, liberation and freedom.

Throughout this period the primary method employed in URM's commitment to local action was community organizing for empowerment of the victims of oppression and marginalization, enabling them to participate in the decision-making processes which affect their lives. A special report "A URM Perspective on Mission" (1986) affirmed that the mission of God is the proclamation of life, that all mission starts with people, takes politics seriously, is about reflection and action, and is essentially about social transformation in the perspective of the kingdom. A celebration in Manila in 1987 brought together about 120 community organizers from all regions of the world to mark the 25th anniversary of URM concerns within WCC.

WCC restructuring in the 1990s placed URM within the programme for Community and Justice in Mission, then the staff team on Mission and Evangelism, but the network continues to refer to itself as Urban Rural Mission.

The programme's mandate is "to work for the understanding and practice of the churches' mission as including solidarity with the poor and marginalized". In the context of a world of increasing dehumanization, in which the community is ever more fragmented and whole populations continue to be ever more marginalized or denied identity and human rights, this solidarity is seen as imperative.

URM thus encourages, assists and supports the churches in an understanding of the meaning and challenges of mission today; facilitates the education, empowerment and renewal of the people of God for mis-

sion; and enables the building up and strengthening of national, regional and global networks of mutual sharing, solidarity and support.

URM works in six regions (Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America, Middle East and North America), and plans, activities, budgets and progress are reviewed by regional contact groups which work with ecumenical bodies, member churches and people's movements. Initiatives are also developing in the Caribbean and Central America. Each region is organized differently and is accountable to the global URM family. The role of the WCC-URM office is essentially to coordinate and enable the URM movement.

URM priorities include leadership development, training for community organizing, building up a forum for sharing and providing space, a voice and identity for excluded people, and developing links and networks for exchange. It is also concerned to nurture relations with churches, ecumenical agencies, non-governmental organizations, people's movements and people of other faiths as appropriate, and to influence the churches' mission thinking and practice with socio-cultural analysis, biblical and theological reflection and missiological studies that support community action for social transformation.

All this effort should support people's struggles for justice and self-empowerment, especially slum-dwellers, women and children, industrial and rural workers, labour movements, migrant workers, and the victims of racism, militarism and other forms of oppression. Strengthening the regional capacity to plan, implement and evaluate their activities is important as regions cope with new challenges, limited resources and the need to revitalize the movement.

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## UT UNUM SINT

SIGNED BY Pope John Paul II on Ascension Day 1995, this encyclical\* re-affirms, following Vatican II,\* the "irrevocable commitment" of the Roman Catholic Church to ecumenism as "an organic part of her life and work". Personal (at times even anecdotal) in style, passionate in tone, and pastoral in aim, the papal letter expresses gratitude and joy at what has so far been achieved in the ecumenical movement and calls for continued conversion – individual and communal, at all levels – to the cause and participation in the process of renewal. The key word is "dialogue".\*

Christian unity\* is seen as the proper outcome of Christ's reconciling death on behalf of humankind. The unity for which Christ prayed among his disciples is essential to the church\* and intrinsic to the credibility of evangelization amid a needy world. The witness of the martyrs, united across confessional divisions in the "selfless offering of their lives for the kingdom of God", is exemplary. The everyday path is by way of repentance (for wrongs mutually committed), prayer (esp. in common), reciprocal visitation, study (of shared faith and remaining differences) and cooperation (in mission and service to human need).

Since the search is for "communion in truth", doctrine is of "fundamental importance". Grounded in love, dialogue is not simply "an exchange of ideas" but also "an exchange of gifts". It presupposes respect between the partners and a desire for reconciliation, and it includes an examination of conscience by each. The "common quest for truth" requires fairness, clarity, humility and charity. Sensitivity to different formulations can make "surprising discoveries possible" that enrich the apprehension of revealed truth. Examination of disagreements should have "two essential points of reference: sacred scripture and the great Tradition of the church".

In a survey of "the fruits of dialogue" over the previous 30 years, the pope enumerates the recognition of "other Christians" as "brothers and sisters" linked by baptism\* and faith\* in the one Lord, "solidarity in the service of humanity" (with special mention of the WCC), "ecumenical translations of the Bible", convergence in

liturgical and sacramental reform and renewal (with special mention of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*)\*, and “growth of communion” (even though the expressions of this remain limited and vary among the several partners). Then the pope rehearses the progress made in the Roman Catholic Church’s particular dialogues with the “churches of the East” (both the Orthodox,\* which are insistently called “sister churches”,\* and the Oriental Orthodox,\* whose patriarchs are also “brothers”), and with “other churches and ecclesial communities in the West” (acknowledged as the initiators of the modern ecumenical movement).

In contemplating the road ahead, the pope foresees a “continuing and deepening dialogue” on the way to “full visible unity among all the baptized”, “that full communion in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church which will be expressed in the common celebration of the eucharist”. Reception\* of the interim results of dialogue requires a critical analysis and testing for consistency with the apostolic tradition.\* Five areas are listed where further work remains to be done towards “a true consensus of faith”: (1) “the relationship between sacred scripture, as the highest authority in matters of faith, and sacred Tradition, as indispensable to the interpretation of the word of God” (a formulation of the issue entirely in line with developments on the matter in *Faith and Order*\* since Montreal 1963); (2) “the eucharist, as the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, an offering of praise to the Father, the sacrificial memorial and real presence of Christ and the sanctifying outpouring of the Holy Spirit” (again a vision consistent with the eucharistic section of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*); (3) “ordination, as a sacrament, to the threefold ministry of the episcopate, presbyterate and diaconate”; (4) “the magisterium of the church, entrusted to the pope and the bishops in communion with him, understood as a responsibility and an authority exercised in the name of Christ for teaching and safeguarding the faith”; (5) “the Virgin Mary, as mother of God and icon of the church, the spiritual mother who intercedes for Christ’s disciples and for all humanity”.

Having already recognized that “certain features of the Christian mystery have at times been more effectively emphasized” in other communities than the Roman Catholic Church (para. 14), the pope repeats that “the talents of each must be developed for the utility and the advantage of all” (87). It is now (88-97) that the pope returns to “the ministry of unity of the bishop of Rome” (in the service of which he places this very encyclical). Declaring “the Catholic church’s conviction that in the ministry of the bishop of Rome she has preserved, in fidelity to the apostolic Tradition and the faith of the fathers, the visible sign and guarantor of unity”, John Paul II acknowledges that this ministry “constitutes a difficulty for most other Christians, whose memory is marked by certain painful recollections”. Yet he notes that the matter is being studied again in both bilateral and multilateral dialogues and – given “the real but imperfect communion existing between us” – humbly invites “church leaders and their theologians” to “a patient and fraternal dialogue” concerning the exercise of this “necessary” ministry.

Early ecumenical response to the encyclical was strongly positive, both for its forthright advocacy of the cause of unity and for the invitation to dialogue on the “Petrine” ministry (the latter doubtless helped by the widespread informal appreciation of John Paul II’s own playing of the role of universal pastor and teacher). Theologically, attention has been given to the nuances of the ecclesiology stated or implied in the encyclical: when, for example, it affirms that “the one church of Christ is *effectively present*” in “other Christian communities” through “elements of sanctification and truth”, may this new phrasing be seen as one more step by Rome away from an “ecumenism of return”? Or again: the official response of the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom notes that, in regard to the magisterium\* of the church and to the Virgin Mary (the fourth and fifth of the pope’s topics for further study), “the current teaching of the Roman Catholic Church... has been developed in isolation from those other churches and ecclesial communities with which the Roman Catholic Church acknowledges a real but imperfect communion. This must have implications for what

can be regarded as the starting point for continuing dialogue.”

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## VATICAN COUNCILS I & II

ST PETER'S basilica within Vatican City witnessed the 20th (Vatican I) and 21st (Vatican II) of the general councils which the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) customarily enumerates in its long history.

### VATICAN I (1869-70)

In June 1868 Pius IX (pope 1846-78) formally convoked a council of bishops, abbot-presidents, and generals of male religious orders. It would, he intended, be a bulwark against the principles and ideologies of the Enlightenment and the French revolution (1789), which were corroding the Christian religion, specifically rationalism, materialism and atheism.

In September 1868 the pope invited also the patriarchs of the Armenian, Coptic, Syr-

ian and Greek Orthodox churches. Because of the invitation's wording, all declined. A public papal appeal to "Protestants and all non-Catholics" to return to the only true fold also received resentful refusals. During the Council itself, 774 Council fathers participated, mostly European in birth. The number was double that of the previous council, Trent\* (1545-63).

The preparatory committees had prepared 51 drafts (schemata) of proposed decrees, but the Council discussed only six and promulgated only two dogmatic documents: *Dei Filius*: God the Creator, the human possibility of knowing God and the human need for revelation,\* and the nature of faith\* and its relation to reason; and *Pastor Aeternus*: the institution, continuation and extent of the papal primacy\* of the bishop of Rome,

and the extent and limits of papal infallibility.\* The latter statement re-cast two later chapters of the lengthy draft on the church (the entire draft had never been discussed). Because of the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war in July 1870 and the Italian occupation of the papal states in September, Pius IX abruptly suspended Vatican I in October.

## VATICAN II (1962-65)

During the 90 years after Vatican I, every area of personal and communal experience was changing – social, cultural and scientific, economic and political, intellectual and psychological. In both positive and negative responses to these changes, biblical, liturgical, missionary and ecclesiological renewal\* movements were becoming steady but hesitant streams in the RCC, especially after the second world war. Although encouraged by Pius XII (pope 1939-58) through lengthy papal encyclicals,\* such movements needed more affirming integration.

Three months into his papacy, on 25 January 1959, John XXIII announced his intention to convoke “an ecumenical council for the universal church”. The pope gradually clarified his intention and hopes: the Council would be a means of spiritual and apostolic renewal, an updating (*aggiornamento*) of the church in modern times, and a service to the unity of the church. The Council would not be a “re-union” gathering of all Christian churches but a Catholic event.

During 1959-60 the Vatican solicited “wishes and desires” for the Council agenda from more than 2800 bishops, 156 superiors general of male religious communities, 62 theological and canonical faculties of Catholic universities, and the Roman curia.\* The collated results of 9520 pages in 15 volumes were handed over to 11 commissions, which began to shape drafts into 119 booklets. These 119 had been whittled down to 20 projects by the time the Council fathers assembled for the first session in October 1962.

One of the preparatory drafting groups was Pope John’s newly created Secretariat (now Pontifical Council\*) for Promoting Christian Unity. It was responsible also for negotiations with other Christian World Communions\* to delegate official observers to the Council’s public and closed sessions.

From October 1962 to December 1965, the bishops (from 2100 to 2540 at any one time) gathered for debate during four long autumn sessions – 168 plenary working meetings and 10 public assemblies during 36 weeks, with continuous re-drafting between and during each yearly session. Also participating were from 200 to 400 invited theologians and other experts (*periti*).

With one-fifth of the bishops from Latin America, and over one-third from the local churches of Asia, Africa and Oceania, Vatican II marked the transition of the RCC to a worldwide body. The majority of RCs were no longer found in the northern Atlantic regions. Unlike Vatican I, Vatican II did not hear Europe as the all-controlling voice. In plenary debate only Latin was used.

In his opening address to the bishops, John XXIII set the pastoral tone which pervaded the deliberations. He chided “those prophets of doom who are always forecasting disaster, as though the end of the world were at hand”. God is leading us “to a new order of human relations” in a world which expects “a step forward towards doctrinal penetration and the formation of conscience”. This new step must be “in conformity with ancient doctrine”, but “the deposit of faith is one thing, the way it is expressed is another”. The church demonstrates the validity of its teaching not by condemnation or severity but with “the medicine of mercy”. The pope emphasized the church’s duty to work actively for “the full visible unity in truth” among all Christians in a “fullness of charity” which should extend also to non-Christians.

Present at the first session was the first group of 38 delegated observers from almost all the Christian confessional families. By the Council’s end, 186 had participated for longer or shorter periods. Their most active presence, including their suggestions to the drafters, became a fact and a symbol of RC ecumenical need.

John XXIII died on 3 June 1963, after the first session; by canon law, the Council was suspended. His successor, Paul VI (1963-78), quickly announced that Vatican II would continue according to the spirit and direction of John XXIII. The last three sessions produced 16 statements. With over 100,000 Latin words, this body of material

far outstripped all previous general councils in its wide-ranging agenda. The themes included divine revelation, the church, the liturgy, bishops' pastoral office, the ministry and life of priests, priestly formation, the laity, Christian education, religious life, Eastern Catholic churches, the church in the modern world, missionary activity, ecumenism, non-Christian religions, religious freedom, and the communications media.

Vatican II used the church as the fulcrum or vital centre around which all *aggiornamento* themes organized themselves. The result was the two key documents, identified by their opening Latin words: the Church (*Lumen Gentium*) and the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*). But the other 14 statements also throw light on the RC understanding in the 1960s of what God, in Christ and through the Spirit, has promised to do and is doing in the midst of humanity through God's pilgrim people.

Without taking account of the debates and resolutions of Vatican II, it is impossible to understand the modern RCC. The church's current consensus and its dissents – its confidence and its hesitations in theology, pastoral and missionary activities, social and political involvements, ecumenical and inter-religious concerns, and understanding of its own structures – are a result of the Vatican II deliberations and of the subsequent debates about what they meant and intended.

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## VIOLENCE AND NON-VIOLENCE

THE NEED for clearer understanding of the churches' responsibility in an often violent world helped shape the early years of the modern ecumenical movement. It gave rise to the Life and Work\* movement and inspired the formation of other Christian organizations, international in membership and ecumenical in vision, in the period between the two world wars.

Prior to 1960, however, the moral dilemma of violence was considered almost exclusively in terms of international conflict between sovereign states (see **state**). No easy consensus was forthcoming. "Can war now be an act of justice?" asked the WCC's founding assembly in 1948, concluding reluctantly that "we cannot answer this question unanimously" (see **just war**). Its second assembly (1954) affirmed that Christians should search for new approaches to peace,\* "taking into account both Christian pacifism as a mode of witness and the conviction of Christians that in certain circumstances military action is justifiable".

Against this background, in which Christian pacifism\* played a significant but not predominant role, the churches in the 1960s were drawn into serious reflection on violence as a reality in the struggle for social justice. Hints of the new discussion appeared at the WCC's third assembly in New Delhi (1961), which went on record exhorting those in power to refrain from using violence and to avoid provoking it. In a carefully phrased statement, the 1966 world conference on Church and Society asked "whether the violence which sheds blood in planned revolutions may not be a lesser evil than the violence which, though bloodless, condemns whole populations to perennial despair". Rejecting the view that absolute non-violence is binding on all Christians, it warned nevertheless against the evils inherent in any resort to arms and said violence could be justified only as an ultimate recourse.

During this period, Roman Catholic documents began to comment on the same issue. Emerging from Vatican II,\* *Gaudium et Spes* praised those who renounced the use of violence in the movement for social justice. In 1967, *Populorum Progressio* noted the "temptation to violence" and warned

that revolutionary uprisings generally produce far more harm than good. This emphasis has continued, in Vatican teaching, to the present.

The WCC's fourth assembly (1968) was painfully aware of the violence issue. Martin Luther King, scheduled to preach at the opening service, had been assassinated three months previously, and the assembly's dominant concern for justice sharpened the question of how social change should be advanced. A resolution of the assembly, encouraging churches to bring King's example to the attention of their members, asked the WCC's central committee to promote the study of non-violent methods of achieving social change.

Unprecedented debate on the subject was catalyzed within and beyond the churches when, in September 1970, the WCC executive committee approved a first set of grants from the special fund of the new Programme to Combat Racism,\* some of which were to support humanitarian projects of liberation movements engaged in armed struggle in Southern Africa. A notable aspect of the ensuing controversy was the way in which many pacifists felt able to give full endorsement to the WCC's action, while the strongest objections were raised within traditionally non-pacifist churches. Another element complicating the debate was the confusion of meanings associated with terms such as "violence", "power",\* "force", "non-violence" and "revolution",\* particularly when discussion ranged across different cultural, linguistic and ideological lines.

Meeting a few months later, the central committee (Addis Ababa 1971) pointed out that the grants should be seen not as the WCC identifying itself with any political movement but as tangible support for the cause of racial justice. The Council, it added, could "not pass judgment on those victims of racism who are driven to violence as the only way left to them". In a related action, the department on Church and Society was asked to undertake a study aimed at furthering the churches' reflection on the ethical dilemmas posed by violence and non-violence in the struggles for justice and peace, and contributing to the search for strategies of action that might minimize the sum total of violence in conflict situations.

The two-year study project engaged people from a wide spectrum of viewpoints and experience: theologians from historic peace churches and leaders of denominations in the "just-war" tradition, activists involved in armed struggle and experts in non-violent strategies and tactics, sociologists and local pastors, biblical scholars and authorities on constitutional law – all of them from extraordinarily diverse local situations. It included a consultation at Cardiff, Wales (1971), to explore the potential of non-violent strategies, and culminated in a major report entitled *Violence, Nonviolence and the Struggle for Social Justice* that was presented to the central committee in 1973. After debating the matter at length and appending some comments of its own, the central committee commended the statement to the churches for study, comment and action.

The statement attracted considerable interest from the media and was well received by member churches. As it remains the most substantial piece of work the WCC has done on this subject, its main points are worth noting.

After observing that the problem of Christian responsibility in a world of force and violence is as old as the church itself, the document speaks of Christian hope\* and the promise of the kingdom\* as the context within which the church must try to elaborate guidelines for its social thought. The statement, in carefully crafted words, offered just such guidance. "We believe that for our time, the goal of social change is a society in which all the people participate in the fruits and the decision-making processes, in which the centres of power are limited and accountable, in which human rights are truly affirmed for all, and which acts responsibly towards the whole human community of mankind, and towards coming generations. Such a society would not be the kingdom of God, but it might reflect within the conditions of our time that subjection of the powers of this world to the service of justice and love, which reflect God's purposes for man."

Under God, governments have a legitimate and necessary function to restrain private power, assure human rights\* and serve the public good. To this end they use force governed by law.\* All human powers, how-

ever, are tempted to misuse and exceed their authority. No wielder of power is perfect, and a government may become so tyrannical and so hostile to its own people that citizens feel obliged to try to overthrow it. Then, says the statement, the goal should be not the destruction of the enemy but a more just social order in which contending groups are reconciled and enabled to participate in decisions affecting the community as a whole.

Without taking a stance itself, the document lists three distinct points of view about methods of resisting oppression. The first understands non-violent action as the only way consistent with obedience to Jesus Christ. The second sees violent resistance as a Christian duty in extreme circumstances, constrained by criteria similar to those traditionally applied to assessing a just war. "Not only must the cause be just and all other possibilities exhausted, but also there must be reasonable expectation that violent resistance will attain the ends desired, the methods must be just and there must be a positive understanding of the order which will be established after the violence succeeds." The third point of view recognizes violence as a seemingly unavoidable element in certain situations in which non-violence simply does not appear to present itself as an option.

While unable to reduce the three viewpoints to agreement, the statement goes on to register several important convictions on which there was consensus. It identifies some forms of violence in which Christians may not participate and which the churches must condemn: "Violent causes – the conquest of one people by another or the deliberate oppression of one class or race by another – which offend divine justice... Violent means of struggle – torture in all forms, the holding of innocent hostages and the deliberate or indiscriminate killing of non-combatants for example – which destroy the soul of the perpetrator as surely as the life and health of the victim."

It calls the churches and action groups to give more attention to the techniques of non-violence. "There are vast possibilities for preventing violence and bloodshed and for mitigating violent conflicts already in progress, by the systematic use of forms of struggle which aim at the conversion and not

the destruction of the opponent and which use means which do not foreclose the possibility of a positive relationship with him. Non-violent action represents relatively unexplored territory..."

It challenges widely held misunderstandings of non-violence. "Non-violent action is highly political. It may be extremely controversial. It is not free of the compromise and ambiguity which accompany any attempt to embody a love-based ethic in a world of power and counter-power, and it is not necessarily bloodless. Moreover, most struggles for freedom – and most government actions – have been, as a matter of fact, mixtures of violent and non-violent action."

With a warning that Christians should be wary of handing out gratuitous advice on behaviour to people living in distant and different situations, the document notes that those near the top of the world's socio-economic pyramid must be particularly sensitive to the limitation their affluence places on their giving moral counsel to others less well placed.

Sharp questions are posed to all parties in the debate: those prepared to use violence, advocates of principled non-violence, those who by whatever means work to bring down an existing power structure, the defenders of institutions that are under challenge, and Christians in countries where government is relatively responsive to pressures for change. Yet the most important question, says the statement, is raised not by any one of these groups to any other but by all of them together to the whole church, which is challenged to become wiser and more courageous in translating its commitment to Jesus Christ into effective engagement in the struggle for social justice.

A decade later, in preparation for the WCC's sixth assembly, the 1973 statement was reviewed at a small consultation held at Corrymeela, Northern Ireland. Its report, *Violence, Nonviolence and Civil Conflict*, affirms the main thrust of the earlier work but notes a major change in the international scene and highlights significant shifts in the ecumenical debate.

In many places, says the Corrymeela document, optimism about the struggle for justice and peace has turned into something approaching despair. "For the churches, the

question becomes how to articulate the gospel in such a way that we may be delivered both from the illusion of facile optimism and the paralysis of faithless pessimism.” Both pacifism and the just-war theory are feeling their inadequacies in the developing ecumenical debates about militarism,\* weapons of mass destruction and revolutionary conflict. Indeed, the violence/non-violence dichotomy of the 1973 statement now seems a trifle simplistic, suggesting instead a broader focus on the variety of ways power is exercised and the constructive possibilities inherent in each.

The inauguration of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation\* process following the Vancouver assembly (1983) led to a renewed focus on questions of peace and non-violence, especially as they related to justice, not least in contexts of conflict.

But it was not until the Harare assembly (1998) that there was a clear focus to this commitment to the search for a new understanding of violence and non-violence. The assembly approved the Decade to Overcome Violence: Churches Seeking Reconciliation and Peace (2001-10), asking Christians to wrestle further with the recurring dilemma: What does it mean to be the church in the midst of violence, and how can the churches help create a culture of non-violence? The WCC committed itself to commission studies, facilitate campaigns against the perpetrators and instruments of violence, initiate education processes that seek to uphold the value and dignity of human life, encourage innovation in liturgy and biblical and theological reflection, and build networks of individuals, initiatives and movements for peace and non-violence.

See also **violence, domestic; violence, religious roots of.**

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## VIOLENCE, DOMESTIC

GLOBALLY, domestic violence continues to be the most hidden form of violence. Still considered to be private and personal, most often there is a hesitancy on the part of family and community to interfere in what happens in the private sphere of the home. In 1993 the United Nations produced a resource manual entitled *Strategies for Confronting Domestic Violence*, where the term “domestic violence” is used to describe “incidents of physical and sexual violations, such as punching, choking, stabbing, throwing boiling water or acid or setting on fire, the result of which can range from bruising to killing; what may often start out as apparently minor attacks can escalate both in intensity and frequency”. Women have included in the definition psychological and mental violence, which can consist of repeated verbal abuse, harassment, confinement, and deprivation of physical, financial and personal resources. So the term “domestic violence” has come to include both physical and mental assault, primarily of women by husbands or partners.

Women’s movements around the world have brought to public consciousness the extent and intensity of this problem. Women’s refuge or crisis centres have long provided a safe space for women and children who need to be temporarily removed from a violent household. In many countries, because of the pressure exerted by the women’s movement, laws exist that protect women against domestic violence; the legal term “wife assault” is sometimes used.

The overwhelming majority of victims or survivors of domestic violence are women, though it is estimated that about 5% of those affected by domestic violence are men. Women have also been known to retaliate violently against the pain they experience and even to kill their partners when the violence gets unbearable. In some countries women are lobbying for such responses to be legally recognized as acts of self-defence.

It is difficult to estimate the actual extent of the violence in households around the

world. Communities typically deny the problem, fearing that if it is revealed a family name will suffer. In many cases the women themselves do not wish to speak about it because of the humiliation of acknowledging openly the way they have been treated. Few official records are kept, as often in police stations domestic violence is trivialized; in many places the family resorts to various forms of pressure, including financial persuasion, to ensure that the first information reports given in police stations are manipulated.

The church has tended to remain silent on this issue, apart from an occasional reference to the problem, or by supporting a women's refuge. Several major denominations, particularly in the USA, Canada and Australia, have developed resource materials and handbooks describing practical, pastoral responses to support survivors of domestic violence. Some churches in other parts of the world have dealt with specific forms of violence in the domestic sphere, but by and large the church too has tended to treat domestic violence as personal and private, particularly in a bid to safeguard the sanctity of the Christian family and church marriage. However, women in Christian homes may face the same kind of abuse as any woman faces, and increasingly such women have begun to speak out. The WCC project of team visits to all member churches, in the context of the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women,\* has recorded the voices of women speaking out against domestic violence in all regions of the world.

Particularly difficult for women to comprehend is the religious sanction given to the violence. The church, for instance, has sometimes used the theology of the cross and suffering as legitimizing the agony women experience. Women are admonished, sometimes by clergy, to see it as a salvation experience and keep silent and forgive the abuser as Christ did in the face of his ultimate sacrifice on the cross. But the silence is being broken in all regions of the world, a sign of hope that domestic violence will ultimately be overcome.

See also **violence and non-violence; violence, religious roots of.**

ARUNA GNANADASON

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## VIOLENCE, RELIGIOUS ROOTS OF

ALL RELIGIONS claim to offer salvation. The offer of it, however, especially when accompanied by zeal, has sometimes produced intolerance and violence. Jesus of Nazareth, whose preaching of the gospel of the kingdom ultimately grew into the Christian church, became a victim of violence from religious leaders of his day, leading to his crucifixion as a rebel and impostor (Matt. 27:63).

In the 4th century A.D., when Christianity was imperialized, this story of violence rooted in religion continued, not only against non-Christians but also against other Christians, thus sundering the *una sancta*.\* Emperor Constantine I (306-37), though proclaiming Christianity *religio licita*, tended more and more between 330 and 337 to suppress paganism, only stopping short of uprooting the imperial cult for fear of eroding popular loyalty. His suppression of centres of pagan cults included the robbery of treasures to enrich Christian churches in the "second Rome" he was building and the demolition of pagan temples.

Constantine also began to act in matters inside the church, suppressing heretics and schismatics and seeking to enforce unity among Christians because, as he saw it, the unity and well-being of the empire depended on the concord in common faith and worship of all citizens of the empire. These policies of suppression and enforced unity were continued by emperors and secular powers throughout the middle ages, as also were the trials and executions of supposed heretics or dissidents directly by the church or by reliance on the secular authorities. The crusades\* are another expression of violence in which political, economic and religious factors were involved but that was justified on religious grounds.

The story of violence with its roots in religion seems unending. Ulster (Northern Ireland) is today synonymous with sectarian vi-

olence between Catholics and Protestants. The present crisis of a violent Roman Catholic-Protestant schism has its beginnings in the battle of the Boyne (1690) at which the Dutch king William of Orange defeated the Roman Catholic king James II. Roman Catholicism is predominant in the south (Eire), and Protestantism in the north (Ulster). The Protestants in the north are the Unionist Party, a name signifying their wish to be united with Great Britain, and the Roman Catholics in the south are the Republicans, who want a separate political identity. Though ostensibly the clash between the Roman Catholics and Protestants, it needs to be seen as the politicization or ideologization of Christian faith. In the process the *una sancta* is broken.

Yugoslavia too has in the 1990s been through a tunnel experience of violence in which religion was a factor, and has been notorious for ethnic cleansing. Croatia is predominantly Roman Catholic, Serbia mainly Orthodox, and Bosnia-Herzegovina mainly Muslim. Tensions arising out of ethnic identities and political interests were fuelled by conflicting religious orientations, leading to brutal wars, massacres and migration. The Conference of European Churches called a meeting at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, Switzerland, in an attempt to mediate dialogue between the religions in Yugoslavia, at which the Orthodox patriarch made a very significant statement: "But the soldiers do not listen to us [church leaders]." This declaration could indicate that the avowals of defending "Christian civilization" against the Muslims were merely a cover for "demonizing the opposition".

Africa too has many stories of religion as a factor in violence. In South Africa the apartheid\* regime and its allies, which included the church, inflicted much violence on the coloured and blacks in the name of defending "Christian civilization". The National Party, which implemented the ideology of apartheid, had its roots in the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk. Theological legitimization was provided for segregation, separate development for different colours of peoples and even violence against the blacks. All this was done for the sake of the Christian faith. But in reality, the faith had been ideologized.

Sudan also continues to experience violence in the name of religion. In November 1995 a joint pastoral letter by the Roman Catholic bishops of Sudan reported a policy of genocide by the Sudanese government in an attempt to transform the religiously and ethnically plural Sudan into an Arab, Islamic state. The Islamic government in the north initiated a military offensive against civilians in southern Sudan and Nubia mountains, enslaving women, men and children, and forcing Christians and animists in the south to convert to Islam. In this aggressive attempt to achieve religious homogeneity, the rich diversity of cultures, languages, communities, and religious and ethnic identities that characterizes Sudan was destroyed.

In the violent conflicts in Central America during the 1970s and 1980s and in the dictatorships of the Southern American countries in the same period, cases of human rights violations, torture and murder were justified as the defence of the Christian faith. Some extreme religious groups, and in some cases the church authorities, provided the needed legitimization for these acts of violence. The racial acts of violence against blacks in the south of the United States had religious justification, which may persist even now in some areas.

However, most churches and ecumenical bodies have denounced and clearly rejected such religious justification of violence, turning instead to defend and support its victims.

The root cause of religiously inspired violence is using faith to support an ideology. For example, words like "Christendom", "Christian civilization" and "fundamentalism" often mask an ideology of power which rejects religious pluralism. Each society needs to renounce certain myths that support such ideologies, such as the doctrine of national security, the equating of Christianity with democracy and the counterposing of democracy and socialism. In religiously plural societies, the ideologies of government must foster the wholeness of peoples, primarily their freedom of conscience and expression.

Also, Christians could look at mission as calling peoples to their true humanity in God's own image. The WCC consultation on dialogue, held in Chiang Mai in 1977, proposed a revised understanding of mission

as the building of a community of communities. This thought has found its way into the WCC's *Guidelines on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies*. Such revision of the understanding and model of mission is urgent in dealing with a pluralistic society (see **pluralism**).

The ecumenical task, then, is to explore broadly what it means to be human, to teach and encourage a culture of magnanimity and hospitality in a context of pluralism, and to empathize deliberately with past opponents as a first step in dialogue and searching together for a common humanity.

JOHN S. POBEE and  
DEENABANDHU MANCHALA

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## VISCHER, LUKAS

B. 23 Nov. 1926, Basel, Switzerland. From 1961 Vischer was research secretary of the secretariat of the WCC's commission on Faith and Order,\* then its director 1965-79. As a WCC observer he followed the four sessions of the Second Vatican Council,\* and became later the co-secretary of the Joint Working Group between the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church. He initiated and promoted various study projects, in particular the efforts leading to the three agreed texts on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*.\* He studied history and theology at the universities of Basel, Strasbourg, Göttingen and Oxford and received a D.theol. from the university of Basel in 1952. Ordained to the ministry in 1950, Vischer became pastor of the Reformed church in Herblingen, an in-

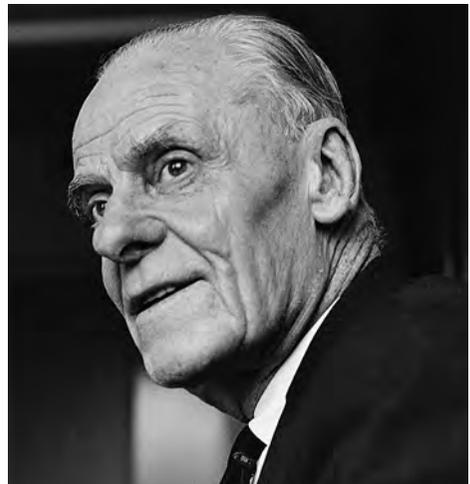
dustrial town near Schaffhausen. From 1980 to 1992 he served as director of the ecumenical institute of the Swiss Protestant Federation and taught ecumenical theology at the theological faculty of the university of Bern. He was moderator of the theological department of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches,\* 1982-89. Ecological themes have become his primary concern.

PAULINE WEBB

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## VISSEER 'T HOOFT, WILLEM ADOLF

B. 20 Sept. 1900, Haarlem, Netherlands; d. 4 July 1985, Geneva. Visseer 't Hooft was the first general secretary of the WCC (1948-66) and a leading figure in the 20th-century ecumenical movement. Like many others, he had his formative ecumenical experience in the Student Christian Movement (see **World**



**Student Christian Federation**). As chairman of the relief committee of the Netherlands student organization during his student years in Leiden, he attended several ecumenical conferences in Europe. In 1924, after finishing his theological examinations, he accepted a position on the Geneva staff of the world committee for the YMCA.\* His introduction to the wider ecumenical movement came the following year, when the YMCA named him an alternate delegate to the Stockholm Life and Work\* conference (where he was the youngest participant).

During the 1926 YMCA world conference in Helsinki, he served as personal assistant to John R. Mott – learning, he wrote later, “the art of running a complicated world conference”. The previous year, during a visit to the US with Mott to prepare for the Helsinki conference, he had become interested in the social gospel movement,\* and in 1928 he wrote a critical study of it as his Leiden doctoral dissertation. Though trained in theology and subsequently ordained a minister in the National Protestant Church of Geneva and the Netherlands Reformed Church (his own background was in the smaller Remonstrant Brotherhood Church in Holland), Visser 't Hooft never considered himself a theologian; and he described his own writings on theological subjects as “interpretations across confessional and linguistic frontiers of thoughts which I have picked up from the theological pathfinders”.

Appointed general secretary of the World Student Christian Federation in 1932, Visser 't Hooft made his first trip to Asia in 1933 to help organize Christian students there. He attended both of the 1937 global ecumenical conferences where it was decided to form a world council of churches – the Oxford Life and Work meeting as part of the steering group, and the Edinburgh Faith and Order conference as a member of the executive committee. At the 1938 meeting in Utrecht, where the WCC was formed, he was named general secretary of its provisional committee. At its first assembly (Amsterdam 1948) he assumed the general secretaryship, continuing in that post until his retirement in 1966.

Visser 't Hooft chaired the steering committee for the world conference of Christian

youth (Amsterdam 1939), the last major international ecumenical event before the war. After the war broke out, he worked actively from Geneva to assist refugees from Nazi Germany and maintain liaison between churches in occupied territories and the outside world.

Beginning in 1948, his tenure as WCC general secretary (in an organization for which there were, as he said, no precedents) involved him in endless travel around the world, making a vast number of personal contacts, lecturing and speaking on behalf of the Council and attending hundreds of meetings large and small.

He himself described the job as one of administration (coping with a rapidly expanding programme and budget), policy-making (helping the churches to find better ways to define and fulfill their “common calling”), liaison (between the WCC's staff and its member churches and governing bodies), “external affairs” (building relations with non-member churches, especially Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and African churches, and with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations), interpretation (including editorship of *The Ecumenical Review*, weekly meetings with the department of information and annual lectures to the graduate school at Bossey\*) and serving as chief of a large staff of men and women from many different national and confessional backgrounds.

Central to all this activity was Visser 't Hooft's unwavering commitment to the unity\* of the church.\* “The ultimate aim of the movement”, he once observed, “is not dialogue, but true unity. Our Lord did not pray ‘that they may all enter into conversation with one another’; he prayed that they all may be one.” This did not mean building something which had not existed before: “all ecumenism that is worthy of the name is a movement of concentration, a return to the sources, or still better a return to the *centre*. The ecumenical movement is Christocentric, otherwise it cannot exist at all.” Critical of “underground” and “private” ecumenism, he stressed the importance of linking the movement to enduring manifestations of the church through the ages.

Following his retirement, the WCC's fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968) elected him

honorary president. Visser 't Hooft remained in Geneva, which had made him an honorary citizen, staying active in the WCC until the 1980s, contributing to debates in nearly every meeting of the central and executive committees. Until shortly before his death he was a regular visitor to the ecumenical centre, where he was often joined in conversations by WCC staff and others over afternoon tea.

Concluding his *Memoirs* with a reflection on how the ecumenical scene of the 1970s differed from that of the early days, Visser 't Hooft affirmed what he described as a shift in orientation from a certain "institutional preoccupation" to service to all of humanity. "When the World Council gives high priority to the issues of worldwide development, or when it takes very concrete steps in the fight against racism, it is certainly not denying the mandate which it has received. When we study the problems of church unity in the light of the unity of mankind, we are not changing our course altogether, but seeking to bring together two dimensions which had always been there but which had not been sufficiently related to each other." At the same time, he insisted that the church's task was more than "the agenda of the world", for "if the church is the church of Jesus Christ, it knows only one destination: the kingdom of God. And all human goals must be critically analyzed in the light of the information which we have received about the nature of that kingdom and the road that leads towards it."

Visser 't Hooft, who had suffered from emphysema for several years, died in Geneva in July 1985. Three days earlier he had given a radio interview to a German journalist and had completed the second draft of a long survey of WCC-Roman Catholic relations since the 1920s.

The recipient of numerous awards and honorary degrees from around the world during his life-time, he received a vast number of tributes at the time of his death – not only from leaders of WCC member churches and ecumenical organizations but also from the pope and the queen of the Netherlands. Five *Festschriften* were published in Visser 't Hooft's honour, the first on his 60th birthday. His own literary output was staggering – including an estimated 50,000 letters.

Among the more than 1500 items to appear under his name in printed or duplicated form were some 15 books in several languages. His 1973 *Memoirs* and his 1982 *Genesis and Formation of the WCC* are invaluable sources of information about the origins of the ecumenical movement.

A close associate on the WCC staff during Visser 't Hooft's tenure has written of his personal energy – which "characterized everything from his entry into a room, to conversation, to his ultimate commitment, always expressed by the words 'calling' and 'common calling'" – and his capacity of discernment. "He did not engage in long analyses, nor did he listen to them patiently. His mind grasped the essential point – whether of world historical developments, proposed departmental programmes, or drifts in the central committee or the life of the member churches – with immediate clarity and penetration. It was a capacity that made him unable to suffer fools gladly."

Another person who worked with him for many years wrote after his death that without Visser 't Hooft's "combination of gifts the WCC might never have existed. No other person in the leadership of those days possessed the acumen, imagination, statesmanship, experience, daring, energy and languages necessary to bring it into being."

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## VOCATION

CHRISTIAN doctrine teaches that God\* takes the initiative in calling people to faith\* and glory. Humans themselves have not decided that it would be good to enjoy eternal life; they have been *called* to a life of glory by a God who freely desires to share everlasting life and love. The vocation of every human being is the attainment of life with God (see *salvation*).

Besides consistently holding that God takes the initiative, Christian doctrine also maintains that God's call reaches us through Jesus Christ.\* Jesus comes at the appointed time and preaches conversion and the kingdom: "The kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel!" (Mark 1:15 RSV). Those who hear the good news and have a change of heart enter the realm of God and look forward to eternal glory.

The New Testament speaks of a salvation that is for everyone: "God our Saviour... desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:3-4). This passage seems to imply that everyone is called, that everyone has a heavenly vocation. But other passages seem to narrow the call to eternal life, including the following: "Those whom [God] foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified" (Rom. 8:29-30).

Augustine, Calvin and Luther understood this and similar passages in terms of a special election on the part of God. In inscrutable freedom God chooses some to receive the effective grace of Christ and so to attain eternal glory; others are not elected and do not receive the power of conversion.\* Today almost all churches in their contemporary statements agree that God does not appoint some persons for glory and others for damnation. The call and the power of conversion are present for everyone, but the individual is able to thwart the call.

The scriptures bear witness to the call to individuals such as Abraham, Jeremiah, John the Baptist and Paul. They were called to perform a task. The same may be said of

Jesus; he was called for a mission, and his commitment to the kingdom became clear in his baptism and preaching.

All Christian believers are called to holiness and perfection, but not all are called to the same ministries. The Holy Spirit\* provides an abundance of gifts, and believers become recipients of multiple charisms\* and ministries (e.g. teaching, administering, encouraging and consoling).

All churches recognize the need for a variety of ministries, but they do not agree about how the ministries are ordered or arranged (see *ministry in the church, church order*). They recognize that all believers are called to perform tasks in the church, but they differ in their understanding of the variety, performance, dignity and rank of the ministries. Many churches, for example, distribute most of the ministerial tasks to the offices of bishop, priest and deacon. Other churches exclude or minimize these offices in favour of a more general priesthood or at least a less distinctive office of service.

All believers are called to a life of conversion and holiness\* (see *sanctification*) which includes discipline of the body and of the mind, self-sacrifice, generosity, etc. The NT churches promoted a life of poverty, self-giving and prayer (see Acts 2:42-47). In the late 3rd century and the beginning of the 4th, some Christians desired to live the Christian life more intensely by following what came to be called the monastic movement. It involved a life alone or in community, the discipline of celibacy, prayer, simplicity, common use of goods and obedience to a spiritual master. Anthony of Egypt stands as the foundational figure; he heard the call of the gospel (Matt. 19:21), took it quite literally, gave away his property, and went into the desert to pray and to lead an ascetic life.

The church, especially the medieval church, acknowledged and was marked by the monastic and religious life. But its promotion also had the effect in many circles of downgrading the regular Christian life of ordinary labour and marriage. The 16th-century reformers were generally critical of the religious life and discouraged or forbade it in their churches, emphasizing instead the goodness of the daily life of labour and marriage. Today one notes again an interest in

monastic and religious orders in the Reformation traditions, e.g. the community of Taizé\* and the Anglican Benedictines. Vatican II\* (1962-65) both maintained the special place of religious life in the church and generally emphasized the goodness of the created world and the labours that sustain human life.

The churches today cannot avoid the global quest for liberty and equality as they consider their vocation as a whole. The quest affects the understanding of God's call, which must not appear arbitrarily or capriciously selective, and it must go out to all peoples; in some way or other, the call must be received by everyone, preferably through the church but in other ways as well (the call of conscience,\* the call of equal rights etc.).

The quest also affects the understanding of the people who are called to be one people of God;\* they are called to holiness in Jesus Christ. Distinctions in tasks and ministries are appropriate, but access to the love of God (to a divine vocation) is present for all. God calls people, one and all, to conversion, holiness of life, and the joy of everlasting glory.

JEROME THEISEN

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# W

## WAR GUILT

AFTER THE SECOND world war the leaders of the Protestant church in Germany made the confession that Christians in Germany had been implicated in the crimes committed by the National Socialist government, including the second world war (Stuttgart declaration,\* 18-19 October 1945). The declaration acknowledges their guilt in relation to God. "We accuse ourselves for not witnessing more courageously, for not praying more faithfully, for not believing more joyously and for not loving more ardently." The confession was made in the presence of delegates of the WCC, which was in process of formation. This was a helpful step for re-integrating the Germans into the ecumenical communion. There were no comparable acknowledgments of guilt in the victorious

countries, although Visser 't Hooft and other church leaders had suggested taking into account the fact that many nations share guilt in a case of total war.

Discussion of the church's role in the war continued. There were declarations in Hungary deploring political errors of the church (esp. its commitment to nationalism) and demanding a new course in politics as well. Similarly, leaders of the Confessing Church\* in West Germany, the Bruderrat, suggested a new political approach to reconciliation and social justice (Darmstädter Wort 1947). In 1948 anonymous voices in Czechoslovakia blamed the political impotence of the government on the moral and spiritual weakness that had already been manifested in the expulsion of Germans in 1945; the church had been implicated in this lack of resistance

to inhumanity. In 1966 the synod of the Protestant church in Germany declared that the whole German people were liable for the consequences of the war. Praying for God's forgiveness of sin, the church hoped for reconciliation with the nations of the Eastern bloc.

At least two Japanese churches have made similar statements. The United Church of Japan issued its "Confession of Responsibility for World War II" in 1967, and the Japan Baptist Convention adopted a "Statement on War Responsibility" at its 42nd annual meeting in 1988.

In these confessions of guilt, every church also claimed to speak for its own nation. The confessions thus became a political sermon, even if they were not overtly pursuing political purposes. Here we find a mixture of the recognition of guilt, which calls us to repentance, and the discernment of wrong developments and faults, which demands a new beginning and a new course. The horror of the second world war, with its terror and destruction of moral values, prompts the question whether war *as war* is always sin,\* justifiable under no circumstances.

The notion of war guilt poses an ongoing question: Is it possible to pinpoint completely the sin which leads to war? In the 20th century the League of Nations and the United Nations organizations were established to determine and to condemn such actions as lead to war beyond any national interest. Since The Hague peace conferences (1899 and 1907) there have been efforts to appoint international courts of arbitration, which are intended to make moral judgments of military conflicts. But often the protection of the struggle for human rights\* and human values (freedom and justice) are given as valid reasons for military interventions. It is often difficult to distinguish such justification from the mere will to have power.\*

GERHARD SAUTER

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## WEBER, HANS-RUEDIGER

B. 21 March 1923, Ruchwil, Switzerland. Weber was director of the WCC department on the laity, 1955-61, associate director and professor at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey,\* 1961-71, and director of biblical studies at the WCC, 1971-88. After ordination in the Swiss Reformed Church in 1947, he served as a missionary in Central Celebes and East Java; he obtained a doctorate in theology from the university of Geneva in 1966. After retirement from the WCC in 1988, he taught at the Pacific Theological College in Suva, Fiji.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## WEDEL, CYNTHIA CLARK

B. 26 Aug. 1908, Dearborn, MI, USA; d. 24 Aug. 1986, Alexandria, VA. Wedel was a president of the WCC, 1975-83. Associate general secretary of the National Council of the Churches of Christ (NCCC) 1960-69, she became president, 1969-72, as well as di-



rector of the Centre for a Voluntary Society, and executive director of the Church Executive Development Board until her retirement in 1973. President of Church Women United, 1955-58, she was moderator of the NCCC broadcasting and film commission from 1955 to 1960. Wedel was an observer at the Second Vatican Council and was also a member of the WCC commission on the cooperation of men and women in church, family and society, 1952-61, and of the committee on the laity, 1961-68. She held a PhD in psychology from George Washington University, Washington, DC.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

## WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

A WIDELY observed annual programme of ecumenical prayer, the WPCU is celebrated 18-25 January (more rarely at Pentecost\* or, in the southern hemisphere, in July). Sometimes called simply "Prayer for Unity" to emphasize that the search for unity is intrinsic to the whole of the Christian life, it is based on the conviction that common prayer is fundamental to the search for the visible unity\* of Christ's church. As one of the oldest and most enduring institutionalized expressions of "spiritual ecumenism" it is independent of, and complementary to, other widely observed programmes of prayer (such as the World Day of Prayer\*).

Churches and revival movements had issued calls for prayer for unity since at least the 18th century. The WPCU originated with Anglican (later Roman Catholic) Paul Wattson's proposal in 1908 for a "church unity octave", held between the feasts of the Confession of St Peter (18 Jan.) and the conversion of St Paul (25 Jan.). Roman Catholic in orientation, this event was broadened by Abbé Paul Couturier's call in 1935 for a Universal Week of Prayer for Unity, a unity to be achieved "as Christ wishes and by the means which he desires". Since 1926 the Faith and Order\* movement (involving Protestants and Orthodox) had published "Suggestions for an Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity", celebrated around Pentecost. From about 1957 a common WPCU text was prepared through informal cooperation be-

tween the WCC F&O commission and the Roman Catholic ecumenical agency Unité chrétienne (Lyons, France). Since 1966 the WPCU has been a joint project of the F&O commission and the Pontifical Council (formerly Secretariat) for Promoting Christian Unity\* of the Roman Catholic Church.

The WPCU text for each year is developed by an international Protestant, Orthodox and Roman Catholic team of liturgists, biblical scholars, pastors and communicators working from draft materials prepared (since 1974) by a local ecumenical group. Each year's theme is based upon a biblical text; e.g. "we have this treasure in clay jars: 2 Cor 4:7" (2003, based on material from Argentina). The text (produced in English and French) includes an ecumenical service of the word (the most widely used part of the material); biblical readings, commentary and prayer intentions for each of the eight days of the observance; additional prayers and music from the local group; an account of the local ecumenical situation; and suggestions for activities on behalf of unity throughout the year.

The WPCU text is distributed through WCC member churches and Roman Catholic bishops conferences, as well as national councils of churches\* and other ecumenical bodies, with local adaptation of the material strongly encouraged. The material is translated into many languages worldwide. Observances of the week are organized locally by churches or councils of churches or other ecumenical bodies. It is estimated that many millions of persons participate annually in WPCU observances throughout the world.

See also **prayer in the ecumenical movement**.

THOMAS F. BEST

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## WELFARE STATE

THE TERM "welfare state" is used to describe the acceptance by a nation state of collective responsibility for the well-being of all of its members. From its central financial resources, the state\* provides services to meet the welfare needs of individuals or families.

The antecedents of the welfare state are to be found in the political philosophies and economic doctrines which emerged in some developed countries in the 19th century. It was realized that many people were confronting economic or social hardship which they could not overcome alone. Often the example and influence of Christians and the churches led to a greater public awareness of human needs and of how they could be met, which was based on the recognition that the extent of social need was greater than voluntary effort could provide.

By the early 20th century the scale of economic growth in some developed countries made it possible for the state to direct financial support to alleviate hardship. Help was made available to the very poor, the sick or the unemployed in the form of payments for social security or social assistance. By the 1920s many countries, with either centralized or federal structures, had begun to develop a range of inter-related public welfare services paid for primarily by taxation.

Such developments were affirmed by William Temple (1941) when he said: "In place of the conception of the power state we are led to that of the welfare state." In the UK, as elsewhere, the intentions of the social policy which provided the legislative basis for the welfare state were (1) to support or compensate those who were disadvantaged, (2) to help all people to achieve their personal potential, and (3) to create a social environment which offered communal benefits and helped eliminate sources of tension within communities.

These services, whether administered nationally or locally, typically made provision for social security, health, education, personal social services and housing. In some countries, employment and training services were also seen as welfare provision. Together, these major services consti-

tute the components of a welfare state, ideally intended to be comprehensive in scope and as a bulwark against poverty and deprivation.

In communist and socialist countries the state assumed a central and directive role in the provision of welfare services. In other countries private (commercial) provision, e.g. in health or education, has coexisted with public welfare services. Furthermore, in many nations there has been a significant non-governmental sector, sometimes with governmental financial support, of which churches and religious organizations form an essential part.

The welfare state was originally based upon assumptions of consistent economic growth. It is argued that welfare expenditure in many countries is now very high, which itself has placed limits on economic development. When financial resources are limited, services cannot respond to any increase in demand, and they may have to be provided increasingly on a selective basis, with selection often through means-testing, which is now under challenge as a method of budgetary control.

In recent decades there has been public concern about the effectiveness of the welfare state. From the political right the promotion of welfare rights and entitlements has been questioned, and welfare-dependency alleged. The high cost and perceived bureaucratization of the system have been criticized. New emphasis has been placed by politicians upon the moral responsibility of individual citizens to care for themselves and their families. It is claimed that the welfare state represents a form of social engineering. State involvement in welfare should therefore be restricted to those in greatest need, within clearly defined priorities.

From the left it is affirmed that the continuing problems of poverty,\* unemployment,\* ill-health and inadequate housing require policies and programmes that are reformist and radical rather than ameliorative: they must actually tackle the causes of disadvantage and deprivation. Political, demographic, social and cultural changes raise questions about the basis of policy formulation and accountability within the welfare state.

Hence, there are contrasted sets of values: those tending towards individualism, free enterprise and market systems; and those emphasizing mutuality, equality and collective security. Debate now centres on whether the state should itself be the institution which provides welfare services on an extensive basis out of general taxation or general levies. If not, what residual role should it play if individual initiatives, family self-help or non-governmental services break down? The problem that faces countries which created a welfare state is whether to sustain a major programme of public welfare services and, if so, how to pay for it. One view is that, because of the prevalence of market capitalism,\* some kind of social market system for welfare is almost inevitable. However, if a mixture of governmental, private and non-governmental welfare services emerges, it is important to ensure that citizens will gain access to the choice thus afforded. Everyone should be able to participate within a caring society by contributing and by receiving.

Individual Christians may be at any point in their country's political spectrum. Churches also take various stances on matters of national social policy, based on their beliefs, traditions and the social structure of which they are a part. Within a formalized welfare state or the mixed welfare society, they will expect to perform a serving role and an interpretative one, seeking to influence the course of social and economic policy, in a manner that makes known God's purpose for his creation.

The WCC, in view of its social concerns, was naturally favourably inclined towards the welfare-state policy. Although it seldom refers to it explicitly, the discussions of the "responsible society"\* in the early 1960s tend to favour this conception of the role of the state. In the New Delhi (1961) assembly this notion appears in a more explicit way. However, some criticism developed in the late 1960s concerning the limitation of its perspective to the national scene (Evanston 1954 already called for a shift from "a social state" to a "social world" understanding of welfare, and this perspective dominated Uppsala 1968). The Geneva conference on Church and Society (1966) criticized the reformist perspective. At the Montreux con-

sultation (1970) Samuel Parmar summarized the distinction between the WCC and the welfare-state approach to the question of development and social justice, indicating that the latter, "based on enlightened self-interest of owning classes", is "essentially a class doctrine, though considerably tamed and civilized by the increasing role played by the state in assuring a more equitable sharing of wealth".

Within all the developed economies the trend has been to more private, as distinct from public, provision in most fields of welfare, especially personal pensions and health insurance. Churches have protested that this trend inevitably promotes individualism and thereby selfishness, and that it aggravates social division and the exclusion of a large number of people and families from a sense of belonging in society. The crises of the welfare state which began in the 1980s and current developments in the globalization of economies have deepened this discussion within the ecumenical movement.

See also **globalization, economic**.

RAYMOND T. CLARKE

■ D. Mieth & M. Vidal eds, *Outside the Market No Salvation?*, London, SCM Press, 1997.

## WILLEBRANDS, JOHANNES

B. 4 Sept. 1909, Bovenkarspel, Netherlands. Willebrands was secretary of John XXIII's newly created Secretariat (from 1989, Pontifical Council) for Promoting Christian Unity\* (SPCU, 1960), and its president, succeeding Cardinal Augustine Bea, from 1969 to 1989.

With a doctorate in philosophy in Mussolini's Rome (1937), Willebrands, a young Dutch priest, returned for pastoral work in the centre of Amsterdam before teaching philosophy at Warmond. In the crucible of his nation's suffering during the Nazi occupation, he broke out of his previously sheltered Catholic milieu. With Protestants who were also in the underground movement, he experienced the fundamental unity of Christians and their common need to preserve the integrity of a defenceless country. After the war he became president (1946) of the St Willibrord association for ecumenical work in the Netherlands. In 1952 he crossed West

and East European borders to enlist members for the Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Questions\* which he directed. Many members later were among the bishops and official experts at Vatican II (1962-65).\*

In the preparations for Vatican II, Willebrands initiated SPCU contacts with representatives of churches, international church bodies and Jewish organizations. Already in the 1950s he had been a frequent visitor to the WCC in Geneva, and he became a close colleague of fellow countryman W.A. Visser 't Hooft, its general secretary. Willebrands was the primary church diplomat in the negotiations for Catholic observers at the WCC New Delhi assembly (1961), and for Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant delegated observers at Vatican II. During the council, his theological acumen, ecumenical experience and low-keyed direction became critical in the SPCU's drafting of the debated documents on ecumenism, on religious freedom, on the relation of the church to non-Christian religions, and (co-drafting) on divine revelation.

After the Council, Willebrands helped to set up the whole range of official bilateral dialogues with other Christian communions, and he co-chaired the Joint RCC/WCC Working Group.\* The cardinal (1969) president then became doubly burdened without complaint. The Catholic church in the Netherlands was in the turmoil of bitter divisions, also among its bishops. To try to facilitate reconciliation, in 1975 Paul VI sent Willebrands to Utrecht as its primate-archbishop and as the chairman of the bishops conference, while he still remained the SPCU president. John Paul II brought relief by naming his Utrecht successor in 1983, and the cardinal returned to Rome until his retiring as president in late 1989.

From 1980 to 1987 Willebrands co-chaired the international Orthodox-RCC dialogue.\* And from 1974 he was the first president also of the Vatican commission for religious relations with the Jews.

Respect for him among a wide variety of people came from his quiet honesty, speaking blunt truth in unfeigned charity, fairly synthesizing consensus and lack of it, allowing others to be themselves, and always conveying realistic hopes.

TOM STRANSKY

■ J. Willebrands, *Church and Jewish People*, New York, Paulist, 1992 ■ *Mandatum Unitatis*, Paderborn, Bonifatius, 1989 ■ *Oecuménisme et problèmes actuels*, Paris, Cerf, 1969 ■ His biography and key addresses and sermons in *IS*, 101, 1999.

## WILSON, LOIS MIRIAM

B. 4 Aug. 1927, Winnipeg, Canada. A president of the WCC, 1983-91, Wilson was president of the Canadian Council of Churches, 1976-79, and moderator of the United Church of Canada, 1980-82, the first woman in both positions. She has been associated with the work of the WCC in several areas. Ordained a minister of the United Church of Canada in 1965, she shared pastorates with her husband in Ontario, 1965-80. She was visiting lecturer on mission and evangelism in several theological colleges in Canada, and at the Ecumenical Christian Centre in Bangalore in 1975. Wilson has done extensive work in voluntary sectors such as Amnesty International\* and has promoted interfaith dialogue\* on the local level.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

■ L.M. Wilson, *Like a Mighty River*, Winfield BC, Wood Lake, 1981.

## WITNESS

THE WCC'S NEW DELHI assembly (1961) considered *witness*, together with *unity*\* and *service* (see *diakonia*), as the primary concerns of the ecumenical movement. In the attempt to clarify missiological vocabulary in its ecumenical setting, "witness" has come to mean the total evangelizing presence and manifestation of the church (see *evangelism*).

The most original New Testament usage of witness (*martyria*) is in the gospel of John (RSV). The incarnation\* of the Word relates to the revelation\* and knowledge of God.\* "For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth" (18:37). Jesus speaks the words of God with authority\* because "he who comes from above... bears witness to what he has seen and heard" (3:31-32): "we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen" (3:11). Jesus as the Word in-

carnate speaks out of his communion\* with God, and therefore through him the disciples hear directly the word of God: "I have manifested thy name to the men... Now they know that everything that thou hast given me is from thee; for I have given them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from thee; and they have believed that thou didst send me" (17:6-8).

### JESUS CHRIST, THE FAITHFUL WITNESS

Indeed, the heart of the NT is Jesus Christ,\* the unique and decisive witness of God, "the faithful and true witness" (Rev. 3:14), "who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession" (1 Tim. 6:13); he sealed the new covenant with his blood (see Heb. 9:24-28) by becoming "obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross" (Phil. 2:8). The faith,\* glory, thanksgiving and worship of the church converge in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb (Rev. 7). The Lamb is given glory because he has been slain (Rev. 5:9). The relationship between cross and resurrection,\* suffering servant and eschatological glory, is fundamental to the whole NT.

The witness of Christ – who sums up in his person the testimony borne by all prophets of the Old Testament and by all God's messengers – is the foundation of the church, which at Pentecost\* bears witness to the resurrection. Any speculation about the essential role of martyrdom\* in the mission of the church, without recognizing Jesus Christ as the one witness of God, has no biblical foundation.

In common biblical use, "witness" refers to bearing testimony to the world, proclaiming and making known that Jesus Christ is the Saviour and Lord of all humankind and of all creation.\* Jesus Christ himself commissioned the disciples to be his witnesses (Acts 1:8). The Holy Spirit\* comes upon the faithful and makes them witnesses of Christ. The epistles describe some of the ways in which the early Christians testified to the resurrection of Christ. There are certain essential dimensions of the Christian witness: we have an apostolic-missionary commission (Matt. 28:19-20); without love, such a witness is only "a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal" (1 Cor. 13:1); in bearing this wit-

ness, Christians are committing themselves to the diaconal service of others, for it is the good news of God they are bringing (Acts 13:32-33); the kingdom of God,\* whose coming they have to proclaim in word and deed, consists in "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17); witness includes the work of reconciliation\* of people with God coming together under the one Head, who is Christ (Eph. 1:10); the church must be ready to witness also before the principalities and powers of this world (Eph. 6:12; see also Rom. 8:38-39); the Christian witness draws its power and nourishment from the word and sacrament.

### EUCHARIST AS AN ACT OF WITNESS

For the apostolic community the celebration of the eucharist\* is a proclamation of the Lord's death until he comes (1 Cor. 11:26). "Especially in difficult circumstances, the very celebration of the eucharist can constitute an act of witness. In 'impossible' situations, it proclaims that God alone creates a saving future. When it cries 'maranatha', the eucharistic community is calling for the overthrow of all that is opposed to God; it is praying for the final coming of God's kingdom: 'Let grace come: let this world pass away' (*Didache* 10). This hoped-for future is already prefigured in the fact that the eucharistic community itself includes pardoned sinners, reconciled adversaries, and the desperate restored to life: all are welcomed by the Lord at his table of justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom. 14:17)" (*Sharing in One Hope*, 198).

### CLOUD OF WITNESSES (HEB. 12:1)

The book of Revelation was written to increase the hope\* and determination of the church in a period of disturbance and bitter persecution. Thus, the book emphasizes the martyrs, those faithful disciples who live in conformity with the Lord to the point of death. They "had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne" (Rev. 6:9 RSV).

In the post-apostolic period Christians defended the gospel and established the church by the witness of their whole life; in certain circumstances, others bore this witness to the point of surrendering their lives in martyrs' deaths. Church tradition holds that most of

the apostles were martyred. At the beginning of the 2nd century, Ignatius of Antioch considered that his martyrdom would "grind" him into one bread with Christ. New local churches often followed where the first evangelists or disciples had suffered martyrdom. Liturgical altars were built over the tomb of martyrs. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church," wrote Tertullian.

Indeed, the ancient church venerated the Christian martyr as a strong witness to the living God and to the coming of his kingdom. But it never absolutized those "prophetic" acts and attitudes, recognizing instead a diversity of choices and possibilities. Christians are called to bear witness also through their active daily involvement in the world.

The witness of the monastic life takes up again in the church the witness of the martyrs of the early centuries. By striving to be unattached to worldly possessions or to family and to be available for God and one's fellow human beings, the monk or nun bears witness to the eschaton inside the church and thus exercises a truly prophetic ministry in showing forth the gospel's way of the kingdom (see **religious communities**).

### COMMON WITNESS

The witness of the community as a whole has the same value and quality as the confession of those who followed the path of Christ in difficult or dangerous situations. But that witness has been undermined by the historical divisions among Christians and the churches. They are called nevertheless to give common witness\* to those divine gifts which they already share.

Common Christian witness cannot replace the theological debate searching for the unity in a common faith, but it can help Christians to realize, through their unity in evangelism and mission,\* the visibility of their incomplete universality. Common witness therefore gives a possibility of having a vision of catholicity\* and of detecting a possible historical and pastoral universality in the midst of the existing doctrinal and ecclesiological divisions.

ION BRIA

■ I. Bria, *The Liturgy after the Liturgy*, WCC, 1996 ■ JWG, "The Challenge of Proselytism

and the Calling to Common Witness: A Study Document of the JWG between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC", *ER*, 48, 2, 1996 ■ G. Lemopoulos, *You Shall Be My Witnesses: Mission Stories from the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches*, Katerini, Tertios, 1993 ■ *Sharing in One Hope: Bangalore, 1978*, WCC, 1978 ■ WCC, *Common Witness*, 1982 ■ WCC, *Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation*, 1981.

### WOMEN IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY

IT COULD BE argued that the first ecumenical encounter was the meeting between Adam and Eve. The man had to learn how to live with another human being like but unlike himself, without whom he could not survive in one household of diversity and unity. The affirmations of scripture that both male and female are made in the image of God and that in Christ both are incorporated into the one Body, the church, form the basis of the fundamental Christian conviction that men and women are of equal worth and have complementary and essential contributions to make within the life of the whole community.

In the church, the leading role in priesthood,\* liturgy, policy-making and scholarship has in almost all denominations traditionally been reserved to men. But there is a long history throughout the church of the lay ministry of women (see **laity**), of women in religious orders, diaconates (see **diakonia**) and missionary service, and of the strength of women's movements within congregational life. In secular society, the 20th century was one of accelerating change for women. Profound questioning of their traditionally subordinate role led to a struggle for their full rights as citizens, for equal opportunities in employment and for a fuller partnership with men in all aspects of family and community affairs.

By the beginning of the 20th century such movements as the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA),\* the Women's World Day of Prayer,\* the various auxiliaries for the support of women missionaries and sisterhood movements were pioneering ecumenical relations across denominations. At the 1910 international missionary conference, though the representation of women was very small indeed, the

issue of women's work came on the agenda; and a study on "The Place of Women in the Church in the Mission Field" published in 1923 carried the recommendation: "What we ask is that the church keep pace with the other agencies that are according to woman a new status and new opportunities for development and achievement. The church, because of her own conservatism and lack of vision, is allowing trained, talented, spiritual women to slip away from her into other lines of activity."

By the time the WCC was in process of formation, the international network of women drawn together through the YWCA was already conducting research into the place of women in the church throughout the world. Through that work the WCC was itself encouraged to give systematic attention to evaluating the worldwide ministry of women, in a study which became the subject of one of the addresses at the first assembly in Amsterdam (1948). The address was given by Kathleen Bliss, whose subsequent book *The Service and Status of Women in the Churches* was a well-documented account of the work of women in all the major denominations except the Roman Catholic Church. It became the formative resource book for the permanent commission set up by the Amsterdam assembly on the life and work of women in the church. Speaking of its mandate, W.A. Visser 't Hooft commented: "The significance of this commission must be regarded in the light of the ecumenical movement, which seeks to foster the wholeness of the church and to work for its renewal. Unless women are given more responsibility in the life of their local churches, that renewal cannot be achieved. The work of the commission may meet with some nervousness. People may fear that we are going to make an onslaught on the whole tradition of some churches or interfere with their life. The commission will need an immense amount of tact in getting its ideas across."

Those diplomatic words proved prophetic. In the second half of the century the concern about women's participation in the whole life of the church, including holy orders, became a focus of ecumenical controversy. But parallel to that debate has been the growing awareness of the distinctive gifts

of women, of feminist insights in theology and liturgy and of the mutual enrichment that comes through full partnership in ministry and service in both family and community.

The emphasis on partnership was echoed in the new title adopted by the Evanston assembly (1954) for the department dealing with what had been thought of as women's concerns within the WCC. It was now to be called the department on the cooperation of men and women in church and society. Madeleine Barot, the department's first executive secretary, developed relations with secular organizations, such as the United Nations, which were also increasingly concerned about the status of women. At the same time, she emphasized the need for the churches to reflect theologically on the status accorded to women within their own traditions. In a 1955 article in *The Ecumenical Review*, she appealed for a blending of male and female spiritual insights which would result in a theology to which women could more fully respond.

A subsequent theological consultation was held at Herrenalb, Federal Republic of Germany, in 1956 which examined in detail the question of the relationship between the sexes as reflecting a divinely ordained order. An important paper by André Dumas explored the concept of mutual submission in the context of common obedience to the authority\* of the kingdom of God.\* A further consultation, sponsored jointly with the department on the laity, recognized closer cooperation between men and women as an essential part of the renewal of the church and of the whole *laos*, the people of God.\*

At the foundation of the All Africa Conference of Churches\* in 1963, the women of the churches were invited to a preliminary gathering to prepare for their full participation in the new ecumenical body, an invitation they accepted with alacrity. In Asia, immediately preceding the New Delhi assembly (1961), a consultation was held in Madras on "Changing Patterns of Men/Women Relationships", which prepared the way for the enlargement of the women's department's mandate to include questions specifically relating to family life.

Within the Roman Catholic Church, women's responsibilities have traditionally

been most frequently discussed in the context of family\* life. The Second Vatican Council\* made scarcely any other specific references to the work of women, except in the final drafting of the documents concerning the lay apostolate, which included the sentence: "Since in our times women have an ever more active share in the whole life of society, it is very important that they participate more widely also in the various forms of the church's apostolate." One of the chief advisers to the Vatican on the lay apostolate, Thomas Stransky, strongly recommended the formation of a women's ecumenical liaison group so as to create a network between Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant women. At a consultation in Taizé in 1967 on "The Christian Woman: Co-Artisan in a Changing Society", Lydia Symons, a Dutch Roman Catholic professor of theology, stressed that the church's vocation in humanizing the world requires full cooperation between male and female: "Above all, we need a form of spiritual care which will help women to live as adults in Christ, liberated from all subjugation to obsolete structures which have been maintained too long in many church circles."

The women's ecumenical liaison group was given personal encouragement by Pope Paul VI, who, in an audience with its representatives, stressed "the importance of women not only in the home, but in society generally and in the church". But the structure of the group was to prove short-lived, as the Vatican became more cautious about the creation of joint bodies developing an identity of their own. The official mandate of the group came to an end after only four years. The participation of Roman Catholic women in WCC consultations on all matters relating to women has continued on an informal and personal basis ever since.

Shortly before the Uppsala assembly (1968) Barot's indefatigable leadership of the department on the cooperation of men and women in church and society came to an end, and her place was briefly taken by Rena Karefa Smart of Sierra Leone and then for over a decade by Brigalia Bam of South Africa. At Uppsala attention was specifically directed to the low level of representation of women within the official delegation of the churches (less than 9%). It became apparent

that the sexual discrimination endemic in society prevailed in the church too. The new word coming into vogue to describe such discrimination was "sexism",\* a word used in the title of an all-women's consultation held by the WCC in Berlin in 1974 to prepare the churches to participate fully in the International Year for Women, designated by the UN in 1975, a year which expanded into a decade as concerns about the injustice, poverty and abuse of which many women were victims throughout the world became urgent matters for the international agenda.

The Berlin consultation on "Sexism in the 1970s" gave a dynamic impetus to the women who later attended the WCC assembly in Nairobi (1975), where for the first time a whole plenary session was given to the concerns of women. It was resolved to pursue issues of social justice\* as they concerned women and to undertake further theological exploration and biblical studies in the light of feminine insights and experience. The resulting recommendations led to the launching of a new worldwide study process on "The Community of Women and Men in the Church", under the joint guidance of Faith and Order\* and the Sub-unit on Women in Church and Society. The study was given a full-time director, Constance Parvey, an advisory committee and a four-year mandate. The preliminary study material had an unprecedented popular reception, involving more local groups in discussion and response than any other study initiated by the WCC. The responses were collated and formed the basis of an international conference held in 1981 in Sheffield, England, a conference whose message to the churches proved to be both controversial in its challenge to the long tradition of male domination and formative in its encouragement to both women and men to seek the mutual enrichment coming through fuller partnership.

In that same year Pope John Paul II addressed an apostolic exhortation on the theme of the community of the family, in which he spoke specifically of the many forms of degradation and discrimination from which women suffer and the high esteem Jesus always showed towards women and the responsibilities he entrusted to them. The pope underlined the equal dignity and

responsibility of women with men, which, he said, fully justifies women's access to public functions. He went on to say, however, "The true advancement of women requires that clear recognition be given to the value of their maternal and family role, by comparison with all other public roles and all other professions."

The question of women's equal opportunity and participation\* in all spheres of life had by this time become a frequent matter of debate in both secular and ecclesiastical circles. The sixth assembly of the WCC at Vancouver (1983) gave clear evidence that the process begun by the community study had prompted widespread concern for fuller representation of women in all the deliberative councils of the churches and for women's voices to be heard on all the major issues. Under the leadership of Bärbel von Wartenberg, who had succeeded Brigalia Bam as director of the women's desk, a conference for women was held preparatory to the assembly. During the assembly itself 12 of the speakers in main plenary sessions were women, and the worship, debates and whole corporate life were all influenced by the lively participation of women. In the official policy-making bodies elected by the assembly, the proportion of women elected rose to 29%.

The sixth assembly resolved that still further emphasis must be given to the needs and the contribution of women. It was decided by the central committee of 1987 that there should be a special decade during which the churches would demonstrate their solidarity with women. The decade was launched on Easter day 1988, under the leadership of WCC women's desk director Anna Karin Hammar. Its focus was on empowering women at all levels to participate more fully in the decisions that affect their destiny, to be partners with men in shaping the lives of their families and their societies and to be equipped for ministry in the churches in the full fellowship of the people of God.

The seventh assembly affirmed that a truly renewed community of women and men would be one in which the gifts of all groups of people would be valued. It is a community united by baptism, which shares differently but equally in the gifts of the

Holy Spirit. Churches throughout the world today are being enriched by new and renewed ministries of women. Nevertheless, the report recognized that serious differences continue to exist between the churches on the question of the nature of these ministries, differences which could become a serious hindrance to unity, and it called on the Faith and Order commission to address in particular the ecclesiological questions raised by the debate about women's ministry. Churches were meanwhile encouraged to continue to focus on the Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women and to seek ways in which the rich variety of gifts and leadership among women might be channelled into all the assemblies, commissions and committees of the WCC.

The Decade culminated in a festival of celebration immediately preceding the WCC's eighth assembly at Harare in 1998. The festival addressed a letter to the assembly, calling on the churches to include women more fully in the life, liturgy and leadership of the church, and to expose and denounce as sin all violence against women.

Since the eighth assembly a process has been launched to bring before the churches insights from women's perspectives on new ways of "being church" which shall make for fuller partnership in the future.

See also **anthropology, theological; community of women and men in the church; Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women; feminism; ordination of women; theology, feminist.**

PAULINE WEBB

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## WORD OF GOD

GOD\* ACTS through his word, which is not only a means of communication and instruction but also a creative power (Gen. 1; John 1:3). Through his word God created the universe; through the preaching of Jesus (see **Jesus Christ**) the kingdom of God\* came into this world; and through the Holy Spirit\* this word is at work today. God does not carry out any fundamental work without his word, and without it nothing can be identified as coming from God.

## BIBLICAL DATA

The Old Testament emphasizes the power of the word of God. God “spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm” (Ps. 33:9). The word that “goes out from my mouth... shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it” (Isa. 55:11). It is fulfilled in creation,\* salvation history,\* the law\* and prophecy.\* The history of Israel is understood as election and salvation by and under the word of God. The decalogue is called the ten words (Ex. 34:28 lit.), and Deuteronomy identifies the law with the word spoken (Deut. 4:2, 15:15, 28:14). In the word of the prophet, God himself speaks to his people.\* The dynamic character of the word is accompanied and given emphasis by the meaningful acts of the prophet. The word proclaims the devastating judgment which follows from the people’s unfaithfulness (Isa. 1-3; Amos 1-9; Hos. 4) and then the new life and re-establishment of the covenant,\* the sign of God’s faithfulness (Ezek. 37; Jer. 31:31-34; Isa. 54). These various forms of the word of God complement and interpenetrate each other. They express God’s revelation\* in the law and in history\* and show the difference between God and idols (Isa. 41:4).

In the New Testament the use of the term “word of God” corresponds to what we find in the OT and means both scripture\* and

God’s self-communication in the Holy Spirit. The word of God involves more than a form of knowledge. It effects salvation when it is received in faith.\* It is the word of life (Phil. 2:16), of salvation (Acts 13:26), of reconciliation\* (2 Cor. 5:18-21) and of truth (Eph. 1:13) and is “living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword” (Heb. 4:12). “Word of God” thus becomes a synonym for “gospel”.

What is new in the NT lies in the close link there is between the word of God and the person of Jesus. In the synoptic gospels the word of God is the saving message of God which Jesus proclaims and with which he identifies himself; the proclamation of the kingdom of God and what Jesus does are one and the same reality (Luke 17:21). The word of God is the message of salvation effected in Jesus Christ. For John’s gospel, Jesus is the logos, and logos defines the actual person of Jesus (John 1:1-14). Because he is the word of God by which God has been expressing his will since the beginning of the world, the words, life and works of Jesus reveal him as the source of true life and as the final and saving word of God for humanity (see **uniqueness of Christ**).

From the NT period onwards, the question of the authority and interpretation of the OT has been raised. This problem sets Jesus over against the Pharisees (Mark 2:23-28, 3:1-6; Matt. 5:21-48; see also the parable of the sower, Mark 4:1-9). Paul states this problem in the form of the dialectical relationship of law and gospel. The OT law is holy, just and good (Rom. 7:12), but it cannot be imposed on gentile Christians (Gal. 1-4). The law cannot purchase justification in the presence of God, nor can it purchase salvation. It enables us only to become aware of sin (Rom. 3:20, 8:2). In and by the cross of Jesus Christ, the law has itself been abolished (Gal. 3). Jesus Christ is the fulfilment and the end of the law (Rom. 10:4). This gospel of Jesus Christ is the sole source of life (see **life and death**), the word which sanctifies and regenerates (1 Tim. 4:5; 1 Pet. 1:23). Paul and the young Christian church emphasize that the power of the word of God lies in its proclamation (Rom. 10:17; Eph. 6:17). The ministry entrusted with spreading this word is a divine institution (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 20:24; 2 Cor. 5:18-

20). In the word of the apostle, the word of God lets itself be heard and acts (1 Thess. 2:13). The word of those who are sent is the word of Jesus Christ, who is the sender (Luke 10:16; Rom. 10:15-16; Titus 1:2-3; see **apostolicity**).

### HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS

The ancient church, in its opposition to Gnosticism and the movement of "enthusiasm" (Montanism), first narrowed down the idea of the word of God through the identification of holy scripture (the canon\*) and the word of God (revelation). But there was also an expansion of its meaning. In the East the Greek understanding of the *logos* (reason) was set alongside the *logos* Christology. Origen insisted on the unity of the word of God in the flesh, in scripture, in the eucharist\* and in reason. The literal and moral interpretations of scripture must be supplemented by the spiritual meaning derived from the *logos*. This view remained essential for the Orthodox churches, which emphasize the complementary nature of real inspiration\* (God as the author of the scriptures) and of passive inspiration (internal illumination of the reader's mind for true knowledge of the word of God).

The West separates more clearly the word of God (*kerygma* and *logos*) and the revelation of God in reason (Tertullian, Cyprian), while seeking not to restrict the word of God to scripture. For Augustine, God is the eternal Word who gives himself to us in the sacrament\* as the visible word and in the written and proclaimed word as an audible sacrament. To discover the fullness of the word of God in scripture, the latter must be interpreted in a fourfold way: literal or historical meaning, allegorical or doctrinal meaning, tropological or moral meaning, and anagogical or eschatological meaning (Augustine, John Cassian). The correctness of the interpretation of scripture as the word of God is protected through its being linked to the church\* and to the dogmatic decisions (see **dogma**) of the councils of the church (see **ecumenical councils**).

The middle ages took up again the great Augustinian options while again restricting the word of God to scripture. It stressed the need for the dogma and Tradition of the church as a guarantee for the interpretation

of scripture as the authentic word of God (Vincent of Lérins, Gregory the Great). Scholastic theology regarded holy scripture and Tradition as norms of the revelation and of the word of God (Anselm of Canterbury, Thomas Aquinas). In response to the Reformation, the council of Trent\* (1545-63) specified that scripture and the traditions are dictated by Christ or the Holy Spirit (*DS* 1501) and that scripture cannot be interpreted contrary to the doctrinal tradition of the church (*DS* 1507).

For the 16th-century Reformation and especially for Martin Luther, understanding the word of God is central to theology. Scripture is the only true basis for faith (*sola scriptura, norma normans non normata* – scripture alone, the criterion which sets the criteria and is not itself subject to a criterion) and is its own interpreter. Under the working of the Holy Spirit, scripture becomes the word of God when it is proclaimed and interpreted in the light of the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the basis of the sinner's justification\* before God. The word of God is also given in the sacraments, which like scripture are means of salvation.\* The word of God comes to us as a summons and judgment (law) and as a liberating and creative word (gospel). John Calvin insists on the "internal witness of the Holy Spirit", which makes scripture the word of God.

By its stress on the literal inspiration of scripture, Protestant orthodoxy (16th-17th centuries) identifies scripture and the word of God. But the word of God goes beyond scripture as such, as the eternal word of God (see **Trinity**), the incarnate word of God (Christology), the preached word of God (preaching) and the visible word of God (sacrament). This literalist view of inspiration was criticized in the Enlightenment, in pietism and by Friedrich Schleiermacher, with their view that the word of God is at work also in human experience.

In the 20th century, the Reformation concern was taken up again and developed in the theology of the word of God put forward by Karl Barth. He called for a return to the witness of scripture and rejected any other basis for faith. The presupposition for every theology lay in the fact that God has spoken. The written word of God cannot be verified either by historical research or by

human experience. Human knowledge of God is based on the revelation of the Trinitarian God. By analogy with the Trinity the word of God comes in a threefold form as the revealed word of God, the written word of God and the proclaimed word of God. This word of God is simultaneously the communication, work and mystery of God. It is one and is given definitively in Jesus Christ. Exegesis must show "how the words relate to the word in the words" (see *exegetis, methods of*).

In Roman Catholic theology a new slant is given by Vatican II\* and its Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum* (DV). Vatican I's statement that the magisterium of the church is the positive norm for scripture, which is therefore subordinate to it (DS 3007), is no longer used. Scripture "firmly, faithfully and without error" teaches the truth of God, the word of God which "shines forth in Christ, who is himself both the mediator and the sum total of revelation" (DV 11 and 2). The word of the church is the proclamation of the word of God as the word of scripture. The magisterium and doctrinal tradition of the church are fundamental but come from "the same divine well-spring" (DV 9); the witness of scripture is normative for the later tradition (DV 10,24).

### THEOLOGICAL AND ECUMENICAL ISSUES

The ecumenical dialogues of the last few decades have revealed significant convergences among the various Christian families in their understanding of the word of God.

The Montreal conference (Faith and Order 1963) made it possible to have a common re-definition of the relation between scripture and Tradition. The word of God which has to be passed on is itself the Tradition (with a capital *T*), "God's revelation and self-giving in Christ, present in the life of the church" (Montreal, 45-46), of which holy scripture is the written form (50). Tradition (with a small *t*) is the transmission of the Tradition: "tradition can be a faithful transmission of the gospel, but also a distortion of it" (48). And finally, traditions (plural) "are the expressions and manifestations in diverse historical forms of the one truth and reality which is Christ" (47).

The bilateral dialogues\* took up this convergence, which for the transmission of

the word of God stresses the role of Tradition and the normative nature of the biblical witness (see Anglican-Orthodox dialogue, Moscow, 1976, 24-42; Reformed-Roman Catholic dialogue, "The Presence of Christ", 1977, 24-42; Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue, Malta, 1972, 14-25, and "Ways to Community", 1980, 62-65; Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue, Honolulu, 1981, 34; all in *GinA-I*). The question still open is that of the criterion for the faithfulness of the tradition and traditions to the Tradition, especially the role of the church and its magisterium\* for determining what is the word of God (Anglican-Roman Catholic, Authority II, 1981, 23-33, in *GinA-I*).

A corollary of this convergence is the distinction (though not separation) between holy scripture and the word of God. The word of God is fully attested in scripture, which is essential for the church (Baptist-Reformed 1977, 1-3; ARCIC 1981, E1.2), but it cannot be reduced to scripture (Reformed-Roman Catholic 1977, 27). Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, scripture itself must become the word of God, the gospel, in which is transmitted the salvation God gives to the world in Jesus Christ. Out of this distinction arises the task of interpreting scripture, which no external datum can guarantee. "Neither the *sola scriptura* nor formal references to the authoritativeness of the magisterial office are sufficient. The primary criterion is the Holy Spirit making the Christ-event into a saving action" (Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue, Malta, 18).

This broader understanding of the word of God finds expression in the word-sacrament relationship, even if more dialogue is called for with a view to the exact definition of the sacrament. Word and sacrament cannot be set against each other (Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue, Dublin, 1976, 54-58, in *GinA-I*); by them God approaches human beings and gives his salvation. Following Vatican II (DV 21 and *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 7), Roman Catholicism insists on the efficacy of preaching and the unity in the sacrament of word and sign and accords a dominant role to the sacrament of the eucharist (Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue, Munich, 1981, 1-6; see also BEM,\* E1). For the Lutheran, Anglican, Methodist and Reformed traditions, salvation is fully offered in the word of God

whether in the form of preaching or in that of the sacraments (see Augustine). The separating character of the difference between Roman Catholics and these Protestants has here been overcome. Resolution is still needed, however, for certain traditions which consider the word of God to be given in the preaching and hearing of scripture, the sacrament being more a response of the believer and of the community to the word of God.

The question of extending the term "word of God" to cover other things besides preaching and sacraments remains more difficult. What is the value of what we find in nature? Of the order of creation? Of the witness of other religions? Can the word of God be discerned there as law? As gospel? Different traditions give different answers, and so far these questions have not been central in the dialogues. A reflection on the word of God and revelation, and on law and gospel, is necessary with regard to the ethical issues of the moment.

All the traditions agree in saying that the word of God, the gift of salvation, must be proclaimed throughout the world (Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Pet. 2:9-12). The word of God calls on Christians to display signs of love (Acts 6:1-6; 1 Thess. 4:9-10). The church lives on the promise that God himself is working in his world, which never goes forth without a response (Isa. 55:11).

See also **Bible in the ecumenical movement; hermeneutics; nature; teaching authority; Tradition and traditions.**

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## WORK

TWO DIMENSIONS of work are revealed in Genesis. Work is a joyful task, a divinely appointed stewardship of the earth; and work is a punishment for sin,\* a painful duty, a heavy burden. Christian theology must take both aspects seriously.

Since the Bible was produced in an agricultural society, the biblical texts respect manual labour. Today certain writers have been critical of the creation story because in it humans are appointed "to subdue" the earth and exercise "dominion" over the animals. These writers claim that since the Bible presents humans as exploiters of the natural environment, Christianity is partially to blame for the present ecological crisis. Yet since Genesis was written for an agricultural people, possibly a people just settling down after a nomadic existence, subduing the earth and exercising dominion referred to ploughing, sowing and harvesting, and the taming of animals. Responsible for the ecological crisis is the maximization of production, derived from the logic of industrial capitalism.\*

In the Bible, manual work was honourable. By contrast, the Greek intellectual tradition, originating in a society based on slave labour, despised manual work. Labour was assigned to women and slaves. Man, or the free male citizen, was defined as an intellectual being. This cultural current has influenced Christian thought.

Writing in a feudal society, Thomas Aquinas praised work as a source of personal satisfaction and service to the community. The church had ritual blessings for fields, stables, tools and workshops. Yet even for Thomas, it was the rational soul that represented the image of God in human beings. Thus thinking and contemplating was the most honoured human engagement.

In the Reformation, work came to be looked upon as obedience to God, as a dis-

cipline and an achievement. This new ethos corresponded to the economic needs of the emerging modern society. Still, the modern philosophies continued to define humans in terms of their rationality. The Enlightenment thinkers, members of the bourgeoisie, had little respect for peasants and workers.

Karl Marx revolutionized philosophical thinking on labour.\* He defined the human being as worker. Humans differed from the animal world because they alone had to produce the conditions of their survival (food, housing, clothing, etc.) by labour. Marx recognized the two aspects of labour specified in the Bible, distinguishing “creative labour”, defined as the way of human self-realization, from “alienated labour”, brought about by the exploitation inflicted on slaves, serfs and, in modern times, the working class.

In the bourgeois age, Christian theologians were slow to recognize the need for a theology of work. Only in recent decades have Protestants and Catholics seriously wrestled with this issue.

A good number of theologians, in critical dialogue with Marxism, have defined human beings created by God as workers and stewards. An early study is J.H. Oldham’s *Work in Modern Society* (1950), written for the WCC. *Laborem Exercens* (1981) developed a detailed theology of work (see **social encyclicals, papal**). Humans produce their world (the “objective dimension” of labour), and in doing so, they also realize their own potentialities (the “subjective dimension” of labour). The subjective dimension, human self-realization, has priority over the objects produced. Labour becomes alienated whenever the subjective dimension is subordinated to purely objective concerns.

Thus workers are meant to be “the subjects” of production. They are entitled to participate in the decisions regarding the organization of labour and the use of the product of their hands. *Laborem Exercens* argues that in capitalism and in communism, workers are excluded from these decisions and hence have become “objects” of production. Since justice\* demands that workers be the subject of production, workers are destined to become the co-owners of the giant workbenches at which they labour.

Following this theology of work, many churches have denounced unemployment\*

as a social evil and called for public policies of full employment. Yet defining humans as workers has been seriously questioned by other churches. They say that since unemployment is becoming a permanent feature of automated, computerized society, Christians should define the human essence and human dignity independently of work and on the political level demand a guaranteed annual income for all.

Ecologically concerned Christians have also questioned a theology that defines humans as workers. Since the ecological crisis is produced by the maximizing impulse of capitalism, reflected to some extent even in the formerly socialist countries, the urgent task now is to scale down industrial production. Defining humans as workers, these Christians argue, only supports the present orientation towards industrial growth.

Another question in regard to the theology that defines humans as workers is raised by some Christians living in non-Western cultures. Is Western-style hard work really necessary? Is it human? In warm climates, they argue, human needs are quite limited; they could be met by a modest economy that relies on relatively simple tools and does not demand constant labour. Should the whole globe become Westernized? Or is there to be room for alternative cultures, based on subsistence economies, where people live lives that are materially modest yet culturally and spiritually rich?

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## WORLD ALLIANCE FOR PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP THROUGH THE CHURCHES

IN THE EARLY 1900s several church leaders were convinced of the need to apply Christian principles to international relations, to

promote mutual understanding between nations and to develop and strengthen international law. Two members of the British parliament, Quaker J. Allen Baker and Anglican Willoughby H. Dickinson, were prompted by the two peace conferences at The Hague (1899 and 1907) to promote peaceful relations between the churches in Great Britain and Germany by a large-scale exchange of visits between church representatives. A German church delegation, led by Friedrich Siegmund-Schultze, visited England in 1908, and the next year an English delegation went to Germany. Both delegations included Roman Catholic clergy and laity.

Charles S. Macfarland, general secretary of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ (USA, 1908), also played an important role in work for closer understanding between the US and European churches. In 1914, Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish organizations founded the Church Peace Union. A gift of \$2 million from the industrialist Andrew Carnegie served to finance most of the activities of the future World Alliance (WA).

The first world war erupted on 1 August 1914, and the very next day in Constance, Switzerland, the WA was founded; only Christians were members. On 3 August the delegates quickly left for their homes, but Christians had formed an association for peace among the nations – an ecumenical pioneer movement to face international problems. The WA post-war conference in 1919 (The Hague) helped lead to the first conference on Life and Work\* (Stockholm 1925). The WA would function through national councils in the USA, Canada, India, Japan and several European countries.

A 1929 peace conference of 500 delegates at Prague climaxed WA history. The delegates held that it was “a paramount duty of the Christian church to strive for the mental and moral disarmament of the people in all countries and to lead them at the same time to insist upon a rapid and universal reduction of armaments and the adoption of methods of arbitration and mediation in the settlement of all international disputes”. The WA further encouraged the churches to support wholeheartedly the League of Nations.

From 1931 to 1937 the WA and the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work

were closely related through common offices in Geneva, a joint general secretary, joint youth work, and a common bulletin (*The Churches in Action*). However, it decided in 1938 to remain “an autonomous movement which serves the churches” and not join Faith and Order,\* and Life and Work, in forming the WCC.

During the second world war most WA national councils in Europe were dissolved, and the Church Peace Union stopped its financial support of WA. Post-war attempts to re-establish it internationally proved unsuccessful; the primary disagreement was whether the organization should be solely Christian or interfaith. Meanwhile, in 1946 the International Missionary Council\* and the WCC in process of formation created the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs. This continues to be the ecumenical agency within the WCC for advocating peaceful resolution of conflicts, disarmament and international reconciliation.

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## WORLD ALLIANCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES

In 1970 THE WARC was formed through the merger of two older Reformed bodies, the Alliance of Reformed Churches throughout the World holding the Presbyterian System, founded in 1875 in London, and the International Congregational Council, which had first met in 1891, also in London. In 2002 the WARC included 215 Congregational, Presbyterian, Reformed and United churches in 107 countries, with an estimated 70 million plus communicant members. Three-quarters of these churches are in Africa, Asia and Latin America; many are minority churches.

Early attempts of the Presbyterian alliance to formulate a single confession for its member churches foundered on the rock of liberal-conservative conflict, and the WARC

remains a federation of churches without a common confession. In 1982, however, it declared a *status confessionis*\* on racism and apartheid and suspended two white South African churches from membership; the suspension of the Dutch Reformed Church was lifted conditionally in 1997.

The Reformed tradition generally sees every church as a particular expression of the one universal church of Jesus Christ; each community of faith contributes to the life of the whole (see **Reformed/Presbyterian churches**).

Through its "mission and unity" programme, the WARC promotes the unity of Reformed churches. The WARC fully supports the growth of the WCC, participates in annual conversations with other Christian World Communions,\* and since the late 1960s has organized bilateral and multilateral dialogues with Christians of other traditions and people of other faiths (see **Disciples-Reformed, Lutheran-Reformed, Methodist-Reformed, Orthodox-Reformed, Reformed-Roman Catholic dialogues**).

In 1877 the Presbyterian alliance, then composed primarily of North American and Anglo-Saxon churches, defended the rights of Native Americans in the USA. Ever since, the WARC in both its branches has repeatedly expressed its commitment to human rights. In 1987 it was the first ecumenical organization openly to protest human rights violations by the Romanian government. It has been involved in efforts to re-unite Korea and in the struggle for democratization in such countries as Malawi, South Africa and Taiwan.

The WARC promotes the full partnership of women and men in church and society, since 1992 through its "programme to affirm, challenge and transform" (PACT) and since 1997 through a department of partnership.

A major contribution of the Reformed tradition to Christianity has often been its deep interest in theological reflection. In 1983, with its study on covenanting for peace and justice, the alliance initiated the WCC programme on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation.\* Studies in the 1990s focused on Christian community in a changing society, Christian-Muslim relationships, the challenge of the emerging ecclesiologies

to church renewal, and Reformed faith and economic justice. On this last subject, the 23rd general council in Debrecen, Hungary, in 1997 mandated the alliance to begin a *processus confessionis*, a "committed process of progressive recognition, education and confession within all WARC member churches at all levels regarding economic injustice and ecological destruction".

A further concern in the 1990s was Reformed identity, which today is broad and somewhat blurred. WARC membership now ranges from John Calvin's Consistoire of Geneva to the Uniting Church of Australia and the united churches of North and South India. Some churches are guided by one or more early Reformed confessions, while others revise their confessions as they believe the times and the Holy Spirit dictate. While most of the member churches would agree that scripture is the final authority on matters of faith and practice, their interpretations of scripture range from the literalist to the liberal.

Such pluralism also incorporates wide cultural and contextual differences, further complicated by many member churches being minorities, not only religiously but also culturally and ethnically. The challenges which the alliance faces to celebrate diversity and unity, particularly in a world where political and economic realities preclude stability and are rife with injustice, demands of the WARC much flexibility as well as a firm grip of the Reformed dictum: *ecclesia reformata sed semper reformanda* (the church reformed but always being reformed).

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## WORLD ALLIANCE OF YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS

THE FIRST association known as the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) was founded in London in 1844 by 22-year-old George Williams to provide young men with a Christian atmosphere for spiritual and educational development, especially through Bible classes and prayer meetings. The movement rapidly spread to different countries of the British empire. The first North American branch was in Montreal in 1850, and the second in 1851 in Boston. Similar associations began to flourish on the European continent. Two of their main characteristics were mission at home and overseas and a will to move towards greater unity among Christians.

Jean-Henri Dunant in Geneva (later the founder of the Red Cross) and others had pressed for a world movement of the YMCAs, and in 1855 the first world conference was held in Paris. It adopted what has become known as the Paris basis, which sets out the fundamental principle of the world alliance: "The Young Men's Christian Associations seek to unite those young men who, regarding Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour according to the holy scriptures, desire to be his disciples in their faith and in their life, and to associate their efforts for the extension of his kingdom among young men."

Under the Paris rules only active members of evangelical Protestant churches were eligible for YMCA membership; this rule was re-affirmed in 1914 but relaxed in the 1920s. Nevertheless, the formula of the Paris basis to bring together those who regard "Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour according to the holy scriptures" was later used as a basis for the World Young Women's Christian Associations\* (1894), the World Student Christian Federation\* (1895), and the WCC (1948) (see **WCC, basis of**). YMCA leaders helped to shape the events after the 1910 Edinburgh mission conference, which led to the WCC formation and founding.

After the first world war the YMCA extended its work to Eastern Europe and reached agreements with leaders of the Eastern Orthodox churches. After the second world war, the World Alliance continued its contacts with the Orthodox churches through the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople.

During the same period, important YMCA developments took place also in countries that were predominantly Roman Catholic. Work with prisoners of war during the second world war presented many opportunities for service to Catholics. In 1950 the alliance held a world consultation which involved Protestants, Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholics and Copts from 27 countries, for whom this truly ecumenical fellowship was an "encouraging indication that Christians of the three confessions are drawing closer together" (C.P. Shedd).

In 1962 a consultation on ecumenical policy and practice for lay Christian movements was held jointly by the World Alliance of YMCAs and the World YWCA. The introduction to its report states that "it was one of the rare occasions in recent times when members of Orthodox, Protestant and Roman Catholic churches – both laymen and women and members of the clergy – have been privileged to join informally and intimately in prayer, Bible study and discussion on questions of ecumenical policy".

The Second Vatican Council opened new opportunities in the area of the YMCA's relationship with the Roman Catholic Church. During the Council and its aftermath, Frank Willis often travelled to Rome as a representative of the World Alliance and maintained friendly contacts with the staff of the Vatican Secretariat (now Pontifical Council) for Promoting Christian Unity (SPCU). In 1970 the YMCA special commission to re-evaluate the Paris basis had as one of the consultants Basil Meeking, a SPCU staff member.

Since then, YMCA contacts and working relationships have been developed not only with the SPCU but also with the Vatican offices for the laity, for inter-religious dialogue, and for justice and peace. Two consultations have been held between world alliance and SPCU representatives (1984, 1989). Catholic representatives have participated at local, national and regional levels in YMCA events concerning human rights and inter-faith dialogue.

The over 26 million YMCA members in 96 countries represent almost all Christian confessions and denominations and in some places include also people of other faiths or none. Particularly at local levels the YMCA works with, besides its members, millions

more people of different social and cultural origins. Recently the YMCA has increasingly sought to address some of the inter-related core issues which affect all peoples, such as justice\* and development,\* peace\* and human rights.\* This initiative is based on the conviction that involvement in these issues is an integral part of the Christian character of the YMCA.

In the late 1980s, the world YMCA, as a lay organization in the context of contemporary social realities, was involved in searching for a deeper understanding of its Christian mission, through action-oriented studies related to justice and peace. There were also concentrated efforts to deepen understanding of the YMCA's ecumenical task in a climate of religious pluralism and secularization. The world council of YMCAs in Frechen, Germany, in 1998 adopted "Challenge 21", a new statement of mission.

ERIKA TYSOE-DÜLKEN

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## WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR CHRISTIAN COMMUNICATION

THE ORIGINS of the WACC go back to 1950, to a meeting in Chichester, England, of Christian broadcasters from many of the national broadcasting corporations of Europe. The meeting was organized by Francis House, with the help of Edwin Robertson, at that time head of religious broadcasting at the BBC. Bishop George Bell of Chichester had encouraged him to organize an informal international conference on Christian broadcasting. That first meeting led to a statement of aims and methods of Christian broadcasting. The following years saw European agencies meeting with missionary societies from the US, which culminated in the World Committee for Christian Broadcasting, founded in Königstein, Federal Republic of Germany, in 1956.

In 1963 a new constitution was drawn up at a meeting in Limuru, Kenya, setting the ground rules for a new World Associa-

tion for Christian Broadcasting (WACB). Five years later, in 1968, another group, the Coordinating Committee for Christian Broadcasting, merged with the WACB in Oslo, to form the WACC. Its concerns now included all forms of media to proclaim the gospel and its relevance to life and the promotion of a just society.

The WACC continued to develop and to cooperate with other organizations involved in Christian communication. In 1975 the Agency for Christian Literature Development (ACLD), a programme of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) of the WCC, was merged with the WACC in order, according to its new constitution, "to make more effective their common witness through the media of mass communication" (see *Christian literature*). Developing out of the CWME-sponsored Christian Literature Fund, the ACLD aimed to provide literature which would be addressed to people in their total environment, speaking in the idiom of contemporary society.

Combining print media with electronic media determined to a large extent both the work and structure of the new organization. Apart from providing fellowship among Christian communicators, the WACC's main task became the development and evaluation of projects, particularly in the third world. Around 150 projects are supported every year, such as audiovisuals, video, radio, book publishing, news services, communication education, journalism, music and others. The WACC's project work is mainly in sectors of society which have limited resources.

During the 1970s, however, there was a great deal of debate on the problems of international communication, most of which was spurred on by the non-aligned movement and communication specialists working for non-governmental organizations. This discussion resulted in the call for a new international information order, which greatly influenced the "new WACC". In parallel, the WACC closely followed the international discussions on the relationship between communication and socio-economic development.

The WACC promotes its policies and principles through studies (e.g. theology and communication, women's issues), training and publications: a quarterly journal, *Media Development*, offers articles on topics of interest

in the area of communication, and *Action*, a monthly newsletter, carries news of events and trends in communication worldwide, with an occasional supplement *Communication Resource*. The WACC also sponsors the publication of books by subsidizing researchers and authors, especially from the third world.

The majority of members and almost all the partner organizations which support the WACC are deeply rooted in the ecumenical movement as it has developed in the Protestant and Orthodox families of churches. It is primarily these churches which have provided the vision and inspiration for the WACC throughout the various phases in its history. For this reason, the WACC has given priority to ecumenical work. It seeks to maintain close contacts with the WCC and denominational families at the international level, like the Lutheran World Federation. Likewise, the WACC emphasizes close ecumenical relationships on the regional and local levels. The WACC has a long tradition of close relationships with Roman Catholic institutions at various levels, such as UNDA (International Catholic Association for Radio and Television), OCIC (International Catholic Organization for Cinema and Audiovisual), UCIP (Union catholique internationale de la presse), CSCC (Centre for the Study of Communication and Culture) and CMC (Catholic Media Council).

Speakers and writers of other faiths have sometimes participated in the WACC's forum work, giving new insights and contributing to dialogue in the sphere of international communication. The WACC has made a provision in its guidelines for applicants to the small-projects fund "whose work reflects Christian values" and who wish to address themselves to "crucial issues facing people and communities", while expressing "an ecumenical vision that recognizes the oneness of all people regardless of race, sex or religion". This ecumenical openness with respect to people of other faiths also applies to secular groups which share the WACC's understanding of communication.

The WACC is organized in eight regions which determine the composition of its governing body, the central committee. Each region establishes its own priorities and work structure in order to meet the needs each defines. World headquarters are in London. The

WACC currently comprises more than 800 corporate (e.g. church agencies and communication institutions) and individual members.

Four major international events were organized by the WACC in recent years. The first world congress (Manila 1989) considered the theme "Communication for Community", and the second (Puebla, Mexico, 1995) "Communication for Human Dignity". With the cooperation of Isis International and the International Women's Tribune Centre (IWTC), an international women's conference was held in Bangkok (1994) with the theme "Women Empowering Communication", as part of an increasing emphasis in the programme on women. The 2001 congress in the Netherlands addressed the theme "Communication: From Confrontation to Reconciliation". The findings of these international events – all attended by denominational and ecumenical communication officers, communication professionals, academics and grassroots practitioners – and the input of the regions provided the basic material for the WACC's five-year programme.

Praxis and reflection have shaped the profile of the WACC over the years. The understanding of communication and the churches' mission in it have been the basis for the WACC's self-criticism as well as the incentive to renewal and greater commitment. The WACC's main policy statement, "The Christian Principles of Communication", expresses the common Christian witness in the service of a participatory, liberating and prophetic communication that creates community and supports and develops culture.

CARLOS A. VALLE

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## WORLD CONFERENCE ON RELIGION AND PEACE

THE FIRST WORLD conference on religion and peace was held in Kyoto, Japan, in 1970, culminating several years of preparation. Al-

ready in 1961 some senior religious leaders from the world's major religious traditions initiated a number of international exploratory journeys to promote sponsorship of a "religious summit" which would address the need for actions on behalf of peace.\* Religious communities that gave early support to the conference included the Baha'i; Mahayana and Teravada Buddhism; Orthodox, Protestant, and Roman Catholic Christianity; Confucianism; several streams of Hinduism; some communities of indigenous spiritualities; Shiite and Sunni traditions of Islam; Jainism; Reform Judaism; some of the New Religions; Shintoism; Sikhism; and Zoroastrianism.

The WCRP mandate is to promote the establishment of national and regional bodies of the WCRP and to initiate an inter-religious engagement with international and intergovernmental partners in a programmatic pursuit of multireligious dialogue and actions for peace. The WCRP has individual or institutional membership in over 100 countries and 35 national chapters. It enjoys consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations, with UNESCO and with UNICEF.

World assemblies have been held at Louvain/Leuven, Belgium (1974), Princeton, New Jersey, USA (1979), Nairobi, Kenya (1984), Melbourne, Australia (1989), Riva del Garda, Italy (1994) and Amman, Jordan (1999).

The organization attracts funding from individual donors, religious communities, international development organizations and philanthropic foundations, as well as from governments in Nordic countries of Europe and the USA.

The WCRP engages itself through its chapters on every continent, and often in cooperation with governments and civil society, in conflict transformation and reconciliation, human rights and responsibilities, the child and the family, development and ecology, disarmament and security, and peace education.

The WCRP has been especially active in monitoring issues of disarmament and human rights. It is engaged in various inter-religiously funded humanitarian projects, such as among Vietnamese boat people (1976-78), Khmer refugees (1979-81) and victims

of drought in Africa; in international multireligious initiatives in situations of conflict, including Sri Lanka, South Africa and Lebanon; as well as direct involvement in conflict transformation in the former Yugoslavia, the Horn of Africa and Sierra Leone. The involvement of the WCRP in organizing interfaith events related to the UN summits, the earth summit, the social summit and others confirms the commitment to strengthen the contribution of religious traditions as instruments for peace and reconciliation in world society.

HANS UCKO

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## WORLD COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

IN 1889 MORE THAN 900 Sunday school leaders registered for the first convention of what soon became the World Sunday School Association. More than 400 came from Great Britain and Ireland, and almost an equal number from the US and Canada. These leaders represented a lay movement (only 54 of the North Americans at the convention were ordained ministers) that had originated in England around 1780 to provide some elementary schooling for urban youngsters, who were increasingly present and troublesome in the cities. The movement spread rapidly to North America and, mostly through the Free churches, into much of Europe.

What started as a school to teach reading, writing and arithmetic to wayward children soon developed into a school for the churches. It became an evangelistic activity to bring children into contact with the church and the Christian message. It also provided nurture that substituted for and complemented religious training in the home and gradually included more and more children of church members.

Missionaries from "sending churches", chiefly in Great Britain and North America, developed Sunday schools which in many lands served as forerunners of formal educa-

tion systems that developed later. Sunday schools constituted a major strategy of the world missionary movement. It is claimed that “Jesus Loves Me”, the “song of the Sunday school”, became the best-known hymn throughout the Christian world.

The Sunday school depended on lay volunteer teachers who used curriculum materials produced by church or religious agency publishers. It provided a significant place for the leadership of women. In many places it offered classes for adults. The official church organizations often gained control of the movement, although its identification with children and women continued to limit its stature within many churches.

In the late 1940s the change of name to World Council of Christian Education (WCCE) symbolized its expansion into youth activities and other field services. Reports of its work in different nations were made to its regular world meetings. From 1889 to 1958 the WCCE sponsored 14 world conventions, all but the first two registering more than 1000 delegates; they were held in London (1889 and 1898), St Louis, Jerusalem, Rome, Washington, Zurich, Tokyo (1920 and 1958), Glasgow, Los Angeles, Rio de Janeiro, Oslo and Toronto. World assemblies and institutes followed until the final assembly in 1971 in Peru, when years of cooperative work, frustrating relationships and negotiations led to a vote to integrate with the WCC. General responsibility for continuing its work was lodged in the newly established Office of Education of the WCC.

WILLIAM B. KENNEDY

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## WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

THIS ENTRY deals with the origins, the basis, nature, purpose and functions, the organization and finances of the WCC. Several other entries deal with the developments in ecumenical thinking and activities which the

WCC has initiated and fostered through its programmes and personnel.

## ORIGINS

The WCC was constituted at the first assembly (Amsterdam) on 23 August 1948. It became the most visible international expression of varied streams of ecumenical life in the 20th century. Two of these streams – Life and Work\* (L&W) and Faith and Order\* (F&O) – merged at the first assembly. A third stream – the missionary movement, as organized in the International Missionary Council\* (IMC) – was integrated at the 1961 third assembly (New Delhi). And a fourth stream – Christian education – entered with the 1971 merging of the World Council of Christian Education.\*

Each of these movements is wider than any of its structured expressions, including the WCC fellowship of churches. “Applied” or “practical” Christianity, for example, had been institutionalized not only in the L&W movement but also in the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches\* (1914). Some world missionary bodies, such as the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization,\* still carry out many of the original evangelism aims of the IMC. The WCC youth department could never replace the YMCAs,\* the YWCAs,\* or the World Student Christian Federation.\* And no one would claim that F&O can gather and focus the whole bewildering variety of biblical/theological thinking.

In 1920, the Church of Constantinople (the Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarchate) became the first church to appeal publicly for a permanent organ of fellowship and cooperation of “all the churches” – a “League of Churches” (*koinōnia tōn ekklesiōn*) similar to the proposal after the first world war for a League of Nations (*koinōnia tōn ethnōn*). Also calling for the same in the 1920s were church leaders such as Archbishop Nathan Söderblom (Sweden), a founder of L&W (1925), Bishop Charles Brent, a founder of F&O (1927), and J.H. Oldham (UK), a founder of the IMC (1921).

In July 1937, on the eve of the world conferences of L&W at Oxford and of F&O at Edinburgh, representatives of the two movements met in London. They decided to bring the two together and to set up a fully repre-

sentative assembly of the willing churches. The proposed new organization “shall have no power to legislate for the churches or to commit them to action without their consent; but if it is to be effective, it must deserve and win the respect of the churches in such measure that the people of greatest influence in the life of the churches may be willing to give time and thought to its work”. Also involved should be laypeople who hold “posts of responsibility and influence in the secular world”, and “a first-class intelligence staff”. S. McCrea Cavert (USA) suggested the name “World Council of Churches”.

Both Oxford and Edinburgh accepted the proposal and each appointed seven members to a committee of 14, which met in Utrecht in May 1938 and in turn created a provisional committee responsible for the WCC “in process of formation”. William Temple (archbishop of York, later of Canterbury) was named chairman, and W.A. Visser ’t Hooft (Netherlands) general secretary. The provisional committee established a solid foundation for the WCC by resolving constitutional questions concerning its basis, authority and structure. In October–November 1938, it sent out formal invitations to 196 churches, and Temple wrote a personal letter to the Vatican secretary of state.

At Tambaram (India) in 1938, the IMC expressed interest in the WCC plan but decided to continue as a separate body. A number of missionary societies in its constituency did not want to come under the control of the churches, and there was fear that the churches of North America and Europe would not give to the younger churches elsewhere the place they deserved. Nevertheless, the IMC helped facilitate the eventual entrance of these churches into the WCC, “associated” with it in 1948, and eventually integrated in 1961.

In 1939 the provisional committee planned the first WCC assembly for August 1941, but the world war intervened, and the period of formation lasted for another decade. Between 1940 and 1946, the provisional committee could not function normally through its responsible committees, but its members and others did gather in the USA, England and Switzerland. Under the leadership of Visser ’t Hooft in Geneva during the war, several activities contributed to

the supra-national witness of the church: chaplaincy service, work among prisoners of war, assistance to Jews and other refugees, relay of information to the churches, and the preparation through contact with Christian leaders on all sides for post-war reconciliation and interchurch aid.

After the war the provisional committee met in Geneva (1946) and at Buck Hills, Pennsylvania (1947). The committee could affirm that the tragic war experience increased the churches’ determination to manifest their fellowship of reconciliation. By 1948, 90 churches had accepted the invitation to join the WCC.

Second thoughts on representation and WCC membership\* resulted in careful regard for numerical size and adequate confessional and geographical representation. The principal membership requirement was agreement with the basis upon which the council would be formed; other requirements specified the autonomy of a church, its stability and appropriate size and its good relationship to other churches.

Although some favoured a council composed primarily of national councils of churches or of world confessional families (e.g. Lutherans, Orthodox, Baptists), the argument prevailed that the WCC should be in *direct* contact with national churches and thus would comprise the individual denominations at the national level, for instance the Methodist Church of Great Britain, the Methodist Episcopal Church, USA, the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, etc. World confessional bodies, national councils of churches and international ecumenical organizations could be invited to send representatives to the first assembly but would have non-voting observer status.

Even with this arrangement, there was the danger that the WCC would be governed by majority votes in assemblies of an ever-increasing number of churches representing very unequal memberships. Could this “numerical democracy” not lead to the lukewarmness or even the defection of one of the large “core” church families, e.g. the Orthodox, the Lutherans, the Anglicans? The question began to emerge as the number of member churches increased steadily, and was a major issue raised by the Orthodox at the eighth assembly in Harare in 1998.

When the inaugural assembly convened on 22 August 1948, its 147 churches from 44 countries represented in some way all confessional families within the Christian world, except the Roman Catholic Church (see **RCC and pre-Vatican II ecumenism**). On the next day the assembly accepted the constitution of the WCC, and the newly organized fellowship of churches issued its message: "Christ has made us his own, and he is not divided. In seeking him we find one another. Here at Amsterdam we have committed ourselves afresh to him, and have covenanted with one another in constituting the World Council of Churches. We intend to stay together."

Amsterdam defined the WCC tasks in a general way in its constitution and more specifically in its decisions concerning policies, programmes and budget. The assembly authorized the WCC to make common pronouncements to the churches and to the world, but clearly defined the nature and limits of such pronouncements.

## **BASIS**

The 1948 inaugural assembly declared: "The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour" (see **WCC, basis of**). Soon this formulation gave rise to requests for a clearer definition of the Christ-centredness of the churches' common calling, a more explicit expression of the Trinitarian faith and a specific reference to the holy scriptures. The resulting reformulation, adopted by the third assembly (New Delhi 1961), still stands: "a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures, and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit."

Less than a confession of Christian faith and more than a formula, the basis serves as a point of reference for WCC members, a source or ground of coherence. Since the WCC is not itself a church, it passes no judgment upon the sincerity or firmness with which member churches accept the basis or upon the seriousness with which they take their membership. Thus, the basis itself comes under William Temple's formula:

"Any authority the Council will have consists in the weight which it carries with the churches by its own wisdom."

## **NATURE AND PURPOSE**

In 1948 the member churches understood that the WCC was not a church above them, certainly not the church universal or incipient "world church". They understood the Council to be an instrument whereby the churches bear witness together in their common allegiance to Jesus Christ, search for that unity which Christ wills for his one and only church, and cooperate in matters which require common statements and actions. The assembly acknowledged Visser 't Hooft's description of the WCC: "an emergency solution, a stage on the road,... a fellowship which seeks to express that unity in Christ already given to us and to prepare the way for a much fuller and much deeper expression of that unity".

What was not clear in 1948 was how this spiritual nature of the fellowship should relate to member churches' understanding of the nature and limits of the WCC, and to their understanding of their ecclesial relation to other members. In short, did membership of a church in the WCC have any implications for the "self-understanding" or ecclesiological position of that church?

To clarify this position, the WCC central committee in 1950 adopted the Toronto statement\* on the church, the churches and the World Council of Churches. It was forged in "a debate of considerable intensity" (Visser 't Hooft), even though its contents "defined a starting point, and not the way or the goal" (Lesslie Newbigin). According to this statement, the WCC "is not and must never become a super-church". It "cannot and should not be based on any one particular conception of the church". Membership does not "imply that a church treats its own conception of the church as merely relative" or accepts a "specific doctrine concerning the nature of church unity". Nevertheless, the common witness of the members "must be based on the common recognition that Christ is the divine head of the body", which, "on the basis of the New Testament", is the one church of Christ. Membership of the one church of Christ "is more inclusive" than the membership in one's own

church body, but it “does not imply that each church must regard the other member churches as churches in the true and full sense of the word”. Yet common WCC membership implies in practice that the churches “should recognize their solidarity with each other, render assistance to each other in case of need, and refrain from such actions as are incompatible with brotherly relationships”.

While debates still continue on the status of both the basis and the Toronto statement, the functions and purposes of the WCC and its organs are changing, in statement and in fact. The present list of functions, approved in 1983 by the sixth assembly (Vancouver), reveals far less neutrality in the ecclesiological understandings of the churches than an impartial reading of the basis and of the Toronto statement would suggest, even if the functions are not binding upon the member churches.

A clear example of this shift is from the vague WCC purpose (1948) “to carry out the work of the world movements for Faith and Order and Life and Work” to the much more specific purpose in the present constitution (Harare 1998): the churches “call one another to visible unity in one faith and in one eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and common life in Christ, through witness and service to the world, and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe”. It would be hard to describe these changes as harmonious with Toronto’s conclusion that “membership does not imply the acceptance of a specific doctrine concerning the nature of church unity”. The churches may now be taking for granted what they might not have in 1948. Or are their representatives at assemblies only being swept up into verbal approvals while in fact their constituents back home hold different self-understandings?

This question itself may support the judgment that in many ways the Toronto statement is out of date. Many of its affirmations about what the WCC is *not* or about what WCC membership does *not* imply are indeed still valid and need re-affirmation. But can one expect a 1950 “emergency solution”, crafted in the nervousness of an infant taking its first steps, to do justice to the collective ecumenical and mis-

sionary experience of the churches in six continents over more than 50 years?

The present questions about the WCC’s identity and role in the ecumenical movement do not simply repeat those of 1950. What do the churches today see as the present status of the one ecumenical movement and its future? How “one” is it? What are the visions or images that are functionally alive in the member churches when one says “ecumenism”? Are the visions and images the same in non-member churches? What is the basis for a “common calling” of the churches and their members to a “common vision”, and how “common” is it? Who is excluded? What are the criteria for evaluating the development, standstills and setbacks of the ecumenical movement in the churches since 1948? Is the WCC the natural framework and context of witness in fellowship for the member churches, in particular in congregational thinking and acting? If not, why not?

The pressure of such questions prompted the WCC, in anticipation of its 50th anniversary, to undertake the most honest comprehensive examination ever of the ecumenical movement, the churches and the WCC. Adopted by the central committee in 1997 and commended for study to the member churches, the policy statement “Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC” (CUV) was presented to the 1998 Harare assembly which agreed on the following: (1) The member churches do not yet dare to speak of full consensus about a “common” understanding or a “common” vision: “towards” remains an honest preposition. It indicates “an ongoing journey of self-reflection on the nature and purpose of the ecumenical movement in general, and of the WCC’s vocation in particular”. (2) The renewal of the WCC cannot come about simply by re-arranging the general structures, the programmes and the Geneva office. Nevertheless, one should not rest in comfortable “institutional captivity”. The WCC does need “changes in structure, style and ethos” (see **criticism of the ecumenical movement and of the WCC**). (3) The core of what the WCC is meant to be is the *fellowship* of the churches, not the organization or the institution.

While reflection on the common understanding and vision was going on, the Or-

thodox churches, in a statement made at Salonika in April 1998, formulated several sharp questions regarding their participation and membership which had become increasingly serious for them. Harare responded by setting up the Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC, a parity body with equal numbers of representatives of Orthodox and other member churches. Many of the Orthodox concerns are now appreciated by other members as well. The quest is for more than “negotiated structural compromises”.

### ORGANIZATION

Amsterdam defined the WCC tasks in its constitution and in its decisions concerning policies and programmes. WCC programmes are a service in the name of the member churches and a service to all the churches, members or not. The WCC discharges its legislative and executive functions through the assembly, the central committee and the executive committee, and through the officers and subordinate bodies of the general secretariat.

The *assembly* (see **WCC assemblies**) is the supreme legislative body which determines WCC policies and reviews their implementation in its programmes. Ordinarily meeting at seven-year intervals, it is composed of voting delegates elected by the member churches. It elects no more than eight WCC presidents for the presidium and, from the delegates, it elects not more than 150 members of the central committee.

The central committee allocates the assembly seats to the member churches on the basis of numerical size, confessional representation and geographical distribution. The following table indicates the growing participation in the assemblies.

<i>Assembly</i>	<i>Delegates</i>	<i>Churches</i>
1. Amsterdam 1948	351	147
2. Evanston 1954	502	161
3. New Delhi 1961	577	197
4. Uppsala 1968	704	235
5. Nairobi 1975	676	285
6. Vancouver 1983	847	301
7. Canberra 1991	842	317
8. Harare 1998	966	336

The rapid decolonization\* of the post-war world began in Asia with India and Pakistan becoming independent in 1947, and among majority-ruled states in sub-Saharan Africa with Ghana's independence in 1957. The subsequent growth of the national churches and the rise of indigenous clerical and lay leadership within them, and the increased number of Orthodox churches, are reflected in the regional representation at the assemblies. In 1948 the large majority of the 351 delegates of the 147 churches were in fact Western European and North American. At Harare 1998 the regional breakdown of the 966 delegates was much more balanced, demonstrating that the WCC has become a truly global body present in all major regions and cultures of the world. This geographical spread indicates a shift that is affecting the ecumenical movement as a whole. The traditional centre, which in 1948 embraced the areas of the North Atlantic, Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean, is fading in its dominant influence over those centres in the southern hemisphere – Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and Oceania.

As both a geographical and a historical re-positioning, these areas are becoming the new centres of theological articulations, personal and social ethical stances, spiritualities, church disciplines, artistic expressions and interchurch cooperation in common witness. As R.D. Paul of the Church of South India said to the churches of the West at the 1954 Evanston assembly: “You have taught us how to think, but now that we are mature, we are trying to think the message of Christianity out for ourselves. We can now be trusted to look after our own affairs. We have become your partner in the great mission of the church to the world.” Whether in the WCC assemblies or in its programmes, all voices have begun to receive an equal hearing. No one ecumenical story is privileged. The ecumenical movement has become polycentric. Nevertheless, the “contexts”, no matter what their variety, still have the theatre of God's one church in God's one world as *the* context.

The more recent strong recommendations and negotiations (not always successful with some churches) to have an adequate cross-section of men and women, adults and youth, clergy and lay have produced changes in the composition of recent assemblies:

Assembly	Percentage of delegates who were		
	Women	Under 30	Lay
Uppsala 1968	9	4	25
Nairobi 1975	22	9	42
Vancouver 1983	30	13	46
Canberra 1991	35	11	46
Harare 1998	35	13	42

The delegates form the core of an assembly but do not by themselves shape the milieu. Even at Amsterdam, far more numerous than the delegates were alternates, WCC staff and co-opted staff, consultants, accredited visitors, media representatives, and youth delegates and stewards (two traditional breeding grounds for ecumenical leaders: William Temple had been a steward at Edinburgh in 1910, and Philip Potter, later WCC general secretary, was a youth delegate at Amsterdam).

Also growing is the number of other participants: delegated observers and observers from non-member churches and organizations (289 at Harare, including 23 Roman Catholics); delegated representatives from Christian World Communions\* and national and regional councils of churches; invited guests (of the 44 at Harare, 9 were Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh).

The *central committee* is the main continuation body between assemblies. Meeting every 12-18 months, it implements assembly policies by approving and reviewing programmes and determining priorities among them, adopts the budget and secures financial support, and elects the 14-16 non-ex-officio members of the *executive committee* (which normally meets twice a year). The central committee has grown from 90 members in 1948 to the present 150. The executive committee now has 24 members.

The general secretary is elected by the central committee and is accountable to it. He or she is the chief WCC executive and heads the staff comprising those who conduct the continuing operations. The following have served in this capacity: W.A. Visser 't Hooft (1948-66), Eugene Carson Blake (1966-72), Philip A. Potter (1972-84), Emilio Castro (1985-92), and Konrad Raiser (1993-).

## STRUCTURES

For some committed ecumenists, since the 1950s there has been too much preoccupa-

tion with structures in the churches and in the ecumenical movement, at first both reasonable and proper but over the years becoming "dangerously neurotic" (Max Warren, 1976). Most take for granted that effectiveness in church life, as in the world of business, requires that scarcely a decade passes without important organizational changes. Others judge that in fact the predominant Western "business management model" for churches and the WCC has hurt and dimmed more than fostered and expressed their nature and tasks. All agree there is no "right and perfect" WCC as an organization and that any decisions about structures, old or new, should be pragmatic.

The 1948 Amsterdam assembly set up 12 departments, on paper somewhat disparate and uneven, but in fact closely supervised and evaluated by the general secretariat. The number of the executive/programme staff was less than the authorized 36 until the Evanston assembly (1954). Several churches had made available the services of their own paid people to strengthen the staff for shorter or longer periods of time.

The experience of the first six years showed the necessity of more effective coordination of the various departments. Evanston provided the WCC with four divisions, each with departments: (1) *studies* – faith and order, church and society, evangelism and missionary studies; (2) *ecumenical action* – youth, laity, men and women in church and society, Ecumenical Institute; (3) *interchurch aid/refugees and international affairs*; and (4) *information*. This model continued through the New Delhi assembly (1961). The IMC-WCC integration in itself had brought about sufficient alterations. The large Eastern European Orthodox churches of USSR, Romania, Bulgaria and Poland had just become members. More drastic changes would not be wise.

The Uppsala assembly (1968) authorized re-organization for "simplification and coordination". Effective in 1972, it tried to reflect the WCC's main constitutional functions in three flexible administrative units with broad mandates: *faith and witness, justice and service, and education and renewal*. The units would overcome the noticeable separation between study and action and would encourage greater participation by

various segments of the WCC constituency through sub-units with specific programmes. Each unit had a committee of members from the central committee and from the governing bodies of the various sub-units. This overall structure remained in place, with some further adjustments, after the Canberra assembly in 1991.

After the Harare assembly, a new internal organization came into effect, based on the insights gained through the CUV process. The Council now has four "clusters", each made up of several teams: (1) *relations* (teams: church and ecumenical relations, inter-religious relations and dialogue, international relations, and regional relations and resource sharing); (2) *issues and themes* (education and ecumenical formation, faith and order, justice, peace and creation, mission and evangelism); (3) *communication* (public information, publications and documentation); (4) *finance, services and administration*.

Since the Nairobi assembly, WCC programmes have revealed a vast extension of activities with a large breadth of concerns and interests. The operational teams have a variety of histories, methods of work, even ways of receiving funding. The focus of some units is quite distinct; for others there is considerable overlap in the issues or constituencies. Few programmes have had built-in clauses for termination. Few can expect more staff and funding, even if new interest groups should ask for new programmes.

## FINANCES

The financial situation of the WCC is symptomatic of the strengths and weaknesses of programmes and church relationships, but it also mirrors world financial trends such as recessions, debt crises and inflation. The same factors also affect the member churches and donor agencies. Wide fluctuations in exchange rates of other major currencies against the Swiss franc (in which the WCC keeps its accounts) create problems, since even when churches increase their giving from one year to the next, the value of this income in Swiss francs may in fact decline.

Where does the money come from? The total income for 2001 was Sfr.47,091,000. About 95% came from member churches,

their mission and aid agencies, individuals and governments; the rest came from investments, property rentals, publications, etc.; 55% of membership fees (2001, Sfr.7.1 million) were from Europe and 31% from North America. Although only a small percentage of the total income came from churches in other regions, some of these contributed more per capita than did larger and wealthier churches. Churches are to make annual contributions "commensurate with their resources". Yet some of the members take no financial responsibility for the WCC, neglecting to pay the prescribed minimum membership fee of Sfr.1000.

The WCC receives money both to cover its operating budget and to be channelled to ecumenical programmes and projects around the world. The income for the WCC is either "undesignated" for the WCC's flexible use or "designated" for specific unit programmes. The "undesignated" portion of total funds is steadily declining, from 30% in 1981 to 15% in 2001.

Where does the WCC's budget go? The total of expenditures for 2001 was Sfr.58,588,000. The most expensive item in this operating budget was the payroll for total staff. In order to improve financial equilibrium, there had been a major reduction in staff from 369 people in 1990 to 201 in 2001. The 2001 payroll was Sfr.21.2 million.

No matter how diligently the WCC tries to increase income and decrease costs, its long-term projected general income and its careful stewardship will be more and more necessary considerations in setting priorities for support of limited programmes and competent salaried personnel. One can no longer reasonably expect, or demand, the WCC to carry out a sweeping ecumenical agenda.

## RELATIONSHIPS

Structure charts and budget sheets do not in themselves capture the new or growing demands for effective functioning of relationships between the WCC and member churches, non-member churches and groups, and other ecumenical bodies. Pertinent facts include the following. *Membership* has more than doubled since Amsterdam, from 147 churches to 342 in 2002. *National Christian councils* in association or "working relations" with the WCC now total over 100.

*Regional councils or conferences*, non-existent in 1948, have been established in Africa (1963), Asia (1959), the Caribbean (1973), Europe (1964), Latin America (1982), the Middle East (1974), and the Pacific (1966).

The structures of *Christian World Communions*\* have become more active, with larger scopes, as have other international organizations, such as the YMCAs, YWCAs, WSCF, and United Bible Societies. The *Roman Catholic Church*, though not a member, has active representation in nearly all WCC programmatic activities (see **Joint Working Group**). The RCC is a full member of over 60 national councils and of the Caribbean, Middle East, and Pacific regional conferences, and it has close working relations with the other national and regional councils.

The fastest-growing churches are in the *conservative evangelical* and *Pentecostal* families (see **Evangelicals**, **Pentecostals**). Most of these groups are not WCC members. Some are in dialogue with the WCC, others are explicitly anti-WCC or strangers to it (see **evangelical ecumenical concerns**). The Harare assembly authorized the formation of a joint consultative group with Pentecostals, which became operational in 2000.

This scenario of relationships requires “an open and safe ecumenical space” (K. Raiser) in which all willing partners in the one ecumenical movement can participate equally. This calls for a wider tent, an extended table, a more intentional, sustaining inclusive networking of member and non-member churches and their agencies, the Christian World Communions, regional and national conferences and councils of churches, and international ecumenical organizations with their specific focuses. In the post-Harare period discussion has developed around the so-called “forum proposal” which aims at establishing such a space for dialogue. There is a legitimate concern that this should not lead to a merger into one more world church bureaucracy or, worse, a substitute for the ecumenical accountability and responsibility of ongoing membership in the WCC.

Another recent development is the formation of several autonomous agencies dealing with certain areas of ecumenical work, in

which the WCC participates along with other ecumenical partners and churches. Examples are Action by Churches Together (ACT) for ecumenical response to emergency situations, Ecumenical News International (ENI) and the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA). To each of these bodies the WCC has delegated tasks for which it used to assume direct programme responsibility in the past.

The numerical increase and geographical spread of the WCC's constituency in the widest sense does not in itself answer the question: What is the quality of fellowship? A greater cross-section of the churches' life is found in the representative participation in the work and decisions of the WCC constitutional bodies. Yet there are demands for greater involvement of more member churches in creating and reviewing WCC policies and programmes. There are also calls for “more deliberate use of staff travel and church visits, in order to listen to the needs and concerns of the churches, to share in their life, and to represent the Council as a whole and interpret its programmes and concerns” (central committee, 1989). Yet for all this, there is less money and fewer staff.

The member churches themselves vary widely in their own structures and personnel to receive WCC services – ranging from one person handling all communication for the WCC to the efficient communication within the appropriate constituency of a church and its follow-up by responsible study and action. Those churches that are seriously committed to the WCC are also ecumenically engaged in local and regional activities or in organized fellowships and bilateral dialogues; they often find too much on their ecumenical plates to digest. An overload of WCC programmes in service to the churches could thus be contributing to the headache of reception,\* i.e., the process of disciplined digestion and ownership at all levels of the churches' life, thought and practice.

The very success of the WCC in carrying out its various purposes over more than five decades has uncovered failures and weaknesses in both the WCC and member churches. The WCC is a servant to the churches who call each other to solidarity in mutual accountability regarding ecumenical goals and means. In the first decades of the

new millennium, the focus of ecumenical activity most likely will not be directed primarily on the WCC but on the churches themselves.

TOM STRANSKY

■ *And So Set Up Signs... The WCC's First 40 Years*, WCC, 1988 ■ *Commemorating Amsterdam 1948* (= ER, 40, 3-4, 1988) ■ H.E. Fey ed., *The Ecumenical Advance: A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, vol. 2: 1948-1968, London, SPCK, 1970 ■ *Financial Report 2001*, WCC ■ D. Kessler ed., *Together on the Way: The Harare Report*, WCC, 1999 ■ "Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC", articles on the draft in ER, 50, 3, 1998; final text, 51, 1, 1999 ■ M. VanElderen & M. Conway, *Introducing the World Council of Churches*, WCC, 2001 ■ W.A. Visser 't Hooft, *The Genesis and Formation of the World Council of Churches*, WCC, 1982.

## WCC ASSEMBLIES

CONSTITUTIONALLY, an assembly – held approximately every seven years – is the “supreme legislative body” of the World Council of Churches. Delegates are appointed by member churches, with the number to which each church is entitled determined by size (every member church may send at least one delegate). Allowance is made in the allocation of delegates for balancing confessional, cultural and geographical representation.

Member churches are urged to select their assembly delegates in a way that will ensure good distribution of church officials, parish ministers and laity, men and women and persons under the age of 30. Moreover, to improve balance or provide special knowledge and experience, up to 15% of the delegates may be persons proposed by the WCC central committee, which then asks their churches to name them as additional delegates.

Also present at each assembly is a wide range of non-voting advisers, representatives and observers from non-member churches or other ecumenical organizations and guests (including, since the fifth assembly, persons of other faiths). An assembly usually draws several hundred press and media persons, many of whom are ecumenically involved clergy and laity; and in recent assemblies, extensive programmes have

been arranged for visitors, including local people.

At the most recent assembly (Harare 1998), a new feature was the “padare”, the Zimbabwe Shona word for a village meeting place to which anyone may bring concerns for public discussion. Some 400 open forums were offered on subjects ranging from single causes (e.g. violence against women, interchurch marriages, debt relief) to faith and order issues and the performing arts.

Assemblies are too large and infrequent to make detailed decisions: close to 5000 people were present at Harare. Rather, they look at the wider ecumenical picture: evaluating what the WCC has done since the previous assembly, seeking a common assessment of current issues demanding ecumenical attention and specifying broadly what the Council should focus on until the next assembly. They elect the WCC presidents and, from among delegates present, members of the central committee.

The assembly has become primarily the unique international intercultural forum or “ecumenical space” of communal worship and celebration, education, shared experiences and renewed ecumenical commitment, and of “owning” the WCC as instrumental servant of the one ecumenical movement in its diverse expressions within the hospitable household of faith. For this reason, despite the preparatory staff time and energy, and increasing costs, voices to eliminate the assembly have never won out in discussions of WCC structural reforms. Everyone agrees that the assembly as an event gives the opportunity for the WCC to reconstitute itself, and for the member churches to improve relations and communication among themselves.

This entry offers a brief overview of each of the WCC's eight assemblies.

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*First assembly:* “Man's Disorder and God's Design”; Amsterdam, Netherlands, 22 August to 4 September 1948; 351 delegates, from 147 member churches.

*Sections:* (1) the universal church in God's design, (2) the church's witness to God's design, (3) the church and the disorder of society, (4) the church and the international order.

*Central committee moderator:* George Bell; *vice-moderator:* Franklin Clark Fry; *presidium:* Marc Boegner, Geoffrey Fisher, T.C. Chao (from 1951 Sarah Chakko), G. Bromley Oxnam, Germanos of Thyateira (from 1951 Athenagoras of Thyateira), Erling Eidem (from 1950 Eivind Berggrav); *honorary president:* John R. Mott.

The WCC's first assembly marked the assumption by the churches of responsibility for the ecumenical movement, as its message made clear: "Here at Amsterdam we have... covenanted with one another in constituting this World Council of Churches. We intend to stay together." Those constituting this world body, however, were largely from North America and Western Europe – only 30 of the founding churches came from Africa, Asia (including 5 from China) and Latin America. Although the term "younger churches" was often used for the latter bodies, they in fact included some of the oldest (Church of Ethiopia and Orthodox Syrian Church of Malabar); and among Western churches were some of the youngest (Old Catholic Church and Salvation Army).

Amsterdam said clearly that the churches had decided to come together in accordance with the will of the Lord of the church. Where this common way would lead them could not be foreseen. "We acknowledge", the report of section 1 emphasized, "that he is powerfully at work amongst us to lead us further to goals which we but dimly discern."

The first assembly adopted the WCC constitution (revised at successive assemblies), laid down conditions for membership, outlined programmes, discussed relationships with other ecumenical bodies and addressed a message to the churches – a practice repeated by succeeding assemblies. The "nature of the Council", defined in an assembly statement, would be further elaborated on by the statement "The Church, the Churches and the World Council of Churches", adopted by the central committee at Toronto in 1950 (see **Toronto statement**).

Section 2 expressed the indissoluble connection between unity\* and inner renewal: "As Christ purifies us by his Spirit we shall find that we are drawn together and that there is no gain in unity unless it is

unity in truth and holiness." Evangelism\* was seen as the common task of all the churches, and the present day as "the beginning of a new epoch of missionary enterprise". Mission\* and evangelism belong together and condition one another; and the distinction between "Christian" and "non-Christian" nations must be discarded. The question of the training of the laity\* was examined by a special committee, which took as its starting point the experience of the already established Ecumenical Institute at Bossey.\*

In section 3 emerged the ecumenical concept of the "responsible society",\* as opposed to both laissez-faire capitalism and totalitarian communism. "Each has made promises which it could not redeem. Communist ideology puts the emphasis upon economic justice, and promises that freedom will come automatically after the completion of the revolution. Capitalism puts the emphasis upon freedom, and promises that justice will follow as a byproduct of free enterprise; that, too, is an ideology which has been proved false. It is the responsibility of Christians to seek new, creative solutions which never allow either justice or freedom to destroy the other." It was also agreed that since "no civilization, however 'Christian'", can escape the radical judgment of the Word of God, none is to be accepted uncritically.

Section 4 was able to encompass such divergent views as those of the Czech theologian Josef L. Hromádka and John Foster Dulles (later US secretary of state). While this showed the strength of the fellowship in the newly formed Council, it also put that strength to its first test. Two points in this section were significant for the future: (1) rejection in principle of war as "contrary to the will of God", but inability to endorse such rejection unanimously; (2) concern that every kind of tyranny and imperialism calls for opposition, struggle and efforts to secure basic human liberties for all, especially religious freedom.

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*Second assembly:* "Christ – the Hope of the World"; Evanston, IL, USA, 15 to 31 August 1954; 502 delegates, from 161 member churches.

*Sections:* (1) our oneness in Christ and our disunity as churches, (2) the mission of the church to those outside her life, (3) the responsible society in a world perspective, (4) Christians in the struggle for world community, (5) the churches amid racial and ethnic tensions, (6) the laity: the Christian in his vocation.

*Central committee moderator:* Franklin Clark Fry; *vice-moderator:* Ernest Payne; *presidium:* John Baillie, Sante Uberto Barbieri, Otto Dibelius, Juhanon Mar Thoma, Michael (from 1959 Iakovos), Henry Knox Sherill; *honorary presidents:* John R. Mott (d.1955) and George Bell.

If “staying together” was the motto of the Amsterdam assembly, Evanston’s was “growing together”. A deep sense of belonging together enabled the assembly to tackle its extremely difficult and controversial theological theme. A previously published report on the main theme, on which two dozen eminent theologians had worked for three years, acknowledged “sharp differences in theological viewpoint” in the discussions. The concept of Christian hope\* among European churches tended to be eschatological, whereas North American churches stressed hope for the here and now. A reference to the hope of Israel (Rom. 9-11) introduced a discordant note and was omitted after a heated debate; many did not wish to recognize that the Jewish people occupy a special place in the history of salvation.

Evanston defined more clearly than Amsterdam the phrase “responsible society”. It did not indicate “an alternative social or political system” but “a criterion by which we judge all existing social orders, and at the same time a standard to guide us in the specific choices we have to make”. Like Amsterdam, Evanston addressed itself to “The Church in Relation to Communist-Non-Communist Tension”. Priority in sections 3 and 4 went to “social and economic problems in the economically underdeveloped regions”, a question to which the WCC was giving increasing attention. The assembly affirmed responsibility for Christian peace and justice and urged governments to ban all weapons of mass destruction and abstain from aggression. There were statements on

religious liberty\* and “intergroup relations”, insisting on racial equality. Continuing the Amsterdam discussion, Evanston stressed even more strongly the missionary task of the laity, which “bridges the gulf between the church and the world” and “stands at the very outposts of the kingdom of God”.

The so-called younger churches (except those in China, which had suspended their WCC participation in the wake of the Korean war) were much better represented than at the first assembly. Their presence was felt in many ways, especially in their impatience with the disunity of the churches. The accent on the missionary dimension of the churches’ task, so characteristic of Amsterdam, was missing at Evanston. But the assembly did show that the Council was centred on the word of God, theologically alert and becoming better equipped to help the churches to discover their common heritage.

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*Third assembly:* “Jesus Christ – the Light of the World”; New Delhi, India, 19 November to 5 December 1961; 577 delegates, from 197 member churches.

*Sections:* (1) witness, (2) service, (3) unity.

*Central committee moderator:* Franklin Clark Fry; *vice-moderators:* Ernest Payne and J. Russell Chandran (1966-68); *presidium:* A. Michael Ramsey, Francis Ibiyam, Iakovos, David G. Moses, Martin Niemöller, Charles C. Parlin; *honorary president:* Joseph H. Oldham.

New Delhi’s theme was again Christocentric, but the discussion now included the issue of other world religions. The theme, however, was not given the same prominence as at previous assemblies, and served mainly as a sort of guiding principle. The International Missionary Council\* was integrated into the WCC, becoming the Division on World Mission and Evangelism. The assembly approved an extension of the WCC basis\* by adding the phrase “according to the scriptures”, and the Trinitarian formula.

Of the 23 churches welcomed into WCC membership at New Delhi, 11 were African, 5 Asian and 2 South American. Only 5 were from Europe and North America. Two Pen-

tecostal churches from Chile formed a bridge to evangelical churches. The presence of the large Orthodox churches from Eastern Europe was regarded as an opportunity to ensure “a real spiritual dialogue” between Eastern and Western churches. “If we accept this opportunity our ecumenical task will not become easier, but we shall surely be greatly enriched.” Out of the estimated 400 million Christians who belong to WCC member churches today, almost 140 million are Orthodox.

Section 1 faced the theological problem of understanding other religions in the light of Jesus Christ (a still-unresolved problem). Another issue was how to distinguish Christian service from mere philanthropy. Discussion in section 2 of the problems of political, economic and social change was largely oriented to the third world. In section 3, the unity of the church was conceived as “one fully committed fellowship, holding the one apostolic faith, preaching the one gospel, breaking the one bread, joining in common prayer, and having a corporate life reaching out in witness and service to all and who at the same time are united with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages...”

New Delhi took a renewed stand on religious liberty, adopted a resolution on anti-semitism, clarified the churches’ views on the international crisis and issued a message to Christians in South Africa and an “Appeal to All Governments and Peoples”. The WCC had by now assumed increased responsibility for relief to people in distress, refugees and victims of catastrophes all over the world. In Amsterdam the churches committed themselves to stay together; in Evanston they affirmed their intention to grow together; and now they were eager to assume new tasks together.

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*Fourth assembly:* “Behold, I Make All Things New”; Uppsala, Sweden, 4 to 20 July 1968; 704 delegates, from 235 member churches.

*Sections:* (1) the Holy Spirit and the catholicity of the church, (2) renewal in mission, (3) world economic and social development, (4) towards justice and peace in international affairs, (5) worship, (6) towards new styles of living.

*Central committee moderator:* M.M. Thomas; *vice-moderators:* Pauline Webb and Metropolitan Meliton; *presidium:* Patriarch German, Hanns Lilje, Daniel T. Niles, Kiyoko Takeda Cho, Ernest A. Payne, John Coventry Smith, Alphaeus H. Zulu; *honorary presidents:* Joseph Oldham and W.A. Visser ‘t Hooft.

Uppsala, the WCC’s most activist and politically oriented assembly, can be seen as ending an era in the ecumenical movement and marking a new beginning. Typifying this was the vigorous presence of youth,\* whose demonstrations made it clear that they were not satisfied with the role given them at the assembly.

Uppsala set the unity and catholicity\* of the church squarely within the sphere of God’s activity in history. Stating that “the church is bold in speaking of itself as the sign of the coming unity of mankind”, the assembly admitted that secular “instruments of conciliation and unification... often seem more effective than the church itself”. Therefore, “churches need a new openness to the world in its aspirations, its achievements, its restlessness and its despair”. All church structures, from local to world level, must be examined to see whether they enable the church and its members to be in mission. More dialogue with the world and more effective proclamation of the good news are equally needed. For the first time the idea of “a genuinely universal council”, able to speak for all Christians, was articulated.

In his assembly address the Jesuit Roberto Tucci referred to the possibility of the Roman Catholic Church joining the WCC – a challenge that was seriously discussed in the following years. Closer WCC relations with national and regional councils of churches was also high on the agenda.

The reality that the rich were becoming richer and the poor poorer dominated Uppsala’s socio-political and economic discussions. The assembly recommended that the churches set aside 1% of their total income for development aid and appeal to their governments to invest the same percentage of their gross national product. The central issue in development is the criterion of the hu-

man. Public opinion must be persuaded to support deep changes in both developed and developing nations.

Uppsala's discussion of worship\* called on Christians to be open to learn from the practices of worship of other Christians. Describing worship as "ethical and social in nature" and thus "orientated towards the social injustices and divisions of mankind", the assembly specified that segregation by race or class in Christian worship must be rejected. It recommended "that all churches consider seriously the desirability of adopting the early Christian tradition of celebrating the eucharist every Sunday".

The assembly also grappled with how Christians make faithful ethical decisions. Social and cultural differences make a single style of Christian life impossible. Refusing to choose between "contextualism" and "rules", the gathering pressed for the position that individual moral choices can be made only in Christian community which is held together by biblical insight and the communion table.

In the wake of Uppsala several new programmes were added to the WCC: the Programme to Combat Racism\* (PCR), the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development, the Christian Medical Commission, Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies, and the Sub-unit on Education. Unit II, Justice and Service, became from 1971 onwards the largest unit in the Council.

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*Fifth assembly:* "Jesus Christ Frees and Unites"; Nairobi, Kenya, 23 November to 10 December 1975; 676 delegates, from 285 member churches.

*Sections:* (1) confessing Christ today, (2) what unity requires, (3) seeking community, (4) education for liberation and community, (5) structures of injustice and struggles for liberation, (6) human development.

*Central committee moderator:* Edward W. Scott; *vice-moderators:* Jean Skuse and Karekin Sarkissian; *presidium:* Annie R. Jigge, José Míguez Bonino, Nikodim (from 1979 Ilja II of Georgia), T.B. Simatupang, Olof Sundby, Cynthia Wedel; *honorary president:* W.A. Visser 't Hooft.

Nairobi has been described as an assembly of consolidation, providing theological undergirding for much that surfaced in Uppsala. It declared that faith in the Triune God and socio-political engagement, conversion to Jesus Christ and active participation in changing economic and social structures belong together and condition one another.

Among contentious discussions was that of interfaith dialogue:\* the section report on this subject was referred back for reconsideration before a plenary vote. Some delegates in the West thought the report was weak and susceptible to interpretation as a spiritual compromise. Asian representatives, on the other hand, stressed that dialogue in no way diminishes full commitment to one's own faith. Far from leading to syncretism, it safeguards against it.

Debate on evangelism related spirituality\* to involvement. As unity requires a commonly accepted goal, a fuller understanding of the context and companionship in struggle and hope, section 1 asked the churches to respond to the three agreed statements on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*\* (BEM), compiled by the commission on Faith and Order.

The assembly resisted efforts to weaken the PCR and its special fund, but strove to understand this commitment to action on behalf of the oppressed in a more deeply theological way. The search for a "just, participatory and sustainable society"\* became a major theme. Programmes on faith, science and technology,\* militarism\* and disarmament,\* ecology and human survival, the role of women in church and society, and renewal and congregational life received a new emphasis. Concern for sharing of resources entered ecumenical discussions.

The assembly's programme guidelines committee approved four "programme thrusts" until the next assembly: (1) expression and communication of our faith in the Triune God; (2) search for a just, participatory and sustainable society; (3) unity of the church and renewal of human community; (4) education and renewal in search of true community.

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*Sixth assembly:* "Jesus Christ – the Life of the World"; Vancouver, Canada, 24 July to 10 August 1983; 847 delegates, from 301 member churches.

*Issue groups:* (1) witnessing in a divided world, (2) taking steps towards unity, (3) moving towards participation, (4) healing and sharing life in community, (5) confronting threats to peace and survival, (6) struggling for justice and human dignity, (7) learning in community, (8) communicating credibly.

*Central committee moderator:* Heinz Joachim Held; *vice-moderators:* Chrysostomos of Myra and Sylvia Talbot; *presidium:* Nita Barrow, Marga Bührig, Paulos Gregorius, Johannes W. Hempel, Ignatius IV, W.P. Khotso Makhulu, Lois M. Wilson; *honorary president:* W.A. Visser 't Hooft (d. 1985).

At Vancouver, some observers said, Amsterdam and Uppsala appeared to come to terms with each other. It was a "re-integrated" assembly. Great emphasis in this most representative gathering in ecumenical history fell on participation,\* and up to 4500 people a day took part one way or another in the assembly. Of voting delegates more than 30% were women, more than 13% youth (under 30) and more than 46% laypeople. Leadership by women was prominent as never before. Canada's cultures and concerns made a strong impact on the gathering.

Daily worship services in a large tent drew thousands of people. The celebration of the eucharist according to an order of worship (the Lima liturgy\*) reflecting the Faith and Order convergence statements on BEM was a memorable event, as was the night-long vigil to mark the anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Churches were requested to respond officially to the BEM document by the end of 1986. The assembly received the fifth report of the WCC-RCC Joint Working Group,\* with an outline of future work. In evangelism, wide attention was drawn to Christian witness in the contexts of culture, worship, the poor, children and religious pluralism.

On Christian education, the assembly pressed member churches "to take seriously the ecumenical dimension of learning and include it in all educational activities and programmes". In emphasizing the central importance of language and culture in ecumenical education, the assembly urged churches to experiment with alternative forms of communication.

menical education, the assembly urged churches to experiment with alternative forms of communication.

A recommended WCC priority was the engagement of member churches "in a conciliar process of mutual commitment (covenant) to justice, peace and the integrity of all creation", whose foundations were "confessing Christ as the life of the world and Christian resistance to the demonic powers of death in racism, sexism, caste oppression, economic exploitation, militarism, violations of human rights, and the misuse of science and technology".

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*Seventh assembly:* "Come, Holy Spirit – Renew the Whole Creation"; Canberra, Australia, 7 to 20 February 1991; 842 delegates, from 317 member churches.

*Sections/sub-themes:* (1) Giver of life – sustain your creation!, (2) Spirit of truth – set us free!, (3) Spirit of unity – reconcile your people!, (4) Holy Spirit – transform and sanctify us!

*Central committee moderator:* Aram Keshishian; *vice-moderators:* Soritua Nababan and Nélide Ritchie; *presidium:* Anne-Marie Aagaard, Vinton Anderson, Leslie Boseto, Priyanka Mendis, Parthenios of Alexandria, Eunice Santana, Shenouda of Alexandria, Aaron Tolen.

As at Vancouver, delegates from member churches made up only about a fifth of those present in Canberra; other participants included 10 guests from other faiths, about 1500 visitors and over 200 observers from non-member bodies.

In two respects Canberra's theme was a departure from earlier assemblies: its formulation as a prayer and its reference to the Holy Spirit. The theme was at the heart of daily and special worship services, carefully prepared to draw on the rich variety of traditions in the WCC. But frequent remarks in assembly sessions showed that while the pneumatological emphasis opens up new perspectives in relating theology and experience, it can also kindle controversy. Many argued the need for discernment and for maintaining the link between Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

War in the Gulf broke out just three weeks before the assembly began. Discussion about a statement on the war revealed the deep differences within the WCC over classic questions about the justifiability of war. The way the Gulf war overshadowed consideration of other situations of conflict and oppression in the world highlighted growing tension within the ecumenical family between global and local concerns.

The venue gave a high profile to indigenous people, especially Aboriginal Australians. An assembly statement committed the WCC to support and monitor “a treaty process” between Aborigines and the Australian government, and called on churches to “return land unjustly taken” from the Aborigines.

Despite significant ecumenical theological convergence in recent years, assembly discussions and worship made clear that eucharist, ordained ministry and views about the nature of the church remained painful stumbling blocks to full communion. An open letter from Orthodox participants insisted that the WCC’s main aim must be restoration of church unity, and asked that faith and order be given greater prominence. But obstacles to unity were also manifest in pleas that certain groups must be better represented within WCC structures. In particular, member church delegations fell considerably short of the target of 20% youth. Even more than at previous assemblies, trying to achieve all mandated “balances” on governing bodies led to sometimes bitter debate.

Christians from mainland China attended a WCC assembly for the first time in over 30 years, and the China Christian Council (seen as a united church in the process of formation, rather than as a council of churches) was one of seven churches welcomed as new members. Another milestone was the presence of observers from the (white) Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa (NGK), a first since it left the council in the 1960s.

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*Eighth assembly:* “Turn to God – Rejoice in Hope”; Harare, Zimbabwe, 3-14 December 1998; 966 delegates, from 336 member churches.

*Hearings, phase I, based on four programme units from Canberra to Harare:* unity and renewal; churches in mission – health, education, witness; justice, peace and creation; sharing and service; work of the general secretariat, including church and ecumenical relations, inter-religious relations, communication, the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, and Finance.

*Hearings, phase II, themes and issues:* unity, justice and peace, moving together, learning, witness, and solidarity.

*Central committee moderator:* Aram I, Catholicos of Cilicia; *vice-moderators:* Marion S. Best and Sophia O.A. Adinyira; *Presidium:* Agnes Abuom, Kathryn Bannister, Jabez Bryce, Chrysostomos of Ephesus, Moon Kyu Kang, Federico J. Pagura, Eberhardt Renz, Zakka I Iwas Mar Ignatius.

Harare was the 50th anniversary assembly of the WCC. For almost two weeks, delegates reflected about where the WCC member churches had been together and how that history might shape the future. They were helped to do this through a policy statement, “Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the World Council of Churches”, commended by the central committee. In light of all this, delegates made decisions to chart the course of ecumenical life through the WCC into the 21st century. They concluded with a “Journey to Jubilee” recalling fifty years of life together, followed by a service of recommitment.

The assembly, the largest in WCC history with about 5000 attendees, included 966 voting delegates: 367 women, 599 men – 525 of whom were ordained – and 134 youth; 46 guests attended, including eight people from other faiths and a four-member delegation from North Korean churches, the first time churches from that country had been present. The Roman Catholic Church was represented by 23 delegated observers. This was the second assembly held on the African continent. Even the most staid attendees found themselves moving to the African rhythms during worship, and sights, sounds and tastes of Africa infused the event. A Shona stone spirit sculpture interpreting the assembly theme became the unofficial logo. One plenary focused on the

daunting challenges faced by Zimbabwe and many countries in the region – large numbers of people infected by the AIDS virus, high unemployment, weakening currency and escalating inflation, corruption among government leaders, political disquiet. This information became a backdrop for assembly actions concerning child soldiers, third-world debt, human rights and globalization.

Harare also marked the conclusion of the Ecumenical Decade – Churches in Solidarity with Women, calling attention to the impact of violence “on women and children who are the innocent victims of war, conflict situations and domestic violence”.

A totally new feature was the *padare*, which means “meeting place” in the Shona tradition. The WCC borrowed this concept, and provided over four hundred spaces for sharing and reflection about sometimes-tender topics that were not necessarily on the official assembly agenda.

Roiling under the surface were a number of doctrinal and ecclesial concerns raised at the Canberra assembly by Orthodox churches – concerns shared by some other WCC member churches as well. The issues were addressed forthrightly by the moderator and the general secretary in their reports, and a Special Commission was created to deal systemically with issues that had been articulated by the Orthodox during a May 1998 consultation in Salonika. These actions helped defuse some tensions.

This was an assembly that reflected a more seasoned, mature, chastened ecumenical movement, still clear (at least in the official texts) on the goal of visible Christian unity, but sobered by the challenges and reminded of the churches’ dependence on God in the face of them.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT and DIANE KESSLER

■ Assembly reports, WCC ■ H.E. Fey ed., *The Ecumenical Advance: A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, vol. 2: 1948-1968, London, SPCK, 1970, for extensive bibliographies on the first six assemblies of the WCC.

## WCC, BASIS OF

ACCORDING TO the WCC constitution, “agreement with the basis upon which the Council is founded” is a precondition for member-

ship. Adopted by the inaugural assembly (Amsterdam, 1948), the original basis read simply, “The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour.” It had been formulated at a meeting in Utrecht in 1938 of the committee of 14 appointed by the Life and Work\* (L&W) and Faith and Order\* (F&O) conferences.

“Fellowship of churches” had by 1948 become part of ecumenical terminology. The 1920 encyclical of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople had proposed “a *koinonia* of churches”. Although the English word “fellowship” lacks the rich biblical nuances of the Greek original, it does affirm the reality of a unity that is “given” and “previous”, and not just constituted by human decisions, and implicitly rejects the WCC as a potential “super-church”.

“Which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour”, some claim, finds its source in the 1855 basis of the YMCAs,\* and later of the World Young Women’s Christian Association\* (1894) and of the World Student Christian Federation.\* More directly, invitations to the first world conference of F&O were addressed to churches “which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour”.

Some in both liberal and conservative circles expressed dissatisfaction with “Jesus Christ as God and Saviour”. Unitarians and the Society of Friends did not want to be committed to a definite doctrinal formula. To the more orthodox the phrase did not adequately affirm the humanity of Christ. It has “a heretical flavour which would have led to its rejection by any one of the ecumenical councils” (William Adams Brown).

In his 1938 explanatory memorandum on the WCC constitution, William Temple, who had chaired the Utrecht meeting, drew out the two main implications of the basis as formulated. First, the fact that the WCC is a fellowship, not a federation, of churches means that it cannot exercise any constitutional authority over the member churches. Second, the Council stands on faith in Jesus Christ as God and Saviour – in essence “an affirmation of the incarnation and the atonement”. But the basis is “not a credal test to judge churches or persons”; the churches will have freedom to interpret that faith in their own way.

From Utrecht on, some have argued against any basis. It could introduce an element of ecclesiastical judgmentalism and so corrode the *koinonia*. Others would prefer the Nicene\* or Apostles\* Creed as the basis.

Although the Amsterdam assembly viewed the basis as “adequate for the present purposes” of the WCC, it endorsed the need “for clarification or amplification of the Christian faith” within the Christological framework which the assembly had affirmed. A later study by the central committee concluded that there was no need to change the basis, though it was necessary to explain its meaning and also make clear that the incarnation\* and the Trinity\* were implicit in it. Accordingly the second assembly (Evanston 1954) accepted a description of the purpose and function of the basis: “less than a confession” but “much more than a mere formula or agreement”. The basis showed the nature of ecumenical fellowship, provided an overall orientation for the Council’s work, and indicated the general range of fellowship which the member churches sought to establish.

After Evanston another study led the central committee to present a new basis at the third assembly (New Delhi, 1961); it was adopted with 383 votes in favour, 36 against and 7 abstentions. It reads: “The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”

The re-formulated basis incorporates five changes. “Confess”, versus the earlier “accept”, suggests commitment and emphasizes the experience of togetherness in fellowship. “The”, not “our”, with “Lord Jesus Christ” is less restrictive and points to the universality of Christ’s lordship. “According to the scriptures” to an extent meets the criticism that the earlier version tended towards Docetism or mono-physitism and, at the same time, affirms the place of the Bible in the ecumenical fellowship. “And therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling” adds a dimension of dynamism to the understanding of fellowship and also underlines the ontological priority of what God in Christ has already ac-

complished. The final doxological formula sets the Christocentric affirmation in a Trinitarian setting, makes the basis totally acceptable to the Orthodox and adds a celebrative element to the fact of and aspiration for unity.

Most of the assembly delegates who took part in the discussion were of the opinion that the new basis was in full agreement with the Trinitarian doctrine as formulated by the first two ecumenical councils\* and in the Nicene Creed, and that it made more explicit the evangelical and scriptural rationale of the ecumenical movement. But there were also critical voices. They feared that, in going beyond the essential Christological criterion for membership, the WCC was moving in the direction of confessionism, or that any expansion would set a precedent for still further additions until the basis became “a burdensome doctrinal statement”. Other critics imagined that the new basis would block any future revision and leave uncorrected “the one-sided monophysite character of the original basis”.

The 1961 basis has endured. It continues to sufficiently define the WCC’s nature. But the one sentence and each of its key expressions are not static abstractions. They are coloured by the horizons which over 50 years of reflective experience have developed: the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, the scriptures as understood, prayed and witnessed, the fellowship of churches and their common calling, even the glory of the Triune God. None of these realities is quite experienced and understood as it had been by the fledgling member churches in 1948. In fact, this developmental continuity creates a “basis beyond the Basis”, evidenced in the central committee’s lengthy policy statement proposed to the eighth assembly (Harare, 1998): “Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC.”

T.K. THOMAS

■ H.E. Fey ed., *The Ecumenical Advance: A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, vol. 2: 1948-1968, London, SPCK, 1970, ch. 2 ■ W. Theurer, *Die trinitarische Basis des Ökumenischen Rates der Kirchen*, Frankfurt, Gerhard Kaffke, 1967 ■ “The WCC Basis” (= *ER*, 37, 2, 1985).

## WCC, MEMBERSHIP OF

CHURCHES WHICH agree with the WCC basis are eligible to apply for WCC membership. Applications may be approved at an assembly by two-thirds of the member churches or, between assemblies, by two-thirds of the central committee (unless objection from one-third of the member churches is received within six months).

A prospective member must evidence "sustained independent life and organization" and "constructive ecumenical relations" with other churches in its country, which normally means membership of the national council of churches. Ordinarily, member churches must have at least 25,000 members. Churches with at least 10,000 members may be associate members, eligible to participate in all WCC activities but not to vote in the assembly. Associate membership is also open to churches which – for reasons approved by the central committee – prefer this status.

WCC rules state that becoming a member signifies a church's "faithfulness to the basis of the Council, fellowship in the Council, participation in the life and work of the Council and commitment to the ecumenical movement as integral to the mission of the church". These responsibilities are further specified in the rules. Member churches are expected to send delegates to the assembly, inform the WCC of situations in their own life which warrant the attention and solidarity of the ecumenical family, pursue and encourage ecumenical commitment at all levels of their church's life, interpret the work of the WCC and ecumenical movement among their members, and participate in the activities and programmes of the Council. Each member church is to make "an annual contribution to the general budget of the Council" in an amount "agreed upon in consultation between the church and the Council", normally a minimum of SFr.1000. The WCC constitution and rules make no provision for suspending or removing churches from membership.

## HISTORY AND STATISTICS

In Amsterdam in 1948 representatives of 147 churches, mostly European and North American, constituted the WCC. By each subsequent assembly the number had in-

creased – 161 at Evanston (1954), 197 at New Delhi (1961), 235 at Uppsala (1968), 285 at Nairobi (1975), 301 at Vancouver (1983), 317 at Canberra (1991), and 336 at Harare (1998). The churches come from about 100 countries all over the world.

Relatively few churches have withdrawn. In 1960 three white South African churches left the WCC in the aftermath of the condemnation of apartheid\* by the declaration of a WCC-sponsored meeting in Cottesloe,\* outside Johannesburg. Later, the Presbyterian Church of Ireland and the Salvation Army withdrew; both objected to grants from the Programme to Combat Racism\* to armed liberation movements in Southern Africa, although the Salvation Army also noted the difference between its organization and that of most member churches and has remained an active participant in a number of WCC activities. Four Chinese churches were founding members, but there was little WCC contact with China after the Korean War (1950-53). In the mid-1980s, after Chinese Protestants entered a "post-denominational" period after the cultural revolution, they began to renew their contacts with the WCC, and in 1991 the Canberra assembly received the China Christian Council as a member church. Following the end of the USSR, the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, which had been a federation of Baptist, Pentecostal and other evangelical bodies in various Soviet republics, ceased to exist, and its successor bodies did not remain in WCC membership. In the context of growing expressions of concern during the 1990s among Eastern Orthodox member churches about the direction of the WCC, two of these churches – in Bulgaria and in Georgia – decided to leave the WCC; until then, all the autocephalous churches of the Eastern Orthodox family had been members of the Council.

The number of member churches has sometimes dropped because of a union of two or more member churches, potentially creating discontent if the newly united church is allowed fewer delegates than its constituting churches were. In other cases member churches whose origins were in mission during the colonial period have divided into two or more nationally organized

churches, thus increasing the total number of WCC members.

Churches calculate their own membership on different bases, ranging from those which count only adult confirmed members to those which include all inhabitants of their country except persons who explicitly indicate otherwise. The WCC does not maintain membership statistics, and it is impossible to give precise figures for how many people are members of WCC churches. Commonly used numbers range from 350 to 450 million.

### MEMBERSHIP ISSUES

The WCC faces various interesting issues of membership within (and without) its fellowship.

*National churches as the "building block".* Nearly all of the member churches are organized bodies of local parishes or congregations, usually within the boundaries of a single nation, where they exist alongside other similar organizations of local congregations. They are often described as denominations, although not all of them would accept this designation.

In the original draft for a WCC constitution, prepared in Utrecht in 1938, representation of the churches was based on a regional principle, with an exception made for Orthodox churches. A counter-proposal made in 1945 by Lutheran churches in the US suggested instead a structure based on world confessional families. In the end, the argument prevailed that it was essential for the WCC, as a body without its own canonical authority, to be in direct touch with the national churches, which was the principle adopted by the Amsterdam assembly. In turn, the WCC takes account of confessional and regional representation in its governing bodies. Moreover, national councils of churches, regional ecumenical organizations, Christian World Communions\* and international ecumenical organizations recognized by the central committee as being in working relations with the WCC are normally invited to send non-voting representatives to assemblies and central committee meetings.

WCC regulations and Orthodox canon law make it likely that new member churches will be Protestant, thus reducing the proportion of the Orthodox voice in the WCC and (some have argued) in effect re-

warding the Protestant tradition for the schismatic and divisive tendencies which the WCC is intended to overcome. To help counter this factor, the WCC ensures a certain percentage of seats to Orthodox representatives.

*Roman Catholic membership.* The first WCC assembly after the Second Vatican Council\* (Uppsala 1968) entertained strong hopes of RC membership. In 1969 Pope Paul VI said the membership question "contains serious theological and pastoral implications. It thus requires profound study and commits us to a way that... could be long and difficult." A 1972 report on membership from the WCC/RCC Joint Working Group\* concluded that there were no insuperable theological, ecclesiological or canonical objections to membership. But the holy see made a prudential judgment not to apply "in the near future".

Were the RCC to apply, two difficulties would be considerable, if not insuperable. Given that representation on WCC governing bodies must give "due regard" to size and that there are perhaps twice as many Roman Catholics as members of all the WCC member churches combined, the consequences for achieving balanced representation would be enormous.

Moreover, since the RCC understands itself as a family of local churches with and under the bishop of Rome – "a universal fellowship with a universal mission and structure" – RC representation would come from both the holy see and the local churches. What would happen if within the RCC there was public dissent among the RC episcopal, clerical and lay representations, and between some of them and the contingent of the holy see, especially on important ecclesiological and personal and social ethical issues?

Although not a member, the RCC does participate in various ways in almost all WCC programmes.

*Other non-member churches.* The limited nature of WCC authority enables it easily to involve a range of people from non-member churches in its conferences and consultations, studies and other activities. Some judge, however, that many small national churches, particularly those in a minority situation, are unfairly excluded from the benefits of belonging to the WCC because they do not have enough

members to be eligible for it. Others note that the WCC does not take sufficient account of the interests of diaspora Christians – those in a smaller ecclesiastical jurisdiction of a church with its headquarters in another country.

A more wide-ranging challenge is raised by statistical projections of the growth of independent, Pentecostal and Evangelical churches outside the WCC's membership; most have little or no knowledge of or contact with the WCC or are in principle against the WCC. According to some observers, fewer than half of the non-Roman Catholic and non-Orthodox Christians in the world are now members of WCC churches; this imbalance has serious implications for the understanding of the WCC as an instrument of the worldwide ecumenical movement.

MARLIN VANELDEREN

■ T. Stransky, "RC Membership in the WCC", *ER*, 20, 1968 ■ W.A. Visser 't Hooft, *The Genesis and Formation of the WCC*, WCC, 1982, ch. 18 ■ WCC/RCC Joint Working Group, "Patterns of Relationships", *ER*, 24, 1972.

## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

THE WORLD DAY of Prayer (WDP) is a worldwide movement of Christian women of many traditions in 170 countries who welcome all people to observe a common day of prayer on the first Friday of March. It is an ecumenical movement that brings together women of various races, cultures and traditions in closer fellowship, understanding and action throughout the year. WDP national/regional committees disburse most of the WDP offering in support of women's projects and Christian literature worldwide.

The origins of WDP date back to the 19th century when Christian women of the United States and Canada initiated a variety of cooperative activities in support of women's involvement in mission at home and in other parts of the world that related to various areas. Concern for women and children motivated women in 1861 and thereafter, despite opposition from all-male mission boards, to found numerous women's boards for foreign and home missions whereby they could work directly with and for women and children.

The role of prayer in mission work led to annual days and weeks of prayer. In 1887 Presbyterian women called for a day of

prayer for home missions, and Methodist women called for a week of prayer and self-denial for foreign missions. A Baptist day of prayer for foreign missions began in 1891. In 1895 a day of corporate intercessions for mission was initiated by the Women's Auxiliary of the Anglican Church of Canada. By 1897 the women of six denominations formed a joint committee for a united day of prayer for home missions. In 1912 the Women's Boards of Foreign Missions called for a united day of prayer for foreign missions. Overall, women were organizing interdenominational structures that were effective and cooperative.

After the devastation of the first world war, women renewed efforts for peace and unity and, beginning on 20 February 1920, the first Friday of Lent was established as a joint day of prayer for missions. In the second half of 1926, women of North America distributed the worship service to many countries and partners in mission. The response worldwide was enthusiastic and 4 March 1927 was the first World Day of Prayer.

In 1928 the WDP committee reported: "The circle of prayer has expanded literally around the world. We have learned the great lesson of praying with, rather than for, our sisters of other races and nations, thus enriching our experience and releasing the power which must be ours if we are to accomplish tasks entrusted to us."

There was new growth after the second world war because of women's commitment to reconciliation and ecumenism. In 1969 the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations decided to forgo their worldwide day of prayer in order to encourage maximum participation in WDP. Today, women of Orthodox traditions also participate widely in WDP.

The annual theme for the WDP worship service and the country of its writing are selected at the quadrennial meeting of the WDP International Committee (WDPIC). The WDP committee selected develops a common worship on the theme determined at the international meeting.

Through preparation and participation in the worship service, millions of people learn how their sisters in other countries understand the biblical passages in their context. They listen to their concerns and move to solidarity with them. Thus the richness of the Christian faith grows deeper and

broader in an international, ecumenical expression.

The worldwide growth of the movement called for international involvement in planning and responsibility for WDP. An International Committee was formed in 1968 and has met every four years since.

EILEEN KING

■ H. Hiller, *Ökumene der Frauen, Anfänge und frühe Geschichte der Weltgebetstagsbewegung in den USA, weltweit und in Deutschland*, WDP Committee, Germany ■ WDPIC, annual journal since 1975 ■ WDPIC quadrennial report for 1995.

## WORLD EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP

THE WEF BEGAN to bring together several Evangelical persons and groups after the second world war. A number of European Evangelicals had been linked since 1846 by the World's Evangelical Alliance,\* but the alliance was limited to a loose affiliation of regional fellowships, based on membership of individuals rather than ecclesial units.

US Evangelicals formed the National Association of Evangelicals in 1943. It was their response to the overseas national churches which had resulted from US conservative evangelical missions and that now sought support in an international network of like-minded Christians.

In August 1951, in response to a call for an international convention of Evangelicals in the Netherlands, 91 participants from 21 countries formed the World Evangelical Fellowship. The WEF statement of faith echoes the Evangelical Alliance statement of 1846, except for the addition of "infallible" in the article on the divinely inspired scripture and a reference to Christ's "personal return in power and glory". In objection to WEF use of "infallible", in 1952 the European Evangelical Alliance was organized. Only in 1968 did the European Evangelical community join the WEF.

From the outset the WEF took a low profile; it encouraged Evangelicals of other nations without pressing for their membership. By the mid-1970s, when the WEF began to enjoy the service of full-time general directors, there were about 50 member nations. As of 2000 the WEF counted 108 national and regional Evangelical fellowships,

70% of them from the second and third worlds. Several internationally constituted commissions spearhead WEF programmes. Consultations and general assemblies and various publications give voice to the concerns of the WEF's worldwide constituencies. In 1992, the WEF appointed as its executive secretary Jun Vencer of the Philippines, the first from the non-Western world.

Two persistent issues on the WEF agenda – which also occupied the founders of the Evangelical Alliance – are theological liberalism and unreformed Catholicism. Contacts in the late 1970s by WEF leaders with Roman Catholic representatives were not well received by some WEF members (see *Evangelical-RC relations*). In some parts of the world, Evangelicals judge that Roman Catholicism has been little affected by the reforms of Vatican II or by the biblical/charismatic renewal movement. The breach created was healed only by the 1986 adoption of a WEF position paper which was very critical of traditional Catholicism.

A 1989 consultation on evangelism\* involved representatives of the WEF, the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization,\* and the WCC. The WEF took issue with an Ecumenical Press Service report that "what unites us is greater than what divides us". Divergent stances on the uniqueness\* and finality of Jesus Christ\* for salvation,\* on the role of interfaith dialogue,\* and on the doctrine of inspiration\* continue to be sources of tension between the WEF and the WCC. Nevertheless, in 1995 (Venice) and 1998 (Jerusalem), a small group of WEF and Catholic theologians and biblical scholars met at least to clarify their communalities, differences and open questions.

Noting the loss of focus on world evangelization because of the integration of the International Missionary Council\* in the WCC, the WEF's sixth general assembly (1974) created a missions commission. The commission seeks to promote greater world mission, particularly by supporting emerging third-world missions, and to facilitate cooperation between mission agencies and associations.

The eleventh general assembly in May 2001 voted to change the name of the WEF to World Evangelical Alliance from January 2002, "to reflect Evangelicals' growing de-

sire to be more pro-active, inclusive and engaged with the world around them”.

See also **evangelical missions, Evangelicals**.

ROBERT T. COOTE

## WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL

IN 1881 SOME 400 delegates from 30 Methodist bodies, primarily British and North American but including some mission-related churches, attended the first ecumenical Methodist conference in London. The conference met every ten years. In 1951 the eighth conference strongly supported the new WCC (1948) and changed its name to World Methodist Council (WMC), “in view of the wider use of ‘ecumenical’ in connection with the WCC”. The WMC would meet every five years.

The WMC is now (2001) a worldwide association of 79 member churches; 9 are united churches with some roots in the Wesleyan tradition. It embraces 38 million full members (i.e. baptized, confirmed and in good standing) among a total Methodist community of about 75 million (including young children and adult sympathizers).

The policy-making body is a 500-member council of persons appointed by member churches. The WMC has no legislative authority over the churches but tries to serve them and harmonize their witness and activities. It surveys programmes, transacts business, and convenes the quinquennial world Methodist conference, an inspirational gathering which draws thousands of people from 130 countries; the 18th conference was held in Brighton, England, in 2001.

The WMC urges member churches to be involved in union negotiations and in councils of churches at every level. It is almost always represented at WCC meetings, and its general secretary participates in annual conferences of secretaries of Christian World Communions.\* The WMC co-sponsors international bilateral dialogues: Methodist-Roman Catholic (1967),\* Methodist-Reformed (1985),\* Lutheran-Methodist (1977)\* and Anglican-Methodist (1992).\* In 1995 a Methodist-Orthodox joint preparatory commission recommended that an international dialogue be inaugurated, and explorations are continuing.

The general secretariat is at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, USA, and a secretary is based at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva. WMC publications include conference and council proceedings, a handbook of information, reports of bilateral dialogues, and its international *World Parish*.

RALPH C. YOUNG

■ *WMC Handbook of Information 2002-2006*, Lake Junaluska NC, WMC, 2002.

## WORLD STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION

THE WSCF, A FEDERATION of national student Christian movements (SCMs) active in over 60 countries on all six continents, celebrated its centennial in 1995. At the time of its founding it was a primary pioneer of the modern missionary and ecumenical movement. It encouraged and inspired students in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to engage actively in the work of spreading the gospel by committed discipleship. It provided a forum for students to meet and work closely with those of other national and denominational backgrounds. Its ecumenical vision and commitment emphasized the importance of mutual communication, cooperation and challenge with the mainline institutional churches. The WSCF worked for unity in the church and in the world.

The WSCF was founded in 1895 at Vadstena, Sweden, by students and student leaders representing SCMs from ten North American and European countries. They were brought together by John R. Mott, a leader in the US Young Men's Christian Associations. He recognized in the universities “strategic points” for Christian world mission. For the next 25 years Mott, with other pioneers such as Karl Fries from Sweden and Ruth Rouse from Great Britain, devoted his energies, first as general secretary (1895-1920) of the federation and then as its chair (1920-28), to the building up of student Christian movements in all parts of the world and to making the WSCF into a unifying and supporting force for these movements.

The history of the federation has several major periods. The founding period, up to the outbreak of the war in 1914, was

marked by a tremendous growth of Christian student groups. Upon leaving the founders' meeting in 1895, Mott embarked on a world tour through southern Europe, the Middle East and Asia. His journey led to the establishment of student Christian groups in many of the places he visited, and within a few years he could report the existence of Christian groups in over 900 universities, colleges and other student centres. By 1913 this number had grown to more than 2000 groups with over 150,000 members around the world.

The outbreak of the war in 1914, however, introduced a period of crisis and test for this worldwide fellowship. The movements, especially in Europe, did not escape the strong nationalism that developed in their respective countries. Tensions became apparent during the first post-war general committee meeting in 1920, where some delegates raised the question, "Do we believe in the same Christ?" Two years later in Peking the general committee failed for the first time to reach a consensus on a major topic: the Christian attitude towards war.

During the period 1929-39 intense theological work was carried on under the leadership of Francis P. Miller (chair), W.A. Visser 't Hooft (general secretary), Suzanne de Diétrich and Pierre Maury. Some of the issues which determined the federation's programmes for the succeeding decades were the international and the ecumenical task of the federation, the federation and the church, the role of the Bible, of Bible study and of worship, and the understanding of mission and evangelism.

In the period following the second world war up to the late 1960s, the emphasis was placed on the task of Christians in the academic community and on their political responsibility. In addition, an extensive programme of study and teaching – the largest project ever undertaken by the federation – focused on "The Life and Mission of the Church".

A new period was ushered in in 1968 when the general committee decided on a major structural change – the WSCF was to be divided into six regions: Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and North America, with responsibility for programmes in their respective regions

and power to nominate representatives to the executive committee. The head office in Geneva became the inter-regional office. This decentralization reflected the new concern for self-determination and for relevance to the political and social contexts (e.g. nation-building in Asia, radical democracy in Europe, revolutionary change in Latin America).

On the international level, the federation elaborated an understanding of the Christian witness within the struggle for liberation. Of special concern was the increase in women's leadership within the federation. In 1986 the general secretariat was restructured to include two co-secretaries general (one woman and one man). Women's programmes were established in most regions, and since 1981 women's pre-assemblies precede general assemblies. The inter-regional office is housed within the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva. Regional offices are based in Nairobi, Hong Kong, Amsterdam, Quito and Beirut (the North American regional structure is currently in abeyance).

The following major aspects of this centennial history can be identified:

*Mission.* The federation was born as students responded to the challenge to participate in the "evangelization of the world in this generation". Along with the Student Volunteer Movement for Christian Mission, it was the main training ground for leaders in the missionary movement. When Mott organized the first world missionary conference in Edinburgh (1910) which led to the formation of the International Missionary Council,\* many of the persons he called upon came from the ranks of the WSCF.

*Ecumenicity.* From its inception the federation has called students to mission and unity and to testify to their oneness in Christ across all differences of confession, nationality, race and gender. In this respect the history of the modern ecumenical movement up to the formation of the World Council of Churches (1948) is almost synonymous with that of the WSCF, and many of the leaders in the early WCC had developed their ecumenical understanding and commitment in the federation. One of the early achievements, due especially to the pioneering work of Ruth Rouse, was the establishment of Orthodox student groups in Eastern Europe

and their integration into the life of the federation. Not everyone accepted this commitment to openness. Already in 1910 a group of students in Great Britain broke away from the SCM and formed the Inter-Varsity Fellowship, and in 1947 the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students\* was formed.

*The role of the Bible and of Bible study.* From the very beginning, Bible study has occupied a central place in the activities of the SCMs and the federation. In the early days it was virtually the only activity. But the views on the Bible and the ways to study it were constantly debated. In the 1930s Bible study became a major preoccupation under the influence of the theology developed by Karl Barth. Suzanne de Diétrich gave major leadership in this area, and her books on the Bible were widely used during the years after the second world war both in the movements and in the churches. The prominence of Bible study in the meetings of the WCC and other ecumenical gatherings owes much to de Diétrich's work. During the 1970s, Bible study was influenced by the emphasis on contextualization. Biblical texts were examined to determine the social and cultural context of their origin, as well as the contemporary context in which they were to be interpreted.

*Mutual assistance.* The first world war had decimated the student population in Europe, and many of the survivors were homeless and without any means. In 1920 the WSCF founded European Student Relief. During four years students from 42 nations provided over \$500,000 for assistance to fellow students in 19 countries. The assistance programme has continued under various names (International Student Service, World University Service) into the 21st century and has served as an expression of solidarity between movements. It also promoted cooperation with other international student movements both religious and secular. Today the Mutual Assistance Programme is principally designed for movement building.

*Education.* Universities and other institutes of higher education have always been the primary locus of the student Christian movements. In the late 1920s and the 1930s, the university was perceived to be in crisis because of the lack of spiritual orientation

among both teachers and students, as well as its captivity to economic and ideological forces. The federation, through its publications, provided analysis of the situation in the universities and guidance for confronting the ideological currents of fascism, national socialism and communism. After the second world war, the "university question" was a top programme priority for many years. Extensive work developed among university teachers, leading in the 1960s to a comprehensive understanding of "Christian presence in the academic world". In the same period, the WSCF started work in secondary schools. The student protests in 1968 in favour of democratization and participation initially provided the ground for a radical critique of the university. The reforms introduced as a result of the protests were reversed in the 1980s as the student population turned increasingly conservative, preoccupied with jobs and security, unwilling to be challenged by questions about the basic purpose of the academic enterprise.

*Faith and politics.* Issues of social, racial and economic justice were raised at an early stage in the meetings of the WSCF, although the federation as a whole avoided taking positions on concrete issues out of concern that controversy might endanger the fellowship. Only after 1945 did the federation start to take more explicit stands on issues of justice and peace. In the years 1960-68 considerable activity was developed by the political commission of the WSCF in order to help students to discover new forms of political action. Several movements were heavily involved with radical political groups; Christian students in Brazil, South Korea, Philippines, El Salvador and Sri Lanka suffered arrest, imprisonment and sometimes death. In the 1980s many students, especially in the third world, had to live under militarized and repressive regimes and were disillusioned when hopes for justice faded. Providing solidarity and mobilizing support was therefore one of the key challenges facing the WSCF worldwide.

*The WSCF as a world community.* When it started, the WSCF was the only intentionally international student organization. By the end of the 1920s the breadth of its membership was still unique in that it included, besides North America and Western Europe,

movements in Eastern Europe and throughout Asia-Pacific (groups from Latin America and Africa joined after the second world war). Already in 1907 a major meeting was held in Tokyo, and a conference and general committee meeting was held in Peking in 1922 with 500 Chinese participants besides the international participation. From 1922 onwards, for the next 20 years, the staff included a Chinese member, T.Z. Koo, the organizer of the Peking meeting.

Because of this international outlook the federation notably preserved an independent perspective during the cold-war period, following the second world war until the late 1980s, and maintained contacts across ideological lines. The division into regions in the 1970s provided a wider base. More movements joined, but this development did not enhance the international outlook. On the contrary, as a result of the emphasis on regional identity, most discussions in the meetings of the WSCF became exchanges between regional viewpoints rather than attempts to elaborate a worldwide perspective. As the federation enters the second century of its history, the transcending of regionalism in favour of a truly ecumenical international community constitutes one of its major tasks.

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## WORLD VISION INTERNATIONAL

WV IS AN INTERNATIONAL Christian relief and development organization working with the poor to promote human transformation, seek justice, and bear witness to the message

of the gospel. Established in 1950 to care for Asian orphans, WV has grown to embrace the larger issues of emergency relief, community development and advocacy for the poor in its mission to help children and their families build sustainable futures. With the assistance of WV, local communities define and address their needs for food, shelter, health care and education, as well as spiritual and other human needs. This holistic, integrated approach, called an "area development programme", has become the standard for WV's work. The objective is to build strong, healthy communities that can sustain themselves. WV also responds to humanitarian emergencies caused by natural disaster or war.

In the half century since its founding by Robert Pierce, an American evangelist, WV has grown into one of the world's largest Christian relief and development organizations. In 2000, WV raised \$886 million in cash and goods from private and public donors for programmes in 89 countries. Through these programmes, approximately 11,500 staff members – 96 percent of them based in their own nations – assisted some 75 million people. Whenever possible, WV joins with communities, churches, governments, and other aid agencies to deliver services more effectively and efficiently.

WV focuses on children because it considers them the best measure of the social health of a community and the greatest hope for tomorrow. Its work is made possible through the contributions of more than 1.2 million child sponsors, the gifts of other private donors, the help of thousands of volunteers and staff, and support from businesses, churches, institutions, and government and international agencies. About half of WV's operations are funded through child sponsorship, in which private donors pledge a certain amount each month to support children in specific community projects.

WV functions as a partnership of 85 interdependent national entities. Each has its own board or advisory council to oversee its operations. A common mission statement and shared core values bind the partnership. A 24-member international board, with representatives from 19 nations, governs the partnership. The international board, which meets twice a year, appoints the partner-

ship's senior officers, approves strategic plans and budgets, and determines international policy. National boards govern at the national level. An international council, comprising international board members and national board delegates representing all national offices, meets every three years to discuss partnership issues.

The World Vision partnership offices, located in Geneva, Bangkok, Nairobi, Vienna, Los Angeles and San José, Costa Rica, coordinate the strategic and global operations of the organization and represent WV in the international arena. WV has consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council, UNICEF, the UN High Commission on Refugees, the World Health Organization, and the International Labour Organization. It is a member of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies and, since 1997, has been recognized by the World Council of Churches as an international ecumenical organization. WV is also a member of international coalitions and committees dealing with issues such as landmines, child rights, status of women, child soldiers and the control of small arms.

World Vision believes that God, in the person of Jesus Christ, offers hope of renewal, restoration and reconciliation. It partners with all Christian churches in fulfilling the mission of Christ to serve the poor and suffering while witnessing to the good news of the gospel. At the same time, WV is respectful of other faiths. It does not engage in proselytism or religious coercion. Its programmes and services are available to all those in need regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, nationality or religion.

DEAN R. HIRSCH

## WORLD YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

THE YWCA WAS A Christian response in the mid-19th century to the radically altered social conditions caused by the industrial revolution, especially the massive shifts of rural populations to cities and the exploitation of the poor and working-class women, men and children. The YWCA of Great Britain attributes its origins to two sources: the prayer unions of Emma Roberts, which reg-

ularly gathered groups of young women for prayer and support; and the network of homes and institutions under the patronage of Lady Kinnaird. The first YWCA residence for young Christian working women was established in London in 1855.

The movement spread rapidly. For example, by 1858 in the USA YWCA residences had been established to provide companionship, Bible study and discussion. In 1894 there were similar movements in France, Germany, Norway, Switzerland and Sweden. In 1898 the World YWCA adopted as a basis of affiliation one similar to the 1855 Paris basis of the YMCA:\* "to unite those young women who regard Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour according to the holy scriptures... and desire to associate their efforts for the extension of God's kingdom among all young women by such means as are in accordance with the word of God". Headquartered in London, it held its first world conference in 1898, with 326 delegates attending.

Inspired by the missionary fervour of the time, the YWCA recruited missionaries for the churches and sent many YWCA leaders to develop work in Asia, Africa, South America and Eastern Europe. Many YWCA leaders came out of the Student Christian movement (see **World Student Christian Federation**), which was also internationally oriented.

Although the World YWCA was not exclusively Protestant, in many countries it was thought to be so. Leadership in predominantly Eastern Orthodox countries (Russia, Bulgaria etc.) or in Roman Catholic environments (Latin America, Philippines) or where Protestants were a small minority of the Christians (Middle East) urged the YWCA to state clearly its position for its work with non-Protestant Christians. In 1928 the World Association faced a serious division by adopting an ecumenical policy which admitted Roman Catholics to membership; in response, the YWCAs of Finland and South Africa withdrew from the World YWCA. That same year Pope Pius XI's *Mortalium Animos* warned Roman Catholics against participation in "pan-Christian" activities, and YWCA Catholic leaders thereafter found themselves often in conflict with their church authorities (see **RCC and pre-Vatican II ecumenism**).

Especially after the first world war, YWCA programmes developed a new emphasis on social action, e.g. in urging national associations to support the standards for working women that had been adopted by the International Labour Conference.

In 1930, following discussions with the World Alliance of YMCAs and the World Student Christian Federation, the World YWCA moved its headquarters to Geneva. This location re-inforced its image as an international, interconfessional movement. In 1939 a world conference on Christian youth, co-organized by the World Alliance of YMCAs, the WSCF, the World YWCA and the churches, brought together 1500 young people from 70 countries, many of whom became leaders in the ecumenical movement after the second world war.

At the 1955 YWCA world council meeting in Beirut, the constitution was revised. A main function of the World YWCA was declared to be bringing together "members of different Christian traditions into a worldwide fellowship through which they may grow as Christians, participating in the life and worship of their church and expressing their faith by word and deed". A preamble was added which stated that "unity among Christians is the will of God" and expressed the association's desire "as a lay movement to make a contribution towards that unity".

Working in 101 countries, the World YWCA has a federated structure of 85 national affiliates which in turn coordinate thousands of local branches or associations. It has consultative status with the United Nations and its specialized agencies and co-operates with many ecumenical and non-governmental organizations.

World YWCA-sponsored programmes have helped women obtain the skills to generate much-needed income, to improve the health and nutrition of their families, and to help build a solid base for their children's educational growth. Generations of women have been trained by YWCA programmes to gain skills and confidence needed to assume leadership roles within their communities, and many have emerged as prominent leaders in their countries in the struggle for women's rights, peace, and development with justice for all.

See also **women in church and society.**

ELAINE HESSE STEEL and  
KATHERINE STRONG

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## WORLD'S EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

IN AUGUST 1846, SOME 800 evangelicals from Britain, Europe and North America, representing a variety of Protestant traditions, met in London to form the Evangelical Alliance. (The British branch was incorporated decades later as the World's Evangelical Alliance.) Based on membership of individuals rather than of churches, the Evangelical Alliance was "the first society formed with a definite view to Christian unity" (Stephen Neill). The founders identified a core of evangelical belief which includes: the inspiration and authority of scripture, the unity and Triune nature of the godhead, the fall-ness of human nature, the incarnation and atonement of Jesus Christ, justification by faith alone, and resurrection and final judgment.

When the American delegates in 1846 balked at barring slave-holders from membership, the Evangelical Alliance's founders dropped the quest for an international organization and settled for loosely affiliated national fellowships. Units quickly formed in England, Canada, India, Sweden and Turkey. Later Spain, Portugal and the USA were added.

The alliance strongly encouraged cooperative missionary work and facilitated "comity" and "non-interference" agreements among mission groups. The Evangelical Alliance annual week of prayer became, at the urging of missionaries in India, the Universal Week of Prayer. The periodical *Evangelical Christendom* articulated Evangelical Alliance concerns for more than a century, notably world mission and solidarity with Christians who were suffering persecution. The alliance sponsored several mis-

sionary conferences, which were precursors to the 1910 world conference in Edinburgh.

In the USA, due to tensions over the social gospel, theological liberalism, and the drive towards institutional unity (realized in the Federal Council of Churches in 1908), the US alliance movement ceased to function after 1900. The British and several European alliances have continued. When evangelical forces began to coalesce in the USA in the 1940s, the historic alliance network was ready to give birth to the World Evangelical Fellowship.\*

ROBERT T. COOTE

## WORSHIP IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

THE SUBJECT OF worship has been on the agenda of the ecumenical movement since its beginnings, although it did not really come to the fore until the concurrently growing liturgical movement\* had also gained strength among the divided churches. Both movements show a near-parallel development; Vatican II\* recognized them respectively as “movements of the Holy Spirit through his church” and as “the work of grace of the Holy Spirit”.

### WAYS OF WORSHIP

References to worship in the report of the first world conference on Faith and Order\* at Lausanne in 1927 are more or less incidental. The report of the second world conference on F&O (Edinburgh 1937), however, suggested a study of patterns of worship characteristic of different churches. A theological commission on worship began to study the relevance of worship for the divided churches. Not until 1951 did the commission publish its report, together with selected papers, as *Ways of Worship*. The material provided the basis for discussion at the third world conference on F&O (Lund 1952).

The work of the theological commission on worship is the first definite indication of the impact of the liturgical movement on the ecumenical movement. Although in the end this liturgical renewal would contribute significantly to the striving towards unity, early WCC documents tend to see worship as the focal point of existing divisions. This per-

spective is probably due to the widely differing liturgical traditions then represented by the member churches.

In Lund ecumenical reflections on worship concentrated on the fact that in worship “disunity becomes explicit and the sense of separation most acute”. The conference maintained: “In worship we meet the problem, nay, rather the sin of the disunion of the church in its sharpest form.” This judgment is not surprising in light of the commission’s primarily descriptive and comparative work. Since worship was explicitly on the agenda of an ecumenical discussion for the first time, a basic overview of the different patterns of worship in the churches was necessary. Part 1 of *Ways of Worship* therefore described and compared “The Elements of Liturgy”, and part 2 dealt slightly more theologically with the “Inner Meaning of Word and Sacrament”. In both sections, members of the different churches outlined the essential features of the worship of their own community. The aim was not so much to attempt a common approach but to describe actual patterns of worship in the churches. Part 3 treated “Liturgy and Devotion”, concentrating on the question of Mariology. (The 1950 promulgation of the Roman Catholic dogma of the Assumption of Mary influenced the agenda here.)

The report of the commission reflected, ecumenically and theologically, on the different contributions. On the one hand, it tried to sketch important distinctions, such as eucharist-centred versus preaching-centred worship, and, on the other hand, to assess the unifying impact of the liturgical movement. The report mentioned especially the growing sense of the corporate aspect of worship, the re-discovery of its sacramental character and the return to primitive patterns of worship.

All in all, *Ways of Worship*, with its basically descriptive and comparative orientation, was a necessary starting point for the ecumenical discussions about the nature of worship. Lund explicitly recognized that the commission’s work “has strengthened the conviction that worship, no less than Faith and Order, is essential to the being of the church”.

Lund 1952 was a first attempt to formulate both the existing agreement and the un-

solved problems regarding the meaning and practice of worship. The formulation of agreement appropriately and convincingly begins with the Trinitarian basis (see *Trinity*) and pneumatological context (see *Holy Spirit*) of worship. "We worship one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Triune God, by whose Spirit all true worship is inspired and unto whom all Christian worship is offered." The agreed statements which follow concern questions that are anthropological (worship involves the whole person), liturgical (a drawing together of the common elements observed in *Ways of Worship*), sacramental (the appreciation of both word and sacrament\*) and ecclesiological (worship always takes place within the communion of saints\*). Also mentioned is a theme that would be stressed repeatedly in subsequent ecumenical documents on worship: "However we view the church's worship, we are unanimous that its setting is the church's mission to the world." The section on unsolved problems takes up more specific questions (e.g. the precise relationship between word and sacrament and the place in worship of saints and the departed).

Lund's recommendations to the churches emphasize unity\* as the aim of all the studies on different patterns of worship. Some recommendations re-appear in later documents, indicating that in the meantime the member churches have not taken them seriously enough.

### THEOLOGICAL APPROACHES: MONTREAL AND UPPSALA

This worship commission, working between Lund and Montreal (1963), consisted of three regional sections: Europe, East Asia and North America. Each had quite different approaches. The European section left behind the method of comparative study and concentrated on the theology of worship in the Bible ("creation and worship", "redemption and worship", "new creation and worship"). This starting point yielded a definitely Christocentric understanding of the nature of worship: "Jesus Christ as the culmination of the mighty saving acts of God forms the living centre of all worship." The biblical approach also drew attention to the genuine variety of types of worship in the New Testament (e.g. sacraments, preaching

of the word, prayers), but they were not systematized or evaluated as different forms over against each other. This variety may suggest the possibility of a unity among the different patterns of worship existing today.

The East Asian section concentrated on understanding worship as a response to God's creative and redemptive activity and on the indigenization of worship – the first time that an Asian report was included in such a theological commission on worship. It soon became clear, especially at the Uppsala assembly (1968), how important the insights and correctives from this Asian perspective were for ecumenical reflection on worship.

The North American section had a dual focus: the matrix of worship in the scriptures and the matrix of worship in contemporary North American churches. The group came to a parallel conclusion to that of the European section: a purely descriptive and comparative approach to the question of worship does not sufficiently advance the unity of the church; liturgical questions must be seen within the wider context of biblical and systematic issues.

The fourth F&O world conference (Montreal 1963) reacted to the above work of the theological commission on worship. Its report, *Worship and the Oneness of Christ's Church*, shifted from the differing patterns of worship to a firm commitment to unity in and through worship. This conclusion was a shift in the evaluation of the place of worship itself. While Lund had maintained that worship is no less essential to the church's life than faith and order, Montreal called worship "the central and determinative act of the church's life" and pressed for the study of worship as one of the main tasks facing the ecumenical dialogue. Some fundamental agreements are enumerated. As in Lund, the Trinitarian perspective is the starting point of the interpretation of the nature of worship: "Christian worship is... a service to God the Father by men [and women] redeemed by his Son, who are continually finding new life in the power of the Holy Spirit." The next point of agreement is the ecclesiological aspect, not the anthropological one as in Lund: "Worship... is an act formative of Christian community..., an act... which represents the one, catholic

church.” This statement clearly recognized the fundamental ecclesiological relevance of worship. The importance given here to worship as a fundamental act of the being of the church\* exceeds anything said about worship before.

Other aspects of worship often stressed are the interdependence of public liturgy and private devotion, the links of worship with creation\* and the new creation, the Christocentric groundings of baptism\* and the eucharist,\* and the eschatological perspective of worship (see *eschatology*). Special sections of the report were devoted to worship, mission and indigenization, and Christian worship in the world today. The last point foreshadows the central concern of subsequent ecumenical debates on worship. The focus shifts from examining different patterns of worship in the churches and its underlying essence and unity to considering the crisis of worship in the modern world, with “authenticity” as the new key word. The mandate from Montreal, however, still concentrated on the newly discovered importance of worship in the ecumenical dialogue and the need for “a fresh approach... to the relation between theology and worship, so that,... as a definite step beyond current practice, our entire theological work may be informed by a fresh sensitivity to the demands and problems of Christian worship”. It soon became obvious that this vital concern was not maintained. The whole discussion narrowed down to specific problems of worship, losing sight of the importance of worship for theological work as a whole.

### THE CRISIS OF WORSHIP TODAY

After Montreal, the subject of worship was important enough to constitute one of the six sections at the WCC's fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968). Of the Uppsala report on worship, one of its contributors has written: “I do not see how one could fail to be disappointed on reading the report” – especially after Montreal, one might add. (The challenge to see positively the fact of a WCC assembly officially treating worship, over against the “respectable obscurity” of F&O, does not seem convincing in the light of how little was achieved.) Several factors were responsible for this disappointment. Because of the general theme of the Uppsala assem-

bly, “Behold, I Make All Things New”, the working group for the section on worship had to focus on the current theological crisis in the life of the church, i.e. the problems connected with the secularization\* debate.

The section's original title was “The Worship of God in a Secular Age”. This wording was criticized both by the churches in countries where secularization was not the main problem facing the churches and their worship and by the Orthodox churches, who feared that worship was being surrendered to secularization. In the end, a very limited agreed statement was published as a “starting point”. It bears few traces of the former agreed statements concerning the Trinitarian and ecclesiological essence of worship and concentrates instead on the crisis of worship and the positive and negative possibilities of secularization. Lengthy justifications of worship are repudiated: “Worship needs no more justification than does love.” Recommendations to the churches are included under the cautious title “Helping People to Worship”, but they do not go beyond anything already said before. Despite its overall disappointing character, one positive thing seems worth pointing out: behind the emphasis on the need for authentic worship in a secular age lies the important conviction of the fundamental link between liturgy and life, a subject to be stressed in most subsequent documents on worship.

A 1969 F&O consultation in Geneva took up the subject of worship again, very much within the perspectives set by the 1968 assembly. Although its title was “Worship in a Secular Age”, the report dropped the reference to secularization, since this term did not seem universally applicable. The report was simply called *Worship Today*, a fitting characterization of the content if the stress is put on the word “today”. The consultation agreed to begin with an analysis of the present situation and then to face the question whether authentic worship was still possible under the analyzed circumstances. The answers were as varied as the analyses. Equally divergent opinions became apparent in facing liturgical reforms;\* merely changed forms of worship cannot resolve the crisis of worship.

The Uppsala report on worship and *Worship Today* constitute a significant shift

from the fairly continuous line of development evident in the earlier ecumenical documents on worship. One cannot deny that the two reports faced very real (and by no means solved) problems, but one may ask whether they would not have gained – especially as far as their lasting interest is concerned – from greater continuity with former ecumenical thinking on worship.

After these reports of the late 1960s, the ecumenical movement had difficulties in picking up the lines and expressing itself on worship again for almost three decades.

But the fifth F&O conference at Santiago de Compostela (1993) urged renewed attention to the inter-relation between worship and the search for unity. A F&O consultation at Ditchingham, England, in 1994 was the response. Called “Towards Koinonia in Worship”, the consultation and its report put worship firmly on the agenda of ecumenical reflection again. Ditchingham focused on four central points: the notion of a basic shared *ordo* (i.e. ordering of the fundamental elements of Christian worship), inculturation as a powerful force of local unity, ways of worship which already prove to be loci of unity, and worship as an intrinsic and essential dimension of the theological work of F&O. With this focus, Ditchingham managed to bridge the gap to the prior ecumenical reflection on worship.

*Liturgical reforms.* Up until 1994, ecumenical reflection on worship had been overtaken by the ecumenical convergence in worship patterns, which has taken place largely as a result of thoroughgoing liturgical reforms among the divided churches. One of the most remarkable liturgical reforms is certainly that within the Roman Catholic Church. Even if its liturgical renewal was not initiated as an ecumenical enterprise, the ecumenical ramifications were quickly perceived as considerable. The uniformity, rubricism and centralization which characterized Roman Catholic worship after the liturgical reforms of the council of Trent\* set it apart from the worship patterns of many other Christian communities. But the Second Vatican Council reforms returned to earlier (and common!) liturgical patterns. The change in the liturgical language from Latin to the vernacular, the

clearer structure of the liturgical rites, the more prominent place given to the scriptures and the sermon, the emphasis on an active participation of the laity, the eucharistic celebrations facing the people, the openness to liturgical inculturation (see **culture**) – all these characteristics of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy and the subsequent liturgical reforms brought about a much greater affinity between worship patterns of the divided churches. Protestant liturgical reforms also based largely on a return to common origins have supported this ecumenical convergence. The programmatic beginning of the Constitution on the Liturgy has found a fulfilment: “It is the goal of this most sacred Council... to nurture whatever can contribute to the unity of all who believe in Christ” (1).

*Confessions in dialogue.* In 1972 a survey of bilateral conversations among World Confessional Families was published under the title *Confessions in Dialogue*. It included a section on “Worship and Bilateral Dialogue”. Rather than theoretical reflections or agreed statements, this section is a series of observations, by persons involved in bilateral dialogues,\* about worship as a topic and matrix in these conversations. Most contributors stressed the importance of a worshipping fellowship during the conversations. One very attractive notion is that of the bilateral dialogues as a continuous act of thanksgiving. But one contributor also admitted that there had not been much worship in his group at all.

Theologically, the most interesting contribution is undoubtedly Edmund Schlink’s. He makes clear the methodological significance of worship for ecumenical conversations. He argues that dogmatic and canonical statements of different churches cannot simply be compared in order to reach agreement. Instead, they may have to be translated back into the elementary functions of church life and worship, where they have their true source and meaning. Schlink’s suggestion, if taken seriously, would have important consequences for the basis and form of any emerging consensus\* among the churches. For good reason, however, in the context of these important reflections on worship and ecumenical dialogue, the following sentence also occurs: “The centrality

of worship in Christian life and consequently also in the search for unity is an inalienable ecumenical conviction – though perhaps honoured more with the lips than in acts.” *Confessions in Dialogue* confirms this statement in both directions.

“*The Worship of the Congregation*”. In 1978 the WCC Sub-unit on Renewal and Congregational Life held a workshop in Crete on “The Worship of the Congregation”. Its report in a way reunites the threads of earlier WCC documents on worship and the problems and challenges faced during the debates on secularization. Although there is no affirmation of the Trinitarian perspective of worship, its Christocentric, pneumatological, ecclesiological and eschatological aspects are clearly stated. Important is the repeated emphasis on the connection between liturgy and life, and a definition which sees worship as something larger than what takes place in church: “The new temple is the Body of Christ, and wherever one encounters another in the power of the Spirit of the risen Christ, there true worship takes place.” The report further deals with questions of faithfulness and creativity, worship and culture (with a positive, anthropologically justified emphasis on symbols) and worship and social engagement. It is interesting to note that the report speaks not only of the challenges which today’s world implies for worship but also of the “radical challenges” brought by worship to today’s world – clearly an important re-adjustment after the one-sided focus of the secularization debate.

*The Lima liturgy*.<sup>\*</sup> The eucharistic liturgy prepared for the plenary session of the F&O commission meeting in Lima in 1982 and its subsequent (and unexpected) enthusiastic reception have indicated a deep-felt need for a liturgical expression paralleling any emerging doctrinal agreement, even if since then the need to go “beyond Lima” has been emphasized (see Best and Heller, *Eucharistic Worship*). In any case, the task which some people seem to have considered solved with the eucharistic text of Lima is still before us: to give the emerging doctrinal agreement liturgical expression(s) (see *lex orandi, lex credendi*).

The celebration of the Lima liturgy was one of the high points of both the sixth as-

sembly of the WCC in Vancouver (1983) and the seventh assembly in Canberra (1991). Perhaps in these assemblies, reflection on worship was overtaken by the actual experience of worship by the participants. One feature worth particular mention, characteristic of thinking about and acting in worship since the fifth assembly in Nairobi in 1975, is the greater appreciation and use of indigenous material in the liturgy (such as hymns,<sup>\*</sup> lyrics, vestments, gestures, art), and of women-identified prayers, songs and other liturgical texts. There is a growing awareness not only of the liturgical richness of other denominational traditions but also of other cultural-linguistic communities. Although the question of liturgical indigenization has been part of the ecumenical reflections on worship ever since Montreal, it is now being faced with heightened enthusiasm and urgency.

## CONCLUSION

Montreal (1963) and the consequent decision to put the subject of worship on the agenda for the Uppsala assembly of the WCC (1968) were the peak points of ecumenical interest in the question of the nature of worship. Afterwards, the crisis of worship seemed more fascinating and threatening than did the privilege of worship. Then, in the 1970s and 1980s, discussion of the nature of worship was swallowed up by the all-absorbing work on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*.<sup>\*</sup>

The subject of worship is, however, re-asserting itself as part of the ecumenical agenda, as the Ditchingham consultation proves. Fortunately, the ecumenical movement does not have to start over from the beginning. Fundamental and important ground has already been covered by the WCC documents, and some basic agreements have been reached, which are foundations to be built upon. A worthwhile aim to strive for seems to be the statement made by one of the contributors to *Confessions in Dialogue*: “Doxology is at the beginning and at the end of all striving for unity. It also accompanies it at every stage of the way.”

See also *liturgical texts, common; liturgy; prayer in the ecumenical movement; spirituality in the ecumenical movement*.

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# Y

## YOUTH

THE PRESENCE of young people in the history of the ecumenical movement is apparent in such institutions as the Young Men's Christian Associations\* (YMCA), the Young Women's Christian Association\* (YWCA), the World Student Christian Federation\* (WSCF), the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches,\* the Life and Work\* movement and youth activities of various confessional bodies. Less visible has been the participation of youth in the initiation and development of the ecumenical movement at various levels of church life. Cross-denominational relationships and common witness started in many communities, towns and nations through encounters of young people in the churches for Bible study, discussion, entertainment or sports.

“Youth” has a different meaning in different cultures. For example, in the USA youth is often equated with adolescence, and thus describes mainly teenagers, while in many African countries some assert that as long as one is young at heart one can still be described as a youth. Thus, while setting age limits can be arbitrary, there is no way to avoid it. Over the years the ecumenical movement has come to see youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 30 (or in some cases, 35).

At the global level, one can trace the development of youth participation in the ecumenical movement in a number of ways, of which four stand out: (1) through landmark events; (2) through the life and activities of a number of youth ecumenical organizations; (3) through the participation of young peo-

ple in a number of major ecumenical institutions (e.g., the WCC and regional ecumenical bodies); (4) through the engagement of youth in issues that affect the communities in which they live.

### YOUTH ECUMENICAL ORGANIZATIONS

Throughout the history of Christianity, gatherings of young people have been educational events for the church. Young people acting out of their faith convictions have contributed significantly to secular historical changes. These convictions have led them to fight slavery and, later, to support civil rights movements in countries where oppression was practised on the basis of colour and race.

In the 19th century the formation of the YMCA and the YWCA, and later the WSCE, sparked a new dimension in the ecumenical youth movement. At the same time, in evangelical circles young people were gathered in organizations which crossed denominational lines, such as the Scripture Union and national fellowships aligned with the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students.\*

Through the involvement of Orthodox youth in the life and work of the WCC youth programmes, a new organization, *Syndesmos\** – the world federation of Orthodox youth – emerged. Orthodox youth have worked together to impact their communities, and through *Syndesmos* they have collaborated with other youth ecumenical organizations. Youth are also heard and seen participating in confessional bodies such as the World Alliance of Reformed Churches\* (WARC) and the Lutheran World Federation\* (LWF). All these associations have been means through which young people have expressed their resistance to merely acquiescing in the status quo.

### LANDMARK YOUTH EVENTS

The first landmark event specifically for youth in the ecumenical movement was the world conference of Christian youth in Amsterdam in 1939 under the theme “Christus Victor”, aimed at mobilizing mostly European youth as a visibly united Christian community witnessing around the world. The conference was organized by what became known as the World Christian Youth Commission (WCYC).

Soon after the second world war, the visible signs of an emerging WCC included something of what later became its youth department. This emerging movement together with the WCYC organized the second world conference of Christian youth in Oslo in 1947. The focus of this post-war event was reconciliation and solidarity.

Soon after came the first assembly of the WCC in Amsterdam in 1948. In a meeting attended mainly by European middle-aged men, the youth delegation brought a refreshing change: it was more inclusive of women, as well as people from the Southern hemisphere. At the third world conference of Christian youth at Kottayam, Travancore, India, in 1952, a renewed emphasis on regional youth work emerged.

Thereafter, a number of major events took place under the auspices of the WCC in collaboration with youth ecumenical organizations. Following the Evanston assembly in 1954, the integration of youth in the life and mission\* of the church became the theme for WCC youth work. Work camps, voluntary service and world youth projects continued as forms of ecumenical education and service, but concern was expressed that so many young people left the church after confirmation and that youth participating in ecumenical activities often felt out of place in their churches. Already in 1957 the rapid and radical changes in society were cited as partially responsible for this situation. Consultations were held on baptism\* and confirmation,\* holy communion and other Faith and Order concerns, including one which challenged the member churches on their rules of communion discipline and their effect on ecumenical gatherings (see **church discipline, intercommunion**).

Youth participation in the WCC assemblies gradually increased, especially between the fourth in Uppsala (1968) and the eighth in Harare (1998). Assemblies of various confessional and regional bodies show a similar increase. In addition, special youth gatherings have been held immediately prior to the assemblies.

By the early 1980s, young people were showing a clear preference against holding large events unless they were made part of the process and encouraged to respond to the issues of the day. They sought “critical

participation" rather than mere integration into church structures.

In 1993, the ecumenical global gathering of youth and students in Brazil (EGGYS) brought together young people from the networks of the WCC, the regional bodies, the WSCF, the YMCAs, the YWCA, Syndesmos, the Catholic youth organization Young Catholic Students and the youth programmes of the WARC and the LWF, among others. This was the first time Protestant, Orthodox and Catholic youth had all attended such a large gathering.

The strength of the youth movement was evident in the collaborative work of the many youth ecumenical organizations in the process towards EGGYS. Such collaboration was expected to continue in the nations and regions from which the participants came.

### THE ECUMENICAL YOUTH MOVEMENT IN THE REGIONS

Young people have been active ecumenically in their own social contexts and sometimes in their national contexts for a long time, yet this phenomenon has been little documented.

Beginning in the 1950s, the WCC enabled training courses in ecumenical work camps in Africa. In the late 1950s, the emerging All Africa Conference of Churches\* (AACC) highlighted the situation of youth caught between two civilizations (their own and that of their colonizers). The first All Africa Christian youth assembly in 1962 called for church structures and worship to reflect current needs and African styles. Once the AACC was firmly established, it set up a youth commission and for many years concentrated on efforts to further development and to eradicate colonialism and racism. In the 1990s, the youth desk focused on building a culture of peace on the continent, a theme chosen by young people against the backdrop of the many ethnic and political conflicts in which they have been both victims and used as perpetrators. The continental youth gatherings in Africa – for example, Douala (1984) and Kinshasa (1989) – have largely been collaborative efforts between the AACC, the WSCF and other ecumenical bodies.

Asian youth have been eager to discuss the tasks confronting them as Christians in

their nations. The East Asia Christian Conference appointed a youth secretary in 1961 to succeed the World Council of Christian Education (WCCE) Asia youth secretary; publications, ecumenical work camps and training institutes helped build up a regional movement and special attention has been given in recent years to the needs of rural youth. The first Asian Christian youth assembly in the Philippines (1965) introduced a new generation of leadership to the ecumenical movement. The 1984 Asian youth assembly was sponsored by the Christian Conference of Asia\* (CCA), the WSCF and the International Movement of Catholic Students. The CCA became the first regional ecumenical body to make available the position of youth president.

Latin Americans who attended the Amsterdam conference in 1939 formed the Union of Latin American Evangelical Youth (ULAJE), which held regional conferences beginning in 1941 and ran work camps and training courses as part of its programme. An ecumenical team of youth leaders visited 13 countries in 1956-57. As ecumenical relations became more open, contacts among the churches and with the WCC became closer; ULAJE became the Union of Latin American Ecumenical Youth, with Roman Catholic participation, in 1970. Its priorities have been community organization for rural and urban youth and participation in the process of people's liberation.

In the Middle East, ecumenical work camps have brought together Orthodox and Protestants. A secretary for youth and student work coordinated programmes for the WCC and WSCF. The youth department of the Middle East Council of Churches has emphasized concern for regional political issues and the identity of youth vis-a-vis their own churches, other Christian communities and nations.

In North America interdenominational youth work began in the 1930s. The activities of the united Christian Youth Movement paralleled those of interdenominational student movements. The North American ecumenical youth assembly (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1961) challenged especially the situation of the churches on that continent. North American initiatives were responsible for the development of world youth projects

and ecumenical work-camp programmes. Ecumenical youth work in the region has depended on the denominations and national councils of churches, since there is no regional structure, and in the 1980s Young Christians for Global Justice was formed as one of the means of filling this void. A 1987 North American consultation of ecumenical groups and denominational youth bodies expressed new commitment to ecumenical co-operation.

In Europe the annual consultations of ecumenical youth leaders begun by the WCC in 1947 led to the formation of the Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe (EYCE) in 1968, which has worked closely with the WCC, the WSCF, the Conference of European Churches\* and other European youth and church organizations, and it serves as a forum for dialogue and encounter. Quadrennial conferences sponsored by the EYCE were significant encounters for youth from churches in Eastern and Western Europe. Since 1960, ecumenical youth have consistently challenged the selfish materialism and consumerism of people in Europe and the leadership of adults. Even during the cold-war period, official representatives from Eastern European churches and from Roman Catholic youth movements were present at EYCE-organized ecumenical gatherings.

Regional youth work started late in the Caribbean and the Pacific, but in both areas the regional conferences of churches are addressing youth concerns. Caribbean emphasis has been on self-reliance and self-development and the struggle against racism and cultural deprivation. The Pacific Conference of Churches is especially concerned about a nuclear-free Pacific and the ambiguities of tourism. A Pacific youth convention was held in January 1980.

### ENGAGEMENT IN ISSUES THAT IMPACT COMMUNITIES

Youth engagement in issues that have an impact on life in their communities had already begun in the 19th century. As one example, the formation of the YMCA and YWCA was largely a response to the social situation in Great Britain in the middle of the century. In addition to catering for spiritual and educational needs, group homes

were established for young Christian workers.

Through various major social upheavals, young people's ecumenical organizations sought to make their actions relevant to the social realities. Thus, by the time the WCC came into being, the young people's gathering in Oslo in 1947 had already expressed serious concern about reconstruction in Europe following the war.

At all levels of activity, young people have constantly demonstrated that engagement in the issues of the day is a part of the ecumenical call. They have challenged both church and secular leaders regarding leadership models that have destroyed rather than enhanced life and community well-being.

The period between the New Delhi and Uppsala assemblies of the WCC (1961-68) was marked by dramatic developments in the ecumenical movement, in society and especially among young people. The emergence of third-world nations and churches, the internationalization of economic-justice issues, the war in Vietnam, the US civil rights movement, the youth and student revolts against accepted value systems, the new relationship of the Roman Catholic church to the ecumenical movement – all had consequences for church youth work. Youth-led movements replaced adult-led organizations; churches had to re-think what they were doing “for” youth.

Some of the issues that have engaged young people in recent years include: challenging church and state to build a more inclusive community in which young and old, women and men, are part of decision making and implementation; the economic crises in which many countries find themselves, with the resultant unemployment; the Jubilee campaign to “drop the debt” of the poorer nations; the military equipment of nations at the expense of attention to health, education and agriculture; and the evils of racism, apartheid and sexism.

While these are issues dealt with by other movements, they have often been raised in a unique and dramatic way by young people. The last push against apartheid\* in South Africa was due to an initiative by young people. The world will long remember the massacre of the innocent children of Soweto whose only crime was to stand for the truth

against the evil of the apartheid system. The ecumenical youth council of Korea has worked alongside student movements in the democratization process since the 1970s. Many have suffered in prison as a result of their stand for justice and a more inclusive Korean community. They have also raised their voices over the division of the Korean peninsula.

Youth have also been at the forefront in raising environmental and economic issues. Young people in various regions have expressed their concern about economic injustice and the environment.

Youth engagement in the ecumenical movement has mostly been through concrete activities, not just empty words. Older generations may experience this involvement as threatening, and they have a tendency to condemn youth without trying to discern the importance of such actions for the whole community. Though certain communities find it difficult to include young people in

authentic ways in all levels of activity, where they have opened the doors to youth participation, they have benefited greatly.

At the beginning of the 21st century, it is clear that ecumenically engaged youth have been an asset to their communities and a strong force for transformation. Where they have been listened to and given space to contribute, both church and society have experienced signs of new life.

SETRI NYOMI

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## ZERNOV, NICOLAS

B. 9 Oct. 1898, Moscow; d. 25 Aug. 1980, Oxford, UK. Greatly influential in analyzing and evaluating the ecumenical relations between East and West Europe, Zernov was an advocate of ecumenism in the Orthodox churches. He was secretary of the Russian Student Christian Movement in exile, 1925-32, and honorary area secretary of the youth commission of the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches\* and the Life and Work\* movement, with the Orthodox countries as his special field, 1934-39. Secretary of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, 1934-47, and lecturer at the school of Slavonic studies in London, 1936-39, he was also professor of Eastern Orthodox culture at the university of Oxford, 1947, and later was associ-

ated with an Orthodox college in Kerala, India, 1953-54.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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## ZULU, ALPHAEUS HAMILTON

B. 29 June 1905, Nqutu, KwaZulu, South Africa; d. 29 Feb. 1988, Ulundi, KwaZulu. Zulu was a president of the WCC, 1968-75, and a member of the executive committee of the Christian Council of South Africa, 1945-58, of the South African Institute of Race



Relations, 1943-84, and of the African National Congress (ANC), 1942-60. He was director of the KwaZulu Development Corporation, 1978-85, and chairman, 1981-85. In 1939 Zulu entered St Peter's Anglican theo-

logical college in Johannesburg and was ordained a priest in 1942. He was appointed assistant curate at St Faith's mission in Durban in 1940, where he stayed for the next 20 years. In 1960 he was consecrated assistant bishop of St John's diocese in the Transkei, and in 1968 he became bishop of the Transkei. His spiritual mentor was Albert Luthuli, with whom he developed a strong fellowship. He refused to condone any form of violence. His decision to break with the ANC in 1975 and to accept office as national chairman of Inkhata ye Nkululeko Yesizwe (arm of the freedom of a nation) and to remain a member of the national council led to much rejection and criticism. He had a profound influence on the life and work of his people and devoted all his energies and talents to promoting a spirit of self-help and self-reliance in all aspects of their life.

ANS J. VAN DER BENT

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# ABBREVIATIONS

In most cases, the full form of an abbreviation is spelled out in each article in which it appears. The following abbreviations are those most widely used in the articles as well as those commonly used in English texts and bibliographies. Some titles in bibliographies have been shortened in order to save space.

AACC	All Africa Conference of Churches
app., apps	appendix(es)
ARCIC	Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission
art., arts	article(s)
b.	born
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BCC	British Council of Churches
c.	<i>circa</i> , about
CBC	church base community
CCA	Christian Conference of Asia
CCC	Caribbean Conference of Churches
CCIA	Commission of the Churches on International Affairs
CCPD	Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development
CEC	Conference of European Churches
CELAM	Latin American bishops' conference
cf.	<i>confer</i> , compare
ch., chs	chapter(s)
CICARWS	Commission of the Churches on Inter-church Aid, Refugee and World Service
CLAI	Latin American Council of Churches
CLS	Christian Literature Society
CMC	Christian Medical Commission
COCU	Consultation on Church Union (USA)
comm.	commentary
comp., comps	compiler(s)
CWCs	Christian World Communions
CWM	Council for World Mission
CWME	Commission on World Mission and Evangelism
d.	died
ed., eds	editor(s), edition(s)
e.g.	<i>exempli gratia</i> , for example
esp.	especially
ET	English translation
et al.	<i>et alii</i> , and others
etc.	<i>et cetera</i> , and so forth
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
F&O	Faith and Order
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GDR	German Democratic Republic

GNP	gross national product
hom.	homily
<i>ibid.</i>	<i>ibidem</i> , in the same place
i.e.	<i>id est</i> , that is
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMC	International Missionary Council
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JPIC	Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation
JWG	Joint Working Group
lit.	literally
L&W	Life and Work
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
LXX	Septuagint
MECC	Middle East Council of Churches
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
n., nn.	note(s)
NCCUSA	National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA
NEB	New English Bible
NGO	non-governmental organization
no., nos	number(s)
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
p., pp.	page(s)
par.	parallel(s)
para., paras	paragraph(s)
PCC	Pacific Conference of Churches
PcPCU	Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity
PCR	Programme to Combat Racism
PhD	doctoral degree
PTE	Programme on Theological Education
RC	Roman Catholic, Roman Catholicism
RCC	Roman Catholic Church
RCL	Renewal and Congregational Life
repr.	reprinted
rev.	revised
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SCM	Student Christian Movement
sec., secs	section(s)
SODEPAX	Committee on Society, Development and Peace
SPCK	Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge
TNCs	transnational corporations
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
univ.	university
UP	University Press
US, USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
v., vv	verse(s)

vol., vols	volume(s)
WARC	World Alliance of Reformed Churches
WCC	World Council of Churches
WCFs	World Confessional Families
WHO	World Health Organization
WMC	World Methodist Council
WSCF	World Student Christian Federation
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Associations
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

**BOOKS AND JOURNALS**

BEM	<i>Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry</i> , Geneva, WCC, 1982 (individual sections referred to as B12, E2, M31 comm., etc.)
Con	<i>Concilium</i> , London, SCM
DS	H. Denzinger, <i>Enchiridion Symbolorum</i> , 37th ed., Freiburg, Herder, 1991
ER	<i>The Ecumenical Review</i> , Geneva, WCC
GinA-I	<i>Growth in Agreement: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level</i> , H. Meyer & L. Vischer eds, Geneva, WCC, 1984
GinA-II	<i>Growth in Agreement II: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level 1982-1998</i> , J. Gros, H. Meyer and W.G. Rusch eds, Geneva, WCC, 2000
HI-I	<i>A History of the Ecumenical Movement. Vol. I, 1517-1948</i> , R. Rouse & S.C. Neill eds, London, SPCK, 1954
HI-II	<i>A History of the Ecumenical Movement. Vol. II, The Ecumenical Advance, 1948-1968</i> , H.E. Fey ed., London, SPCK, 1970
IBMR	<i>International Bulletin of Missionary Research</i> , Ventnor NJ, Overseas Ministry Study Centre
IR	<i>Irenikon: Revue des moines de Chevetogne</i> , Chevetogne, Editions de Chevetogne
IRM	<i>International Review of Mission</i> , Geneva, WCC
IS	<i>Information Service</i> , Vatican City, Roman Catholic Church, Council for the Laity
JES	<i>Journal of Ecumenical Studies</i> , Philadelphia, Temple University
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i> , Oxford, Clarendon
MIS	<i>Missionalia</i> , Pretoria, Southern African Missiological Society
MS	<i>Mid-Stream: An Ecumenical Journal</i> , Indianapolis, Council on Christian Unity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
OC	<i>One in Christ: A Catholic Ecumenical Review</i> , Turvey, UK, Vita et Pax Foundation
ÖR	<i>Ökumenische Rundschau</i> , Frankfurt am Main, Otto Lembeck

**BOOKS OF THE BIBLE**

Gen.	Judg.	1 Chron.	Ps.	Lam.
Ex.	Ruth	2 Chron.	Prov.	Ezek.
Lev.	1 Sam.	Ezra	Eccles.	Dan.
Num.	2 Sam.	Nehemiah	S. of S.	Hos.
Deut.	1 Kings	Esth.	Isa.	Joel
Josh.	2 Kings	Job	Jer.	Amos

Obad.	Nahum	Hag.
Jonah	Hab.	Zech.
Micah	Zeph.	Mal.
Matt.	Eph.	Heb.
Mark	Phil.	James
Luke	Col.	1 Pet.
John	1 Thess.	2 Pet.
Acts	2 Thess.	1 John
Rom.	1 Tim.	2 John
1 Cor.	2 Tim.	John
2 Cor.	Titus	Jude
Gal.	Philemon	Rev.

### STATES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AK	Alaska	MS	Mississippi
AL	Alabama	MT	Montana
AR	Arkansas	NC	North Carolina
AZ	Arizona	ND	North Dakota
CA	California	NE	Nebraska
CO	Colorado	NH	New Hampshire
CT	Connecticut	NJ	New Jersey
DC	District of Columbia	NM	New Mexico
DE	Delaware	NV	Nevada
FL	Florida	NY	New York
GA	Georgia	OH	Ohio
HI	Hawaii	OK	Oklahoma
IA	Iowa	OR	Oregon
ID	Idaho	PA	Pennsylvania
IL	Illinois	RI	Rhode Island
IN	Indiana	SC	South Carolina
KS	Kansas	SD	South Dakota
KY	Kentucky	TN	Tennessee
LA	Louisiana	TX	Texas
MA	Massachusetts	UT	Utah
MD	Maryland	VA	Virginia
ME	Maine	VT	Vermont
MI	Michigan	WA	Washington
MN	Minnesota	WV	West Virginia
MO	Missouri	WY	Wyoming

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Theresia Hainthaler (Roman Catholic) is research worker at the institute for the history of dogma and the councils, the Jesuit Faculty of Philosophy and Theology, Frankfurt, Germany. *Chalcedon*.

Douglas John Hall (United Church of Canada) is professor emeritus of Christian theology of McGill University, Montreal, Canada. *Creation*.

David G. Hallman (United Church of Canada) is programme officer for energy and environment of his church in Toronto, and climate change programme coordinator of the WCC. *Environment/ecology*.

Carlos E. Ham (Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba) is programme executive for evangelism in the Mission and Evangelism team of the WCC. *Caribbean*.

Bryan Hamlin (United Church of Christ) is New England director for MRA-Initiatives of Change. *Moral Rearmament (Initiatives of Change)*.

Béla Harmati (Lutheran Church in Hungary) is bishop of the south province of his church, Hungary. *Civil religion; property*.

Richard Harries (Church of England) is bishop of Oxford, UK, and chairman of the Council of Christians and Jews. *Jewish-Christian dialogue*.

Elizabeth J. Harris (Methodist Church of Great Britain) is secretary for interfaith relations of her church, London, UK. *Buddhist-Christian dialogue*.

Susannah Harris-Wilson (Episcopal Church, USA) is adjunct professor of English and theatre arts at Community College of Philadelphia, PA, USA. *Chakko, Sarah*.

Dorothy Harvey (Presbyterian Church of New Zealand), an ordained minister, has been on the staff of the Christian Conference of Asia and the World Council of Churches. *Participation*.

Josine Hautfenne (Roman Catholic) is secretary general of the International Ecumenical Fellowship, Brussels, Belgium. *International Ecumenical Fellowship*.

†Sione 'Amanaki Havea (Methodist Church in Tonga) was president of his church. *Theology, Pacific*.

William Henn (Roman Catholic) is professor of ecclesiology, ecumenism and theological methodology at Gregorian University, Rome, Italy. *Una sancta*.

Patrick Henry (Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)) is executive director of the Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research, Collegetown, MN, USA. *Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research*.

Alasdair Heron (Reformed Church in North-Western Germany and Bavaria) is professor of Reformed theology at the University of Erlangen, Germany. *Filioque*.

†Frederick Herzog (United Church of Christ) was professor of systematic theology at Duke University, Durham, NC, USA. *Poor; status confessionis*.

Paul G. Hiebert (Mennonite Church) is professor of anthropology and mission and associate dean of academic doctorates at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL, USA. *Anthropology, cultural*.

Henry Hill (Anglican Church of Canada) was a bishop of his church and founder of the scholarship of St Basil the Great for interchange between the Anglican Church of Canada and the Oriental Orthodox churches. *Anglican-Oriental Orthodox dialogue*.

David Hilton (United Methodist Church, USA), a physician and former associate director of the WCC Christian Medical Commission, is international consultant on faith and health. *Healing, health, health care*.

E. Glenn Hinson (Southern Baptist Convention) is professor of spirituality and John Loftis professor of church history at the Baptist Theological Seminary, Richmond, VA, USA. *Church order*.

Dean R. Hirsch (Conservative Congregational Christian Conference (USA)) is international president of World Vision International. *World Vision International*.

Norman A. Hjelm (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) was director of both the department of communications of the Lutheran World Federation, Geneva, Switzerland, and of Faith and Order, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, New York. *Lutheran World Federation*.

Peter Hocken (Roman Catholic) is chaplain to the Roman Catholic bishop of Northampton, UK. *Charismatic movement; Pentecostal-Roman Catholic dialogue; Pentecostals*.

Libertus A. Hoedemaker (Netherlands Reformed Church) is professor emeritus of missiology and Christian ethics of the State University of Groningen, Netherlands. *Church and world; local church*.

David R. Holeton (Anglican Church of Canada) was professor of liturgics at Trinity College, Toronto, Canada. *Chrismation; confirmation*.

Gertruida van Hoogevest (Netherlands Reformed Church) was coordinator of the WCC's refugee service from 1975 to 1986. *Refugees*.

Robert Hotz (Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church) is director of Ostreferat, an independent organization of the Jesuits in Switzerland for information about Russia and Eastern Slavonic States, Zurich. *Sacrament(s)*.

François Houtart (Roman Catholic) is professor emeritus of the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium, and director of the Tricontinental Centre at Louvain la Neuve. *Colonialism*.

Richard L. Van Houten (Christian Reformed Church in North America) is general secretary of the Reformed Ecumenical Council, Grand Rapids, MI, USA. *Reformed Ecumenical Council*.

Anton Houtepen (Roman Catholic) is director of the Interuniversity Institute for Missiological and Ecumenical Research, Utrecht, and professor of ecumenics at the University of Utrecht, Netherlands. *Common confession; faith; reception; teaching authority*.

George R. Hunsberger (Presbyterian Church (USA)) is professor of missiology at Western Theological Seminary, Holland, MI, USA, and coordinator of the Gospel and Our Culture Network in North America. *Gospel and culture*.

Heikki Huttunen (Orthodox Church of Finland), director of the WCC Sub-unit on Youth from 1985 to 1989, is a parish priest of his church in Helsinki, Finland. *Syndesmos*.

C.I. Itty (Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church) was from 1970 to 1979 director of the WCC Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development, and from 1979 to 1986 consultant of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. *Just, participatory and sustainable society.*

Heikki Jääskeläinen (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland) is secretary to the archbishop of Finland. *Europe: Northern – Finland.*

André Jacques (Reformed Church of France) was secretary for migration in the WCC Commission on Inter-church Aid, Refugee and World Service. *Barot, Madeleine; CIMADE; migration.*

Riad Jarjour (National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon) is general secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches. *Middle East Council of Churches.*

Willie J. Jennings (Independent Bermuda Baptist) is associate dean of academic programmes and assistant research professor of systematic theology and black church studies at Duke University Divinity School, Durham, NC, USA. *Person; reconciliation.*

Clement John (Church of Pakistan) is programme executive for international relations with the WCC. *Asia: China; Asia: Northeast; Asia: Southeast.*

Ottmar John (Roman Catholic) is responsible for issues of pastoral care with the German Bishops Conference in Bonn, Germany. *Subsidiarity.*

Keith E. Johnson (Baptist General Conference) is an ordained campus minister whose research at Duke University, Durham, NC, USA, centres on the theological interface of Christianity and other religions. *Theology of religions.*

Muhungi Kanyoro (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya) is director of the Ecumenical Church Loan Fund, based in Geneva, Switzerland. *Ecumenical Church Loan Fund.*

Jonah Katoneene (Church of the Province of Uganda) is general secretary of the Association of Christian Lay Centres in Africa, Harare, Zimbabwe. *Laity.*

Lynda Katsuno (Anglican Church of Canada), a musician, liturgist and theologian, was WCC special adviser on issues of disabilities. *Disability.*

William B. Kennedy (Presbyterian Church (USA)) is professor emeritus of practical theology of Union Theological Seminary, New York, USA. *World Council of Christian Education.*

Eileen King (Roman Catholic) is executive director of the World Day of Prayer International Committee, New York, USA. *World Day of Prayer.*

Michael Kinnamon (Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)) is Allen and Dottie Miller professor of mission and peace at Eden Seminary, St Louis, MO, USA. *Consultation on Church Union; united and uniting churches.*

Aloys Klein (Roman Catholic) is director emeritus of the Johann-Adam-Möhler Institute for Ecumenics, Paderborn, Germany, and professor emeritus of the theological faculty of Paderborn. *Institute for Ecumenics.*

Klaus K. Klostermaier (Roman Catholic) is distinguished professor emeritus of the department of religion of the University of Manitoba, Canada. *Hindu-Christian dialogue.*

†Alexis Kniazeff (Orthodox Church, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople) was rector of the Orthodox Theological Institute of St Sergius, Paris, France. *Apostasy; heresy; schism.*

Ninan Koshy (Church of South India) was director of the WCC Commission of the Churches on International Affairs from 1981 to 1991. *Militarism/militarization; religious liberty; third world; United Nations.*

Hanfried Krüger (Evangelical Church in Germany) is professor emeritus of ecumenics of the University of Mainz, Germany. *Söderblom, Nathan.*

Ulrich Kühn (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony) is professor emeritus of the theological faculty of the University of Leipzig, Germany. *Salvation.*

Manoj Kurian (Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church [Malaysia]) is programme executive for health and healing with the WCC. *Healing, health, health care.*

Kwame Labi (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa [Ghana]) is programme executive for community and justice in mission with the WCC. *Family; urban rural mission.*

Régis Ladous (Roman Catholic) is professor of modern history at the University of Lyons III, France. *Spiritual ecumenism.*

†Thomas A. Langford (United Methodist Church) was professor of theology and provost of Duke University, Durham, NC, USA. *Lutheran-Methodist dialogue.*

Emmanuel Lanne (Roman Catholic) is a monk at the Benedictine monastery of Chevetogne, Belgium, and a member of the WCC commission on Faith and Order. *Apostles' Creed; apostolic tradition; baptism; conciliarity; typoi.*

Bernard Lauret (Roman Catholic) is on the staff of Editions du Cerf publishing house, Paris, France. *"Theology, new".*

Hervé Legrand (Roman Catholic) was director of the Higher Institute of Ecumenical Studies, and is now professor emeritus of the Catholic Institute of Paris, France. *Assyrian Church of the East; divorce.*

Yorgo Lemopoulos (Orthodox Church, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople) is deputy general secretary of the WCC. *Bartholomew.*

Peter L'Huillier (Orthodox Church in America) is archbishop of New York, and professor of canon law at St Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY, USA. *Economy (oikonomia); excommunication.*

Wolfgang Lienemann (Evangelical Reformed Church of Basel) is professor of ethics at the Protestant Theological Seminary, University of Bern, Switzerland. *Conscience.*

Gennadios Limouris (Orthodox Church, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople) is metropolitan of Sassima. *Constantinople, first council of; Nicea; Nicene Creed.*

George Lindbeck (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) is Pitkin professor emeritus of historical theology of Yale University, New Haven, CT, USA. *Dogma.*

Jan Milic Lochman (Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches) is professor emeritus of systematic theology of the University of Basel, Switzerland. *Atheism.*

Paul Löffler (Evangelical Church of Hessen and Nassau) was director of the Board of Mission and Ecumenical Relations of his church in Frankfurt, Germany. *Conversion; proselytism.*

Bradley J. Longfield (Presbyterian Church (USA)) is dean and professor of church history at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, IA, USA. *Creationism.*

Sergio M.P. Lopes (Methodist Church in Brazil) is director of the Centre for Philosophy and Theology of the Methodist University of Piracicaba, Brazil. *Latin American Council of Churches.*

Werner Löser (Roman Catholic) is professor of dogmatics at the Jesuit Faculty of Philosophy and Theology, Frankfurt, Germany. *European unity.*

André Lossky (Orthodox) is professor of liturgical theology at the Orthodox Theological Institute of St Sergius, Paris, France. *Epiclesis.*

Nicholas Lossky, editor. *Eastern Orthodoxy; icon/image; Lossky, Vladimir; Meyendorff, John; Orthodoxy; theology, ecumenical; Uniates, Uniatism.*

Denton Lotz (American Baptist Churches in the USA/Southern Baptist Convention) is general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance with headquarters in McLean, VA, USA. *Baptist-Orthodox relations; Baptist World Alliance; Baptists.*

Joseph A. Loya (Roman Catholic) is associate professor in the department of theology and religious studies at Villanova University, PA, USA. *North American Academy of Ecumenists.*

Gert van Maanen (Netherlands Reformed Church) was general manager of the Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society, Amersfoort, Netherlands. *Oikokredit.*

Frank D. Macchia (Assemblies of God) is associate professor of theology at Vanguard University, Costa Mesa, CA, USA, and senior editor of *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*. *Pentecostal-Reformed dialogue.*

Steven G. Mackie (Church of Scotland) was lecturer in practical theology and Christian ethics at the University of St Andrews, Scotland. *Church as institution.*

Duncan MacLaren (Roman Catholic) is secretary general of Caritas Internationalis. *Caritas Internationalis.*

John Macquarrie (Church of England) is Lady Margaret professor emeritus of divinity of Oxford University, England. *Anthropology, theological.*

Jorge E. Maldonado (Evangelical Covenant Church [USA]), a former executive secretary in the WCC programme on family education, is president of the Hispanic Centre for Theological Studies, Bell Gardens, CA, USA. *Family; marriage.*

Tinyiko Sam Maluleke (Evangelical Presbyterian Church in South Africa) is professor and dean of the faculty of theology and religious studies at the University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa. *Theology, black.*

Deenabhandu Manchala (United Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India) is programme executive for peace concerns with the WCC. *Violence, religious roots of.*

†Jonathan M. Mann (Jewish) was director of the International AIDS Centre and François-Xavier Bagnoud professor for health and human rights at Harvard School of Public Health, Cambridge, MA, USA. *AIDS.*

Alwyn Marriage, former director of Feed the Minds, Guildford, UK, is general secretary of the United Society for Christian Literature. *Christian literature.*

Daniel F. Martensen (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) is director of the department for ecumenical affairs and assistant to the presiding bishop of his church in Chicago, IL, USA. *Lutheran-Orthodox dialogue.*

James B. Martin-Schramm (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) is assistant professor of religion in the religion and philosophy department at Luther College in Decorah, IA, USA. *Population.*

Jacques Matthey (Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches) is coordinator of the WCC team on Mission and Evangelism. *Mission.*

Melanie A. May (Church of the Brethren) is vice president of academic life and dean of the faculty, and professor of theology, at Colgate Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, NY, USA. *Brethren; community of women and men in the church; feminism.*

Roy H. May, Jr (United Methodist Church) is professor of Christian ethics at the Latin American Biblical University, San José, Costa Rica. *Globalization, economic.*

Jean Mayland (Church of England) is coordinating secretary for church life of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, London, UK. *Europe: Western.*

Ali A. Mazrui (Muslim) is Albert Schweitzer professor in the humanities at the State University of New York at Binghamton; Ibn Khaldun professor-at-large at the School of Islamic and Social Sciences, Leesburg, VA; and senior scholar in Africana studies at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, USA. *Decolonization.*

John S. Mbiti (Anglican Church of the Province of Kenya), director of the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, from 1974 to 1978, teaches the science of mission and extra-European theology at the University of Bern, and was a pastor of a local parish in Switzerland until retirement. *Indigenous religions; theology, African.*

Richard P. McBrien (Roman Catholic) is Crowley-O'Brien-Walter professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame, IN, USA. *Roman Catholic Church.*

Kevin McDonald (Roman Catholic), former co-secretary of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission, is bishop of Northampton, UK. *Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue.*

†Roger Mehl (Reformed Church of Alsace and Lorraine) was professor of ethics and sociology of Protestantism of the faculty of Protestant theology, University of Social Sciences, Strasbourg, France. *Law; Protestantism.*

Antonio G. Mendonça (Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil) is professor of the sociology of Protestantism at the Methodist University of São Paulo, Brazil. *South America: Brazil.*

†John Meyendorff (Orthodox Church in America) was dean of St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, Crestwood, NY, USA, and professor at Fordham University, Bronx, NY, USA. He was moderator of the WCC Faith and Order commission from 1971 to 1975. *Patristics.*

Paul Meyendorff (Orthodox Church in America) is Alexander Schmemmann professor of liturgical theology at St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, Crestwood, NY, USA. *Liturgy.*

Harding Meyer (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hanover) was research professor at the Institute for Ecumenical Research, Strasbourg, France. *Dialogue, bilateral; reconciled diversity.*

José Míguez Bonino, editor. *Conflict; ethics; fascism; imperialism; land; Medellín; middle axioms; national security; natural law; praxis; South America: Andean region; theology, liberation; totalitarianism.*

Larry Miller (Evangelical Mennonite Churches in France) is general secretary of the Mennonite World Conference, Strasbourg, France. *Mennonite World Conference; Mennonites.*

Tarek Mitri (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East) is programme executive for Christian-Muslim relations and dialogue and coordinator of the WCC team on inter-religious relations and dialogue. *Middle East.*

Gerald F. Moede (United Methodist Church), now a pastor in Wisconsin, was general secretary of the Consultation on Church Union, Princeton, NJ, USA. *Consultation on Church Union.*

Paul Mojzes (United Methodist Church) is academic dean and professor of religious studies at Rosemont College, PA, USA, editor of *Religion in Eastern Europe*, and co-editor of the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*. *Socialism.*

Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel (Evangelical Church in Württemberg), living in Germany, is a writer on the church and feminist theology. *Feminism.*

Cyris Moon (Presbyterian Church of Korea), former lecturer at the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey, is professor of Old Testament at San Francisco Theological Seminary, CA, USA. *People.*

Lewis S. Mudge (Presbyterian Church (USA)) was dean of San Francisco Theological Seminary, CA, USA. *Ministry in the church.*

Daleep Mukarji (Church of North India), former executive secretary for urban rural mission in the WCC Programme Unit on Churches in Mission: Health, Education, Witness, is director of Christian Aid, London, UK. *Urban rural mission.*

Geiko Müller-Fahrenholz (Evangelical Church of Bremen) is an ecumenical consultant and writer from Germany. *History; prophecy; salvation history.*

†Walter Müller-Römheld (Evangelical Church of Germany) was director of the publishing house Verlag Otto Lembeck, Frankfurt, Germany. *Diétrich, Suzanne de.*

†Roland E. Murphy (Roman Catholic) is G.W. Ivey professor emeritus of biblical studies of Duke University, Durham, NC, USA. *Old Testament and Christian unity.*

Owen Nankivell (Methodist Church of Great Britain) is director of the Hinksey Centre (Christian concerns for public issues), Torquay, UK. *Capitalism.*

Luca Negro (Evangelical Baptist Union of Italy) is secretary for communications and information with the Conference of European Churches, Geneva, Switzerland. *Europe: Southern.*

J. Robert Nelson (United Methodist Church) was director of the institute of religion of Texas Medical Center, Houston, TX, USA, and dean of theology at Boston University and Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN. *Bio-ethics.*

Richard John Neuhaus (Roman Catholic) is director of the Institute on Religion and Public Life, New York, USA. *Hartford appeal*.

Peter Neuner (Roman Catholic) is professor of dogmatics and ecumenical theology at the Catholic Faculty of Theology, University of Munich, Germany. *Anathemas; dialogue, intrafaith*.

†Lesslie Newbigin (United Reformed Church in the UK) was for many years a missionary and bishop in the Church of South India, and director of the International Missionary Council from 1959 to 1961. *Niles, Daniel Thambyrajah; union, organic; unity of "all in each place"*.

Leopoldo Niilus (United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina) was representative of the Middle East Council of Churches at the Ecumenical Centre, Geneva, Switzerland, and is a former director of international ecumenical relations of the MECC. *Middle East Council of Churches*.

D. Preman Niles (United Reformed Church in the UK) was general secretary of the Council for World Mission, London, UK. *Justice, peace and the integrity of creation*.

Ingrid Vad Nilsen (Church of Norway) was general secretary of the Christian Council of Norway. *Europe: Northern – Norway*.

Peder Nørgaard-Højen (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark) is professor of dogmatics and ecumenical theology at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark. *Sin*.

Roger Nunn (Baptist Union of Great Britain) was a field officer of Churches Together in England, and editor of the CTE bulletin *Pilgrim Post. Local ecumenical partnerships*.

Setri Nyomi (Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana) is general secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. *Youth*.

Ronald O'Grady (Associated Churches of Christ in New Zealand), former associate general secretary of the Christian Conference of Asia, is a founder and honorary president of ECPAT (End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism). *Prostitution, child*.

Daniel Olivier (Roman Catholic) was professor of Luther studies at the Catholic Institute, Paris, France. *Holiness; sanctification*.

Milan Opočenský (Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren), professor emeritus of Charles University Prague, was general secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, Geneva, Switzerland. *Christian Peace Conference; Europe: Central and Eastern*.

†Raymond Oppenheim (Church of Aotearoa New Zealand) was vicar of Lower Hutt, diocese of Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand. *Aotearoa New Zealand*.

Helen Oppenheimer (Church of England) is a writer on Christian ethics and has been a member of various Church of England commissions on marriage. *Ethics, sexual*.

Levi V. Oración (United Church of Christ), former executive secretary for theological studies in the WCC Sub-unit on the Churches' Participation in Development, is a pastor of his church in Covina, CA, USA. *Asia: Southeast; people*.

Nicolas Ossorguine (Orthodox Church, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople) is professor of liturgy at the Orthodox Theological Institute of St Sergius, Paris, France. *Church calendar*.

Geevarghese Mar Osthathios (Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church) is metropolitan of Niranam and teaches at the Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam, India. *Oriental Orthodox churches.*

Martin Parmentier (Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands) is canon of the chapter of Utrecht and professor of systematic and ecumenical theology at the Old Catholic Theological Faculty of the University of Bern, Switzerland. *Old Catholic Church; Old Catholic-Orthodox dialogue.*

Geoffrey Parrinder (Methodist Church of Great Britain) is professor emeritus of the comparative study of religions and fellow of King's College, London, UK. *Scriptures.*

Harvey Perkins (Uniting Church in Australia) served both the WCC and the CCA in the area of development and service. *Tourism.*

William A. Perkins (Episcopal Church [USA]) spent several periods on the staff of the WCC, the last as executive secretary for the administration of the WCC seventh assembly at Canberra. *International Christian Youth Exchange.*

Arturo Piedra (Federation of Evangelical Churches in Costa Rica) is professor of church history at the Latin American Biblical Seminary, San José, Costa Rica. *Central America.*

Barney Pityana (Church of the Province of Southern Africa – Anglican), director of the WCC Programme to Combat Racism from 1988 to 1992, is vice-chancellor of the University of South Africa, Pretoria. *Racism.*

John S. Pobee, editor. *Africa; African Instituted (Independent) Churches; All Africa Conference of Churches; Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians; education and renewal; Gatu, John; Ibiam, Francis Akanu; International Association for Mission Studies; Jiagge, Annie; Matthews, Zachariah Keodirelang; polygamy; redemption; theology, black; theology by the people; theology, contextual; violence, religious roots of.*

Elisabeth Pontoppidan (Reformed Church of France) was prioress of the Community of Pomeyrol, St-Etienne-du-Gres, France. *Theotokos.*

†Maria Teresa Porcile Santiso (Roman Catholic) was professor of biblical theology and Mariology at the Theological Institute of Uruguay, Montevideo, Uruguay. *Magnificat.*

Philip A. Potter (Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas) was WCC general secretary from 1972 to 1984. *Covenant; mission.*

David N. Power (Roman Catholic) is professor emeritus of systematic theology of the Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, USA. *Episcopacy; ordination; presbyterate; priesthood.*

James F. Puglisi (Roman Catholic) is director of the Centro Pro Unione, Rome, Italy. *Centro Pro Unione.*

Joan Puls (Roman Catholic) is president of the School Sisters of St Francis in Milwaukee, WI, USA. *Spirituality in the ecumenical movement.*

John A. Radano (Roman Catholic) is bureau chief of the western section, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Vatican City. *Baptist-Roman Catholic international conversations.*

Konrad Raiser (Evangelical Church in Germany) is general secretary of the WCC. *Holy Spirit in ecumenical thought; international order; oikoumene; theology in the ecumenical movement.*

Páraic Réamonn (Church of Scotland) is executive secretary for communication in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, Geneva, Switzerland. *World Alliance of Reformed Churches*.

Ruth Reardon (Roman Catholic) is co-president of the Association of Interchurch Families, London, UK. *Association of Interchurch Families*.

†Hans Diether Reimer (Evangelical Church in Germany) was a theologian at the Protestant Central Agency for Religious and Ideological Issues, Stuttgart, Germany. *Sects*.

Víctor Rey (Evangelical Baptist Church of Chile) is a pastor of his church. *South America: Andean region*.

Russell E. Richey (United Methodist Church) is dean of Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA. *Denominationalism*.

Cecil M. Robeck, Jr (Assemblies of God) is professor of church history and ecumenics at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA, USA. *Assemblies of God; charism(ata); Pentecostal World Conference*.

Ronald G. Roberson (Roman Catholic) is associate director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC, USA. *Assyrian Church of the East-Roman Catholic dialogue; Oriental Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue; Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue*.

Earl Robinson (Salvation Army) is colonel at the Salvation Army headquarters, office for spiritual life development and international external relations, Maple Ridge, BC, Canada. *Salvation Army*.

Martin Robra (Evangelical Church in Germany) is WCC programme executive for ethics and ecology. *Sustainability*.

Violeta Rocha Areas (Nazaren Church in Nicaragua) is pastor of her church, dean of the Evangelical Theological Faculty in Managua, Nicaragua, and president of the Latino-american and Caribbean Ecumenical Education Community. *Central America*.

Jean Rogues (Roman Catholic) was professor of ecumenical theology and director at the Higher Institute for Ecumenical Studies of the Catholic Institute of Paris, France. *Laity/ clergy*.

Michael Root (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) is research professor for systematic theology at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, OH, USA. *Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue*.

Susan H. Ross was interim coordinator of the international secretariat of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, Alkmaar, Netherlands. *International Fellowship of Reconciliation*.

Peter Rottländer (Roman Catholic) works in theological research at Misereor, Aachen, Germany. *Solidarity*.

Theodore Runyon (United Methodist Church) was professor of systematic theology at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, USA. *Theology, political*.

William G. Rusch (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) was director of the Commission on Faith and Order, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, New York, USA. *Athanasian Creed; Baptist-Lutheran dialogue*.

Dafne Sabanes Plou (Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina) is a free-lance journalist specializing in church and society issues. *Latin American Council of Churches*.

Saïd Elias Saïd (Roman Catholic Church, France, and Maronite Church of Saïda, Lebanon) is Maronite patriarchal vicar in France. *Canon law*.

Julio H. de Santa Ana (Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches) is professor at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, Geneva, Switzerland. *Debt crisis; dependence; economics*.

Gerhard Sauter (Evangelical Church in the Rhineland) was professor of systematic theology and director of the Ecumenical Institute, Faculty of Protestant Theology, University of Bonn, Germany. *Stuttgart declaration; war guilt*.

Ursula Schoen-Gieseke (Evangelical Church in the Rhineland) is a pastor of her church and works at the Institute for Social-diaconal Research, University of Heidelberg, Germany. *People of God*.

William F. Schulz, former president of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, is executive director of Amnesty International, USA. *International Association for Religious Freedom; Unitarian Universalism; Unitarian Universalist Association*.

Marilia Schüller (Methodist Church in Brazil) is programme executive for combating racism with the WCC. *Racism*.

Juan Schwindt (Evangelical Church of the River Plate) is general secretary of his church, Argentina. *Latin American Council of Churches*.

Alan P.F. Sell (Presbyterian Church of Wales) was professor of Christian doctrine and philosophy of religion at the United Theological College, Aberystwyth, within the Aberystwyth and Lampeter School of Theology of the University of Wales, UK. *Anglican-Reformed dialogue; congregationalism*.

Bernard Sesboüé (Roman Catholic) is professor of theology at the Faculty of Theology of Centre-Sèvres, Paris, France. *Authority; Groupe des Dombes*.

Norman Shanks (Church of Scotland) was leader of the Iona community. *Iona community*.

Wilbert R. Shenk (Mennonite Church) is professor of mission history and contemporary culture at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA, USA. *Church growth*.

Roger L. Shinn (United Church of Christ) is Reinhold Niebuhr professor emeritus of social ethics of Union Theological Seminary, New York, USA. *Revolution; science and technology; scientific world-view*.

†Werner Simpfendorfer (Evangelical Church in Württemberg) was executive secretary of the Ecumenical Association of Academies and Laity Centres in Europe, Bad Boll, Germany. *Academies, lay*.

†Jean Sindab (Progressive National Baptist Convention) was director for environmental and economic justice/hunger concerns at the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, New York. *Indigenous peoples*.

Baldwin Sjollem (Netherlands Reformed Church) was the first director of the WCC Programme to Combat Racism, from 1970 to 1981, then coordinator of the anti-apartheid programme of the International Labour Organization. *Land; Programme to Combat Racism*.

Jean Skuse (Uniting Church in Australia) was general secretary of the Australian Council of Churches. *Australia*.

D.J. Smit (Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa) is professor of systematic theology at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa. *Inspiration; kairos documents; kingdom of God; liberty/freedom; order*.

D. Moody Smith (United Methodist Church) is George Washington Ivey professor emeritus of New Testament of Duke University, Durham, NC, USA. *New Testament and Christian unity*.

Dorothee Sölle (Evangelical Lutheran Church of North Elbia) is a theologian and writer living in Hamburg, Germany, and was visiting professor of systematic theology at Union Theological Seminary, New York, USA, until 1987. *Suffering*.

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Tom Stransky, editor. *Antichrist; Bea, Augustin; Beauduin, Lambert; Bilheimer, Robert; Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Questions; Chevetogne; Christian World Communions; collegiality; common witness; Congar, Yves; Couturier, Paul-Irénée; criticism of the ecumenical movement and of the WCC; crusades; Day, Dorothy; Decree on Ecumenism; Duprey, Pierre; Ecumenical Directories; encyclicals; encyclicals, Roman Catholic; encyclicals, Roman Catholic social; Focolare movement; Friends World Committee for Consultation; fundamentalists; Graham, Billy; hierarchy of truths; International Missionary Council; Jerusalem; John XXIII; John Paul II; Joint Working Group; Küng, Hans; millennialism; missio Dei; missionary societies; Moeller, Charles; Nissiotis, Nikos; Paul VI; Pax Christi International; Pax Romana; Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity; religious communities; Roman Catholic Church and*

*pre-Vatican II ecumenism; Roman curia; Romero y Galdames, Oscar Arnulfo; Sant'Egidio community; SEDOS; SODEPAX; Tantur Ecumenical Institute; Thurian, Max; Trent, council of; UNIAPAC; Vatican Councils I and II; Willebrands, Johannes; World Council of Churches.*

Katherine Strong (United Church of Christ) was a staff member of the World YWCA. *World Young Women's Christian Association.*

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Geoffrey Wainwright, editor. *Anglican-Methodist dialogue; canon; Christmas; church; church discipline; dialogue, multilateral; Easter; eucharist; federalism; God; intercommunion; Leuenberg Church Fellowship; lex orandi, lex credendi; magisterium; Methodist-Orthodox relations; Methodist-Reformed dialogue; Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue; Pentecost; scripture; uniqueness of Christ; universalism; Ut Unum Sint.*

John Waliggo (Roman Catholic) is executive secretary of the Justice and Peace National Catholic Commission and a member of the Uganda Human Rights Commission. *Inculturation.*

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Pauline Webb, editor. *Communication; intercession; Potter, Philip; Raiser, Konrad; Vischer, Lukas; women in church and society.*

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Hugh Wybrew (Church of England) is vicar of St Mary Magdalen, Oxford, UK. *Anglican-Orthodox dialogue*.

†John H. Yoder (Mennonite Church) was professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame, IN, USA. *Conscientious objection; peace*.

Ralph C. Young (United Church of Canada) was Geneva secretary for the World Methodist Council, Geneva, Switzerland. *World Methodist Council*.

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